

**Construction of stories:  
The glorified and the silenced  
in 1980 and 2015 Greek history textbooks**

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2016

A thesis submitted to McGill University in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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*I dedicate my work to my father Panayiotis,  
from whom I learned the importance of combining knowledge with kindness.*

## **Abstract**

This research project is situated in the Greek context, one defined by the continuous diversification of Greek society and the rise of extreme right political groups. Drawing from the theoretical frameworks of a critical approach to diversity, the disciplinary approach to history, the principles of historical thinking, and Ross Dunn's three models of world history, this study compares two sets of textbooks: the 1980 and 2015 grades six, nine, and twelve Greek textbooks of modern history. The three research questions of this study trace the development of the textbooks' epistemological stance, their thematic focus, and the narratives of non-Western peoples.

Research findings show that the 2015 textbooks have made moderate steps toward introducing historical thinking and a disciplinary approach to history, elements that were absent in the 1980 textbooks. Regarding thematic focus, the 2015 textbooks' titles indicate a turn to world history; however, similar to the 1980 textbooks, little attention is paid to history beyond Greece and Europe. Finally, despite the fact that 2015 textbooks provide a greater exposure to non-Western history, both the 1980 and 2015 textbooks lack multiperspectivity. The voices and stories of non-Westerners are mostly silenced.

The implications of these findings are linked to the writing of history textbooks in Greece. Reference is also made to the teaching of history and how it can prepare students deal with today's multicultural and interconnected world.

## **Resumé**

Ce projet de recherche se situe dans un contexte Grec, défini par la diversification continue de sa société et la montée de groupes politiques d'extrême droite. Puisant dans les cadres théoriques de l'approche critique de la diversité, de l'approche disciplinaire à l'histoire, ainsi que des trois modèles de Ross Dunn de l'histoire du monde, cette étude compare deux séries de manuels scolaires grecs de l'histoire moderne: ceux des années 1980 et 2015 de sixième, neuvième, et douzième classe. Les trois questions de recherche de cette étude retracent le développement épistémologique des manuels, leur thématique et les récits concernant les peuples non-occidentaux.

Les résultats des recherches montrent que les manuels de 2015 comportent des mesures modérées prises en vue d'introduire une pensée historique, ainsi qu'une approche disciplinaire à l'histoire qui étaient absentes dans les manuels scolaires des années 1980. En ce qui concerne le focus thématique, les titres des manuels de 2015 réfèrent au "World History" (Histoire du monde), alors que dans les manuels des années 1980, peu d'attention est accordée aux sujets qui n'étaient pas reliés à l'histoire de la Grèce et de l'Europe. De plus, malgré la plus grande exposition à l'histoire non-occidentale des manuels de 2015, les volumes des deux époques – 1980 et 2015 – manquent de multi-perspectivité. Les voix et l'histoire non-Occidentale sont, la plupart du temps, passées en silence.

Les résultats de cette analyse visent à informer et à influencer la façon dont les manuels d'histoire sont rédigés en Grèce. Il sera également fait référence à l'enseignement de l'histoire et comment ce dernier peut préparer les étudiants à faire face aux multitudes de cultures du monde interconnecté d'aujourd'hui.

## **Acknowledgments**

The research and writing of this dissertation was possible due to the insight, guidance, and support offered by many people.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my doctoral supervisor, Professor Ratna Ghosh. From the beginning until the very end of this degree, Prof. Ghosh, you have been my mentor, my friend, my family. Your broadened vision of multiculturalism and your critical conception of difference and identity have become the pillars of my work. Your leadership has also been a great source of inspiration. I learned from your example that a leader could be strong, but also generous, considerate, and kind toward others. Over the years, you have offered me your immediate support whenever I needed it. Thank you for your academic insight and for encouraging me along the way, thank you for reading and responding to my work, even when travelling all the way across the world. Thank you very deeply, for always having your door open when I needed someone to talk to. Thank you for being available to help me solve any issues, big or small, anytime they occurred. Thank you for standing by me like family during my health issue, for the flowers, for caring. I am extremely grateful to have had you at my side throughout this PhD journey. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Two more people who have been pivotal for the completion of this thesis are my doctoral committee members: Professors Anastasia Kesidou and Paul Zanazanian. I am grateful to both of you for the time and effort you put into this project.

Prof. Kesidou, I still remember when we met in your office in Thessaloniki. Thank you for welcoming me so warmly, for openly sharing your resources and insights, and for agreeing to be on my committee. During the years that followed, your comments and suggestions provided my work with a necessary link to Greece. I recall very fondly all the long conversations we had about my research, about our homeland, and about life. I am grateful for your promptness and your encouraging and detailed comments during all stages of the research.

Prof. Zanazanian, thank you for your willingness to join my doctoral committee at a later point in the research process, when I was making changes in my approach. Your guidance and expertise provided me with the tools necessary to navigate through new

methodology and various aspects of history education. Thank you for the close reading of my work, for your insight, and for challenging me to reexamine elements of this thesis.

I would also like to thank Prof. Ayaz Naseem, who was part of my committee before I changed my methodology. Prof. Naseem, thank you for your contribution during the earlier stages of this project.

I am truly thankful to my professors from Loyola University Chicago, Prof. Erwin Epstein and Prof. Noah Sobe for acquainting me with Comparative Education. It was both of you who inspired me to move forward with my studies and pursue a PhD.

The Faculty of Education and the Department of Integrated Studies in Education has felt like home in the years I have been a student at McGill University. Thank you to all the academic and administrative staff for your continuous support. I would especially like to thank Mr. Michael Larivière, the department's graduate coordinator. Michael, I cannot thank you enough for assisting me every time I needed your help. Thank you for all the letters you have written for me, which allowed me to fulfill my obligations towards numerous institutions. Thank you for your patience and for always greeting me with a smile.

I owe another special thanks to the former Greek Consul of Educational Affairs in Canada, Dr. Despina Hatzidiakos. Thank you for your willingness to listen, for your generosity, and your continuous support during the past two years.

I would also like to thank Prof. Anastassios Anastassiadis for giving me the opportunity to work at McGill's Modern Greek Studies program. I learned a lot from our collaboration and from my students during these two and a half years.

The research for this project received invaluable financial support primarily from the Alexander Onassis Scholarship Foundation in Greece (2011-2015). I would especially like to thank the person responsible for my scholarship, Ioanna Kailani, for her continuous and kind assistance. I am also indebted to the WYNG Trust Fellowship for awarding me a one-year scholarship (2012-2013). I would also like to thank Prof. Ratna Ghosh, the Faculty of Education, and the Hellenic Scholarship Foundation of Montreal for their financial contribution in various stages of my degree.

Gratitude is due to the Hellenic Community of Greater Montreal, and especially to Mr. Fotis Komborozos, for opening the doors of their rich library and lending me the materials that have been the sources for my research.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the contribution of Angelina Leggo, who meticulously edited this thesis in record time.

Of course, this project would not have been possible without the immense support I have received from my friends. Whether near or far, your encouragement and your faith have kept me sane and gave me the strength to carry on. Ευχαριστώ, to all my friends in Greece: Thank you Lena Taki for always checking up on me and making sure that I am doing well. Thank you Katerina Tsalla and Anna Antonakaki for sharing your sea, your food, and for all the great laughs. These moments provided me with the necessary energy. Maria Georgoula, I am deeply grateful for all the support you have shown to me and to my family during these past years. Thank you for your patience, your thoughtfulness, and your generosity. A special thank you to my dear childhood friend Ioanna Sklavou. Thank you for pushing me to understand myself. Thank you for our long, long conversations and all the trans-Atlantic text messaging during times of difficulty. You are my sister.

Merci to all my friends in Montreal! You made the PhD a beautiful and memorable journey. Helene Dragatsi, my first friend in Montreal, thank you for the study sessions, the teas, and our unforgettable laughs. Nouf Khashman thanks for sharing with me the hiking and photography adventures and for encouraging me. Angeliki Sioli thank you for reminding me that ‘I should be writing’ and for offering the ear that helped me work through my ideas and feel good about my project. Cheers to Hussam Rafaat and Steve Paugh for the endless fun and for helping me with the title of this thesis. I would especially like to thank Steve for his generous help with the final proofreading of the thesis. Shirin Radjavi and Ehaab Abdou thank you for warmly making sure I’m doing ok. Lily Han, your strength and critical mind have inspired me in many ways. Christelle Franca thank you for all those warm tea talks and pool swims where we shared our dreams and plans for the future. Kathy Mikic, I will always remember your presence on October 1, 2012 and be grateful that you were there. Having you at my side, I felt that I had my family with me, so thank you for your warm friendship all these years. My dear friend Facil Tesfaye, thank you for reading and advising me on my papers and earlier

versions of this thesis. Most of all, thank you for your immense support during some rough times. You were always available to listen, share your pasta, and have a coffee or a dance. Tahiya Mahbub, we are arriving at the end of this journey together. Thank you for your presence in the good and bad. You are a friend that I know I can always count on.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my dear friend Katy Kalemkerian. From the moment we sat beside each other in 2011 at our McGill class, you have been my point of reference in Montreal. Thank you for believing in me and pulling me up when I was down. Thank you for the cards, the cakes, the candles, for your ability to bring people together, for making simple things special. Your thoughtfulness, your creativity, and, most importantly, your strength and resilience have been a great source of inspiration. Over the years, your warm spirit has nurtured my soul... and your delicious cooking has nourished my body. Thank you also for bringing Ermis into my life—my energetic feline who pushed me to get off my chair during the long hours of writing and open the door so he goes out, and then in, and then out... My dear Katy, together we laughed, we cried, we grew. We are family.

Finally, I want to thank the people without whom this journey would not have been possible, my family: my sister Vicky, my mother Harikleia, and my father Panayiotis. You have been the wind beneath my wings. I am who I am and I am where I am today because of you. Thank you for instilling in me the aspiration to travel, explore, and learn. Thank you for never second-guessing my pursuits and for encouraging me every step of the way. Thank you for believing in me and for providing me with warm comfort during stressful times. You have been my safety net. Vicky, thank you for being that person who has contributed to my growth. To my mother, Μαμά, thank you for the warm meals you prepared for me with all your mastery, a token of our special bond. Thank you for being the strong woman that you are and teaching me the power of the feminine. And finally to my dad, Παμπά, thank you for inspiring me to reach high. Your drive to constantly learn inspired me to pursue this degree. From, you I also learned the value of generosity, kindness, and patience. Βίκυ, Μαμά, Παμπά, we did it! Σας ευχαριστώ!



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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

During the past few decades, humanity has experienced various worldwide developments: globalization, the rise of new economies, technological advances, geo-political changes, and intensified population movements (Portera, 2008). More than ever before, individuals are coming into close contact with other people of different cultural backgrounds, races, ethnicities, and religions. Especially because of growing immigration waves, the nineteenth century ‘imagined’ homogeneous communities of nation-states, as described by Benedict Anderson (2006), are becoming increasingly diverse and interconnected. In Europe, most states demonstrate a wide ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity (Stardling, 2001).

Greece is one such state. Being part of several international communities, including the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Union for the Mediterranean, OECD, NATO and the United Nations, and having received a large number of immigrants in the past twenty-five years, the Modern Greek state has a longstanding international status and multicultural population. However, during the past few years, far right political parties have gained popularity and, as a result, the public sphere is increasingly dominated by xenophobic voices opposing diversity. In some cases, such tendencies have been accompanied by racist manifestations, which have occasionally resulted in violent action by some political parties and groups.

Amidst the ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity, which is commonplace across the globe, many scholars highlight the central role of schooling in providing young students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will allow them to

function effectively, both in their communities and beyond their cultural borders (Banks, 2004). Education is regarded as a powerful tool that has the potential to prepare active, critical, and responsible citizens who can participate with confidence in public life (Tawil & Cougoureux, 2013). The Council of Europe (2010) further recognizes that education has the capacity to promote core values such as democracy and human rights and, consequently, to combat the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination, and intolerance. Acknowledging school's important role, my study turns its attention to education and its potential to prepare young people to actively participate in today's diverse and interconnected societies.

Within the field of education, my study focuses more specifically on the teaching of history. As people come into close contact with others whose culture is radically different from their own, policy makers and educational theorists are pointing to the fact that, more than ever before, traditional understandings and representations of the past are no longer adequate to express the multiplicity of today's society. As such, history education is currently under close scrutiny and is at the center of international attention (Lévesque, 2008). In the case of Greece, the matter of education and, specifically of history education, holds a prominent place in the discourse regarding the recent rise of the extreme right. The way that history has been written about and taught in Greek schools is often presented as one of the reasons that allowed the acceptance and spread of far right ideologies within Greek society over the past few years (Bournazos, 2014; Fragoudaki, 2013; Tsiakalos, 2015). The discussion about history education in relation to the rise of the extreme right in Greece is understandable, since, as scholars argue, history is inherently political. The representations of 'self' and 'other' that permeate the history

curriculum shape students' national identity (Stearns, Seixas, & Wineburg, 2000), and thereby, inform their stance towards fellow nationals, their country, and the 'other' (Dragona & Bar-On, 2000).

In light of the above, within the field of history education, my research focuses on the writing of school history. In the context of the continuous diversification of Greek society and the rise of extreme right ideologies, my study critically examines Greek history textbooks (GHT) that narrate modern history. Specifically, this research project compares two sets of textbooks: the 1980 and 2015 grade six, nine, and twelve GHT. Drawing from a critical approach to diversity, the disciplinary approach to history, the principles of historical thinking, and from Ross Dunn's (2000) models of world history, my study traces the development of the following issues: the textbooks' epistemological stance, their thematic focus, and the narratives of non-Western peoples. The goal of this thesis is to examine these issues in the framework of Greece's current socio-political reality.

## **The Greek Context**

### **Diversity within the European Union and Greece**

Eurostat (2015), the statistical office of the European Union (EU), reports that on January 1, 2014, the number of people living within the 28 EU member-states who had been born outside of the EU was 33.5 million. In regards to Greece, after 1990, the country served a large number of migrants as both a final destination and a transit stop between their countries of origin and other countries of the EU. Specifically, after the collapse of the communist bloc in the 1990s, Greece received thousands of Pontian Greeks from the former USSR, Greek Northern Epirotes from Albania, and foreign

nationals from the wider Central and Eastern European region (Damanakis, 1997). In 2005, approximately one million foreigners accounted for 10% of the population and had brought about significant demographic changes (Damanakis, 2005). According to FRONTEX (2015), in recent years there have been an increasing number of migrants arriving in Greece from its Eastern borders, primarily from the Middle East (Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria), Southeast Asia (Pakistan, Bangladesh), and Sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, FRONTEX (2015) reports that in 2014, with 50,000 detected illegal border crossings, the Eastern Mediterranean route<sup>1</sup> was the second largest area via which migrants arrived to the European Union. One year later, in 2015, the EU faced a ‘refugee/migrant crisis’, and these numbers escalated. According to reports, Greece received approximately 250,000 migrants seeking asylum in the EU from January to August 2015 (Migrant crisis, 2015). The migratory flows are mixed, but most of these migrants are Syrian refugees fleeing conflict at home (FRONTEX, 2015).

A basic difference between migration flows in Greece during the past three to five years and those that occurred during the 1990s and 2000s is that current migrants enter the country aiming to transit to other EU countries; that is, Greece is not a final destination for most of these migrants. Nevertheless, both the state and Greek citizens, especially on the islands at Greece’s Eastern borders, face huge challenges in addressing this unprecedented influx of people (Hendawi, 2015).

### **The Emergence of the Extreme Right in Greece**

Looking back at the history of modern Greece, and taking into consideration the presence of a Muslim minority in Western Thrace and Rhodes, Slavic and Albanian

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<sup>1</sup> Frontex defines the Eastern Mediterranean route as the passage used by migrants crossing through Turkey to the European Union via Greece, southern Bulgaria, or Cyprus (FRONTEX, 2015).



speakers, as well as Jewish and Roma minorities, we can discern that the country's cultural and ethnic diversity is not a phenomenon of only the past three decades. However, for the latter part of the twentieth century and until the 1990s, Greece was considered a homogeneous society, at least in the consciousness of the Greek people (Kesidou, 2008). As this imagined homogeneity altered during the past twenty-five years with the influx of immigrants, diversity and its impact on Greek society became a prevalent issue for some groups of people.

For example, after the mid-2000s, far right wing political parties like LaOS and Golden Dawn started to gain popularity, bringing forth a discourse that opposed the diversification of Greek society (Chrisi Avgi, n.d.; LaOS, 2012). These parties present diversity as a threat to the country's homogeneity and purity, and follow a rhetoric that is highly nationalist, racist, authoritarian, and xenophobic. In some cases, the extremity of these positions is not only expressed verbally, but is followed with physically violent practices by some groups.<sup>2</sup>

During the twentieth century, far right movements in Europe from 1945 to the end of the 1980s were reduced to small, marginalized groups. It is only after 1990 that far right groups emerge and eventually enter European parliaments. In Greece, things are a bit different. Until the mid 2000s, the far right had no considerable power within Greek political life. Anna Fragoudaki, in her 2013 book, *Nationalism and the Rise of the Far Right*, argues that this is probably because of the country's recent political history when,

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<sup>2</sup> For example, the 'policing' of Athens' neighborhoods in some cases resulted in assaults against immigrants, such as those in Ag. Panteleimonas in 2008 (Kostopoulos, 2014). Another example is the killing of Greek rapper Pavlos Fyssas in September 2013. The person accused for his death was Giorgos Roupakias, a member of the Golden Dawn political party (GD). Charges were pressed against the General Secretary of GD, Nikos Michaloliakos, and other members of this party; most of them parliamentarians. The court case is ongoing, but in September 2015, during a radio interview on Real FM, Nikos Michaloliakos announced that his party accepts the political responsibility for the murder of Pavlos Fyssas in 2013 (see: Poios einai, 2013; Magda Fyssa, 2015; Golden Dawn accepts, 2015).

after the end of the seven-year military dictatorship in 1974, in the consciousness of the Greek people, the far right was linked to that un-democratic period.

This balance changed for the first time in 2004 during the EU elections, when LaOS (Laikos Orthodoxos Synagermos = Popular Orthodox Rally) gathered 4.12% of the popular vote and entered the European Parliament (Ypourgeio Esoterikon, 2004). Three years later, this was followed by an increase of its power, this time within the Greek Parliamentary system. In 2007, LaOS won 3.80% of the popular vote in the Greek national elections, gaining ten seats in parliament for the first time since the party's establishment in 2000. In 2009, it further increased its parliamentary power to 5.63% of the popular vote, and gained fifteen seats (Ypourgeio Esoterikon, n.d). Three years later, in the 2012 elections, after taking part in the coalition government of Papadimos, LaOS failed to enter the Greek parliament (Ypourgeio Esoterikon, n.d). This was primarily due to the fact that LaOS participated in the unpopular governing coalition at the time, which supported the EU and IMF-imposed austerity plan; therefore, it lost its profile as an anti-mainstream political party (Nedelcu, 2012). Since 2012, LaOS has not been elected into the Greek Parliament.

During two rounds of national elections in 2012, another far right political party entered the Greek parliament for the first time since its creation in 1985: the Golden Dawn (GD). Capitalizing on LaOS' discredit, GD skillfully portrayed itself as the only true radical right party, one that would never partake in centrist government coalitions or austerity measures. As austerity forced the Greek state to withdraw from its social commitments, Golden Dawn successfully promoted itself as the only party capable of restoring the country's 'glorious past' and eventually managed to draw votes from LaOS

(Koustenis, 2014; Nedelcu, 2012). GD won close to 7% of the popular vote and obtained twenty-one seats in the May 2012 elections and eighteen seats in the ensuing June elections of the same year. Since 2012, GD has managed to maintain its percentage and, during the two national elections in 2015, has established its place as the third leading political power in the Greek parliament (Hellenic Parliament, n.d.).

**LaOS and Golden Dawn – Ideological background.** In the literature that examines the rise of the far right in Europe, LaOS and GD are both placed to the right of the political spectrum, with GD being more conservative than LaOS. Various works define LaOS as an ultra-religious, populist,<sup>3</sup> and radical left party and GD as an extreme right party (Mudde, 2000; Mudde, 2007; Nedelcu, 2012; Vadoros, 2013).

Although the two parties have certain commonalities, they differ in defining their position and their political goals. One of their differences is that LaOS refuses to identify as an extreme right political party or to have any affiliation with fascism. Furthermore, LaOS rejects the characterization that it is a nationalistic party. In declaring its political positions, LaOS self-identifies as a patriotic, Hellenic-centered, and populist party that supports the ‘Hellenic spirit’ and the traditional Hellenic and Greek Orthodox values and culture (LaOS, 2012). LaOS also opposes globalization and the dominance of banks and financial institutions, although it supports the liberal principles of the market. The party’s declaration states that they are against racism; however, during the establishment of the party in 2000, its leader, Giorgos Karatzaferis, professed his alignment with the principle

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<sup>3</sup> For the term populist, Harry Nedelcu (2012) notes: “A generally used definition is that populism is a type of discourse that emphasizes the interests of the populous, the ordinary people. It often contrasts the ‘authentic,’ ‘real,’ ‘pure’ people with the ‘hidden’ and ‘evil’ interests of those that lead them. The elites are usually presented as corrupt, greedy, and generally not at all interested in doing what they claim to do—represent” (p. 3).

of compatriot priority,<sup>4</sup> demanding the immediate deportation of illegal immigrants and the national safeguarding of the job market<sup>5</sup> (Georgiadou, 2014).

The literature brings forward the argument that LaOS' success was based on two phenomena that occurred during the 1990s: the Macedonian issue<sup>6</sup> and the mass influx of immigrants. By connecting the presence of immigrants to the dangers of ghettoization in Athens, the increase of crime, the loss of jobs, and by considering immigration a conspiracy to eliminate the historic, cultural characteristics of the Greek nation, LaOS capitalized on immigration and used it to push forward its political agenda (Koustenis, 2014).

Turning now to Golden Dawn's (GD) ideology, its leadership and members have often been upfront about their Nazi and fascist stance.<sup>7</sup> At the beginning of its establishment, GD openly self-identified as a National Socialist party. However, in later years, they camouflaged their strong support of Nazism and chose the term 'Greek nationalists' to define themselves (Chrisi Avgi, 2012; Georgiadou, 2014; Michaloliakos, 2013b).

Golden Dawn was founded in 1985 by Nikos Michaloliakos, but became visibly active in 1993, during the Macedonia crisis ("Poios einai," 2012). For many years, GD was reduced to a criminal gang and accused of group assaults against foreigners and

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<sup>4</sup> This is defined as priority treatment to compatriots living within a political community over foreigners living within or outside of the community (Couture and Nielsen, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> During an interview in 2011, the leader of LaOS, Giorgos Karatzaferis, stated that, 'any ship with illegal immigrants entering the Greek territorial waters will be sunk.' He also promised to deport the 1.7 million immigrants who were residing in Greece at the time ("G. Karatzaferis," 2011).

<sup>6</sup> The Macedonia issue arose in 1991, when the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia seceded from Yugoslavia and declared its independence under the name 'Republic of Macedonia' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.).

<sup>7</sup> For a collection of texts exalting Hitler and Nazi figures written by the GD leaders and other GD members, see T. Katsimardos & T. Roumpanis (Eds), *I mavri vivlos tou neonazismou* [The Black Bible of neo-nazi ideology]. Athens: Ethnos. Also, ideological texts can be found on the GD website: <http://www.xryshaygh.com>.

people with ‘improper appearance,’ but only a few of the incidents made their way to the Greek courts and the media. Having openly expressed admiration for Nazi and fascist historical figures (Kassidiaris, 2013; Michaloliakos, 2013a), GD condemns the idea of democracy and the parliamentary system. Georgiadou (2014) describes GD as a type of political party that functions like a private army, with a paramilitary structure, strict discipline, and a military-like hierarchy. According to the party’s declarations, its participation in the parliamentary system aims to take advantage of democratic institutions, to gain power, and then to eventually abolish it (Fragoudaki, 2013; Georgiadou, 2014). This is another point of difference distinguishing LaOS from GD; the former is not opposed to parliamentary democracy, whereas the latter rejects the principles of democracy, equality, and majority (Vandoros, 2013).

Overall, by adhering to fascist ideologies,<sup>8</sup> Golden Dawn advocates national purity, the intellectual, national and racial inequality of people, and supports the elimination of immigrants and ethnic minorities from Greek society. GD is also homophobic and rejects people with disabilities or any other type of physical or mental challenges (Chrisi Avgi, 2012; Hasapopoulos, 2013; Katsimardos & Roumpanis 2013). Building from this stance, GD declares that, once in power, their goal is to purify the nation by implementing the law of natural selection in order to eliminate ‘the weak’ from society. According to their ideological manifesto, “the people of the country [Greece] are the REAL and AUTHENTIC GREEKS, they are the authentic continuation of Ancient Greeks, as it has

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<sup>8</sup> Anthony Smith (1979) distinguishes nationalism from fascism. In its mild form, nationalism is “an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity, and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential ‘nation’” (p. 9). According to Smith, fascism, especially in its extreme form of Nazism, discriminates on the basis of race, blood, and biological descent. Within nationalism, discrimination is linked to cultural, rather than racial or biological criteria. For fascism, citizenship is irrelevant. Rather, it glorifies violence and seeks to create a power elite comprised of young people. Drawing from Smith’s distinction, GD falls within the fascist spectrum.

been proven by history, linguistics, folklore, and genetics” (Chrisi Avgi, 2012, para. 13, emphasis original). Their stance against those who do not belong to the ‘Aryan race’ is ideologically based on the existence of inequalities among different races (E. K., 2015; Fragoudaki, 2013; Th. N., 2012). Within this framework, GD holds the position that immigrants are not only culturally, but biologically inferior to Greeks. Drawing from GD’s ideological stance, Georgiadou (2014) distinguishes GD from other anti-immigrant parties, who tend to alter their populist protest discourse according to the social conditions; for example, when the anti-immigrant stance of society decreases, populist parties easily turn to anti-Islamic or anti-European protest. Georgiadou argues that GD, on the other hand, does not transform its discourse, but remains consistent. According to this scholar, this is due to the fact that GD’s stance against immigrants is based on an ethno-racial ideology that advocates the establishment of the state on the basis of the continuation of race, blood, and descent.

Finally, Golden Dawn’s narrative is also founded on the distinct idea that there is a worldwide conspiracy to eliminate the Greek nation. This stance is common among extreme right movements because they consider globalization as the source of people’s suffering, which strategically aims at the elimination of nations (Tsiakalos, 2015). Fragoudaki (2013) sums up GD’s conspiracy theory into three elements: 1) the imposition of economic crisis aims to physically exterminate Greeks through poverty and hunger; 2) globalization driven by Zionists aims to exterminate Greeks because they envy and are afraid of them; and 3) immigration aims to alter the purity of Greek blood. They

argue that racial/biological deterioration will eventually cause the extinction of the Greek nation.<sup>9</sup>

**The rise of Golden Dawn.** As the extreme right in Greece rises, the number of articles and books on this phenomenon has exploded since 2012 (Bournazos, 2014; Christopoulos, 2014; Dragona, 2013; Fragoudaki, 2013; Georgiadou, 2014; Hasapopoulos, 2013; Kostopoulos, 2014; Koustenis, 2014; Tsiakalos, 2015). Although LaOS is part of this discussion, it remains peripheral; most of the literature focuses on the rise of Golden Dawn. This is understandable because, contrary to LaOS, GD has managed to not only increase its political power, but also to solidify it since 2012. Second, unlike LaOS, GD encompasses fascist and neo-Nazi elements in its political practices and ideology. Third, and most importantly, GD is extremely popular with the youth.

In addition to presenting the history and ideological background of GD, most works demonstrate a particular interest in explaining and analyzing the reasons that led to GD's electoral success. Although the lens and the focus of these works differ, there is an overlap regarding the main reasons that contributed to the rise of the far right and, specifically, Golden Dawn. According to the literature, the causes that paved the way for the popularity of far right political parties include the diversification of the country and various other social, political, and ideological factors that are specific to the Greek context.

Starting with the diversification of Greece's population, the literature suggests that one of the main factors that contributed to the rise of the far right is related to the arrival

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<sup>9</sup> Articles related to these positions can be found on the GD website under *Ideological Texts*, (<http://www.xryshaygh.com/enimerosi/ideologika>). For example, Epitidios (2012); Karaikos (2012); Karaikos (2015); Th. N. (2012).

of an unprecedented number of immigrants during the past three decades. For example, during the September 2015 elections and after a summer marked by a refugee/migrant crisis, which the Greek government appeared to be unable to handle, the increase of GD's electoral percentage was significant in the Greek islands of the Eastern Mediterranean that were most affected by the influx of immigrants. In some cases, GD's percentage almost doubled.<sup>10</sup>

Despite these indications, research has shown that there is only a weak correlation between the presence of immigrants within a state and the electoral support of extreme right parties (Mudde, 2007). The case of Greece provides some evidence that supports this position. In effect, although the far right used immigration as a vehicle to gather support in society, the rise of the extreme right took place long after the 1990s, when Greece received its first million immigrants—10% of the country's total population in less than two decades. In fact, until the mid-2000s, Greek society was able to adjust to this new phenomenon without turning to the far right. As such, political parties like GD were basically marginalized (Bournazos, 2014; Fragoudaki, 2013). Minkenberg, (2014) suggests that the rise of the extreme right is associated more closely with insufficient state policies on immigration, as well as other socio-political factors within a country, than with an increased presence of immigrants. This is true for the case of Greece. Evidence shows that it was only after the mid-2000s that social conditions in Greece allowed both LaOS and GD to capitalize on the overconcentration of undocumented immigrants, a phenomenon that exploded after 2008 (Georgiadou, 2014).

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10 Some examples: Kos (Jan.2015: 5,87%-->Sept.2015: 10,15%), Lesbos (Jan.2015: 4,66%-->Sept.2015: 7,78%), Kalymnos (Jan.2015: 3,84%-->Sept.2015: 6,01%), Samos (Jan.2015: 5,54%-->Sept.2015: 7,66%). (Ypourgeo Esoterikon, n.d.)



Similar to Minkenberg's (2014) argument, Anna Fragoudaki (2013) suggests that negative stances against immigrants within Greek society were triggered by two phenomena: the state's inability to manage immigration and the 2009 Greek economic crisis. She argues that the governing parties were unsuccessful in enforcing effective immigration policies in order to manage the unprecedented number of immigrants. Given these circumstances, when the Greek economic crisis arose, the negative reactions against immigrants increased. The financial destabilization of the country shrank the national economy with subsequent consequences: the implementation of austerity measures after the signing of three bailout packages led to a reduction of salaries, high unemployment rates, and the increase of poverty (Fragoudaki, 2013). The decrease of resources created more resistance against the presence of immigrants. From a psycho-sociological perspective, high rates of unemployment created feelings of uncertainty, anger, social humiliation, and desperation (Dragona, 2013). In the consciousness of some Greek nationals, the immigrants were those who worked for low wages and stole jobs from citizens. In effect, people turned against the immediate and visible 'other,' the immigrant. This is an important aspect regarding the relationship between the rise of the far right and immigration because, given the circumstances, it could be argued that it was not the far right that initiated negative sentiments against immigration. Rather, the political parties took advantage of society's reactions against immigration, which surfaced with the advent of the economic crisis.

Regarding the financial instability of the country and its relation to the popularity of the extreme right, Jackman and Volpert (1996) confirm that an unhealthy economy coupled with high rates of unemployment provide a favorable environment for the rise of

these political movements. This is backed by the historical rise of fascists and Nazis in Europe during the interwar period, when the economic boom of the 1920s was followed by the Great Depression (Nedelcu, 2012). In regards to Greece, the literature presents a strong connection between the Greek debt crisis and the rise of the extreme right (Fragoudaki, 2013; Georgiadou, 2014). In fact, when small economies, such as Greece, face the negative consequences of globalization, like the dominance of the market and liberal political economies, evidence shows that this may leave nation-states feeling less independent and less in control of their fate. Under these circumstances, citizens may feel insecure and thus become susceptible to ideologies that support traditional values, the protection of ethnic homogeneity, and the need for national sovereignty and self-determination (Fragoudaki, 2013). In effect, this partially explains the rise of far right ideologies when the Greek financial crisis occurred.

On a political level, the literature suggests that the far right may have benefited also from the general crisis of the Greek political/parliamentary system. At the advent of the economic crisis, the two political parties that ruled the country during the political changeover—Metapolitefsi<sup>11</sup>—New Democracy, and PASOK (Panellinio Socialistiko Kinima = Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement)—were challenged on their unsuccessful governance. After a number of economic and political scandals, the legitimacy of the governing political parties was disputed, as was the legitimacy of the overall parliamentary system. As a result, part of the population expressed its dissatisfaction, indignation, and lack of confidence in the political elites by voting for political parties on the far right (Bournazos, 2014; Fragoudaki, 2013; Hasapopoulos, 2013).

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<sup>11</sup> Political changeover (Metapolitefsi) in Greece is defined as the period after the fall of the seven-year military dictatorship in 1974 until the present.

Under these circumstances and in contrast to LaOS, which lost its power after 2012, Golden Dawn's strong opposition to the Troika-imposed bailout memorandums and to the subsequent austerity policies solidified its popularity amongst part of society. Through organized soup kitchens and blood donations 'only for Greeks,' and through its paramilitary gangs claiming to police Athens' neighborhoods from 'the dangerous immigrants,'<sup>12</sup> Golden Dawn aimed to demonstrate its solidarity with society and sought to challenge the ability of the state to perform its most basic functions (Nedelcu, 2012). Hence, for some citizens, who felt angry due to the overall social, political, and economic situation, a vote for Golden Dawn may be interpreted in the literature as a form of punishment, a protest-vote, against the whole political system that led to the crisis. It is also a vote against the state that left some citizens feeling helpless and unsupported (Bournazos, 2014; Dragona, 2013; Fragoudaki, 2013; Hasapopoulos, 2013; Koustenis, 2014).

These social and political factors explain the rise of far right ideologies, but only partially. Fragoudaki (2013) contends that the reason a growing part of Greek society tolerated and adopted racist, exclusionary, and xenophobic attitudes is attributed primarily to the ideological crisis found within the country. Fragoudaki grounds her position on the findings of a large scale and widely cited study that was conducted in 1995, which highlights the role of schooling and history education in fostering nationalistic ideologies. It is important to summarize the findings of this research project because it has direct bearing on Greek education and on my study.

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<sup>12</sup> One such example is the incident of 2008 at the city-center, Ag. Panteleimonas, when the GD organized a venture to remove all foreign nationals from the area (Kostopoulos, 2014).

Fragoudaki and Dragona's (1997) interdisciplinary research project studied nationalism in the framework of education at a time when far right political parties were not as prevalent in Greek society as they are today. The study analyzed Greek history, geography, and modern literature textbooks, and conducted interviews with Greek educators regarding their understandings of the 'self' and the 'other.'

Within this study, Fragoudaki's (1997) focus on history textbooks brought forth three elements, which she argues are dominant within the official historical narrative: The superiority of the European civilization over non-European nations, the supremacy of the ancient Greek past, and the uninterrupted continuation of the Greek nation from the ancient past to present. Fragoudaki reports that the implications of this narrative are multiple and fundamental to the cultivation of racism and xenophobia within society. First and foremost, she argues that by promoting the idea that anything non-European is inferior, history textbooks foster a Eurocentric stereotype that is racist. In turn, and in an attempt to reject any type of inferiority inherent in Greek identity, the Greek historical narratives omit any external, non-European influences that may have occurred in the past or in the present. Efi Avdela (2000), building on the findings of this research notes:

[Greek] history textbooks document resistance to these threats, highlighting the heroic deeds and patriotism of the country's forefathers, stressing cultural continuity, and making national homogeneity a precondition for preserving the nation. Selective memory eliminates references to ethnic, cultural, and religious differences that have existed within the 'national body' during various historical periods, as well as all the repressive actions taken. Social differences and conflicts

are equally absent; consequently there is no reference to the opposing interests of different social groups or the conflicts among them over time. (p. 248)

According to Avdela, this logic resulted in a societal discourse that was nationalistic, insisted on the purity of the nation, and was hostile towards anything ‘foreign.’ If the unaltered preservation of the ancient Greek nation is the ultimate virtue, Fragoudaki (1997) argues that this creates a notion in the consciousness of people that external influences threaten the nation with extinction. Thaleia Dragona’s (1997) analysis of these findings from a socio-psychological perspective shows that these understandings of Europe, the Greek nation, and the ‘other’ have created a Greek identity that is fragile, insecure, and constantly feeling under threat. Therefore, in an attempt to protect itself against any elements of the past or the present that could degrade it, the Greek identity becomes xenophobic. It is within this framework that Fragoudaki (2013) argues that Greek society, influenced by the Eurocentric and ethnocentric narrative, was unable to resist the spread of far right, xenophobic ideologies.

The aforementioned research project was conducted twenty years ago, in a very different context from today. Twenty years later, the political and social situation has evolved and GD has added new elements to the public discourse regarding understandings of identity and the ‘other.’

### **Turning to Education**

Education, specifically history education in Greece, has been the center of attention and criticism for many who are attempting to unpack the reasons that led to the rise of the far right. Highly nation-centered history curricula and textbook content, and the need to

revise and transform them, seem to be pertinent issues among those who consider the rise of the extreme right a problem in Greek society (Tsiakalos, 2015; Thanasekas, 2014).

As a teacher and a researcher, I regard the examination of education, specifically history education, as necessary, but also urgent. Golden Dawn is a political party that overtly supports undemocratic principles. This extreme right party challenges the very principle of democracy, rejects equality and basic human rights, and condemns the Greek constitution and its governing bodies and institutions (Dragona, 2013). Subsequently, it assumes the role of the castigator of all immigrants, leftists, gays, the licentious, the disabled and the weak, the ‘traitor’ politicians, and the ‘foreigners who aim to destroy Greece’ (Bournazos, 2014).

Drawing from Couture and Nielsen’s (2005) distinction regarding various forms of nationalism—the tolerant and the liberal on one hand and the more extreme, non-liberal forms of nationalism on the other—GD falls within the latter category. Even in their less virulent forms, the two scholars point out that nationalists who fall under the extreme forms of nationalism trace national origin to ethnic origin and race, and tend to be xenophobic, exclusivists, and racists. In some extreme cases, when the opportunity is at hand, they may engage in genocide and ethnic cleansing. Couture and Nielsen argue that when membership in a nation is marked by descent, this type of ethnic nationalism is incompatible with a diverse and multicultural society and, as they put it by quoting Engels, is incompatible with just plain human decency. In this study, I argue that education can and should play a key role in addressing exclusionary positions within society. Additionally, I regard it as pivotal that educational research supports schooling’s

efforts in combating extremism, by suggesting ways to improve educational theory and practice.

Second, and most importantly, I regard it as necessary to focus on education, because GD is especially popular among the youth. As voters, those between the ages of 18-34 are the most visible, but their popularity is also strong among school students. At the same time, their voters tend to be, on average, among the less educated in comparison to voters of other parties (Georgiadou, 2014; Koustenis, 2014).

Third, as mentioned previously, the financial destabilization of Greece has created feelings of uncertainty, anger, resentment, and desperation (Dragona, 2013). Within this context of general disappointment, the public sphere is increasingly overrun by an accusative discourse that targets the ‘other’: the political other, the professional other, the national other, the other that holds a different opinion, and so forth. Although the focus point is the xenophobic attitude of the far right ideology, it is worth noting that voices insisting on exclusionary divisions—‘us’ versus ‘them’—have become widespread across the public sphere. It is commonplace to hear politicians across all political parties using expressions like patriots and traitors, patriotic duty, the Greeks and their glorious ancient past, the loss of national sovereignty, Germanotsoliades,<sup>13</sup> the European coup d’état, Nazi Germany attempting to destroy and enslave Greece, and so on. As such, discriminatory language that projects xenophobic attitudes is no longer limited to the far right political parties.

Furthermore, on a more theoretical level, the necessity of turning to history education is justified in how the study of the past is considered one of the core subjects

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<sup>13</sup> Security Battalions: Greek collaborationist military groups, formed in 1943 during the German occupation of Greece in order to support the German occupation troops.

that embodies the most fundamental messages that each state transmits to its young citizens (Nash, Crabtree, & Dunn, 1997). On one hand, history education takes part in the process of creating a nation, of creating a population with a national identity. According to Smith (2001), through this process a population is taught who they are, where they come from, and where they are going. On the other hand, history education is also the platform where students have an opportunity to develop awareness and understanding of ‘others,’ of other histories and cultures (Papoulia-Tzelepi & Spinthourakis, 2007).

Admittedly, learning about one’s nation and learning about the world can be a point of tension and, sometimes, they can be mutually exclusive categories. However, if we agree with the stance that education has the capacity to liberate and combat inequity and discrimination in today’s conflict-ridden world (Ghosh, 2011), then there are ways to work through this tension. The literature suggests that the key lies in providing an education that uses methods of learning that encourage the development of critical thinking, which foster a balance between representations of the ‘self’ and the ‘other,’ and that present an inclusive history from multiple perspectives (Maiztegui Onate & Cava Mesa, 2007; Papoulia-Tzelepi & Spinthourakis, 2007; Stradling, 2001). Overall, it is not a matter of teaching either content or skills, but rather of helping students to accumulate a body of historical knowledge, while acquiring a critical attitude towards historical facts and applying the thinking processes essential to historical interpretation (Nash et al., 1997).

In light of the above, my project focuses on Greek history textbooks and aims to unpack the tensions between learning for content and learning to acquire critical thinking



skills, between nation-centered and world history, and between the history of the Western and non-Western world.

During my initial exploration of this project, I began by examining several questions that are related to schooling and to history education in Greece: Does schooling provide students with the skills to deal with today's conflicting stories and diverse societies? How have students residing in Greece been trained to approach knowledge? In terms of content, how are students residing in Greece educated about the world? What do they learn about the history and culture of others and which others? These concerns eventually led to the formulation of the present research project and provide the ground that both supports and ignites my research inquiries.

### **Objectives and Description of the Study**

Marc Ferro (1984), in the preface of his book, *The Use and Abuse of History*, argues that the ideas we have of others and of ourselves are shaped by the history we are taught during our childhood. School history constructs common past and common myths of origin that, together with language and territory, are considered the distinguishing features of any national identity (Avdela, 2000). Considering the power of these stories in formulating identity and our perception of 'others,' in this study, I investigate the written sources of school history, namely history textbooks.

Drawing from a critical approach to diversity framework, the principles of a disciplinary approach to history and historical thinking, and Ross Dunn's (2000) models of world history, I analyze and compare the 1980 Greek history textbooks (GHT) of

modern history (grades six, nine, and twelve) with the GHT used in 2015<sup>14</sup> (grades six, nine, and twelve), in order to answer the following research questions:

- 1) How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in terms of their epistemological orientation?
- 2) How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in terms of their thematic focus?
- 3) How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in the way they narrate histories of non-Western peoples?

In my first question, I look at the two sets of textbooks<sup>15</sup> and compare their epistemological orientation by examining their approach to knowledge; that is, whether they follow a traditional, collective approach to history or a more contemporary, disciplinary approach. By comparing these textbooks, I explore if and how GHT's epistemological orientation has changed from 1980 to 2015. In order to answer this research question, I examine the textbooks' introductions and the inclusion of questions and historical sources throughout the textbooks.

With my second research question, I investigate the textbooks' introductions and contents in order to examine whether they demonstrate a nation-centered or a world-centered focus, and if this focus has changed. I explore whether the textbooks' stories reflect the diversity of the present Greek society and to what extent the stories include or exclude the world beyond Greece and Europe.

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<sup>14</sup> Online versions of the 2015 Greek history textbooks can be found here: <http://ebooks.edu.gr/new/allcourses.php>.

<sup>15</sup> A list of the study's textbooks: APPENDIX I.

Finally, in my third question, I examine the narratives that refer to non-Western peoples and I explore how the two sets of textbooks differ in presenting these peoples' voices and histories.

In search of an inclusive term to describe the focus of my third research question, which examines historical narratives beyond Greek, European, and North American history, I chose the term 'non-Western.' A term commonly used to denote the part of the world that is *not* the focus of my study is 'the West,' defined in the Oxford English as: "The Western part of the world, esp. Europe (later also North America) as distinguished from Asia; the culture and civilization of these regions. From the later 20th century sometimes used of the developed world as distinguished from the Third World, regardless of geographical location" (West, n.d.). In juxtaposition with the West, I define the focus of my research as non-Western history. Admittedly, the binary division, Western/non-Western produces several tensions.

Within the literature, there is extensive discussion regarding the division of parts of the world into clusters and the subsequent imposition of inclusive terms on these groupings (Chakrabarty, 2000; Huntington, 1996; Naff, 1985; Said, 1979; Tiwari, 1964). A well-known, but highly criticized approach is Samuel Huntington's (1996) division of the world into civilizations: The Western, Latin American, African, Islamic, Sinic, Hindu, Orthodox, Buddhist, and Japanese (p. 27). Huntington situates the civilizational clashes particularly between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Opponents of his work contend that his 'Clash of Civilization' argument generalizes and oversimplifies cultures, ethnicities, and civilizations. Severely criticized by many for implying that cultures are monolithic and denying the interdependence and

interaction of cultures, scholars argue that Huntington's 'The Rest' belonging to all but the Western civilization, places everyone else of a different color, religion, and culture into one big cluster and implies fixed categorizations. Moreover, by focusing on the West versus 'The Rest' in terms of civilizational identities, and particularly by identifying the clash between Islamic and non-Islamic civilizations, Huntington presents Islamic civilization and the Muslim world as the most potent threat to the West (Sajjad, 2013). Thinkers such as Edward Said saw Huntington's thesis as "invidious racism ... directed against Arabs and Muslims" (Said, 2004, p. 293). Finally, many scholars consider Samuel Huntington's central thesis that the fundamental source of conflict in the modern world is people's cultural and religious identities as false because it ignores that these conflicts are mainly ideological or economic in nature (Cogen, 2005).

In reviewing the textbooks of my study, my findings show that they follow a similar approach to Huntington: the textbooks divide the world into the West and the rest of the world. The West is considered one entity, projected as being one homogenous group, having one uniform culture, and constituting one civilization. The 'Rest' of the world is juxtaposed with the West and measured to Western standards.

One of the central problems of using such blanket terms and clustering large parts of the world into natural-seeming groupings is that these constructions are arbitrary and ignore the diversity within the groups they attempt to define (Tiwari, 1964). Steven Vertovec (2007) pushes this critique further, by suggesting that modern societies do not simply display diversity, but they rather demonstrate, what he terms, super-diversity. Employing the example of the UK, Vertovec draws on a range of data sources and shows how diverse the population is with reference to net inflows, countries of origin,

languages, religions, migration channels and immigration statuses, gender, age, space/place, and so forth. Hence, the concept of super-diversity is coined to underline the complexity and increased diversity not only between a nation and immigrant and ethnic minority groups, but also within them (Meissner and Vertovec, 2015).

In effect, slavery, colonization, and globalization have significantly changed the world we live in. The assumption that the West is European and ‘white’ does not hold true. Undergoing intense migration waves during the past century, the West does not constitute one homogenous culture, but is rather super-diverse in terms of ethnicities, religions, social and economic integration, and so forth. Similarly, the world beyond the West is also complex and multi-layered. Hence, using blanket terms to group large parts of the world together and assuming that they constitute one ‘homogenous whole’ is highly problematic.

In my work, choosing one term to lump together peoples that are different in many ways was a great challenge. The adoption of one blanket term was in contrast to my stance that peoples are diverse and deserve to be recognized as such. Being aware of the many shortcomings of simplified divisions of the world, I finally decided to employ the division West/non-West. The main reason I made this decision is because this is the terminology used within the textbooks of the study. As previously noted, the textbooks use the term West similarly to Huntington (1996): “The West [...] includes Europe, North America, plus other settler countries such as Australia and New Zealand” (p. 46). Wanting to focus my study on the history of peoples beyond Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand, I use the term ‘non-West’ to denote the remaining areas of the world. Acknowledging the tensions of this division, in my work, I highlight its

limitations and by using the term peoples in plural, I recognize the existence of diversity within these two clusters. Finally, within the West, I treat indigenous history and the history of the victims of the European slave trade as distinct from the Western historical narrative.

Regarding the analysis of my findings, my study firstly draws from the theoretical framework of the critical approach to diversity (CAD). This educational approach informs my work in regards to key concepts, such as understandings and representations of the ‘other,’ voice, identity, difference, and critical thinking. The CAD also informs my theoretical stance in terms of school history, which in turn draws from the disciplinary approach to history, Stéphane Lévesque’s (2008) principles of historical thinking, and from Ross Dunn’s (2000) models of world history. The end goal of this study is to examine how my findings relate to today’s Greek multicultural context.

In terms of methodology, I began this project intending to use critical discourse analysis. Although this tradition has become increasingly popular in the field of textbook research, I chose narrative analysis for this particular project because I am concerned specifically with the writing of the textbooks and, therefore, with the narrative itself. Critical discourse analysis, especially from a Foucauldian (2009) perspective, is concerned with the external, socio/political conditions that gave rise to one type of discourse rather than another. Although critical discourse analysis includes a wide range of approaches<sup>16</sup>, which do examine the text, its interest is geared towards the processes and the contexts that produce them rather than the narrative that is incorporated within the textbook. This mode of investigation has its value and serves the purpose of other types of research, but since I am interested in the text itself, I chose to use narrative

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<sup>16</sup> Fairclough (1992, 1995); Gee (2011 a&b); Laclau and Mouffe (1985).

analysis, a methodology for interpreting texts that have a storied form. Furthermore, drawing from my professional experience as a schoolteacher when I teach history, I see it as telling a story, as a process that constructs a narrative. When I read a textbook, I see stories that are told using elements like text, illustrations, questions, and so on. Narrative analysis, as a methodology, allows me to examine all these elements as a whole and analyze how the textbooks assemble and sequence events, and how they use visual images and other elements in order to communicate specific ideas and positions to create a story.

### **Justification of the Study**

There is extended literature about history education in Greece highlighting the urgency to critically review, reform, and revise the curricula, teaching material, teacher training, and teaching methods within the classroom. This urgency is connected to the recognition that Greece is becoming increasingly diverse and that schools need to adjust to this reality in order to best serve its students and society (Fragoudaki, 2013; Kesidou, 2007; Leontsinis, 2007; Sakka, 2006; Vouri, 2006). My study draws from this call for educational revisions and investigates the state-administrated teaching materials: Greek history textbooks.

I chose to examine history textbooks for several reasons. In the words of Peter Stearn (1998), history is an important subject for good citizenship; it “encourages habits of mind that are vital for responsible public behavior, whether as a national or community leader, an informed voter, a petitioner, or a simple observer” (para.10). This is, of course, true when history is used to cultivate critical and creative thinking and not as a tool to indoctrinate and impose linear, monolithic, and absolute interpretations of the past.

Furthermore, regarding the object of my investigation, school textbooks constitute a primary source to study and understand the process of knowledge legitimation at school (Carretero & Bermúdez, 2011), a process that Apple and Christian-Smith (1991) contend is “the result of complex power relations and struggles among identifiable class, race, gender/sex, and religious groups” (p. 2). Textbooks represent a codified version of what is ‘worth knowing’ and what is considered ‘right and wrong.’ These two scholars argue that the question of ‘whose knowledge is worth knowing’ is something that is constantly negotiated between various cultural, economic, and political communities within a state. As such, textbooks “signify—through their content and form—particular constructions of reality, particular ways of selecting and organizing that vast universe of possible knowledge” (Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991, pp. 3-4). Repoussi and Tutiaux-Guillon (2010) describe history textbooks as national instruments that perpetuate cultures and ideologies, and that constitute a type of autobiography for nation-states. Essentially, history textbooks create reference points in time and space and influence the way we see ‘others’ and ourselves. They represent a body of knowledge that the younger generation is expected to learn.

In history education, textbooks constitute the most widely used resource for teaching and learning, despite the development of new media and educational technologies. This means that they not only represent a large percentage of written knowledge that students are exposed to during their schooling, but also the material that teachers rely mostly on for their teaching. In the past it has been documented that the use of a textbook constitutes as much as 90% of instructional time (Garcia, Powell, & Sanchez, 1991). Similarly, recent studies conducted in Greece reveal that history teachers



rely heavily on textbooks to organize both the content and the structure of their teaching (Karatzioula, 2013; Xochelis, 2000). Moreover, empirical surveys in various countries have shown that students regard textbooks as the trustworthiest authority, even over the teacher (Pingel, 2010). Additionally, since students and teachers in Greece can choose from only one available textbook—the one that is officially approved and distributed by the Greek Ministry of Education—history textbooks are a valuable source of information regarding official understandings of the purpose of history and representation of the ‘self’ and ‘others.’ Considering all this, it is no surprise that history textbooks are the primary objects of research on history education.

Although my goal is to investigate history textbooks in the context of the current sociopolitical situation in Greece, I chose not to focus solely on the currently used textbooks of modern history. This decision is driven by my belief that a comparative approach allows me to acquire a deeper understanding of current GHT. By investigating the 2015 GHT in comparison to another time period, 1980, I aim to provide an analysis and a critique that is not in a vacuum, but is rather grounded in relation to past versions of Greek history textbooks. Although I hold a critical stance when I interrogate the various aspects of my data, the purpose of my dissertation is not to illuminate only the weaknesses of these textbooks, something that past research has tended to do. On the contrary, by examining the 2015 GHT in reference to past versions, I aim to also present the positive developments that have occurred from 1980 until now and to highlight the aspects that are in tune with contemporary approaches to history.

Given the fact that I could have chosen any time period to compare with today’s GHT, I chose the three textbooks that were used in 1980 for several reasons. Although all

three textbooks were used during a time period that extended before and after 1980, I chose them because they were in use during all three grades in this time period, and because I needed a specific reference point in order to conduct a comparison. The sixth grade history textbook was used from 1979-1989, the ninth grade was used from 1975-1984 and the twelfth grade from 1923-1982 (with several revisions in between).

Additionally, 1980 and the years shortly before comprise an important historical period for Greece. The years following the fall of the seven-year military coup in 1974 until today—defined as the Third Hellenic Republic—constitute a discrete period in the history of the Modern Greek State. After a fair amount of political instability during most of the twentieth century—coup d'états, two world wars, a civil war, and monarchy—a new Constitution in 1975 declared Greece a presidential parliamentary republic and is still in force to date. In my study, I wanted to compare textbooks that were used during a politically similar environment, of parliamentary governance, situated within the Third Hellenic Republic.

The years around 1980 are also an interesting time period because they precede the year that Greece became a full member of the European Union (EU), in 1981. Greece's EU membership is a defining moment of Modern Greece in terms of politics, economics, and culture. The years prior to Greece's EU membership mark an intense period of preparations to become a full member. Therefore, I believe that textbooks from the years immediately prior to the country's entry into the EU provide an interesting comparison with the textbooks that are now in use. I am able to explore how history textbooks narrated the story of the modern world in preparation for joining the EU, and if or how this has changed after Greece's thirty-five year membership.

Finally, 1980 was a time when Greece was still not experiencing an unprecedented influx of immigrants. In fact, as previously mentioned, the intensification of immigration into Greece started in the late 1980s, peaked in the 1990s, and continues to date. During the early 1980s, Greece was a fairly homogeneous country, at least in the consciousness of its nationals, and incoming immigration was not a pertinent issue. Therefore, I chose GHT from 1980 because this period provides an interesting contrast to the current Greek context. I will be able to see if and how textbooks have changed after the arrival of the foreign nationals currently residing in Greece.

In terms of the historical time period, I chose to examine textbooks of modern history because, as a number of leading European historians have observed, an effective way to help students comprehend the complexities of their present-day lives is by studying and reflecting on the broader forces that have shaped the world during the past century (Stradling, 2001). Furthermore, I decided to look at textbooks on modern world history from all the school levels that teach the subject—rather than choosing one or two levels—because I want to obtain an understanding of how current and 1980 textbooks deal with issues of modern history at all school levels. In the case of Greece, the history curriculum is structured in a spiral model, where the intention is for the topics to be revisited with increasing depth at each school level. For example, ancient history, the Roman and Byzantine Empires, and modern history are all taught at elementary, junior high, and high school levels. Despite this intention, it is worth mentioning that critics have pointed to the weaknesses inherent in this type of curriculum, which they view as unsuccessful in presenting each topic with increasing depth at each higher school level (Mavroskoufis, 2008).

## **Significance of the Study and Contribution to the Literature**

The significance of the research lies in the fact that it investigates modern history narratives within the current socio-political context, namely the increased multiculturalism in Greece and the rise of far right political parties. Considering that the popularity of the far right is fairly recent, my study provides an analysis based on a recent social and political situation and, therefore, presents a different outlook from past research on Greek history textbooks.

The textbooks that I study here have already been the focus of some research. However, there have been no studies specifically comparing the two sets of textbooks that I am investigating in this research project: the 2015 textbooks and the equivalent textbooks used in 1980. Furthermore, my study uses textbooks from more than three distinct school grades. Most studies conducted on Greek history textbooks focus solely on contemporary editions or on textbooks from one grade level throughout a period of several years.<sup>17</sup> Although there have been studies that examine textbooks from the compulsory school years (up to grade nine), it is rare that grades six, nine, and twelve are investigated in a combined manner. Additionally, by comparing the textbooks of the two time periods, my critique of the current textbooks is not presented in a vacuum, but is rather grounded on the evolution of the books during the past thirty-five years.

In terms of the focus of my study, it varies from past research because I analyze two aspects of the textbooks, the didactics and the historical content. Following Pingel's (2010) definition, didactic analysis investigates the methodological approach to the topic presented and explores the pedagogy within the textbook. In other words, the analysis of

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<sup>17</sup> Examples: Karageorgou-Kourtzi (2004): Grade nine history textbooks 1980-2000. Vasileiou (2009): Grade six history textbooks of 1979, 1997, 2007.

didactics explores the textbooks' approach to knowledge and the skills that they promote, what I term in my study the epistemological orientation. Historical content analysis, on the other hand, examines the narrative itself: what the text tells us, whether it is in accordance with academic research, and whether it sufficiently covers the topic in question.

In terms of the content, I chose to focus on how non-Western peoples are presented within the textbooks for two reasons: first, research on GHT has not focused extensively on non-Western narratives. Rather, most studies on GHT tend to examine three categories of historical issues: a) history of the Greek nation and minorities within the country;<sup>18</sup> b) neighboring 'others,' especially Turkey and Balkan countries;<sup>19</sup> and c) European related historical events.<sup>20</sup> In my study, I do not focus on content related to Greek history and I move away from narratives regarding neighboring countries and Europe. Instead, I analyze the narratives of non-Western peoples. Second, at present, Greece is not a country that deals only with neighboring or European peoples; it is a country that is at the crossroads of three continents and in close proximity to conflict zones, both at its East and South borders. At the time I am writing this dissertation, each day hundreds of refugees are arriving to the country from conflict zones, such as Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan (Migrant crisis, 2015). All this, in addition to the sociopolitical situation described earlier in this chapter, makes it necessary for textbook research to focus on

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<sup>18</sup> For examples of GHT studies on historical content related to Greece and its minorities, see Glyptis (2007); Kapsomanis (2004); Karakatsani (2002); Kokkinos, Kimourtzis, Gatsiotis, Theodorakakou, & Kourgiantakis, (2009b); Konstantinidou (2000); Kontova (2014) Koulouri (1988); Theodorou (2003); Zervas (2012).

<sup>19</sup> For examples of GHT studies on historical content related to Turkey and Balkan countries, see Ahlis (1983); Antoniou & Soysal (2005); Athanasopoulou (2008); Flouris & Kaloyiannaki-Hourdaki (1996); Millas (2001); Papoulia-Tzelepi & Spinthourakis (2007).

<sup>20</sup> For examples of GHT studies on historical content related to Europe, see Flouris (1995); Kokkinos (2015); Kokkinos Vlahou, Sakka, Kouneli, Kostoglou, & Papadopoulos (2007); Kokkinos G. Gatsiotis, & Lemonidou (2012a).

narratives outside the Greek nation and its neighbors. There is a need to investigate how textbooks depict the diverse groups of peoples, who are currently residing in Greece and in the EU, and to examine the GHT textbooks' openness and inclusion of the world.

One study that approached non-Western history was presented at a conference by Kokkinos, Kimourtzis, Palikidis, Lemonidou, Gatsiotis, & Papageorgiou (2012b). These scholars looked at issues of colonization and decolonization within Greek history textbooks from 1939-2012. Their aim was to detect if and how these concepts were linked to issues of current reality, such as migration, racism, cultural and religious differences, racial inequality, and exploitation of the Third World. They concluded that the textbooks do not use history as an opportunity to process past traumas and promote the multi-dimensional influences between people and cultures. My study is linked to this topic, but is also distinct as I do not focus solely on colonization and decolonization, but rather on all the historical issues that refer to non-Western peoples. By drawing from a critical approach to diversity and Ross Dunn's (2000) models of world history, I focus on the existence of non-Western peoples' voice juxtaposed with that of dominant groups. I also compare the 2015 textbooks with those used in 1980—the former period's six grade and the latter period's six and twelve grade textbooks are not included in the study by Kokkinos' et al. (2012b).

Another aspect of my study is the comparison of the textbooks' thematic focus and how it has changed over time, from 1980 to 2015. Linked to this inquiry, Kokkinos, Gatsiotis, Sakka, and Kourgiantakis (2009a) examined the teaching hours that are devoted to topics related to world history in the textbooks of the 2005-2006 school year. Their findings showed that the amount of hours devoted to world history are minimal and

absent in certain school grades. According to these scholars, the focus of history is nation-centered. Since the 2015 textbooks of my project were first published in 2007 and 2012, my study further develops the issue of world history and attempts to examine the inclusion of the world in the textbooks that followed the 2005-2006 school year. Additionally, my study compares the thematic focus of the 2015 GHT to those used in 1980 and, therefore, gives a comparative aspect to the critique of the 2015 GHT. Finally, Kokkinos et al.'s (2009a) study did not regard the 'discovery' of America as part of World history, but grouped it under Western history because, as they mention, the reference to the indigenous is very limited. In contrast, my study focuses on this historical topic, as I regard the absence of references to the indigenous peoples very important when analyzing non-Western history in the textbooks.

In terms of the textbooks' epistemological orientation, several studies<sup>21</sup> have examined the textbooks' approach to knowledge and the skills they promote. Usually this is not done in combination with historical content. In my study, I not only investigate if the textbooks' content reflects the country's multicultural reality, but also the extent to which textbooks promote an attitude that is critical to knowledge and conducive to accepting diversity.

### **My Position within the Research**

Within this thesis, I often make use of the first person singular form 'I.' This is intentional and indicative of my position in the research. As I explain in chapter three, my work falls within a constructivist framework. According to this line of thought, knowledge is not neutral, but subjective. It is "culturally and historically contingent,

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<sup>21</sup> For examples of GHT studies on the GHT's didactics, see Aggeli (2012); Palikidis (2007); Vazoura (2014); Vrettos (1994).

laden with moral and political values, and serving certain interests” (Howe, 1998, p. 14). Drawing from this perspective, I regard historical texts as constructions, highly influenced by the beliefs, the identity, and the historical moment of the historian and overall society. Similarly, I also believe that every scholarly work is embedded within a certain amount of subjectivity: the choice of topic, the questions, and the course of work is always a reflection of the identity of the researcher. In this respect, this study is accompanied and informed overall by my personal viewpoints, emotions, and concerns, as well as my professional identity.

### **Myself, as a Schoolteacher**

In terms of my professional background, I am a schoolteacher with fifteen years of teaching experience. I have taught in primary schools in Greece and in Greek community schools in Chicago and Montreal, teaching elementary and high school students of Greek descent. Among the various subjects I have taught, history is the one that has drawn my attention most. My interest in history education was instigated by the students’ reactions to this subject, their opposing views, the textbooks’ historical content, but also by how I, as their teacher, would manage the various classroom debates and the conflicting versions of the past. Within these multicultural contexts—the Greek and the North American—I have often questioned how I can best organize my history lessons so that they would take into consideration the diversity of the students’ experiences and the complexities of historical knowledge. Additionally, after the increasing popularity of the extreme right in Greece and the use of history in their political discourse, my questions became more prevalent.



In investigating educational approaches suitable for a multicultural context, I found myself situated within, what I will term in my theoretical framework in chapter two, the critical approach to diversity. Moreover, in my attempt to link this educational approach to history education, I found that the disciplinary approach to history and the principles of historical thinking were among the various frameworks found in the literature that were able to answer some of my questions as a schoolteacher teaching history. This attempt to address certain aspects of my professional inquiries related to the teaching of history eventually shaped my research questions and my current project.

My classroom experiences do not constitute part of my data or my analysis. However, my research questions, the formation of my theoretical framework, and my position within the educational theories are influenced by my teaching experience. Following a constructivist line of thought, which states that people construct meanings and each of these constructions represents a particular point of view, when I navigate through the theoretical frameworks, I critique and situate myself both as a researcher but also as an education practitioner.

### **Structure of the Thesis**

The thesis is organized in six chapters.

The first chapter, the present one, constitutes the introduction to the thesis. I give an account of the Greek context, in terms of the sociopolitical situation, namely the rise of far right ideologies in order to explain why I conducted this project. After I present my three main research questions, I describe the process and explain the choices I made in regards to my methodology and my sources of data. Finally, I situate my study within the literature and I explain its significance.

In chapter two I discuss my theoretical framework regarding two broader issues: a) educational approaches to diversity and b) history education. After giving a brief account of the various approaches to diversity, I focus on the critical approach to diversity (CAD) and explain how it relates to my research. I then make the link between CAD and history education by discussing the following specific issues: the thematic focus of history, Ross Dunn's (2000) models of world history, the nature of historical knowledge, and the concept of historical thinking.

In the third chapter, I detail my methodological framework. Initially, I give an overview of qualitative research as a mode of investigation and I situate the study and myself within constructivism. To follow, I give a review of narrative research and discuss its use in the framework of my study. Finally, I provide a detailed account of the research process; i.e., the methods of data collection and analysis, the sources, and the various research choices I made throughout the study.

Chapter four includes the first part of the analysis of my sources of data, the history textbooks. In this chapter, I give an overview of textbook production in Greece. I also present the study's textbooks and I address the first two research questions of my study: 1) How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in terms of their epistemological orientation? and 2) How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in terms of their thematic focus? For the first question, I examine the extent to which the textbooks follow a traditional collective memory approach versus a disciplinary approach to history. For the second question, I examine the textbooks' adherence to a nation-centered/Eurocentric versus world thematic focus.

In chapter five, I address the third research question of my study: 3) How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in the way they narrate histories of non-Western peoples? For each grade, I discuss the various historical events separately. Specifically, I describe how each textbook of the same grade level treats each historical event. Following the description, I analyze and compare how the two textbooks of the same grade level present the same topic.

In the sixth and final chapter of this thesis, I bring together the findings of my study. I summarize the answers to my research questions and discuss the implications of the study's findings for the current Greek context. Finally, I make suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

If you want to destroy something in this life, be it acne, a blemish or the human soul, all you need to do is to surround it with thick walls. It will dry up inside. [...] We're born into a certain family, nation, class. But if we have no connection whatsoever with the worlds beyond the one we take for granted, then we too run the risk of drying up inside. Our imagination might shrink; our hearts might dwindle, and our humanness might wither if we stay for too long inside our cultural cocoons. (Shafak, 2010).

In her 2010 talk, Elif Shafak, a fiction novelist of Turkish origin, describes the tendency humans have to form clusters based on similarities. However, according to an Eastern tradition that she shares in her talk, it is not healthy for human beings to spend too much time staring at their own reflections. As she skillfully argues, living with like-minded people is problematic, not only because we stay confined in our cultural 'ghettos' and form stereotypes about other people, but because our thinking may be impoverished and our ability to imagine and create may be hindered. Shafak and others, who adopt this viewpoint, regard diversity and difference as a creative force that opens up the minds and hearts of people. Contrary to this stance, some groups of people, such as those who align themselves with ideologies of the extreme right, oppose the very idea of diversity within their communities and countries. Anything different is considered a threat and is often perceived as something to be eliminated or repressed.

On September 2015, in an interview discussing the refugee crisis, the EU's foreign policy chief, Federica Mogherini, touched upon the issue of diversity. By citing the

European Union Treaty (2012), she underlined that diversity is at the core of European values: “Diversity is a value, it is not a threat.” Commenting on the racist statements and actions by certain member-states’ political actors, such as Hungary (Hungarian PM, 2015; Kingsley, 2015), Mogherini stressed that, “Europe was built on the idea of coming together, of overcoming differences [...] The EU was built out of this: Respect of human rights, unity in diversity. [...] Coming together is not a threat. Coming together, multicultural, multiethnic societies are a point of strength.”

Aligning myself with the position that diversity is strength for communities, in this chapter, I review the various ways that schooling used to educate students of different cultures coming together and living within increasingly diverse societies. Scholars have used several criteria to label and distinguish education’s approach to diversity. In what follows, I offer my own typology by synthesizing those already available in the literature, thereby providing a comprehensive and inclusive overview of the educational approaches to diversity. Finally, I explain how the critical approach to diversity has informed my study, the analysis of the textbooks, and how it connects to my theoretical framework on history education.

In the second part of the chapter, I focus on history education and link it to my discussion on diversity. Initially, I investigate the thematic focus of school history throughout time, and trace the debates regarding the use of nation/Euro-centric and world-focused history. I also present Ross Dunn’s (2000) three models of world history. Finally, I elaborate on the epistemological focus of history by examining the collective versus the disciplinary approach to history, and discuss Stéphane Lévesque’s (2008) five principles of historical thinking.

## **Approaches to Diversity Within Education**

### **Historical Background**

In today's globalized world, individuals are forced to coexist with people of other cultures and, thus, live in new and unfamiliar environments. Educational research and practice has recognized that how one deals with the dynamics of today's interconnected world may determine, often to a great extent, one's personal, social, and professional development, as well as the overall progress of society (Ghosh, 2002; Ghosh, 2011; Johnson, 2009). Although theorists and practitioners have identified education's pivotal role in successfully assisting students through this process, there is not one common educational strategy or approach that remains the same over time. By examining the relevant literature, we can identify a wide range of perspectives, each differing in their assumptions and practices, but almost all addressing one, recurring buzzword: diversity (Johnson, 2009).

The Oxford English dictionary defines the term diversity as, "The condition or quality of being diverse, different, or varied; difference, unlikeness" (Diversity, n.d.). In the field of educational research and practice, particularly in the North American context, the discussion on diversity is strongly tied to the concept of multiculturalism; or, in the case of Quebec, interculturalism. In the USA, multicultural education became a topical issue in the early 1970s, largely as a response to the African American movement against social marginalization, which pressed public education to change its pedagogy, its curriculum, and its organization (Apple, 2004). Likewise, curricula on multicultural education were introduced in Canada in the 1970s, after the official recognition of Canada's diverse social reality that was sealed by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's

announcement in 1971 of the policy known as ‘Bilingualism within a Multicultural Framework’ (Ghosh, 2002).

In Europe as early as the 1950s, countries with high immigration flows have had many projects that could be termed multicultural. Officially, the Council of Europe adopted the strategy of multiculturalism and multicultural pedagogy in the 1970s. In later years, specifically in 1983, the European ministers of education unanimously passed a resolution on the schooling of migrant children, in which they highlighted the importance of the ‘intercultural dimension.’ Since then, the Council of Europe (2008) has promoted the concept of intercultural dialogue. According to the Council, the term multicultural is descriptive, whereas the prefix ‘inter’ is a more appropriate way to describe the intentions of European education, because intercultural dialogue takes into consideration differences and similarities and encourages the relationship, interaction, and exchange between people (Portera, 2008).

In Greece, concern and actions for the education of ethnically and culturally diverse students are strongly tied to the transformation of the country from a migrant-sending to a host society over the last three decades (Damanakis, 1997, 2005). The term intercultural was first introduced in the country’s official educational policy in 1996, with Law 2413/1996. According to chapter ten of this law, the goal of intercultural education is the establishment of elementary and secondary schools that will provide support to young students who are educationally, socially, culturally, and instructionally distinct (2413/art.34/par.1). Currently, the institutional framework of intercultural education is based on Laws 2413/1996 (art.34-37), 2817/2000 (art.14, par.24), and other ministerial decrees, which were passed after 1996. These intercultural policies focus on the design of

special compensatory and supportive processes for immigrant, repatriated, and minority pupils. As such, these policies tend to be geared mostly towards the ‘other,’ and do not also address the host society, which also needs to make changes in order to be accepting and adaptive to the new reality.

### **Typologies of Approaches to Diversity**

Political actors, practitioners, and scholars use different terms to describe policies and practices that address issues of diversity: multicultural education, transcultural education, multiethnic education, ethnic studies, intercultural education, bilingual/bicultural education, and so on (Portera, 2008; Sleeter & Grant 2003). For the purpose of my study, I will use the term multicultural education.

The differences, however, go well beyond the choice of terms. The scholarly discussion on diversity indicates that, throughout time, multicultural education has meant different things to different people (Ghosh, 2002; Grant & Sleeter, 1985). In reviewing the literature, mainly produced in North America, we see that scholars have identified several approaches to diversity within the field of education. In the following section, I present some typologies that have been used to categorize these approaches. This is not intended to be an exhaustive account of all the available typologies, but rather to provide some examples of various categorizations.

Gibson, in his 1976 article “Approaches to Multicultural Education in the United States: Some Concepts and Assumptions,” offers the following types of multicultural education: 1) education of the culturally different or benevolent multiculturalism, which aims to provide culturally diverse students with equal opportunities in order to succeed in the mainstream society; 2) education about cultural differences or cultural understanding,



which aims to promote cross-cultural understanding by focusing on the value of cultural difference rather than on the education of the “culturally different,” thereby focusing on relational aspects rather than limiting difference to biological factors; 3) education for cultural multiculturalism, which seeks to preserve ethnic minority groups and increase their self-awareness and power; and 4) bicultural education, which aims to produce learners who can operate successfully in two different cultures.

Pratte (1983) suggests another typology by providing an analysis of four normative policy arguments. He identifies the following approaches to multicultural education: 1) the restricted argument for multicultural education, which aims to amend deficiencies in culturally diverse students and teach majority students to respect minorities; 2) the modified restricted argument for multicultural education, which promotes equality and access to all cultural groups; 3) the unrestricted argument devoted to plurality, which will remediate ethnocentrism among students; and 4) the unrestricted modified argument for a school that prepares students’ active citizenship within diverse societies (Pratte, 1983; Sleeter & Grant, 2003).

A few years later, Harper (1997) offered an historical overview of the production and treatment of difference in Ontario’s school policy and identified the following five responses to the notion of diversity: 1) suppressing difference, 2) insisting on difference, 3) denying difference, 4) inviting difference, and 5) critiquing difference.

In the early 2000s, Ghosh (2002) attempted to redefine multicultural education by centering the discussion on the politics of difference and by addressing the following questions: What do we mean by different? Different from whom and in what way? Adopting a politically influenced terminology, Ghosh and several other scholars identify

the following approaches to multicultural education: conservative, liberal, left liberal, pluralist, and critical approaches (Ghosh, 2002; Ghosh & Abdi, 2004; Naseem, 2011; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2009).

Out of the many, one typology that seems to prevail in the literature is that of Sleeter and Grant (2003). In their book, *Making Choices for Multicultural Education: Five Approaches to Race, Class, and Gender*, they expand upon Gibson (1976) and Pratte's (1983) typologies and, by detecting their limitations, identify the following five approaches to diversity: 1) teaching the exceptional and the culturally different, 2) human relations, 3) single group studies, 4) multicultural education, and 5) education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist.

In reviewing the aforementioned typologies, we can identify several differences between them. Some differ in regards to their focus. For example, Gibson's (1976) and Pratte's (1983) typologies focus primarily on race, while others include distinctions in social class, gender, life-style, and disability (Ghosh, 2002; Naseem, 2011; Sleeter & Grant, 2003; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2009). Other typologies provide an in-depth account of the theory undergirding each approach (Ghosh, 2002; Sleeter & Grant 2003), whereas still others provided a less detailed theoretical background (Gibson, 1976; Harper, 1997; Pratte, 1983). Despite the several differences between these typologies, in my opinion, these scholars are talking about more or less similar trends.

### **Approaches to Diversity**

In what follows, I present my own typology of the various educational approaches to diversity, which is informed by the aforementioned typologies, but does not follow them strictly. First, I discuss each approach's underlying ideas and then show how they

are translated within the curriculum. Finally, I present some of the critiques to each approach.

I begin my discussion with what I term the Mono-cultural approach to diversity (MAD). This approach, which Steinberg & Kincheloe (2009), Ghosh (2002), and Naseem (2011) identify as conservative, emphasizes the supremacy of European/North American culture (Ghosh, 2002; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2009), and argues that social and economic growth can occur when diverse cultural groups accept and conform to the social and political values of the dominant culture (Harper, 1997; Naseem, 2011). In education, the MAD focuses on culturally diverse students and promotes a homogeneous educational program, which is based on the dominant culture's epistemology, ethics, and value system (Naseem, 2011). The standardized educational model proposed by this perspective (Hirsch, Kett, & Trefil, 1987) is often critiqued for seeing lower-socioeconomic classes and non-white children as culturally deprived and for depicting Western culture as the objective ideal (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2009). According to this line of thought, one group is better, 'us'—the West, while other groups are always behind and need to catch up. This approach, therefore, aims to assimilate diverse groups to the dominant culture. Other critics argue that MAD, by aligning everyone to an 'objective' standard and by suppressing the subordinate groups' cultures and/or languages (Gerin-Lajoie, 2012), fails to recognize the value of difference and the competing power relations between dominant and minority groups. They further argue that such an understanding of diversity promotes an 'us' against 'them' mentality, and therefore is conducive to absolutist and separatist ideologies.

Another conceptual framework critiqued for subscribing to assimilationist goals is what Steinberg & Kincheloe (2009) call liberal multiculturalism and what I term Equality-focused approach to diversity (EAD). This approach emphasizes and celebrates the natural equality and sameness of individuals from different ethnic, socio/economic, and gender groups (Gerin-Lajoie, 2012; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2009). Equality-focused education theorists and practitioners view inequality between diverse groups as stemming from a lack of social, economic, and educational opportunities (Pallas, Natriello, & McDill, 1989). By placing immense trust in the power of the state to provide equal opportunities and by ignoring structural and institutional oppression, the underlying assumption of the EAD is that these inequalities will vanish once the system is reformed (Naseem, 2011). In education, this translates to curricula that aim to help students fit into the mainstream social structure by building bridges between the students' experiential background, their learning styles, and the demands of the school (Sleeter & Grant, 2003). This approach has been critiqued for ignoring difference and for limiting educational practices to the study of 'exotic' cultures, to celebratory multicultural days, and to compensatory programs such as language learning (Ghosh, 2002; Ruitenberg, 2011). In effect, it perpetuates the 'us' versus 'them' mentality and ignores the social and political dimensions of difference.

Moving on to another perspective, the Group-focused approach (GAD), Sleeter and Grant (2003) identify the emergence of more assertive approaches to diversity in the 1960s, such as ethnic studies, African studies (Giles, 1974), women's studies (Rutenberg, 1983; Schmitz, 1985), Asian American studies, Indigenous studies, and so forth. This approach aims to bring attention to one specific group at a time in order to raise

awareness of their oppression, to empower its members, and to encourage political action and liberation. Unlike the two previous approaches, the GAD views school knowledge as political, rather than neutral, and provides alternatives to Anglo-Saxon culture and Western ideals (Grant & Sleeter, 2004; Sleeter & Grant, 2003). This “response is premised on the notion that difference is natural, predetermined, and unassailable. As such, it requires accommodation rather than elimination” (Harper, 1997, p. 194). The insistence on difference is observed in several instances, such as the segregation of girls with separate and distinct schooling in the 19th century, Afrocentric schools (Giles, 1974), and separate schools for the physically and mentally disabled (Grant & Sleeter, 2004; Harper, 1997). Critics from a conservative-monocultural perspective highlight the fact that the Group-focused approach keeps diverse groups out of the mainstream and thus promotes cultural and social separatism. Additionally, critics fear that if students spend too much time focusing on their culture, they will fail to acquire the necessary knowledge to succeed in the mainstream curriculum (Hirsch, Kett, & Trefil, 1987). Others from a more humanistic perspective express the fear that the study of oppression is counterproductive; they believe it will exacerbate tension and hostility rather than promote unity (Sleeter & Grant, 2003). Finally, even those who support the intent of this approach argue that the main limitation is that it leaves the regular curriculum in place, uncontested, and unreformed (Connell, 1993). Furthermore, some scholars argue that if we raise awareness of each non-mainstream group separately, then we may leave out society’s dominant group. This critique suggests that if we want to enable young students to work together in shaping a just and democratic society, multicultural education needs to be inclusive and must address all groups (Carr & Lund, 2009; McIntosh, 1990).

Another approach, which emerged during the early 1970s, is the Pluralistic approach to diversity (PAD). This approach does not build on the sameness of people. Rather, when developing educational programs, it takes into account the differences in culture, ethnicity, language, gender, disabilities, and socio/economic class (Hernández, 1989; Sleeter & Grant, 2003). To a greater extent than the previous three approaches, this pluralistic perspective promotes total school reform in order to reflect diversity in schools (Grant & Sleeter, 2004). In the classroom, content is organized around the contributions and perspectives of several different groups—and not only of one specific group as in the GAD— so that it is relevant to students’ personal experiences (Sleeter & Grant, 2003). Instruction emphasizes critical thinking skills, while language learning and cooperative learning are prominent (Hernández, 1989). Some critics of this approach, coming from the humanistic perspective, argue that knowledge and celebration of cultural difference will not necessarily ease intergroup relations because it will not automatically lead to greater acceptance among students and it will not necessarily change behaviors and attitudes (Sleeter & Grant, 2003). Other critics argue that the mere celebration of diversity fails to question difference, its politics, and how difference is constructed. Although the intentions of this approach are valuable, some critics argue that such a response to diversity gives too much attention to cultural issues and consequently ignores issues of power and social structural inequalities (Ogbu, 1978; Sleeter & Grant, 2003; Suzuki, 1984).

While the previously mentioned approaches depend heavily on cognitive skills and knowledge, what I term the Humanistic approach to diversity (HAD) focuses on the attitudes and feelings students have of themselves and of each other (Grant & Sleeter,

2004). This approach aims to reduce intergroup conflict and stereotyping, promotes acceptance, and fosters positive interaction among students who differ (Calabrese, 2002; Girard & Koch, 1996; Hernández, 1989; Watson, 2002). The curriculum of this approach addresses both differences and similarities and, as such, includes information regarding the contributions of groups of which students are members, while also providing accurate information about various other groups—be they ethnic, racial, or defined by ability—about whom students may hold stereotypes (Grant & Sleeter, 2004). The humanistic approach to diversity seems particularly popular with teachers because it is difficult to dispute what it aims to do. However, those who adopt a critical approach to diversity do not agree with the HAD. For example, advocates of anti-racist education oppose what is left out in this approach, arguing that it fails to analyze discrimination, structural inequalities, and power relations (Dei, 2011). They argue that, by merely teaching students to get along, the school implicitly urges them to accept the status quo. On the contrary, they contend that schools should educate students to challenge the status quo and to address the social problems stemming from structural inequalities and uncontested power relations (Sleeter & Grant, 2003).

This last stance is indicative of the final category, which I term the Critical approach to diversity (CAD). Theorists and practitioners adopting this perspective argue that schools should prepare future citizens to reconstruct society so it serves the interest of all groups, especially those who are underprivileged (Grant & Sleeter, 2004). As such, this approach stresses that multicultural education is not only for students who are ‘different,’ but rather for all who belong to dominant and minority groups (Ghosh, 2002). In the literature, this approach is referred to as critical multiculturalism (Naseem, 2011;

Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2009). Although some scholars distinguish critical multiculturalism from anti-racist education (Dei, 2011) and anti-oppressive education (Kumashiro & Ngo, 2007), I choose to include these two within this category because they are critical to power relations, they politicize education, and they are action-orientated (Dei, 2011; Naseem, 2011). Overall, advocates of the Critical approach to diversity argue that students should learn to work collectively in order to bring about social change (Giroux, 1992; McLaren, 1989, 1997a; Sleeter & Grant, 2003). This line of reasoning suggests that it is only by encouraging students to critically examine power relations and social inequalities that we can provide them with an insight on how to become active participants in society (Naseem, 2011). Peter Seixas (2008) makes a similar point regarding history education: “If young people are to get a useful history education in this cultural moment, they must not only be exposed to a good historical drama but also be allowed to see the ropes and pulleys behind the curtains” (p. viii).

Compared with the aforementioned approaches, CAD incorporates a much greater curricular emphasis on active student involvement, on problem solving, cooperative learning, and democratic decision-making skills (Hernández, 1989). Curriculum content that stems from the CAD is organized around current social issues involving racism, classism, sexism, sexuality, disability, and so on. Critics of this approach question whether or not the school is able to undertake such an important task, namely to build a ‘new social order.’ Another major critique concerns implementation; many worry that teachers may sensitize students to social issues and then leave them feeling hopeless and frustrated about what they can do to change the situation. Those adopting a more



humanistic approach also worry that by discussing injustices, they will aggravate conflict and tension among people rather than solve problems (Sleeter & Grant, 2003).

As a schoolteacher, I subscribe to a critical approach to diversity, and contrary to the aforementioned critiques, I believe that by failing to sensitize students on social issues, and by not discussing prejudices, we run the risk of educating young people unable to understand the complexities of the issues they encounter in their communities, countries, and the world. As I am writing this thesis in 2015, the Charlie Hebdo shooting in January and the November attacks have occurred in Paris (Boffey & Zeffman, 2015; Levs, Payne, & Pearson 2015). Technology makes it possible for almost everyone to have immediate access to descriptions, discussions, and interpretations of these and similar events. Schools need to provide students with the tools to critically analyze such events, examine all perspectives, and abstain from the politics of fear and hatred. Peter Seixas (2002), a theorist specializing on history education, supports the idea that young people are already seeing and experiencing conflicts in their everyday lives, in social media, and in the news. Hence, schools cannot avoid the critical discussion and examination of conflicting stories in today's interconnected world. Rather than ignoring them, schools need to bring these conversations to the classrooms. Ultimately, schools should aim to equip students with the knowledge, the competencies, and the attitudes to not only participate in the job market, but to participate in society as active and critical citizens. The goal is to enable students to work collectively towards creating a just and democratic society (Banks, 2006; Osborne, 2001). It is with this reasoning that I support a critical approach to diversity within schools; an education that is critical and that addresses diversity in its multiplicity.

### **Critical Approach to Diversity and my Study of Greek History Textbooks**

In the previous section, I reviewed various approaches to diversity within education and I explained that, as an educator, I subscribe to the critical approach framework. In the following section, I discuss this approach in further detail by focusing my attention on certain concepts: ‘other,’ identity, difference, and critical thinking. I approach this discussion as a researcher, and I explain how the CAD informs my work on history education and history textbooks in Greece.

The founding theory of most critical approaches to diversity is critical pedagogy. This educational theory and practice has emerged over the past few decades and is based on the teachings of Paolo Freire (1970), as well as on principles from Foucault’s sociology of knowledge, the Frankfurt school of critical theory, feminist theory, and neo-Marxist cultural criticism (McLaren, 1997b). By recognizing the inextricable link between education and politics, this pedagogical theory is fundamentally concerned with the relationship between power and knowledge (Giroux & Giroux, 2006). Critical theorists argue that knowledge is not neutral or objective, but is constructed through social interaction with others and is heavily dependent on culture, context, and historical specificity (Giroux & Giroux, 2006; McLaren, 1989). Furthermore, critical theorists reject the idea that school is the ‘great equalizer’ that aids the less advantaged and bridges the gap between students of different socio-economic backgrounds. On the contrary, they view school as an institution that maintains the status quo, reproduces the values and privileges of existing elites, and favors select groups of students on the basis of race, class, and gender. Simultaneously, and contrary to this reproductive view of schooling, they also acknowledge and promote school’s potential to challenge already established

social structures and to function as an agency for self and social empowerment. In this respect, critical pedagogic theorists view schools as a site for both domination and liberation (Ghosh, 2011; McLaren, 1989).

Critical pedagogy's stance that knowledge is political and, therefore, historically and socially constructed, has informed both my research questions and my methodology. The idea that certain types of knowledge have more power and legitimacy than others has led me to investigate the dominance or absence of groups within historical narratives and, from a CAD perspective, to question the consequences of such representations. In documenting the histories that are included or excluded in the GHT, I attempt to trace the extent to which the textbooks favor and privilege the experiences of certain groups, and if and how this has changed during the past thirty-five years. As I explain in chapter three, the constructive nature of knowledge also informs my approach in the research process and my position in regards to my findings.

The critical framework regarding diversity differs from other educational approaches in how it defines the 'other.' Although more conservative views on diversity often limit the discussion of the 'other' to racial and ethnic 'others,' scholars from a critical perspective consider this view as overly simplistic. Thus, they draw our attention to additional cultural characteristics, such as socioeconomic class, gender, sexual preference, religion, lifestyle, political views, age, and physical abilities, to name a few. They argue that bringing individual characteristics into the discussion of diversity results in a more comprehensive viewing of the 'other' (Connor & Baglieri, 2009; Ghosh, 2002; McLaren, 1989). In this respect, the 'other,' and by extension the 'self,' is a multi-

dimensional entity with several roles, attitudes, values, behaviors, and, therefore, multiple identities.

The use of identity in the plural is intentional. As Ghosh (2002) argues, people do not have only one identity because identities are dynamic, fluid constructions and they are always in the making. Furthermore, no group can be a homogenous whole. We often perceive ourselves or ‘others’ as a collective ‘we’ or ‘they’ with common and unchangeable characteristics (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004). However, this oversimplification fails to treat the complexities and contradictions that are a result of a person’s identities (Fine, 2000). For example, an eleventh grade student may be a Canadian, but she is also a teenage girl, a Polish immigrant, an atheist, a football player who loves math, and so on. If schools do not acknowledge all these identities, then they may fail to address the possible contributions and/or tensions deriving from peoples’ multiple identities and differences. By teaching students that “there is as much variation within groups as between them” (Ghosh, 2002, p. 2), schools will be able to promote a broadened view of ‘self’ and ‘other.’ Ideally, such a view will reveal the complexities and contradictions inherent in our various identities and, ultimately, open the way for a more comprehensive understanding of the ‘other.’

Since I am investigating history textbooks, homogenized representations of nations and peoples, in contrast to the multiplicity of human identities, is central to the reading and critique I provide. When I analyze the narratives of non-Western peoples within the GHT, I document the extent to which narratives address differences and similarities, and whether they reveal the complexities of each historical event, of each identity, and of the conflicting roles/contributions of various ethno-cultural groups. Again, the use of peoples

in the plural is intentional. Since my project examines narratives of non-Western peoples, by using the plural I aim to highlight that these peoples are not a homogeneous entity. By using peoples, I acknowledge that non-Westerners are comprised of groups and individuals that are all different and distinct from one another. They are peoples with distinct identities, histories, experiences, and contributions.

From a critical perspective, another concept central to the discussion of the 'self' and the 'other,' is difference. Taylor (1994) and Ghosh and Abdi (2004) have elaborated extensively on the construction of difference and its political implications. They argue that differences conceived on the basis of physical characteristics (race and ethnicity), biological characteristics (gender), or other social differences (class, economic status) appear to be natural and divide people into uncontested groupings (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004). Rothenberg (1990) argues that the problem with these categories is that they are often difficult to dispute because they are presented as value-free descriptions. For example, a white, heterosexual, middle-class male is considered the norm within the Western world. Anything else is considered different, deviant, or deficient. For critical theorists, the problem with such an assumption is that it disregards issues of domination and exclusion, and ignores the underlying power struggles inherent in these 'natural' categorizations (Goldberg, 1992). Further, this misrecognition sustains prejudices and discriminatory views of the 'other' and, as a result, perpetuates segregation within society and promotes racism, sexism, and other oppressive ideologies (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004; Giroux, 1993; Rothenberg, 1990; Sleeter & McLaren, 1995). In order to counterbalance the effects of this misrecognition, critical theorists argue that school should help students recognize that difference is socially and politically constructed, and that these constructions serve to

separate groups and safeguard the position and privilege of the dominant groups. In this respect, critical theorists see school as an agent that should encourage students to reveal the veiled power hierarchies that constitute the status quo and challenge the uncontested and unequal structures (Ghosh, 2002).

While most approaches to diversity focus on minority groups—‘those different people’— critical theorists argue that education must address all students. This means that, within a critical approach, policies and practices need to include the group that possesses the power within society, whose characteristics define the norm and represent the model of rationality and morality, the dominant group, in addition to and alongside minority groups. If unequal structures are to be challenged, then the dominant group needs to be an active member of the dialogue. Within a critically orientated education, all groups need to look at differences, question their politics and how they are created, and contribute to the deconstruction of the unquestioned status quo (Ghosh, 2002; Ghosh & Abdi, 2004). Several scholars have made the analysis of a dominant category the focal point of their work. For example, McIntosh (1990) focuses on whiteness and those belonging to the norm by examining their unquestioned privileges and the possible consequences of their ‘natural’ advantages. Such discussions have served as an effective platform for raising questions on privilege, on uncontested categorizations, and on discriminatory processes within society. They therefore provide additional arguments for the necessity to include the dominant group when structuring multicultural education (Carr & Lund, 2009; McIntosh, 1990).

The aforementioned concepts of difference and the dominant norms inform my project in more ways than one. While analyzing the narratives of Western versus non-

Western peoples, I examine the extent to which these descriptions are presented as natural and value-free categorizations. I also aim to understand to what extent the narratives may or may not sustain prejudices and discriminatory views of certain groups. As such, my study focuses on the examination and critique of the textbooks, which as I will demonstrate in my findings, present the world as a Western/European story. With my work, I critique this depiction and argue that it does not reflect nor serve our present day multicultural societies. At the same time, I do not hold the position that subordinate narratives should be prioritized over dominant narratives, or vice versa. Departing from the principles of the critical approach to diversity, it is not a matter of prioritizing one narrative over the other, but rather a matter of recognition. Following this line of reasoning, my study investigates whether narratives reveal the complexity of each event, of each group, identity, and so forth; and whether they allow students to critically examine and understand these various aspects.

Finally, in order to challenge dominant depictions of otherness, identity, and difference, CAD places the cultivation of critical thinking at the center of its pedagogy: a thinking strategy, which involves questioning the legitimacy of the given knowledge (Brookfield, 2012). Opposing the ‘banking system’ (Freire, 1970), critical theorists advocate a type of thinking that is critical and political. In other words, they support a thinking process where students are able to discover the underlying values and assumptions of knowledge creation, evaluate and re-conceptualize school content, understand the dynamic and changing nature of knowledge, question power relations within society, identify and confront prejudices and hierarchies, and eventually create their own knowledge. Ultimately, within a critical educational framework, critical

thinking should assist students to move away from a narrow outlook of the world towards a more global perspective (Ghosh, 2002).

Likewise, in my examination of GHT, I aim to understand whether the textbooks are structured in ways that facilitate critical thinking and cross-examination of the available narratives and historical explanations.

The critical approach to diversity provides the foundation that informs my position on history education, as well as the lens through which I will analyze the findings of my study.

### **History Education**

Every normal person, Mr. Everyman, knows history. [...] Suppose Mr. Everyman to have awakened this morning unable to remember anything said or done. He would be a lost soul indeed. [...] But normally it does not happen. Normally the memory of Mr. Everyman, when he awakens in the morning, reaches out into the country of the past and of distant places and [...] pulls together as it were things said and done in his yesterdays, and coordinates them with his present perceptions and with things to be said and done in his tomorrows. Without this historical knowledge, this memory of things said and done, his today would be aimless and his tomorrow without significance. (Becker, 1932, p. 223)

In the preceding sections of this chapter, I discussed the various ways education has responded to today's multicultural societies. I also explained that I position myself, both as a schoolteacher and as a researcher, within the critical approach to diversity. In this section, I focus my attention on history education and on the writing of history textbooks. I link my discussion to diversity and bring forward various positions within the literature



pertaining to the thematic focus of history and its epistemological approach. I present the scholarly discussions on world history, Ross Dunn's (2000) three models of writing world history, and finally, I elaborate on Stéphane Lévesque's (2008) five principles of historical thinking.

### **The School, History, and the State**

One of the central tasks of the modern state is to create trustworthy, competent, and, most of all, loyal citizens with a common identity. States possess several means for accomplishing this task: state institutions like museums, media, the commemoration of national holidays, and so forth (Wertsch, 2002). However, as Anthony Smith (1991) notes, one of the most important institutions the state uses to inculcate national devotion and a distinctive homogeneous culture is compulsory, standardized, public mass education systems. As such, one of the basic functions of education was, and still is, to create a nation, a population with a common national identity (Smith, 1995). Scholars tend to agree that, to date, the modern school is a 'national' school everywhere. "It is a major taxonomic mechanism, cultivating and reproducing the characteristics that determine national specificities and differences. [...] It stresses the territorial dimension of national identity, and it promotes common historical memories and common myths of origin" (Dragonas & Bar-On, 2000, p. 337). In all modern states, the most important vehicle for instilling such understandings in young people is school history (Nash, Crabtree, & Dunn, 1997). It is the main school subject that constructs and influences collective memory<sup>1</sup> and understandings of identity and of otherness (Foster, 2012).

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<sup>1</sup> Collective memory is distinct from school history and academic history. "There are three representations of the past, all situated in different ways in individuals' and institutions' social experience. First, the record of history such as it appears in school. Second, everyday history: an element of collective memory that, in one way or another, is permanently inscribed— through experience and formation— in the minds and

## **The Thematic Focus of School History: Nation-Centered Versus World History**

If we inquire about the purpose of history education over time, it is not surprising that school history was traditionally geared towards nation-building purposes.

“Historically, subjects were transformed into citizens through the teaching of history, geography, and the language of the nation” (Soysal & Schissler, 2005, p. 1).

During the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Anderson (2006) situates the social construction and imagination of the nation, history curricula and textbooks—at least within the Western part of the world—transmitted an official version of a shared past, which was used to ensure social cohesion and to promote the state’s goal of creating loyal citizens with a common identity. As Christian Laville (2004) explains, school history ultimately aimed to teach its citizens “what they should know and even, by extension, what they should think and feel” (p. 166).

Following this intention, history textbooks told the story of the most important group: the nation. History writing glorified the nation and defined it in terms of who was included and who was excluded. Naturally, history writing and the formation of the nation-state were two simultaneous processes. In fact, according to Rainer Ohliger (2005), nation building and national historiography formed a hermeneutic circle at the time. They were interwoven processes, with one constantly influencing and empowering the other.

Despite the fact that historical narratives construct the natural homogeneity of the nation, this by no means reflects the reality of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, or

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bodies of each society’s members, articulating shared narratives about identity, value systems and common beliefs. Lastly, there is academic history or historiography, cultivated by historians and social scientists, according to the disciplinal logic of a knowledge instituted under specific social and institutional conditions” (Carretero & Bermúdez, 2011, p.3).

that of the present time. Nations have been heterogeneous, even when they were initially ‘imagined.’ Every nation-state is and has always been comprised of peoples with diverse ethno-cultural identities (Fragoudaki, 2013). By contrast, what national histories tend to do is present the nation’s history as a seamless continuity from the long distant past, projecting the homogeneity of its people by disregarding or neglecting minorities (Stradling, 2001). During the eighteenth and nineteenth century nation-building process, Ohliger (2005) notes that, following this pattern, history writing tended to present historical discontinuities as aberrations and to overlook any cultural or ethnic diversity. Purity of the nation was the ultimate virtue.

The nationalistic way of writing and teaching history was first challenged at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century (Cajani, 2007; Frank, Wong, Meyer, & Ramirez, 2000; Kennedy, 1973; Ohliger, 2005; Soysal & Schissler 2005). In fact, as early as the First World War, governments, international actors, and various agencies had shown active interest in the content of textbooks, especially history textbooks. In later years, namely after the Second World War, these efforts were pursued systematically by UNESCO, which published *A Handbook for the Improvement of Textbooks and Teaching Materials as Aids to International Understanding* in 1949 (Pingel, 2008, 2010). This initiative aimed to screen national textbooks and remove xenophobic stereotypes and narrow nationalistic approaches to historical interpretations of the world. Nationalism was viewed as partly responsible for feeding the negative sentiments among nations that led to the two catastrophic World Wars. UNESCO (1974, 1996, 2005, 2006) continued its efforts along the same lines over the years and other

regional actors, such as the Council of Europe (1996, 1999, 2002; Stradling, 2001; Tudor, 2002), have followed in its footsteps.

However, despite the many efforts to revise history, Paul Kennedy (1973) indicates that the tendency towards an ethnocentric way of writing history is prevalent, especially in newer states. Kennedy notes, “there has been a tendency within every nation and tribe... to laud itself at the expense of its neighbors” (p. 88). As such, he argues that this may be a phase that every nation needs to go through in its development and, often, nation-centered history is still the default mode of narrating the past. In fact, research has shown that the national narrative is not easily omitted from history textbooks.

Jacque E. C. Hyman’s (2005) research on French history education provides significant evidence of this. His findings illustrate how French history education has taken only moderate steps to move away from the nation-centered and Eurocentric model. His investigation of French history curricula, textbooks, *École normale supérieure*’s essay questions (the most prestigious undergraduate institution in France), and past reforms, reveals that both French educators and academics have resisted moving towards a more diverse, world-focused way of telling the story.

Similar to Hyman, Julian Dierkes (2005) set out to explore whether there is a widespread, common world model in the writing of history and whether the focus on national history has declined, using middle school curriculum of national history in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) from 1945 to 1995, and in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) from 1945 to 1989, as his sources of investigation. Dierkes argues that his findings illustrate the implementation of global trends, like the decline of nation-centered historiography in West Germany, as well as the blocking of these isomorphic

tendencies and the existence of nation-centered history textbooks in East Germany.

The situation is similar in Greece. Scholarship on Greek history has shown that, to date, the teaching of history is treated as a tool for the diffusion of a national ideology and the construction of a homogeneous national identity. Historical knowledge in schools is accused of providing an ahistorical account of the Greek nation, one that eventually creates a fragile and artificial Greek identity (Fragoudaki & Dragona, 1997). Vouri (2006) contends that, as a result of their education, Greek students tend to ignore their neighbors, or even their own history. She points to the absence of references at all grade levels regarding the presence of any other groups living within the country, like the Slavophones of Macedonia, the Muslims of Thrace, the Arvanites in Attica, various Jewish populations, and recent refugees and immigrants from countries around the world. In regards to the latter group, Vouri notes that the textbooks do not offer insight on how these people live and work in Greece, how they arrived, from which countries, their economic role in Greek society, and the various socio-economic issues they encounter. As Vouri (2006) argues, the problem with these omissions is that, by the end of the twelve-year basic education, the ‘others’ remain mostly unknown to the students of the Greek education system.

At a European level, The Council of Europe (1996, 1999, 2002; Stradling, 2001; Tudor, 2002) continues to do a lot of work regarding the teaching of history in a multicultural, multiethnic context. However, critiques regarding the Council’s efforts to broaden the scope of school history point out that, in the present day, changes to the nationalistic model have been minor at best. In effect, Luigi Cajani (2003) observes that, after World War II and with the creation of the European Union, the focus of history in

the schools within Europe has merely shifted from the single nation-state to Europe. As Cajani notes, this is not far from being nationalistic. In fact, he argues,

This is a spatial enlargement of the same ethnocentric mental pattern. Previously there was state nationalism; now there is European ethnocentrism and nationalism. In history textbooks the rest of the world remains on the margins and is dealt with according to when and how Europe becomes involved with it. [...] Europe stands as a swollen body, to which a series of stumps—the rest of the world—are attached. (2003, para. 8)

Soysal and Schissler (2005) refer to this as the Europeanization of history, where Western European textbooks situate the nation in a European framework. However, the two scholars do not include Eastern and Southern Europe—the newly created nation-states after the fall of the Soviet bloc—in this framework, where Soysal and Schissler observe that the Europeanization trend does not seem to be present. There, they note we see the reemergence of nation-centered narratives.

Currently, criticism of the traditional way of writing school history, which centers on the nation and/or Europe, has taken a variety of forms. Foster (2012) suggests that this approach to history is problematic because it projects a selective, narrow, and uncritical depiction of the world. Burke (2001) further argues that by focusing on “the great deeds of great men” (p. 4) of the nation, traditional history ignores history-from-below and, therefore, marginalizes the experiences and views of ordinary people, who are equally important in the shaping of history. While recognizing the benefits of promoting a common imaginary for the cohesion of the group, Lowenthal (1998) is also skeptical of its consequences. He argues that historical knowledge focusing on a group’s common

heritage, memory, and tradition may eventually result in xenophobic and chauvinistic nationalisms. This is directly linked to the default methods of identity formation and what Rüsen (2007) describes as an asymmetrical relationship between ‘self’ and ‘other.’ As he explains, in identity formation, whatever belongs to oneself is subject to positive evaluation and any negative aspects are pushed towards the ‘other.’ Although we need this ‘otherness’ to legitimate our self-esteem, Rüsen argues that the asymmetrical relationship between sameness and otherness makes historical memory controversial and, in the long run, may provoke conflict.

Within the later twentieth century, certain processes heightened the urgency to change traditional ways of writing history: decolonization, transnational migration, the human rights discourse, global economic entanglements, the social movements from the 1970s, the end of the Cold War, and so on (Soysal & Schissler, 2005). These processes led various groups—women, gay, indigenous, minorities, colonized peoples, etc.—to demand recognition of their sufferings and their inclusion in the official collective memory (Laville, 2004). Similarly, there have been extensive discussions in academia and scholars have increasingly emphasized the necessity of dropping ethnocentric approaches in school history in favor of world history (Cajani, 2003). Many see nation-centered narratives as unable to successfully express the heterogeneous ethno-demographic patchwork within each nation-state of the contemporary world (Kennedy, 1973; Ohliger, 2005; Pingel, 2010; Soysal & Schissler, 2005).

By drawing attention to the effects of globalization, Hana Schissler (2005) argues that now, more than ever before, history curricula and textbooks have to shift away from closed national histories so that world history can make its way into every classroom. She

contends that broadened history textbooks, which focus more on the world, will convey the idea of connectedness between people on local and global levels. Schissler (2005) argues that world-centered history will help students cope with the demands of the present and will allow them to move skillfully and more successfully around the world as future citizens in a global community.

World history might help teachers and students to understand that the world is not ‘out there’ somewhere, but that it saturates our lives and that we are part of it; it might help to endure the ambiguities of this modern world and it might aid in resisting the temptation to turn to fundamentalism. (Schissler, 2005, p. 241).

Those supporting world history as a priority within the history curriculum believe that a balanced and inclusive world history may allow students to appreciate the world’s cultures and understand peoples’ shared humanity and common problems (Papoulia-Tzelepi & Spinthourakis, 2007). In this respect, by creating history textbooks that relativize and contextualize national narratives, and stripping them of their exaggerated claims, Schissler (2005) argues that school history will provide the foundations that will contribute to the harmonization of difficult inner and inter-national relations.

Critical race theorist Richard Delgado (1989) also defends the value of learning other peoples’ stories by arguing:

Stories build consensus, a common culture of shared understandings, and deeper, more vital ethics. Counterstories, which challenge the received wisdom, do that as well. They can open new windows into reality, showing us that there are possibilities for life other than the ones we live. [...] Listening to the stories of



outgroups can avoid intellectual apartheid [...] Stories humanize us. They emphasize our differences in ways that can ultimately bring us closer together. They allow us to see how the world looks from behind someone else's spectacles. They challenge us to wipe our own lenses and ask, 'Could I have been overlooking something all along?' (pp. 2414-2415, 2439-2440)

Although these arguments make a strong case for embracing world history in contemporary textbooks, the assumption that it will necessarily promote mutual understanding is not self-evident. Romanowski's (1996) claim that factual passages in textbooks can communicate biased assumptions and judgments calls to our attention that, while knowing about the world is very important, it is possible that the message to students about the 'other' and the 'self' can remain more or less biased. To others, the subject seems too vast, disorderly, and superficial.

Despite these views, for those who advocate the importance of world history, this course is necessary knowledge for citizenship in today's interconnected world (Allardyce, 1982).

**Models of world history.** Ross Dunn, (2000) in attempting to define world history, identifies three models that sum up the direction that the writing of world history has taken over time.

His first model is the Western Heritage Model (WHM). In this model of history writing, great ideas are derived from peoples of Europe and the ancient Mediterranean, such that the West is considered the most historical in terms of its contribution to humanity. For texts adopting this model, Western history is 'high history' and synonymous with contemporary ways of doing and thinking (Allardyce, 1982). The West

is personified as an entity that possesses historical agency and brings progress to the world. As Dunn (2000) puts it, the West is seen as the agent of freedom; people from the West abolished slavery, invented modernity, brought the industrial revolution, and so forth. Other parts of the world are included in the narratives only to the extent that they have contributed to the making of the West. Dunn (2000) sums up the goal of this type of world history as one that aims “to identify the inborn characteristics of the West, contrast them with the qualities of other civilizations, and demonstrate through lessons and narratives the importance of nourishing our civilization’s ‘essential continuing core’” (p. 125).

Several critics of this model argue that, although European history and its turning points, ideas, philosophies, and so on, are important and worth knowing, insistence on this one type of history may mislead students to believe that European history is synonymous with the history of humankind. Furthermore, scholars argue that Western history alone will not give students the intellectual tools they need to understand the global issues of today. And so, they suggest that European history or any other history ought to be situated in a broader, world context (Nash et al., 1997).

The second model of writing world history is the Different Cultures Model (DFM). According to Dunn (2000), this type of world history highlights the contribution of other civilizations and ethno-racial groups—other than Western civilization—and celebrates each culture as possessing “its own internal coherence, integrity and logic” (p. 126). Dunn argues this model is not very successful in challenging the fundamental assumptions of the Western Heritage Model. Rather, it is fixated on cultural differences, particularities, and otherness. Similarly, David Lowenthal (2000) suggests that themes

concerning specific groups and regions may be part of humanity; but examined in isolation, they tend to obscure their history. In line with this viewpoint, Nash et al. (1997) point out that this model of history runs the risk of confusing students because it may teach them that certain groups of people possess a past distinct from other groups. Contrary to such an understanding, Nash et al. argue that “civilizations do not have self-contained linear histories that can be understood in terms of purely internal mechanisms and in isolation from the human community at large” (p. 275). By rigidly dividing the world into isolated cultures, Nash et al. (1997) claim that history teaching may fail to demonstrate that our world and our nation is shaped not in isolation, but by complex, large-scale, and transnational processes.

Dunn (2000) identifies a third model, which he argues is more suited for educating students in the twenty-first century, called the Patterns of Change Model (PCM). This model resists the narrative of Western ethnocentrism and the imagined chains of causation that link East Africa to Mesopotamia, Mesopotamia to Greece, and Greece to modern Europe. Content is organized in a way that connects “detailed knowledge of particular topics, events, and facts to larger frameworks of development and causation” (Dunn, 2000, p. 129). As such, content showcases how developments occurring in different parts of the world affected one another across time and space. There is significant attention on the interaction between individual groups and how these interactions affect all of humanity throughout history. For example, content will not introduce the notion of slavery or immigration in isolation, but discuss it in various historical periods and for a number of groups and regions. Dunn (2000) argues that content organized under this model promotes the comparative study of cultural

differences, events, and groups; as a result, this model offers the idea that cultures are not “solid, commonsensical and agreed-upon, but are rather contested, uncertain and in flux” (p. 129). In other words, the PCM advances the notion that cultural beliefs and practices are diverse between groups, within the same group, and over time.

Dunn points out that this model does not propose that we eliminate all references to a particular civilization or to Europe. Nor does it suggest that we replace civilization stories solely with historical themes, or as Lévesque (2008) termed them, colligatory concepts. On the contrary, he proposes a combination of all these elements in the teaching of history, where content is organized in ways where students acquire a clear understanding of terms such as nation, society, identity, culture, and difference across time and space.

These three models of world history inform my work in the thematic focus of the textbooks and in my examination of non-Western history. As such, in my analysis I take into account these models and I attempt to situate the textbooks within them.

In the next section, I move on to the nature of historical knowledge and I elaborate on two epistemological orientations: the collective memory approach and the disciplinary approach to history.

### **The Nature of Historical Knowledge – The Epistemological Orientation of History Education**

We can identify two major orientations on the nature of historical knowledge in the literature regarding the discipline of history. The first is closely related to Enlightenment inspired assumptions. Influential historian Leopold von Ranke (1956) laid the foundation for an epistemology that ascribed to the idea that it is possible to study and reproduce the

past in an objective manner. According to Ranke's scientific method of writing history, by selecting the purest archival sources of the period—namely primary sources—historians are able to produce a correct and detached representation of the past. He argued that the historian's task is to give readers the facts, or as he put it, to tell 'how it actually happened.' Peter Burke (2001) terms this method of writing history as 'Rankean history' and equates it to a traditional paradigm. He explains that one of the characteristics of this paradigm is that history is concerned with politics, meaning it typically narrates instances of war, whereas other kinds of history—for example, history of art, the sciences, social history, etc.—are marginalized and considered peripheral.

In education, the traditional paradigm of history translates into an understanding that there is one, best version of a story and the goal of all school history is to find this 'one' good story and present it objectively to the students (Foster, 2012). It is no surprise that school history, which is based on this premise, usually coincides with the nation-centered approach used during the nineteenth century for nation-building purposes; but, as I pointed out, is not limited to that time period. History curricula and textbooks, which are guided by this epistemology, present a content that usually focuses on military history. Peter Seixas (2000) labels this type of school history as the collective memory approach, which, he argues, fosters the impression that history is fixed, truly objective, and therefore does not require critical examination. Rather, history is something that students need to memorize, learn passively, and not question.

A second major orientation regarding the nature of historical knowledge follows the epistemological stance put forth by several history theorists succeeding Ranke, such as R. G. Collingwood (1946) and E. H. Carr (1962). These scholars reject Ranke's idea that

such a thing as historical truth or objectivity exists. Scholars identifying with this viewpoint argue that historians choose from the many available facts of the past, only some of which will eventually become historical facts. This choice does not necessarily mean that the ‘chosen facts’ are indeed the most accurate or important ones. On the contrary, historians’ choices are guided by their positionality, interests, and perspective. Thus, historical knowledge is more about a positioned selection, about interpretation, than an objective depiction of the past (Jenkins, 1995; Lévesque, 2008). Nash et al. (1997) suggest that,

to understand the act of writing history we must also recognize [...] that the past is necessarily embedded in the present human condition. [...] History is an ongoing conversation that yields not final truths, but an endless succession of discoveries that change our understanding, not only of the past but of ourselves and of the times in which we live. (p. 11, p. 277)

Nash et al (1997) further explain that because the present changes, each generation asks new questions of the past; and although the past does not change, every new generation writes its past in a whole different way.

The postmodern critique of knowledge has pushed this argument even further and has questioned things that were considered natural or given. Theorists like Hayden White (1973; 1981) underlined the limitations of historical knowledge and have called into question both written historical records and historical narratives. As Stéphane Lévesque (2008) writes, what we can take from the general assertions of the meta-Ranke historiography is “that history and narrative are not identical. History can take the form of

narrative, but a narrative does not always speak in the name of history, because it is constructed—as opposed to rescued” (p. 25).

In history education, this meta-Ranke epistemological stance is translated into an approach that rejects the dogmatic transmission of a single version of the past and aims to develop in students the ability and the disposition to arrive independently at critical and informed opinions. School history founded on this approach abstains from emphasizing indoctrination or memorization and, instead, promotes critical thinking and the analysis of the past with the aid of evidence from a variety of sources (Foster, 2012; Lévesque, 2008; Nora, 1996; Seixas, 2000; Shemilt, 2000). Some scholars term this a disciplinary approach to history (Foster, 2012; Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 2000), while others speak of ‘New History’ (Lee, 1991; Nash et al., 1997). In my work, I employ the former term.

Although the collective approach camp may see the disciplinary approach as threatening and destructive to social unity, many scholars observe that, at the present time, when people with different pasts and cultures are in close proximity, traditional ways of teaching history are no longer adequate to supply meaning (Foster, 2012; Lévesque, 2008; Nash et al., 1997; Seixas, 2000). The reason is that they provide no way of reconciling differing stories in a multicultural society. It is this gap that the disciplinary approach attempts to address, offering a platform to discuss multi-perspective accounts on the basis of evidence and argument. By not presenting single, finished versions of the past, the disciplinary approach to history brings the arguments into the classroom and provides students with the opportunity to confront and discuss conflicting accounts and multiple versions of the past. Some counter-argue that the multiple stories approach may confuse students and leave them lost in relativism. Seixas

(2000) adequately responds to this assumption by arguing that students already encounter conflicting stories in their everyday lives. What schools need to do is help young people deal with these stories, by discussing them, acknowledging others' counter stories, and analyzing the multiple perspectives. In support of this idea, Foster (2012) further suggests that the disciplinary approach allows students to understand that history textbooks offer only *one* selected version of the past and any historical account is a social construction, which needs to be analyzed carefully and critically.

### **Historical Thinking**

A person who studies history ought to get a sense of the great sweep of human life and endeavor, a sense of what man has tried to do and failed to do, a sense of tragedy, of splendor, and of wonder... History may not give a man a philosophy, it may not make him a philosopher, but if it does not make him ask very profound philosophical questions, it is strange indeed. (G.E. Wilson, 1951)

Drawing from the critiques brought forward by the critical approach to diversity, scholars argue that insistence on linear, mono-cultural narratives is not an effective way to educate students of the twenty first century (Gerin-Lajoie, 2012; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2009). If we are to help future citizens deal with the demands of our interconnected world, contemporary scholarship and transnational agencies increasingly emphasize the necessity to educate students not to merely master names, dates, and events, but to teach them how to think historically and, therefore, how to think critically (Council of Europe, 1996; Laville, 2004; Lévesque, 2008; Lowenthal, 2000; Stradling, 2001, 2003).



In its 1996 report, *Recommendation 1283 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on History and the Learning of History in Europe*, the Council of Europe points in this direction by stating: “The main aim of history teaching and learning is to show young people that [...] history cannot be approached like mathematics” (para. 99). In this respect, “schools should pay greater attention to preparation for history learning than to the teaching of historical facts: in the case of history, the emphasis should be on teaching how to learn rather than on imparting facts” (para. 101).

Similarly, Peter Lee (1991) argues that history education is not doing its job if schoolchildren do not understand how historical knowledge is attained: “the ability to recall accounts without any understanding of the problems involved in constructing them or the criteria involved in evaluating them has nothing historical about it” (pp. 48-49).

Historical thinking is widely recognized as an approach that encourages students to think because it draws from critical faculties that are common to historians: their ability to isolate a problem, analyze its component parts, and offer an interpretation, as well as their qualities of curiosity, empathy, and so forth. However, historical thinking’s importance does not only lie in the fact that, as a result of their education, students will become experts in analyzing historical sources and texts. Unless a student chooses to follow the discipline of history, most young people will not engage directly with historical texts as adults. The importance of training students to think historically is related to equipping students with the knowledge, competencies, and attitudes they will need to deal with everyday social issues in today’s multicultural reality (Laville, 2004; Sakka, 2006). David Lowenthal (2000) argues that we need history to eventually learn

how to think critically: “Lacking such apprehension, we can scarcely cope with the simplest social interaction” (p. 71).

The concept of historical thinking is at the center of several recommendations brought forward by European organizations dealing with history education in Europe (Stegers, 2015; Stradling, 2001, 2003). It is also widely discussed by scholars theorizing history education (Laville, 2004; Lévesque, 2008; Lowenthal, 2000; Nash et al., 1997; Seixas & Morton, 2013). In regards to Greece, historical thinking as a teaching and learning method holds a central position in discussions pertaining to the country’s school history, both within the academic community (Kokkinos & Nakou, 2006; Mavroskoufis, 2005; Nakou, 2000) and the official Greek history curriculum (YP.E.P.Th.-Pedagogic Institute, 2003a).

Several scholars have elaborated on historical thinking and its main principles. Peter Seixas, for example, is a Canadian scholar who has written extensively on this topic. He is the director of the historical thinking project, which worked on developing a framework of six historical thinking concepts.<sup>2</sup> His recent publications, *The Big Six: Historical Thinking Concepts* (Seixas & Morton, 2013) and *New Directions in Assessing Historical Thinking* (Ercikan & Seixas, 2015), serve as a useful guide on historical thinking, both for in-service teachers and researchers in the field of history education.

Although my study is informed by Seixas and the work of other scholars on history education, in regards to historical thinking, I utilize primarily the five concepts presented by Stéphane Lévesque (2008) in his book, *Thinking Historically: Educating Students for the Twenty-First Century*. Seixas (2008) has acknowledged that Lévesque’s book is “the

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<sup>2</sup> See [historicalthinking.ca](http://historicalthinking.ca): 1. Historical significance, 2. Evidence, 3. Continuity and change, 4. Cause and consequence, 5. Historical perspectives, and 6. Ethical dimension.

first in North America to take these concepts on in an extended, scholarly, and systematic way” (p. viii). In this book, Lévesque compacts the historical thinking concepts into five categories: historical significance, continuity and change, progress and decline, evidence, and historical empathy. His account of these five concepts was a useful tool for my research because he provides a detailed discussion founded on a broad theoretical framework. His conception of progress and decline was particularly informative for my analysis regarding representations of Western versus non-Western peoples.

Overall, I use these concepts in my research to analyze the textbooks’ narratives, sources, and questions by examining the extent to which these elements provide a platform for the cultivation and promotion of historical thinking. In what follows, I give an overview of the concepts and the questions they raise.

Lévesque (2008), a proponent of the disciplinary approach to history, begins by distinguishing between substantive and procedural knowledge of history; the former relating to historical content, and the latter comprising the tools and skills required to study the past and the construction of historical knowledge. The five historical thinking concepts he analyzes are related to the second type of historical knowledge: procedural. However, it is important to note that, as Lévesque observes, it is impossible to have a strict distinction between content and skills, because one cannot exist without the other. Students cannot think historically if they have no knowledge of the past. For example, students cannot comment on how non-Western peoples are portrayed in the narratives and the consequences of these depictions, if they do not know the content related to colonization. This viewpoint constitutes one of the main positions of this thesis: rather than learning one or the other, both content and skills should be developed

simultaneously. To paraphrase Lévesque, sophisticated historical thinkers are those knowledgeable of both the substance of the past and the conceptual tools needed to study the past.

Moving on to Lévesque's five concepts of historical thinking, the first is historical significance and is related to the question, what is important in the past? Out of the many events of human experience, historians, and by extension, history textbooks, narrate only some events. This raises another question: why these events and not others? As mentioned in the previous section, Nash et al. (1997) observe that an event becomes significant and is included in historical narratives when historians see its relevance to the present. Until the mid-twentieth century, the question of significance was un-problematic, but it has now become obvious that significance is not inherent in the event itself, but rather it is political and tightly linked to the present and to the questions, concerns, and values of contemporary society. In school history, events are selected because they are considered important in defining a community, a nation, and an identity. This, of course, implies that the selection of events is a political decision, one that can have serious consequences on how students perceive their society and the diverse 'others' within and outside of it. If, for example, school history overemphasizes the 'we,' as Rüsen (2007) suggests regarding the formation of identity, this may result in ethnocentrism,<sup>3</sup> a cultural strategy that imposes negative values on 'other' peoples and, in certain instances, may lead to clashes between different ethnic identities.

Lévesque (2008) presents a number of questions raised by the concept of historical significance. Without giving an exhaustive account of all these questions, I will briefly

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<sup>3</sup> Rüsen defines ethnocentrism as, "a widespread cultural strategy to realize collective identity by distinguishing one's own people from others. [...] It realizes this distinction with values which put a positive esteem on one's group and a negative on the other group" (2007, p. 26).

refer to those that have direct relevance to my project. Lévesque asks, who is included and who is excluded from the narratives? In terms of my study's textbooks, this question raises interesting issues regarding whose stories are considered relevant and whose stories are thought less important. Subsequently, this leads to even more questions regarding the consequences of inclusion and exclusion and how they construct depictions of the past, the present, and the various actors involved: How were people's lives affected because of a certain event? How many were affected? Were some explored more than others? Is the focus only on events that affected masses of people, or certain small groups of people? These questions are integral for my study because, even if all parties were included in the narrative, it is important to explore the extent to which the effects of an event on *all* interested individuals and groups were adequately investigated within the textbooks.

The second category of concepts related to historical thinking is continuity and change. When studying the past, historians typically choose to focus on those events that they deem significant, those that have brought about changes in the course of human life. Lévesque (2008) argues that, inasmuch as there is importance in studying changes in the past, historians, and by extension educators and students, must also pay attention to certain elements of continuity in human life. In order to integrate the concepts of continuity and change within history curricula and textbooks, Lévesque introduces the following two objectives that are related a) to historical sequence, and b) to colligation.

Historical sequence attempts to address the fact that history in schools often focuses on a series of disconnected events. The problem with such a presentation is that students are then unable to see the connection between these historical events and their

significance for the past and present. In order to deal with this confusion of historical time, Lévesque (2008) proposes that both the material and teaching need to promote chronological thinking; an element, he argues, that provides the necessary framework for organizing historical thought. Developing chronological thinking does not mean that students only memorize timelines. Beyond acquiring a strong sense of historical time, young people need to be trained to examine the relationship between events, which means being able to contemplate on the causes and motives behind events, as well as their consequences for the past, present, and future.

The second objective Lévesque (2008) brings forward for the teaching of continuity and change refers to the way we organize and group the contents of history. He argues that the best way to organize historical material and lessons is by taking into consideration colligatory concepts:<sup>4</sup> pervasive themes and ideas present in a series of historical events. For example, if we take the theme of immigration and examine how this colligatory concept runs through various moments in history, we have a useful tool for constructing intelligible interpretations of historical continuity and change. Most importantly, he claims, it may also discourage simplistic and naïve understandings of the past.

For my research, the concept of continuity and change is useful, especially when investigating the portrayal of non-Western peoples, because it allows me to investigate

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<sup>4</sup> McCullagh (2004) defines colligation as follows: “The word ‘colligation’ is derived from the Latin word *colligere*, meaning to bring things together. Some colligatory words and phrases name unique patterns, in the same way as proper names refer to unique people or places; and some colligatory words name common patterns, just as common nouns can refer to many things. As such, the phrase ‘the French Revolution’ refers to just one pattern of events, whereas the word ‘revolution’ is a common noun, which can be used to refer to a whole range of revolutions. [...] Historians often find patterns in the past after studying available evidence. These are patterns formed by actions and events, and often represent changes of a certain kind. Descriptions of these patterns provide new information about the past, about the way in which actions and events related to one another” (pp. 125-126).

the chronological presentation of historical events and whether or how they are connected with one another across time and space. It also helps me to explore how the narrative deals with issues like causes and consequences, meaning how and if the textbooks explain the consequences of events/actors on others. It also gives me the means to explore whether the events are presented in a way that brings forth colligatory concepts—for example, concepts related to nation, immigration, racism, causes, and so forth—that develop connections between historical events and informed interpretations.

Lévesque's third group of concepts is progress and decline. In addition to narrating significant events and making connections between them, historians also attempt to evaluate the direction of change, namely to address the following questions: as a result of historical events, did things change for the better or for the worse? If things improved, in what way did they improve and for whom? Lévesque (2008) describes two ways these concepts have been employed by historians since the Enlightenment: a) oppositional and b) successional. The oppositional application suggests that progress and decline coexist, meaning that where we have progress in some aspects of life, we have decline in others. As for the latter, the successional stance implies that it is not possible for the two concepts, progress and decline, to occur at the same time. It also assumes that decline is inferior; therefore, the only desirable direction for humanity is progress.

Lévesque argues that school history in the Western part of the world has traditionally supported a successional view of the past, where collective memory is transmitted as stories of inevitable freedom and progress. Lévesque notes two consequences of this viewpoint: first, the two concepts fall into an asymmetrical relationship, reducing decline to being only partial, temporary, and a stepping-stone to

further progress. Second, history is conceived as following a linear route, that of progress and advancement. As a result, human experience is described as a collective singular where the universality of progress is praised and diversity in development is mostly ignored or considered negative. As he observes, such a representation runs the risk of conveying a simplistic depiction of the past, one that may prevent a deeper understanding of the direction of change.

To counter the effects of this linear representation of progress and decline, Lévesque (2008) presents the following three principles necessary for interpreting changes that occurred in the past: continuous application, equal importance, and prudential relevance. The first involves applying the standard principles of evaluation that one applies to an entire period and not just certain portions of the past. This principle, as Lévesque argues, is meant to “prevent historians from superimposing contemporary norms and concepts on the past that would fit only certain changes occurring during that period, and thus predispose the historian to view events as moving in some singular direction—usually one of progress” (p. 100). The second principle, of equal importance, is related to the act of recognizing the simultaneous existence of both progress and decline when evaluating a certain event. This means, for example, that while a historical event or action may have positive effects in one group or aspect of life, it may simultaneously have negative effects in others. The third and final principle is prudential relevance, and it requires that a historical event be evaluated on the standards of the period under study and not on the present-day ideas and assumptions.

The concepts of progress and decline and their evaluative principles have a direct application on my study, especially for my question related to the portrayal of non-



Western peoples. For example, when looking at the narratives that describe non-Westerners, Lévesque's progress and decline concepts allow me to examine how the textbooks present progress in the non-Western world in comparison to the West. In some cases, colonization is presented as the inevitable result of the West's industrial progress that promoted the cultural advancement of the colonized peoples. The problem with this line of reasoning is that it presents a linear narrative of inevitable freedom and progress. Furthermore, it ignores the decline that the colonization process may have brought to certain aspects of life and to a specific group of people.

The fourth historical thinking concept is evidence. Lévesque suggests a step-by-step pedagogical approach for an educator to successfully integrate evidence, namely various types of historical sources, in the teaching of history: 1) developing research questions, 2) collecting and selecting evidence, 3) analyzing evidence, and 4) developing interpretive answers. In this study, I focus on the first and second steps.

For the first step, Lévesque refers to the type of research questions that are appropriate for the investigation of historical evidence. He points out that the provided questions should be thought-provoking, articulated in simple language, and framed around colligatory concepts. Most importantly, these questions should not lead to simple yes-or-no answers, but to historical reflection and critical examination of the sources. In the context of my study, developing research questions is an important element because most of the textbooks have questions at the end of each chapter. Based on Lévesque's first step, I explore how the in-text questions relate to the narrative and the sources, as well as the type of response they elicit; i.e., recollection, yes-or-no, critical reflection, and so forth.

Lévesque's second step, and the line of questions he suggests for selecting the appropriate evidence, serves as a guideline for my examination of the historical sources that are available in my study's textbooks. Out of the several questions he poses, I focus my investigation on these two: Does the source relate to—support or contradict—other essential sources? Does the source contribute to deepening students' historical thinking? (p. 134). These two questions are important for my investigation because the presence of multiple perspectives is an essential component for the presentation of history and for the promotion of historical and critical thinking. The Council of Europe places great importance on multiperspectivity (Stradling, 2001, 2003) and presents it as a necessary element for educating students in the twenty-first century. If the in-text sources merely repeat or reinforce the textbook narrative, then students' exposure to contradicting stories is limited and, therefore, they will not be familiarized with alternative versions of the past. Especially in chapter five, where I explore the third question of this study, I will be looking at the contribution of historical sources to the general narrative and to the understanding of specific historical issues and events.

Lévesque's (2008) fifth and final concept for the development of historical thinking is historical empathy. This concept does not simply imply sympathy for actors of the past, but refers to an imaginative way of thinking about past events. It attempts to train students to distance themselves from the limiting lens of their own perspective and to encourage them to imagine, interpret, and understand the world through a belief system other than their own.

Lévesque (2008) develops an extensive discussion on how one can teach students' historical empathy, but it is beyond the scope of my study to cover all the points he

makes. For the purpose of my research, I use two elements from his discussion. First is the idea that historical interpretation should take into account the social, cultural, and economical context of the historical period under examination. Since actors of the past had their own belief and value systems, any interpretation or judgment of them or their actions should take the context of the past into consideration. If students impose their own morality on the past and empathize with actors in a decontextualized, naïve, and presentist manner—that is, judging the past with present day values—then they may arrive at simplistic understandings, where actions are seen as defective and morally inferior. Second, and in addition to being aware of past actors’ different belief systems, students must also be aware and reflective of their own assumptions, and positionalities. History is an active dialogue between past and present, and when examining it, students must be aware of their personal assumptions, values, and cultural contexts, as well as their impact on historical interpretations and understandings.

In terms of the textbooks under study, this concept guides my investigation of how the narratives, questions, and sources build on and distinguish between past and present-day interpretations. Namely, I examine whether the textbooks provide explanations on how it was different in the past; whether they make a distinction between interpretations based on past actors’ different sociocultural contexts on one hand, and our contemporary understandings on the other.

In concluding on historical thinking, I want to note that all of these concepts are interrelated. For example, we cannot teach historical empathy without taking into consideration how the text, questions, and sources deal with the notion of progress. Historical thinking is a way of understanding and interpreting events; it is not about

isolated skills. The same applies to my project and the way I use Lévesque's five concepts. The purpose of this study is not to measure to what extent the textbooks incorporate all five of Lévesque's historical thinking concepts. Rather, these concepts provide the lens through which I will discuss the findings of my study.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

In this chapter I discussed the study's theoretical framework related to education and history education. By examining the educational approaches to diversity and by elaborating on issues pertaining to the thematic focus of school history and the nature of historical knowledge, I focused on the critical approach to diversity, world history versus nation-centered history, Ross Dunn's models of world history, the disciplinary approach to history, and historical thinking.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH PROCESS**

This chapter consists of four sections. In the first, I discuss qualitative research as a mode of investigation and how its principles have informed my project. In the second section, I present constructivism and how I situate the study and myself within this framework. The third section consists of a review of narrative as a mode of research, where I also discuss its use in my study. Finally, I present the methods and the overall process of my research project in detail.

#### **Qualitative Research and my Study**

This research project is situated within the field of qualitative research (QR). My choice to conduct a qualitative study is related to my research goal, as well as my questions and the nature of my data. The aim of my project is first to examine and critically analyze the narratives within the history textbooks, and not to generalize, predict or control the latter research goals mostly associated with quantitative research methods (Muijs, 2004). Secondly, I do not aspire to confirm a hypothesis or to arrive solely at a cause and effect conclusion with my research questions. By comparing the 1980 and 2015 Greek history textbooks, my goal is to document how they have evolved and to acquire an understanding of this evolution within the Greek context. Third and most importantly, since I will be investigating history textbooks, I believe a quantitative approach, like quantitative content analysis for example,<sup>1</sup> offers a fragmented depiction of the texts and thus would not allow me to access the complexity and richness of the data. Further, my intention is not to look at the textbooks as disconnected word-numbers,

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<sup>1</sup> Kerlinger (1986) defined content analysis as a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables.

but rather to examine them holistically and view them as narratives that create meaning and tell stories with a specific purpose. For these reasons, I chose to work within the qualitative paradigm.

Since its inception, various scholars have defined qualitative research in many ways. In his latest book, John Creswell (2013) gives the following definition:

Qualitative research begins with assumptions and the use of interpretive/theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to people and places under study, and data analysis that is both inductive and deductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and its contribution to the literature or a call for change. (p. 44)

Although Creswell's definition is detailed and includes multiple elements regarding the qualitative research process, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) show that, in the past and at present, QR is not always conducted in the way that Creswell describes it and it does not have the same meaning for all researchers.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) offer a historical review and trace the evolution of qualitative research by identifying eight distinct moments, the first of which they name the *traditional phase* (1900-1940). During this time, researchers aimed to produce objective, valid and reliable accounts of the 'other,' which often led to colonizing depictions of participants that distorted reality and cultures. The following period is the

*modernist phase* (1940-1970s), when qualitative researchers struggled to match the rigor of quantitative research. The third moment is located between the 1970s and 1986. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) name it the *blurred genres phase*, during which time researchers used a variety of paradigms, methods, and strategies and replaced totalizing approaches with more pluralistic, interpretive, and open-ended perspectives. The period between 1986 and 1990 is named the *crisis of representation phase*. During this time, researchers started to include more reflexivity in their work, by calling into question issues of gender, class, and race. Fifth was the *postmodern phase* (1990-1995), a period where researchers used experimental forms and more participatory and activist oriented modes of research. The phase that followed was the *postexperimental phase* (1995-2000), during which time researchers employed new forms of expression such as literary, poetic, visual, and performative modes of inquiry and representation. The seventh phase, the *methodologically contested phase* (2000-2004), is a moment of great tension, where researchers question the existing methods of inquiry. Finally is the eighth and current phase: the *fractured future* (2004- ), when researchers are confronted with conservative, positivistic orientations.

Despite the linear presentation of these eight historical moments, QR is not always straightforward and the work conducted within the field does not strictly fit into one of these well-defined chronological boxes. After all, the two scholars note that, like all histories, the above timeline is arbitrary. “Each of the earlier historical moments is still operating in the present, either as a legacy or as a set of practices that researchers continue to follow or argue against” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 20). Currently, qualitative research draws from any of the above-mentioned historical moments and

practitioners utilize a great variety of frameworks, strategies of inquiry, and methods. As such, QR is a site of multiple interpretive frameworks and privileges no single methodological practice over another. It has no one theory or distinct set of methods. It is up to the inquirer to choose what best fits his/her philosophy and research project. This very multiplicity is one of the major contributions of QR, because it can offer a variety of important insights, meanings, and knowledge. For example, in literary studies, textual analysis may treat texts as self-confined systems. On the other hand, if someone adopts a cultural-studies or feminist perspective, the textual analysis may focus on issues related to reveal gender, race, or class (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Considering QR's complexity, identifying and clarifying the theoretical framework is one of the most important tasks of the qualitative researcher. Therefore, within the field of QR, positioning oneself within the various paradigms is an integral part of the research process (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

In my research, becoming aware of and clarifying my philosophical assumptions has been pivotal in constructing my overall project. However, identifying my beliefs has not been a linear process. Rather, it was a mutually informed and co-constructed process. I found myself moving constantly between my philosophical assumptions, the definition of my topic, my questions, my methods, and the development of my interpretations and understandings.

Scholars employ several terms to name the underlying beliefs researchers bring to their work: worldview, paradigms, philosophical assumptions, theoretical frameworks, alternative knowledge claims, etc. (Creswell, 2007). All of these terms denote the basic set of beliefs that shape how researchers see the world and, ultimately, guide their actions



within it (Guba, 1990). These beliefs are linked to one's stance in regards to ontology, epistemology, and methodology. The overall net that contains researchers' ontological, epistemological, and methodological principles ultimately determines the questions that they ask, the methods they use, and the interpretations they apply to their data.

Ontology is the branch of philosophy that deals with the key question of whether there is a 'real' world 'out there' that is independent of our knowledge of it. In more general terms, ontology is concerned with the kinds of things that actually exist. What kind of being is the human being? What is the nature of reality? Such inquiries are inherently ontological questions.

Epistemology, on the other hand, is concerned with the origins and nature of knowing and the construction of knowledge (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). An epistemology is literally a theory of knowledge; it reflects views of what we can know about the world, focusing on two key questions: what is the relationship between the inquirer and the known? Can an observer identify 'real' or 'objective' relations between social phenomena?

Finally, methodology addresses the issue of how we know the world and how one goes about gaining knowledge of it (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 2013). Stemming from the Greek word *hodos* (way), a methodology is the study (*logos*) of the way (*method*). In other words, methodology is the theory behind the method; it defines what method one should follow, why, and how (Van, 1990). Methodology puts paradigms of interpretation into motion and, at the same time, connects the researcher to specific methods of collecting and analyzing empirical material (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The term method refers to the specific strategies used to collect and analyze data,

such as interviews, observation, document analysis, and so on. As Polkinghorne (1983) notes, the use of a method is not an isolated activity, but is shaped by implicit or explicit reference to a particular methodological framework. Therefore, how one uses a specific method may change depending on the methodological framework within which it operates.

### **Situating the Study and Myself within Constructivism**

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, QR draws from a great variety of philosophical assumptions that inform and shape the practice of research (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Creswell, 2007; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Howe, 1998; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Yanow & Schawrtz-Shea, 2006). This research project and my understanding of reality and knowledge are informed by constructivism.

In regards to ontology, this perspective sees reality as actively constructed through social interactions and experiences, taking into consideration that people construct meanings, and that each of these constructions represents a particular point of view. As such, there is no single reality (Butler-Kisber, 2010). Entities in the human sciences “are matters of definition and conventions; they exist only in the minds of the persons contemplating them. They do not ‘really’ exist” (Lincoln & Guba, 2013, p. 39).

In terms of epistemology, constructivists accept that there are multiple ways of understanding and knowing the world and that the relationship between the known and the knower is always person and context-specific. Thus, the perspective of the observer and the object of observation are inseparable (Butler-Kisber, 2010). From a constructivist perspective, knowledge is not neutral, but subjective; “culturally and historically contingent, laden with moral and political values, and serving certain interests” (Howe,

1998, p. 14). Therefore, “knowledge is not discovered but [rather it is] created” (Lincoln & Guba, 2013, p. 39) and socially negotiated.

As a researcher, I hold the position that the meaning we ascribe to the world is subjective and individually constructed. This stance has implications on two aspects of my project: my views on historical narratives and my stance regarding the research process and findings. Drawing from constructivism, I view historical narratives and, thus, history textbooks as providing versions of a story. I do not regard narratives as complete, objective, and accurate representations of reality. Rather, I adopt the view that the events included in the texts as history, how the story is told, and how it is interpreted are highly influenced by the historians and readers’ beliefs, interests, and identities and by their political, historical, and social contexts.

Similarly, I believe that every scholarly work is a subjective construction. It is created by subjective beings whose beliefs and assumptions change with time and experience. Hence, the choice of research topic, the questions, and the research process is always a reflection of the identity, perspective, and political sociocultural context of the researcher at a particular moment in time. In this respect, I admit to not producing an objective, unquestionable account of the issue under study. I confess to the fact that my understanding and interpretation of the historical narratives is accompanied and informed by my current worldview, my educational standpoint, and even by my affiliation with Greece; my biases, my emotional attachments, and my personal concerns. For these reasons, throughout the thesis, I aim to be transparent and account for my personal beliefs, my theoretical lens, and how they have influenced the choices I have made and the interpretations I have constructed.

However, it is important here to note that I do not adopt absolute relativism toward the outcomes of my research. James Ogilvy (1977) argues there is not *one truth* that corresponds to reality and therefore not one interpretation of a problem under question. Instead, there are *some truths*, which hold within communities. In effect, knowledge claims are submitted to validation tests within separate communities of like-minded interpreters; what each community accepts as knowledge is what agrees with the epistemological position that exists within that community. “Objectivity is a construction; it is a kind of commitment in which an ultimate ground is hoped for. But the ground does not exist outside of a particular perspective” (Polkinghorne, 1983, pp. 250-251). Drawing from this line of thought, I regard my work to hold some truth within the framework of a specific community that ascribes to the same region of truth. Overall, the goal of my analysis and my research project is “to *suggest* [rather] than *convince*, to open a ‘region’ of truth rather than seek to present a definite one” (Freeman, 2004, p. 79).

### **Methodological Considerations**

In this section, I provide the background and the rationale for my methodological approach. As I explained in the first chapter of this thesis, among the various methodologies used for conducting textbook research, I adopt the theoretical lens of narrative analysis. Before I explain why I adopted this specific framework and how it has informed my work, I will discuss how scholars define narrative and how they view its function in human life. I will then give a general overview of narrative research, referring to the intellectual developments within human sciences that gave rise to this mode of investigation. Finally, I will review its various uses across the disciplines.

## **What is Narrative? What Does It Do?**

Scholars have defined narrative in a variety of ways throughout time and across disciplines. The Greek philosopher Aristotle was among the first to interrogate the narrative form, and to examine what it does and how. He saw narrative as a story having a beginning, middle, and an end; as a moral tale that depicts a rupture from the unexpected (Riessman, 2008). Over time, the theoretical definition of narrative, its purpose, and its meaning have been the focus of various theoretical traditions, all of them highlighting the pervasiveness and centrality of narrative in people's lives.

In his widely quoted statement, Roland Barthes (1975) highlights the universality of the narrative:

There are countless forms of narrative in the world. First of all, there is a prodigious variety of genres, each of which branches out into a variety of media [...]. Among the vehicles of narrative are articulated language, whether oral or written, pictures, still or moving, gestures, and an ordered mixture of all those substances; narrative is present in myth, legend, fables, tales, short stories, epics, history, tragedy, [drama], comedy, pantomime, paintings [...], stained-glass windows, movies, local news, conversation. Moreover, in this infinite variety of forms, it is present at all times, in all places, in all societies; indeed narrative starts with the very history of mankind; there is not, there has never been anywhere, any people without narrative; all classes, all human groups, have their stories, [...] Like life itself, it is there, international, transhistorical, transcultural. (p. 237)

Employing a more brief definition, Donald Polkinghorne (1988) describes narrative as a story: "Narrative can refer to the process of making a story, the cognitive scheme of

the story, or to the result of the process—also called ‘stories,’ ‘tales,’ or ‘histories’” (p. 13).

Within history, postmodern theorist Hayden White (1981) sees the function of narrative as a meta-code, a human universal, which allows the transmission of transcultural messages about the nature of reality and about the meaning of human experience. He argues that narratives inform us not only about past events, but also about how people understand these events and what meaning they ascribe to them (White, 1973). He goes so far as to suggest that, “the absence of narrative capacity or a refusal of narrative indicates an absence or refusal of meaning itself” (White, 1981, p. 2). This line of reasoning suggests that meaning-making and narrative are closely interwoven and inseparable processes, something that has been recognized and argued by Jerome Bruner (2004): “narrative imitates life, life imitates narrative” (p. 692). Bruner (1986) sees narrative as an essential means of human sense-making and identified it as one of the two primary modes of knowing and thinking. For Bruner, there is the traditional, logical-scientific mode of knowing called paradigmatic cognition on the one hand, and on the other, the storied knowing, or narrative cognition. For the latter, he argues that people make sense of their experience by looking for connections between the various events of their lives and placing them together in a connected cognitive scheme.

Overall, narratives serve different purposes for individuals than they do for groups, although there is some overlap. On an individual level, people create their autobiographical narrative, presenting life as unified and whole. They use the narrative form to remember, argue, justify, persuade, engage, entertain, and even mislead an audience. This function enables people to construe who they are and foresee where they

are heading. In stories/histories about social groups, narratives connect and place significance on seemingly random activities. They serve to give cohesion, to mobilize others, to transmit values, and to create common beliefs; they do political work (Polkinghorne, 1988; Riessman, 2008). In this respect, narratives are cultural meanings and interpretations that guide perception, thought, interaction, and action. They organize life by formulating interpretations of the past and plans for the future (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004).

It is exactly this recognition of the narratives' centrality in individual and social life that has led researchers to turn their attention to narrative as a mode of investigation.

### **Historical Background of Narrative Research**

The presence of stories/narratives in our lives is not new: "human beings have lived out and told stories about that living for as long as we could talk" (Clandinin & Rosiek 2007, p. 35). What seems to be fairly new during the past few decades is the interest that researchers have shown in narrative as the focus and the vehicle of their work. By using narrative methodologies, researchers across disciplines attempt to investigate people's stories and understand their function in human life, and in constructing social reality (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007).

The advent of narrative analysis as a mode of investigation can be traced in the early works dedicated to the hermeneutic study of the *Bible*, the *Talmud*, and the *Koran*. Czarniawska- Joerges (2004) places the beginning of more contemporary accounts in the work of Vladimir Propp (1968), who published the *Morphology of the Folktale* in 1928. Although narrative research flourished initially with linguists and in the field of literary studies—e.g., Roland Barthes, Mikhail Bahktin, Paul Ricoeur—the study of narrative

does not fit neatly and exclusively into only one scholarly field. Currently, the analytical study of narrative has spread to virtually every field of the humanities and the social sciences; for example, history: David Carr, Donald Spence, Hayden White; anthropology: Mary Catherine Bateson, Clifford Geertz; psychology: Jerome Bruner, Amia Lieblich, Elliot Mishler, Donald E. Polkinghorne; sociolinguistics: William Labov and Joshua Waletzky; sociology: Laurel Richardson; education: D. Jean Clandinin, F. Michael Connelly. The idea of narrative has energized the study of an array of topics—social movements, organizations, politics, and other macro-level processes. Furthermore, it is increasingly used in research conducted about particular professions, such as law, medicine, nursing, and social work (Clandinin & Connelly 2000; Czarniawska-Joerges, 2004; Riessman, 1993, 2008; Wells, 2011).

**The narrative turn.** In the literature associated with the study of people's lives, the popularity of narrative research is attributed to the commonly referred 'narrative turn' in qualitative research. Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) define it as "a change in direction from one way of thinking or being toward another" (p. 7). They identify four basic themes that contributed to this turn: first, the change in the relationship between the researcher and the researched. Positivistic approaches and objectivity gave way to research that focused on interpretation and the understanding of meaning. With this new approach, both parties learn from each other and change during the research process. The second step toward narrative research was the move in the human sciences from using numbers as the main vehicle for research to using words. Researchers started to realize that numbers could not represent the complexity of human experience and needed more nuanced ways to depict the multiplicity of human life; thus came the turn to narrative. The third change was the



recognition of the power of the particular, meaning a turn from striving for generalizability and capturing the universal, to acquiring a deeper understanding of a particular experience in a specific setting. The fourth and final turn was blurred knowing. This was a move from defending a single way of knowing the world to accepting that there are multiple ways of knowing and understanding human experience.

The mechanical metaphor adopted from the natural sciences—investigators provide an objective description of the world and position themselves outside the field of study to do so—[gave] way to narrative studies that position the investigator as part of the field, simultaneously mediating and interpreting the ‘other’ in dialogue with the ‘self’ (Riessman, 2008, p. 17).

The importance of this turn for the study of human life is that it made room for research that includes the subjectivities of both investigators and participants.

### **Narrative Research and my Study**

Although the study of narrative started with the examination of literary texts, within most of contemporary literature associated with education, psychology, sociology, and anthropology, narrative as a method of research tends to focus on stories of a single life or of the lives of a small number of individuals (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Chase, 2005; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2007; Gubrium & Holstein, 2012; Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998; Mishler, 1999; Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007; Riessman, 1993, 2008; Wells, 2011). Within the aforementioned fields, narrative research takes many forms and uses a variety of interdisciplinary analytical practices. Clandinin and Rosiek (2007), who use narrative research to investigate people’s lives, give the following inclusive description of what narrative researchers do: “[They] study the

individual's experience in the world, an experience that is storied both in the living and telling and that can be studied by listening, observing, living alongside another, and writing and interpreting texts" (pp. 42-43).

Some scholars prefer to distinguish between narrative as a text and narrative as a mode of inquiry. Pinnegar and Daynes (2007), for example, suggest that within qualitative research, narrative has been used to denote either the phenomenon or the method of study. Similar to this distinction, Polkinghorne (1995) describes two types of narrative studies, 1) analysis of narratives and 2) narrative analysis. According to Polkinghorne, in the former, researchers use stories as data, which they analyze in order to provide descriptions of themes that hold across stories or taxonomies of types of stories, characters, or settings. This type of study takes the stories themselves as its primary source of data. It examines the content, structure, performance, or context of these narratives, which are investigated as a whole. On the other hand, in narrative analysis, data consist of actions, events, and material, which the researchers then synthesize or configure in order to produce a story (e.g. a history, case study, or biographic episode). In other words, analysis of narratives—or the study of the phenomenon, according to Pinnegar and Daynes (2007)—moves from stories to common elements, and narrative analysis—or the method of study—moves from elements to stories. An example of the first approach is research that uses interviews as its primary way of gathering data. The researcher then uses the transcribed text to analyze a person's story and to locate the themes that emerge from it (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Creswell, 2007). In the second approach, research includes a combination of various forms of data such as interviews, observation, field notes, documents, artifacts, and other visual forms, such as

photos, diaries, films, and so forth. The researcher then takes elements from all of the available data, synthesizes it and constructs his/her own narrative, a story of a life or an event.

Within the framework of this study, I regard my work as simultaneously encompassing both approaches. The elements within the textbooks—the text, the illustrations, the questions, the historical sources—constitute the narrative that I analyze. At the same time, the description of the textbooks and the analysis that I provide also constitute a narrative. The narrative that I produce is more than a summary: it is a selection, an interpretation, and a constructive action. Therefore, within my study, I regard the narrative and the construction of the narrative's interwoven processes that inform one another. Hence, to define my methodology, I do not follow the strict distinction of 'analysis of a narrative' versus 'narrative analysis.' Rather, I employ the term narrative analysis inclusively.

In exploring narrative analysis as a method of research, Catherine Kohler Riessman (2008) explains: "As a general field, narrative analysis is useful when the interest is in how and why a story is constructed as it is, what it accomplishes, and how the audience affects what may be told" (p. 11). As such, narrative analysts are mainly interested in investigating the succession of events and how this is configured, the cultural resources the story draws on or takes for granted, the storehouse of plots within the text, what the story accomplishes, and the gaps and inconsistencies that might suggest preferred, alternative, or counter-narratives. Riessman (2008) focuses mostly on oral storytelling, but her theoretical positioning in narrative analysis is relevant to my study, as I am

interested in examining how textbooks assemble and sequence events and how they use visual images and other elements in order to communicate specific ideas and positions.

Riessman (2008) differentiates narrative analysis from qualitative category-centered methods, such as content analysis and grounded theory, by how they treat the text. On one hand, she argues that category-centered methods tend to distill long accounts into fragmented, often out of context, coding units. In contrast, narrative analysis treats and preserves extended accounts as continuous analytical units, and pays close attention to sequential structural features, which Riessman sees as the hallmarks of narrative. Category-centered methods, then, are useful for making general statements across many subjects, whereas narrative analysis is grounded in the study of the particular. As such, the use of narrative analysis in my work allows me to examine the narratives holistically in order to understand how and why a particular event is storied the way it is, what the narrative accomplishes by developing the story the way it does, and its possible effects on the reader or the listener.

Considering that stories influence how one perceives, remembers, and prepares for future events (Polkinghorne, 1988; Riessman, 2008), I consider the study of historical narratives an important task in educational research. History textbooks contain narratives that may influence the ideas that students have about themselves, the others, and the world. Since these ideas may guide their actions as future citizens, it is important to review the narratives and revise them when needed.

My analysis is additionally guided by the recognition that the narratives themselves are constructed in dialogue with the context, are recounted with intentionality to accomplish a purpose, and are always partial and told from a particular perspective

(Chase, 2005). Therefore, I consider the narratives within the textbooks as a version of the story and not as the objective, one and only truth. I recognize the fact that the authors of the textbooks made particular choices and that these choices are context and time specific. In my study, I attempt to investigate these choices and to analyze them in relation to my theoretical framework.

Finally, narrative methodology informs my stance in terms of my own interpretations:

Narratives are interpretive and, in turn, require interpretation: They do not ‘speak for themselves,’ or provide direct access to other times, places, or cultures. Our analytic interpretations are partial, [they are] alternative truths that aim for believability, [and] not certitude. [They aim] for enlargement of understanding rather than control. [...] The meaning of a text is neither to be ‘found’ nor ‘created’ from nothing: it is constructed anew from what already exists (a text, a tradition, a genre) in the interaction between the readers and the text, among the readers, and between the author, the readers, and the text (Czarniawska-Joerges, 2004, pp. 22-23, 67).

This line of reasoning suggests that those of us analyzing collective remembering and other forms of human action are just as socio-culturally situated as the individuals, groups, or other material we examine (Wertsch, 2002). Accordingly—and as mentioned earlier in this chapter—I do not confess to providing the true meaning of the historical narratives. I present my interpretation of the author’s interpretation of the historical event. My interpretation of the narratives is informed by my worldview, my theoretical stance on education and history, and by my personal identity and experiences.

## **Research Process**

### **Research Questions**

In the context of the continuous diversification of Greek society and the rise of extreme right ideologies, my study critically examines Greek history textbooks (GHT) that narrate modern history. Specifically, I compare two sets of textbooks: the 1980 and 2015 grade six, nine, and twelve GHT. Drawing from a critical approach to diversity and from contemporary approaches to history, my study traces the development of the following issues: the textbooks' epistemological stance, their thematic focus, and the narratives of non-Western peoples. Specifically, my study addresses the following three research questions:

- 1) How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in terms of their epistemological orientation?
- 2) How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in terms of their thematic focus?
- 3) How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in the way they narrate histories of non-Western peoples?

### **Sources of Data**

My sources of data consist of six history textbooks, published and used in all schools across Greece. Three of them were used in 1980 and the other three are in use at the time I am writing this thesis, in 2015. All six of them cover modern history; although, as I will explain in chapter four, they vary in terms of the time periods they cover. The textbooks from both 1980 and 2015 are from grades six, nine, and twelve. The study's sources of data are the following:

#### Textbooks used in 1980

- Grade six (**80G6**): *Elliniki Istoria ton Neoteron Hronon* (Modern Greek History), 1984 edition.
- Grade nine (**80G9**): *Neoteri Europaiki Istoria* (Modern European History), 1980 edition.
- Grade twelve (**80G12**): *Istoria Elliniki ke Europaiki ton Neon Hronon* (Modern Greek and European History), 1981 edition.

#### Textbooks used in 2015<sup>2</sup>

- Grade six (**15G6**): *Istoria tou Neoterou ke Syghronou Cosmou –Student textbook and Workbook* (History of the Modern and Contemporary World), 2012 edition.
- Grade nine (**15G9**): *Neoteri ke Syghroni Istoria* (Modern and Contemporary History), 2007 edition.
- Grade twelve (**15G12**): *Istoria tou Neoterou ke Syghronou Cosmou* (History of the Modern and Contemporary World), 2008 edition.

In Greek education, various periods of history are covered in spirals over the school years. This means that, for example, modern history is first introduced in elementary school in grade six, repeated again in gymnasium in grade nine, and then again in lyceum in grade twelve. At each grade level, the textbooks are expected to cover the content in greater depth than the previous grade level, according to the students' age, although this is not always achieved. The spiral presentation of historical time periods is true for both years that I am examining: 1980 and 2015. The only difference is that for the 2015 Greek

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<sup>2</sup> Online versions of the 2015 Greek history textbooks can be found here:  
<http://ebooks.edu.gr/new/allcourses.php>.

history textbooks, the early modern years from the mid fifteenth century are covered in grades eight and eleven, in the textbooks that cover medieval history. In both the eighth and the eleventh grade textbooks, the early modern years are included in one chapter. In order to limit the scope of my study, I examine those textbooks in 2015 that cover only modern history, namely textbooks from grades six, nine, and twelve.

All the textbooks of this study are approved and published by the Greek Ministry of Education. They are distributed for free to all students across the country. All schools use the one Ministry-approved textbook, both in 1980 and in 2015. I elaborate on issues of textbook production at the beginning of chapter four.

### **Notes on the Research Process**

Before I describe the specific steps I took in order to answer my research questions, I will first discuss certain aspects of the actual research process and the presentation of my findings. Overall, I followed an open-ended process. My research questions provided a general direction for my investigation, but my direction also shifted once I started dealing with the data. For example, before starting my analysis, I made decisions on what parts of the textbook I would use to answer each question. In order to answer my first question regarding the epistemological orientation of the textbooks, I had planned to review the textbooks' introductions and the inclusion of questions and historical sources within the chapters. In the introductions, my intention was to explore if the authors refer to and explain contemporary orientations of history education, such as the constructive nature and the multiplicity of historical knowledge. However, when I began the process, I found additional elements within the introductions that dealt with issues beyond the strict boundaries I had set concerning the textbooks' epistemological stance. In this respect, in



the 1980 textbooks' introductions, which gave information regarding the historical periods that the students have studied and will study, I found data that related to the textbooks' thematic focus—my second research question. When I formulated my questions, I expected the introduction to provide information only about the textbooks' epistemological orientation (my first research question<sup>3</sup>) and the contents to relate to the thematic focus (my second research question<sup>4</sup>). However, as I engaged with the data, I realized that the research process was not linear and the elements I was investigating and discussing for one question informed certain aspects of my other questions.

To take another example, in addition to the introductions, I also examined the inclusion of questions and historical sources for the first question. For this question, my goal was to explore the presence or absence of both of these elements within the textbooks and not to analyze all the questions and sources. When I moved on to the next phase and I started investigating the narratives of non-Westerners within the textbooks (my third research question<sup>5</sup>), I looked in greater detail at the questions and sources of the sections being explored. Eventually, the findings of my third question also informed my first and second questions regarding the textbooks' epistemological stance and thematic focus. For example, in the framework of my third research question, I found that the current sixth grade history textbook does not include questions or historical sources that present the voice of the indigenous peoples of the Americas when Columbus arrived in their land. This absence of multiple perspectives also revealed a one-sided version of the

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<sup>3</sup> How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in terms of their epistemological orientation?

<sup>4</sup> How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in terms of their thematic focus?

<sup>5</sup> How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in the way they narrate histories of non-Western peoples?

story (related to the epistemological stance - question one) that was Eurocentric (related to the thematic focus - question two).

The aforementioned aspects of the process determined how I present my findings within this thesis and how I answer my research questions. For this reason, I have divided the findings of my study into two chapters. Chapter four of this thesis addresses the first and second questions, and chapter five addresses the third question of my study. However, since the data and the findings of one question inform the others, I provide an overall answer to my research questions in the sixth and final chapter of this thesis. This is where I draw from all my findings and present a collective answer to each research question.

In regards to the extracts, all the quotations from the history textbooks that I present in this thesis are personal translations. These translations are, as much as possible, close representations of the original text. I would also like to note that I often use passive voice in the translation. Although this is not always acceptable in English, it is a common grammatical practice in Greek, especially in formal writing. I follow the grammar and syntax as closely as possible because, as I will show in the analysis, the use of passive voice often has implications for the meaning of the text. For example, the phrase ‘their wealth was looted,’ denotes a recipient of an action, but does not explicitly state *who* the actor was. These are aspects that I consider important to observe, as they contribute to the analysis and interpretation of the texts.

Another note I would like to make concerns the use of ‘current textbook’ in my study. This thesis is written in 2015 and when I refer to the textbooks that are used in

Greek schools during this year, I interchange how I reference them between the abbreviation 15G(#) and the term ‘current.’

### **Steps and Techniques of the Research Process**

**Investigating the textbooks’ epistemological orientation.** In order to answer my first research question—How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in terms of their epistemological orientation—I examine the following elements: the textbooks’ introductions and the inclusion of questions and historical sources within the textbook. I examine these elements in order to discern whether the textbooks follow a traditional-collective approach or a disciplinary approach to history.

I decided to examine the introductions because I consider them revealing in terms of the authors,’ and therefore the textbooks,’ epistemological orientation, namely their position in regards to the nature and purpose of history. Similar to most books that include an introduction, this part of the textbook usually summarizes the authors’ intentions and what they regard important for the reader to know in terms of the work that follows. My decision to investigate the introductions in order to understand the textbooks’ epistemological orientation was further solidified during my preliminary examination of the textbooks. In this initial overview, I found that the 2015 textbooks contain explicit statements regarding the nature and purpose of school history. For example, in the grade-nine textbook, the authors state explicitly that their goal was not to create a textbook that gives one and only one correct answer, but rather to ignite questions that students can answer in their own way. This preliminary finding urged me to examine the extent to which such statements are included in the 1980 and the rest of the 2015 textbooks, and how they represent the textbooks’ epistemological stance.

As I explained above regarding the research process, the introductions contained additional elements that addressed issues beyond the textbooks' epistemological stance. So, in addition to the presence or absence of explicit statements regarding the nature of historical knowledge, the introductions also revealed information regarding the textbooks' thematic focus. For example, in their majority, the 1980 textbooks do not discuss the nature and purpose of history. They do, however, include explicit statements that reveal understandings of national identity and of what they consider important for students to know. For example, the 1980 grade-twelve introduction includes an emphatic praise of Greek culture and of its central role in the development of all other cultures. As I explain in my analysis, this reveals the textbooks' nationalistic approach. Considering the richness of the data I found in the introductions, I use them to address both the first and second research question of my study.

To further address my first question, I also examine the inclusion of questions. Drawing from Stéphane Lévesque's (2008) principles of historical thinking, I regard the questions as an integral part of the disciplinary approach to history. First of all, the presence of questions is an element that encourages the interrogation of the narrative. For example, the 1980 grade-twelve textbook includes no questions, which could indicate an approach that regards historical knowledge as an objective subject matter, not to be questioned or challenged. Of course, this does not mean that the inclusion of questions automatically implies the adoption of a disciplinary approach to history. According to Lévesque (2008), it is important that the questions do not simply direct students to recall information from the text; rather, they should encourage reflective thinking and critical examination of historical knowledge. For this part of my investigation, I do not provide a

full account of all the types of questions. Rather, I provide an overview and I comment generally on the extent they seem to direct students to solely recall information from the text or to think critically. The questions that I examine in more detail are those included in the chapters that narrate non-Western history. This examination and analysis is included in the fifth chapter of this thesis, where I address the third question of my study. That brings me back to the ‘Notes on the Research Process’ section of this chapter, where I explained that the research process was not linear and could not be strictly separated for each research question. In practice, and in terms of the textbooks’ questions, this means that my third research question regarding non-Western history eventually informed my first question regarding the textbooks’ epistemological orientation. Finally, I recognize that during the teaching of history, the types of questions that are addressed in class also depend on the teacher. This means the absence of questions in the textbook does not necessarily exclude a critical interrogation of the narrative in class. However, the focus of my study is on the textbooks themselves and not the teaching process. Hence, my analysis is limited to what is included in them.

Additionally, in order to address my first question, I also examine the inclusion or absence of historical sources. Lévesque (2008) regards the use of historical evidence as an integral part of a disciplinary approach to history. Accordingly, the examination of sources allows students to ‘do history’ and to cultivate their historical thinking. For example, the 1980 textbooks do not include any historical sources within the chapters, but only narrate events. Thus, students are left with one version of the story. This is indicative of a traditional epistemological stance and is something that I discuss in my analysis. My examination of historical sources as elements revealing the textbooks’

epistemological orientation is also informed by the findings related to the third research question of this study (that looks at non-Western history). It is within the framework of the narratives of non-Western peoples that I examine the sources' perspective, their connection to the text, and how they contribute to historical thinking.

**Investigating the textbooks' thematic focus.** In order to answer the second research question on the textbooks' thematic focus, I examine the textbooks' titles, contents, and introductions. I examine these elements aiming to discern whether the textbooks reveal a nation-centered/Eurocentric focus or a broader focus on the world, encompassing multiple perspectives.

In terms of the textbooks' titles, I examine the explicitly-stated focus of the textbooks and then juxtapose it with their contents, which allows me to examine the extent to which the title corresponds with what is included in the textbooks. For example, the current textbooks' titles hint to a focus on world history, but this is not reflected in its contents. In fact, the textbooks seem to focus more on Greek and European history than on the world. Additionally, I examine how the chapters are organized and if, for example, they present a linear chronological account or a thematic division. I also investigate to what extent they focus on military history and national heroes versus other types of history, such as art history and so forth.

While the introductions were not initially part of the data I was intending to use to answer this question, as I previously explained, once I proceeded with my investigation, I found elements within the introductions that revealed the textbooks' thematic focus.

Finally, my examination of the textbooks' thematic focus is also informed by the findings of the third research question of my study. My findings regarding the presence

of non-Western peoples within the narratives revealed an absence of their voice and experience, which hints at a Eurocentric way of telling the story that resembles Ross Dunn's (2000) Western Heritage Model. These are aspects I will incorporate into my overall answer, which I will include in the final chapter of this thesis.

**Presentation of the textbooks' epistemological orientation and thematic focus.**

Considering that I used data that overlap in order to answer questions one and two, I present these two questions together in chapter four. My theoretical framework serves as a guide that assists me to choose the elements that I will analyze from the narrative. For example, when I describe the introductions, what I chose to focus on and analyze are related to the theories I discussed in chapter two; i.e., the nature of historical knowledge and the thematic focus of school history.

In order to present the findings of the first and second research questions, I have structured chapter four in the following way: I present each school grade separately, first the 1980 textbook and then the 2015 textbook. In my description, I include three sections: an overall presentation of each textbook, a narrative with the main points of their introduction, and an account of their contents. Once I describe both textbooks, I conclude each school grade with an analysis section. Here, I analyze my findings drawing from my theoretical framework and I compare how the two textbooks differ.

**Investigating the narratives of non-Westerners.** For the sake of comparison and because the 2015 textbooks do not cover the same time periods as the ones used in 1980, I chose to delimit my investigation and focus on the narratives referring to non-Westerners within the time period that is common for both the 1980 and 2015 textbooks. Within each time period, I examine the events or chapters that have extensive text on the

history of non-Westerners in either one or both of the textbooks. For this reason, some events that I discuss in one grade are not necessarily included in one or both of the other grades' textbooks. I made this choice because, in order to address my question, I do not regard it necessary to examine exactly the same events in all of the textbooks, which would not be possible anyway because not all historical events are covered throughout all six textbooks. Furthermore, my focus is not on specific events per se. For example, it is not my intention to exhaustively examine the arrival of Europeans on the American continent in all textbooks unless the event is included in the material that I predetermined to be the focus of my examination. Rather, my goal is to select certain events and to use them as case studies in order to get a sense of how the textbooks' narratives present non-Western peoples. Hence, it is not the events that interest me in this project, but the textbooks' overall approach to dealing with the histories of non-Westerners.

During my investigation, I examine primarily who is included and who is excluded from the narrative. When the narrative refers to non-Western peoples, I explore to what extent it includes their voices and perspectives. In addition to the text, I examine the chapters' historical sources, images, and questions in order to discern whether they include perspectives that are complimentary to, supporting of, or in opposition to the narrative. I also pay attention to homogeneous representations that either disdain or praise certain groups' contributions.

Drawing from the methodology of narrative analysis, I treat the chapters as units. This means that I do not isolate the references of non-Western peoples. Instead, I take into consideration all aspects of the narrative that refer to the same historical event. For instance, in the 2015 grade-six textbook, there is only one short paragraph regarding the



indigenous peoples of America during the ‘discoveries’ of the fifteenth century.

However, I do not treat this small paragraph as a fragmented unit and analyze it in isolation from the rest of the chapter; rather, I juxtapose it to how the textbook depicts European sailors and analyze how the representations of the two groups differ.

**Presentation of the textbooks’ narratives on non-Westerners.** Similar to questions one and two, I treat various aspects of the chapter—text, images, sources, questions—as narrative, which I then analyze. My theoretical framework provided the elements that guided the analysis of the textbooks’ narrative. For example, when I describe how the chapters narrate non-Western peoples, the phenomena I choose to focus on and include in my own narrative are related to the theories I discussed in chapter two: the critical approach to diversity, the nature of historical knowledge, the thematic focus of school history, historical thinking, and the three models of world history.

In order to present the results of the third research question, I have structured chapter five in the following way: For each grade, I discuss the various historical events separately. Specifically, I describe how each textbook of the same grade level treats each historical event and, following the description, I include an analysis section, where I compare how the two textbooks present the same topic.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE CONSTRUCTION OF STORIES**

#### **The Textbooks' Epistemological Orientation and Thematic Focus**

In this chapter, I address the first two research questions of my study:

1) How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in terms of their epistemological orientation?

2) How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in terms of their thematic focus?

For the first question, I examine the textbooks' approach to knowledge; specifically, to what extent the textbooks follow a traditional collective memory approach to history, versus a disciplinary one. As for the second question, I examine the textbooks' adherence to a nation-centered/Eurocentric stance, rather than a broader, globally thematic focus.

Before presenting my analysis, I give a brief introduction to history education and textbook production in Greece. Then, I begin by presenting my findings for each grade level, in three sections. In the first section, I give a brief description of the two textbooks then summarize the introductions within each, and focus on their main points of discussion. Then, by examining their contents, I present an overview of the general themes covered by the two textbooks. In the second section, I provide a discussion of my findings, where I compare both textbooks from each grade level in terms of their design, epistemological orientation, and thematic focus. Finally, in the third section, I provide a brief summary where I include the main points of the comparison between each grade's textbooks.

## **History Education and Textbook Production in Greece**

The Greek education system is organized into three tiers: six years of compulsory elementary education, six years of secondary education, and higher education. Secondary education is divided into gymnasium, which is three years long and part of compulsory education, and lyceum, which is also takes three years (Papoulia-Tzelepi & Spinthourakis, 2007). At the end of secondary education—lyceum— and in order to obtain a place in Greek universities, students take part in highly competitive nation-wide exams that emphasize knowledge retention. To this effect, Greek education is a system geared towards examinations, something that has promoted a memorization-driven type of schooling (Koulouri, 1999).

Traditionally, the Greek education system is highly centralized, offering a uniform program across the country (Antoniou & Soysal, 2005). Education is the responsibility of the state, and all levels of schooling, including university, are offered free of charge. The state uses legislation to establish schools and to appoint, transfer, and pay teachers (Persianis, 2000).

School curriculum and textbooks are also regulated by the state, through its specialized jurisdictions. Until recently, this has been the responsibility of the Pedagogical Institute, but since 2011, the new governing body is the Institute of Educational Policy (IEP). The IEP was established by Public Law 3966/2011<sup>1</sup>, and is a private legal entity supervised by the Ministry of Education. It is also the Ministry's major research and consulting department.

Institutional regulations strictly define how a textbook will be written, whose approval it requires, and what procedure will be followed for its publication and

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<sup>1</sup> Published in the Government Gazette A' 118/24-05-2011

distribution to students. Although the regulations dictate that the writing of a textbook may be appointed after a competition or by commission, in practice, most textbooks are written by commission. The Ministry of Education assigns the development and writing of teaching materials for a specific subject and grade level to authors, who are required to follow detailed instructions concerning its content, presentation, format, layout, and illustrations. There is one textbook for each subject at each grade level and the books are distributed to all students across the country. Each textbook has a corresponding teacher's manual produced through the same process. In the spirit of free education, all textbooks are produced by the Computer Technology Institute and Press, and are distributed free of charge to all public schools (Avdela, 2000).

The overall education curriculum is based on a cross-thematic framework introduced in 2001 and established by law in 2003 (YP.E.P.Th.-Pedagogic Institute, 2003a). Although it maintains the school subjects separately, the cross-thematic curriculum proposes a holistic approach to content, whose aim is to promote cross-disciplinary connections rather than divisions among the various academic disciplines. This cross-thematic curriculum also defines the purpose for history education in Greece:

The general aim of teaching history is the development of historical thinking and historical awareness. [...] Thus, through the teaching of History, pupils can realize that the modern world is the continuation of the world of the past, and also that contemporary historical events are directly connected with their lives. [...]

Developing historical thinking and historical awareness is closely related with the general aim of education, which is to help individuals to develop into responsible citizens (YP.E.P.Th.-Pedagogic Institute, 2003b, p. 99).

The cross-thematic history curriculum provides a very detailed account of the themes that should be covered in each school grade level, as well as a description of the aims and activities that are associated with each theme. It also offers a guideline for teachers, where it proposes that teachers ought to connect history to other disciplines and employ diverse teaching approaches, such as dialogue, the use of various sources, individual and group work, and visits to related sites and museums. The curriculum also provides instructions regarding the writing of history textbooks, according to which they should contain historical sources, maps, diagrams, illustrations, a glossary with key terms, and suggested bibliography (YP.E.P.Th.-Pedagogic Institute, 2003a).

In regards to the teaching personnel in Greek public schools, history teachers do not receive special training, apart from some secondary arts teachers whose degree specializes in history. In elementary school, those holding a bachelor degree in general elementary education teach the subject of history. In secondary education, the arts teachers who teach history are often specialists in other fields, such as Ancient Greek, Modern Greek, philosophy, or other arts related subjects (Koulouri, 1999).

Similar to many countries, Greek history education is often at the center of public attention. In fact, history textbooks have sparked various controversies and have been the object of intense debates among various actors within Greek society. Within the past three decades, four history textbooks were withdrawn after strong critiques and extensive campaigns against them.

In 1984, Elefterios Stavrianos' textbook *History of the Human Kind*, which included Darwin's evolution theory, was one of the first attempts in history textbook writing to diverge from the traditional ethnocentric narrative of past Greek history

textbooks. However, it was greeted with great hostility from parts of Greek society, which considered it to be atheist and offensive to the Greek Orthodox Church. After several ‘corrections,’ the Greek Ministry of Education eventually withdrew it in 1991.

In the same year, Vassilis Kremmydas’ ninth grade textbook *Modern and Contemporary History: Greek, European, Global*, replaced the grade nine 1980 textbook that I am investigating in this study. Kremmydas’ textbook made an effort to place Greek history in a European and worldwide history framework, but again, was strongly criticized as anti-national and anti-clerical. Although it was ‘corrected’—without the permission of the author—similar to Stavrianos’ textbook, the Ministry of Education withdrew it in 1991. The justification was that it was ‘ideologically one-sided.’

The third case of a Greek history textbook controversy is Giorgos Kokkinos’ 2002 twelfth grade history textbook, *History of the Modern and Contemporary World, 1815-2000*. This time, the reactions to the textbook centered on the inclusion of a national Greek-Cypriot organization, EOKA, which many regarded as an insult to the struggle of the Greek-Cypriots for liberation and national independence. The Greek conservative party also considered certain omissions an attempt for ideological propaganda. This textbook was withdrawn before being distributed to the schools (Repoussi, 2009).

The most recent controversy over a Greek history textbook produced unprecedented reactions that became the center of the 2007 pre-electoral period. Maria Repoussi’s sixth grade history textbook, *Modern and Contemporary Times* was taught in schools during the school year 2006-2007. Major opponents of the textbook were the Greek Orthodox Church and two right wing political parties: Dimokratiki Anagennisi [Democratic Renaissance] and Laikos Orthodoxos Synagermos (LaOs) [Popular

Orthodox Rally]. The religious and political leaders of local groups eagerly fought against the textbook and organized campaigns demanding its immediate withdrawal. They saw their ‘crusade’ as a way of protecting the Greek nation from the destructive effects of globalization. They argued that this textbook followed the new model of history education, which aimed to de-nationalize and de-Christianize history, and fragment the Greeks’ national memory. As a result of the tremendous uproar, the Minister of Education asked the Academy of Athens to evaluate the textbook and to give its recommendations to the writing team, so that they could revise it. After the authors completed the revision of the textbook according to the Academy’s recommendations, the Pedagogic Institute approved its circulation. However, on September 25, 2007, after the national elections, and even though the same political party regained power, the new Minister of Education expressed his reservations about the contents of Repoussi’s textbook and eventually ordered the re-distribution of the previous history textbook, which had been in use from 1989-2005. He justified the withdrawal by saying that the new generation should not be treated as guinea pigs to new techniques and trends (Tsagkaraki, 2008).

Through these controversies, we can discern that in Greece history textbooks and narratives concerning Greek history are a highly political matter, which draw the attention of political, religious, and academic actors. Consequently, it is no surprise that numerous research projects have been conducted on Greek history textbooks.

In the next section, I begin the analysis of the study’s textbooks by addressing the first two questions of my study, which examine the textbooks’ epistemological orientation and thematic focus.

## Grade Six History Textbooks

### Description of Findings

**The 1980 sixth grade history textbook (80G6).** This sixth grade history textbook was used from 1979 until 1989. For my study, I was able to access and use the 1984 edition. The textbook's authors are N. Diamantopoulos and A. Kyriazopoulos. It is entitled *Elliniki Istoria ton Neoteron Hronon* [Modern Greek History] and it comprises 194 pages. Most of the illustrations in the textbook are paintings, the majority of which portray Greek, male historical figures from the Greek Revolution against the Ottoman occupation. The textbook contains several maps, but only a few photos, which are located solely in the chapter that explores the Second World War. After each section, the textbook typically includes two types of questions: the first asks students to recall information from the text and the second asks students to state their opinion about a historical figure and/or someone's actions. The latter questions frequently start with the phrases: 'How do you characterize...?' 'How do you find...?' The textbook does not contain any historical sources within the chapters' narratives. At the end of the textbook, and before the content pages, we find a section entitled: 'Sources that were used for the writing of the textbook' (p. 188). This section includes nineteen references, which are not in alphabetical or any other order that is obvious to the reader.

**Introduction.** The introduction of the 80G6 textbook is about half a page long. Throughout the introduction, the authors address the students and use first-person plural. They also use first-person plural when talking about the Greek nation: 'our nation.' In the first paragraph, they explain what 'we learned' in grade five, and in the rest of the chapter, they explain what 'we will learn' in grade six. According to the authors, the



textbook covers Greek history from the fall of Constantinople (1453) until the present. The third paragraph is quite interesting in terms of the victimized tone it adopts and the negative characterizations it makes against the Turks:

Modern Greek history has many unpleasant [events]. We will see that our once great and glorious nation was enslaved by the Turks, an uncivilized nation who came from Asia. Our ancestors were under Turkish rule for centuries and suffered calamities and humiliations. Because of that, many believed that the Greek nation was extinguished. (80G6, p. 5)

In the remaining part of the introduction, the authors continue with the same dramatic tone and explain that the textbook will trace the honorable struggles of ‘our nation’ against the conquerors and the Greek people’s efforts for freedom and independence. They end the introduction by admitting to Greece’s inferior position in relation to other developed countries: “We will also see the free Greek State and the efforts it made in order to progress and to take its place among the civilized nations” (80G6, p. 6).

**Contents.** The 80G6 textbook covers the period between 1453 and 1949, the latter marking the end of the Greek Civil War, which took place from 1946-1949. The textbook is divided into three main sections: a) the Turkish occupation of Greece (1453-1821), b) the Great Revolution of 1821, and c) consecutive expansions of the Greek state. These sections are divided into chapters and subchapters. The focus of the two first sections is the period of the Ottoman occupation and the Greek Revolution against the Ottomans. The third section covers the expansion of the newly created Greek state of the nineteenth century, the Balkan Wars, the two world wars, and the Greek Civil War. By looking at

the titles of the subchapters, we can see that the majority of them refer to events of war: the Battle of Valtetsi, the Battle of Alamana, the Siege of Messologgi, the Naval Battle of Salamis, and so forth. Some rare references to non-military history include chapters about the Greek Church (pp. 14-15), the Greek communities (pp. 15-17), and the Greek intellectuals during the Ottoman rule (pp. 28-29). Also, the second to last chapter of the textbook explains the economic and cultural life of Greece during the nineteenth and twentieth century (pp. 182-185).

An interesting element of the textbook is the many subchapters that are devoted solely to specific Greek national heroes of the 1821 Greek Revolution, all of them males, like Rigas Fereos, Konstantinos Kanaris, Theodoros Kolokotronis, Andreas Miaoulis, etc. In total, there are fifteen subchapters, most of them titled after the historical figure's name, apart from four, which also include the name of the battle; for example, 'The Battle of Maniaki and the heroic death of Papaflessas' (pp.115-116). I looked throughout the textbook to find the presence of Greek female historical figures, but I found only two references, one regarding Bouboulina and the other Manto Mavrogenous, whose pictures are included in the subchapter entitled 'The revolution in the islands' (pp. 65-67). The chapter includes a painted portrait of each woman and within the text there is a six-line paragraph that briefly narrates their contribution to the revolution.

At the end of the textbook, after the list of historical sources and before the contents, the authors include a chronological table, which refers to battles and the deaths of historical figures.

**The 2015 sixth grade history textbook (15G6).** The sixth grade history textbook currently in use is entitled *Istoria tou Neoterou ke Syghronou Cosmou* [History of the

Modern and Contemporary World] and was published and used for the first time in 2012. Here, I used the 2012, first edition. The head author is Ioannis Koliopoulos, a historian, who was also among those who wrote the current twelfth grade history textbook, which is also part of my study. The 15G6 textbook was written after direct assignment from the Greek Ministry of Education (Papamatthaiou, 2008). The remaining co-authors all have doctorates in history: Iakovos Mihailidis, a historian and professor at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki; Athanasios Kallianiotis, Educational supervisor; and Haralampos Minaoglou, teacher in high school. It is interesting that although this textbook is addressed to sixth grade students, none of the authors are from the elementary school level.

The 15G6 textbook comprises 238 pages. It is divided into five sections and each one has a distinct frame color. Each chapter uniformly includes the following components: several illustrations, either paintings, photos, or both, a timeline on the first page of each chapter, a glossary explaining some terms from the text, a brown-colored frame entitled ‘The sources narrate...,’ which includes extracts from historical sources, and a grey-colored frame entitled ‘A glance at the past,’ which includes either more extracts from historical sources, or gives more details about a specific event or idea. Finally, each chapter ends with a dark red frame that includes questions. At the end of each of the five sections, there is a one-page overview with the main points of that section.

The 15G6 textbook is accompanied by a workbook that is 41 pages long. It includes additional exercises that take several forms: multiple choice questions, fill-in the blank,

grouping words, completing maps, writing activities that often direct students to find information from specific websites, and so forth.

***Introduction.*** The introduction addresses the students in a friendly tone and narrates what students learned in the previous grade and what they will learn in grade six. The authors state that students will read about the historical period from the fall of Constantinople until the present day. Using first-person plural, they also note that the main focus of the textbook will be on ‘our homeland’ but it will also present developments in Europe and the *whole world*. The authors devote a paragraph to explain what is included in the term ‘historical Greek lands/countries’ and explain that it includes the mainland and the Greek islands of the Aegean and the Ionian Sea, but also Asia Minor, Pontos, Eastern Thace, and Cyprus, “areas where the Greek civilization has always flourished and where Greeks resided” (p. 4).

They end the introductory note with a wish that hints at a disciplinary approach to history, “[students] will gain more historical knowledge this year and most importantly [they will acquire] critical thinking and a love for the past, which are useful for designing the future” (p. 4).

Following the introduction, on the next page, the authors include a section entitled ‘Note’ (p. 5). Here, they explain the structure and elements of each chapter and provide visuals to show examples of the historical timeline, the frames that include the sources, questions, and so on. They again hint at notions of historical thinking and state that the purpose of the questions is to strengthen their critical thinking and to help students make the necessary connections between historical events. At the end of this section, the authors note that the textbook is not to be memorized. They advise students to read the

narratives carefully and to recreate the historical events with their own, personal imagination. “History is narrative, it is exploration, adventure, it is knowledge of the past. Happy wandering” (p. 5).

**Contents.** The 15G6 textbook covers the period between the mid-fifteenth century and the 2000s. It is divided into five main sections. The first section is entitled, a) ‘The developments in Europe during the modern years (mid-fifteenth century – beginning of nineteenth century)’ (pp. 9-24). This section is the only one that refers to history that is not Greek. The three chapters of this section cover fourteen pages and explore, 1) the Renaissance and the religious reform, 2) the geographical discoveries and the Enlightenment, and 3) the American and French Revolutions.

The remaining four sections narrate only Greek history: b) The Greeks under Ottoman and Latin rule (1453-1821)’ (pp. 25-70), c) The Big Revolution (1821-1830) (pp. 71-146), d) Greece in the nineteenth century (pp. 147-174), and e) Greece in the twentieth century (pp. 175-234). Similar to the 80G6 textbook, we find chapters devoted to Greek historical figures, again male, in a total of nine chapters. Out of these nine chapters, only four are titled after the historical figure’s name, the remaining five are titled after two historical figures or include a historical event. I also looked for female figures within the 15G6 textbook and, similar to the 80G6 textbook, I found references to the same two women, Bouboulina and Manto Mavrogenous on page 92. The four-line reference was not in the main text, but under the section ‘A glance at the past.’ There is a second reference to women on page 188, again outside of the main text and included under ‘A glance at the past.’ This paragraph-long reference is on women’s rights within the chapter ‘The Balkan Wars’ (pp. 186-189).

After the end of the chapters, the textbook includes a reference section, two and a half pages in total, which contains references for the included illustrations and a suggested bibliography.

### **Analysis of Findings – Grade Six Textbooks**

Beginning by comparing the design of the two textbooks, the 80G6 textbook has a lot of text and few illustrations, the majority of which are in black and white. This is typical of older types of textbooks, which relied heavily on the authority of the text (Pingel, 2010). The 15G6 textbook, by contrast, is more colorful and includes many illustrations. In the current age of technology, a mostly black and white, text-focused textbook is not sufficient to draw students' attention. Now, students are constantly surrounded by quick-moving colorful visuals, and research has shown that illustrations attract students' attention more than written text. Pictures serve as catchwords and as keys that give memory access to a chapter. Furthermore, illustrations have been shown to often affect the observers' emotions and encourage them to express their feelings (Pingel, 2010). By moving towards greater visual diversity, the 15G6 textbook seems to be more in tune with contemporary approaches to textbook writing. Additionally, the 15G6 textbook makes extensive use of historical timelines throughout each chapter. As noted in the second chapter of this thesis, Lévesque (2008) regards the development of chronological thinking an essential element of historical thinking. Hence, the 15G6 textbook's timeline, if it is not used merely for memorization, is one element, among others, that can provide a framework for organizing historical thought.

**Epistemological orientation.** In terms of the textbooks' epistemological orientation, and beginning with the authors' explicit intentions, the 15G6's 'Introduction'

and ‘Note’ sections make clear reference to the disciplinary approach to history. Similar to the principles of this approach that I analyzed in chapter two, the authors of the textbook explain that history is not to be memorized, but should be used to cultivate critical thinking. In addition, by encouraging students to see history as a personal creative process, they move away from the traditional model of teaching the one-best-version of the past. The 80G6’s introduction, on the other hand, does not hint towards the constructive nature of knowledge. On the contrary, it aims to convince the reader about one, objective and common history by its overall tone and content and it therefore leans toward the collective memory approach.

In regards to other elements that demonstrate the textbooks’ epistemology, such as the questions and the activities included in the chapters, the 2015 textbook shows a greater variety than the 80G6 textbook. The questions in the latter rely mostly on students’ ability to memorize, and they aim to arouse patriotic sentiments. On the other hand, the 15G6 textbook has two questions at the end of each chapter. The first usually asks students to recall information from the text. The second, however, directs students toward a disciplinary approach as it asks them to discuss one of the historical sources. In addition to these questions, the 15G6 textbook provides a workbook that has several types of activities. Considering this, the current textbook has made efforts to move away from the traditional model of questions. However, it must be noted that, similar to the questions in both main textbooks, the majority of the 15G6 workbook exercises demand that students recall information from the main text. Although this may limit the advancement of historical thinking, one group of exercises points to alternate sources of knowledge, since they direct students to look up information on the Internet. Despite the

fact that the exercises propose specific websites and, therefore, do not encourage students to look on their own, this is a step towards getting students into the habit of searching for information beyond the textbook. Rather than using the textbook like ‘the book of truth’ (Kokkinos & Gatsiotis, 2010), it promotes the idea that there is not one source of knowledge, but multiple spaces to attain information and, perhaps, other versions of the story. As such, by offering teachers, as well as students, new possibilities for structuring their lessons and collecting their own material, electronic media is a tool that has the potential to challenge the authority of the textbook (Pingel, 2010).

Another central difference in terms of the textbooks’ epistemology is the inclusion of historical sources. The 80G6 textbook contains no historical sources, apart from a bibliography included at the end of the textbook. In contrast, the current one places a greater emphasis on the inclusion of historical sources, where each chapter contains at least one page of extracts from original sources or out-of-text commentaries. As I indicated in chapter two of this thesis, the study of evidence is essential in the disciplinary approach to history and for cultivating historical thinking. Stéphane Lévesque (2008) explains that the inclusion of additional sources allows students to experience ways of ‘doing history,’ rather than to mechanically memorize what is included in the text. Of course, the promotion of historical thinking with the use of historical sources also depends on the type of sources and how the teacher uses them. In this part of my analysis, I do not go into detail and discuss the types of sources that are included in the chapters and how they function, because I will discuss this when I address my research question regarding the narratives of non-Western peoples.



**Thematic focus.** Moving on to the textbooks' thematic focus, both present the historical content in a linear chronological manner. They both cover a period from the mid-fifteenth century, but they differ because the current textbook covers a period that is closer to the present time, the 2000s, whereas the 80G6 stops at the end of the Greek Civil War of 1949. Additionally, drawing from their titles, the two textbooks seem to have a different focus. The 80G6 textbook's title indicates a focus solely on Modern Greek History, whereas the 15G6's title expands this focus to world history. However, in examining the 15G6 textbook more closely, its contents do not reflect the claim made by its title, namely that it covers modern world history, therefore implying an opening to history beyond Greece. In fact, the total pages that cover non-Greek history are fourteen. Aside from a one-paragraph reference to the peoples that the Europeans encountered when they arrived in America, all fourteen pages refer to European and North American history. Hence, the 15G6 textbook's title does not correspond to the content that is actually included in the textbook. This contradiction has several consequences: the title is misleading and may create misconceptions as to what constitutes the world and what is important to know. I go into further detail regarding these consequences in my discussion on the ninth-grade textbooks because this contradiction is even more prevalent in the 15G9 textbook.

A common aspect in both textbooks is that Greek history under Ottoman rule and the Greek Revolution against the Ottomans occupies a central place in the overall narrative. The 80G6 textbook devotes 144 pages, out of a total of 180 pages, to this topic and the current textbook devotes 120 out of 213 pages of text. Anna Fragoudaki (1997), in her study on Greek history textbooks, notes a similar focus. She explains that this

insistence may be due to the fact that Greeks consider the Ottoman Empire the only real threat to the continuation of the Greek nation. For this reason, she argues that Greek history textbooks devote a disproportional part of the narrative to the time of Ottoman rule. This, of course, is not something new. Since the establishment of the Modern Greek state in the early nineteenth century, Greek history textbooks commonly focused on the Ottoman occupation, which to date they describe as the years under slavery. Theodore Zervas (2012) suggests that this portrayal allows for two things to happen: first, it unites Greeks around one common enemy, the Ottomans. Second, the Ottoman occupation serves to explain the decline of the classical Greek civilization (p. 21).

Another common element between the two textbooks is the inclusion of chapters devoted to male historical personas, which are promoted as national heroes. The focus is on male figures and the presence of women is minimal. This is typical of historical content closely linked to the construction of national identity. Such content tends to uncritically employ emblematic historical figures, which are often based on a ‘heroes versus villains’ dichotomy (Carretero, Rodriguez-Moneo, & Asensio, 2012). As Burke (2001) puts it, the traditional model of the history textbook, which “concentrates on the great deeds of great men” (p. 4), tends to ignore the history-from-below and marginalizes the experiences of ordinary people, which are equally important in shaping history. Although the inclusion of personas is not necessarily negative, drawing from my discussion on the critical approach to diversity, I note that an insistence on national heroes and a parallel silencing of other social groups allocates the rest of humanity a minor role in the course of history and, therefore, fails to present everyone’s contributions.

Furthermore, both textbooks devote most of their chapters to military history. Although some chapters move away from events of the wars, military history definitely outweighs references to economic, social, ideological, and cultural aspects of life. One slight difference between the two textbooks is that the 80G6 includes chapters specifically devoted to battles—about 16 chapters—whereas the 15G6 textbook does not. This is not to say that the battles are not included in the 15G6 textbook; rather, they are covered more briefly and are integrated into the narrative of the Revolution and its evolution in the various Greek regions; for example, ‘The Revolution in the Peloponnese’ (15G6, pp. 82-85). Here, I do not argue that moments of conflict are not important. In fact, many consider the study and close analysis of controversial issues and conflicts as a key element for fostering mutual understanding (Kokkinos & Gatiotis, 2010; Seixas, 2008). However, the problem with this way of presenting history is that it gives a one-sided story of human existence, where battles and wars are the most important historical events, and moments of peace are rendered less significant. Scholars argue that teaching in a multicultural and global setting requires that we broaden the focus of history, not only towards the world, but also in regards to the themes it covers. As such, the argument is brought forward that school history should go beyond the narration of wars and should include themes that cover aspects of human activity: the economy, social, artistic, and cultural life of humanity (Vouri, 2006). Not only do “we need to find,” as Pingel (2010) notes, “new forms of remembrance that unite rather than divide the memories of the people involved” (p. 25), but we also need to approach humanity in its diversity.

Continuing on the thematic focus, one aspect of the 80G6 textbook that stands out is the promotion, as Anna Fragoudaki (1997) puts it, of a Greek national ideological

myth. This is evident in a couple of instances within the textbook. First, the bibliography that the 80G6 textbook includes at the end, places Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos' book, *The History of the Greek Nation* (1853), at the top of the list. Paparrigopoulos is a renowned Greek historian, who is considered the father of Modern Greek historiography. He promoted the concept of the historical continuity of Greece by using the Byzantine era—which initially was not recognized as part of Greek history—to bridge Ancient Greece to Modern Greece. The authors' adherence to Paparrigopoulos' idea of continuity is noticeable, not only because of his book's prevalent position at the top of the bibliographical list, but also because of the final chapter in the textbook, which is entitled 'General overview of Greek history' (pp. 186-188). Similar to Paparrigopoulos' schema, the chapter divides Greek history into three periods: Ancient Greece, Byzantine Empire, and Modern Greece. It also presents the idea that the Greek nation has a continuous historical life of 4,000 years. The 15G6 textbook follows a similar line of thought in its introduction, where we also see the inclusion of the Byzantine Empire as part of Greek history: "the empire that started off as Roman and evolved to be Greek state" (15G6, p. 4).

Contemporary scholars often criticize this idea of linear, uninterrupted continuity, insistent in Greek history textbooks and Greek historiography in general. For example, in her study on Greek history textbooks, Anna Fragoudaki (1997) argues that the concept of Greek continuity is a national ideological myth that promotes the idea that the Greek nation has not been influenced by other groups and has not changed over time. She argues that this approach presents the absence of change and outer influences as a national virtue. Fragoudaki explains that this myth is related to the stereotypical

evaluation of the industrial West as superior to the rest of the world. She goes on to suggest that this evaluation automatically creates the idea of Greek inferiority in comparison to the superior and developed West. This inferiority complex is recognizable in the introduction of the 80G6 textbook, which concludes with: “we will also see the free Greek State and the efforts it made [...] to take its place among the civilized nations” (p. 6). The phrase implies that the Greek nation is not among the civilized ones, namely the West, but is rather striving to become one. In order to deal with the image of inferiority, Fragoudaki (1997) contends that Greek schoolbooks repeatedly highlight the link between the glorious Ancient Greek past and present Greece, as well as the great influence of Ancient Greece on the development of European civilization. The inferiority complex is also related to Greece’s past, its association with the Eastern Roman Empire and the Ottoman Empire, and its geographical location, all elements which tend to keep Greece on the margins of Europe (Antoniou & Soysal, 2005). For this reason, Fragoudaki (1997) suggests that textbooks separate Greeks from their Eastern, ‘inferior’ neighbors or other non-Westerners, in order to deny any influence from them.

This tendency to differentiate Greeks from their neighbors is also evident in the 80G6’s introduction, where the Turks are described negatively as the “uncivilized nation who came from Asia” (p. 5). Hercules Millas (1991), in his research comparing Greek and Turkish textbooks used in the 1988-1989 school year, offers similar findings and argues, “Greeks and Turks have been *educated* to become antagonists and opponents. For generations they have been fed with aggressive ideologies, with prejudices against the other side, with one-sided information and with historical distortions and exaggerations” (p. 23). In discussing the consequences of these depictions, Millas suggests that distorted

historic events, which depict the others' severity and harshness as unchangeable, are used in the textbooks in order to prove the continuous brutality of the neighboring country. These stereotypical depictions eventually create permanent ethnic prototypes, which ignore complexity of life and how people and nations evolve. According to Millas, children are left to conclude that the 'others' are always at fault and their side is always correct. Of course, this practice is not unique to Greece. Pingel (2010) suggests the presence of stereotypes and prejudices within textbooks is quite common and is related to the need of every society to find points of self-orientation in its own developmental process. In this respect, Rüsen (2007) affirms that identity is often constructed by positioning the 'self' against an 'other.' History textbooks support this process of identity construction, typically by focusing on national achievements and triumphs and by ignoring or downplaying the contributions of other groups, with the goal of uniting people and emphasizing national unity and pride (Foster, 2012).

Despite how common this practice is, the directly offensive characterizations of the Turks and the victimized representation of the Greeks in the 80G6 textbook is in contrast to contemporary theories on the teaching of history, which suggest eliminating such representations. It is worth noting here that, from the 1990s, Greece and Turkey have been working together to change their textbooks in a quest to eliminate the negative depictions and to normalize their relations (Antonia & Soyasal, 2005).

In comparing the two textbooks overall, the 80G6 version gives greater emphasis to the idea of a pure, homogenous Greek nation, which has not been influenced by other nations or cultures, and is continuous and unchanged. The 80G6 textbook promotes a nation-centered type of history. From the perspective of a critical approach to diversity,

the problem with this approach is that it tends to promote homogenized representations of peoples and therefore fails to present the complex identities and the contributions of various groups to the history of a nation. Furthermore, the insistence on a pure and homogenous nation conveys the idea that mutual interactions are not a positive element in the evolution of a nation. Any influence is considered threatening and unwanted. Ultimately, the teaching of history based on these premises does not comply with the principles of a critical approach to history education.

This is not to say that the 15G6 has a completely different focus. Considering its contents, it also focuses on Greek history. Moreover, although the 15G6 textbook's introduction does not use negative characterizations, it does use some phrases that are common in the 80G6 and could be regarded as exclusionary. In the introduction of both textbooks, we find the use of the first-person plural: "our nation" (80G6, p. 5), "the history of our homeland, the Greek history" (15G6, p. 4). This is typical of historical content that is closely linked with the construction of national identity. Foster (2012) argues that expressions such as 'we', 'our', and 'us' are often used to differentiate the national citizens from 'them', 'their' that are usually assigned to those 'other' peoples. The use of 'our' disregards the fact that some of the students attending schools in Greece may be of different origin and, by extension, it shows a tendency to disregard the existence of diverse peoples within the country. Drawing from the critical approach to diversity perspective, the problem with overemphasizing the 'we' is the potential to construct a collective patriotic identity that ignores different peoples in the collective narrative and, therefore, promote exclusionary practices. In the words of van Alphen and Asensio (2012), "if a child cannot identify with the master narrative told at school,

because her community was not represented in that historical account, we feel that a voice has been smothered and that human rights are violated” (p. 353). School, and by extension, school materials that disregard some voices, may leave those students feeling excluded and not part of the society. During a time of increased radicalization in Europe and the world, it is imperative that *all* school children see themselves within the narrative, so that they are inspired to collectively participate in the creation of a just and peaceful society.

Since it is not within the scope of my study to investigate the section on Greek history, I am not able to conclude whether the 15G6 textbook similarly insists on the idea of a continuous and unchanged Greek nation. Based on the introduction alone, apart from the use of ‘we,’ the authors abstain from making blatantly exclusive statements that may be regarded as discriminatory.

## **Grade Nine History Textbooks**

### **Description of Findings**

**The 1980 ninth grade history textbook (80G9).** The 80G9 textbook was first published in 1975 and was used until 1984. In my study, I use the 1980 edition. The textbook is entitled *Neoteri Europaiki Istoria* (Modern European History). The author, Georgia Koulikourdi, wrote this textbook after a direct assignment from the Greek Ministry of Education.<sup>2</sup> She was a historian and folklorist.

The textbook comprises 366 pages. Most of the pages include illustrations that are either in color or in black and white, and most of them are accompanied by a small description. The textbook also contains maps and some images of documents. At the end of certain sections, there are questions and issues for discussion, but they do not

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<sup>2</sup> Approving decision: ΥΠΕΠΘ Φ.211.14/106307/20-1-1975.



necessarily coincide with the end of each chapter. Sometimes we find these questions/issues in the middle of a chapter and after the completion of a section or at the end of two or three chapters. Within the chapters, there are no historical sources, but some are included at the end of the textbook, under a sixteen page-long section entitled: ‘Excerpts from the sources’ (pp. 335-351).

***Introduction.*** The introduction of the textbook is quite formal in its tone and is treated as a regular chapter, since the author includes questions and issues for discussion at the end of the text. It is a little more than two pages long and, for the most part, the author explains the main characteristics of modern history. She delimits the modern era from the middle of the fifteenth century until the present time and emphasizes that the French Revolution was a pivotal point in this time period.

Koulikourdi explains that the mid-fifteenth century is a historical milestone because of two major events: the fall of Constantinople (1452) and the discovery of America (1492). She contends that the fall was a deeply tragic event for ‘us,’ the Greek people: “the Byzantine Empire dissolved and Hellenism, which up until then had the political and intellectual leadership of the world, had to go through a three hundred year period of harsh slavery; an event that greatly impacted Hellenes’ cultural progress” (80G9, p. 5). It is noteworthy that the author uses first-person plural to define herself and the readers as part of the Greek nation.

The author goes on to explain that the fall of Constantinople had the following impact on Europe: it led them to Asia and America and allowed for economic and scientific development. The author links this progress to two facts: a) certain peoples—implying the Greeks—fell into obscurity after the Turkish expansion and so Europe was

able to advance, and b) the Byzantine scholars, being refugees in Europe, brought Europeans in contact with the Ancient Greek heritage: “we could say that from then onwards the European civilization took its final form and started to develop” (80G9, p. 5). She explains that European culture is rooted in the Greco-Roman and Byzantine cultures.

The author summarizes the main characteristics of the modern era in the following three points: 1) geographical expansion: by discovering new lands, Europeans were able to trace the size and the shape of the earth and the continents. Through the colonial process, they became familiar with Asia, Africa, and Europe, primitive people, and ancient civilizations. 2) The development of science and technology, which was able to utilize natural resources in order to cope with the needs of an increasing population and to advance a higher standard of living. She notes that the downside is that we can often discern greed for greater power and wealth in these pursuits. 3) Education, which is used for scientific and technological advancement. The author also notes that education should not be used solely for utilitarian purposes. Rather, it should introduce people to a humanistic way of thinking that will allow them to live together with one another and not at the expense of one another.

In the last part of the introduction, Koulikourdi explains that the purpose of history is to present the complex relationships between the states and, most importantly, to highlight the need for global cooperation. She also attributes the two world wars to conflicts between the nation states that emerged during the modern era. Finally, she argues that the huge problems of the present, violence, international conflicts, the tragic situation of the underdeveloped world, the population increase, environmental pollution,

can only be solved if people cooperate and if, through mutual love and understanding, they work towards peaceful progress.

**Contents.** The 80G9 textbook covers the period between the mid-fifteenth century and the 1970s. It is divided into five sections; the first section is entitled: ‘From the fifteenth century to the Peace of Westphalia (1648)’ (pp. 9-106). This section is further divided into two subsections, a) the ‘Renaissance in Europe’ (pp. 14-67), whose chapters cover the following themes: the humanistic movement, fourteenth to sixteenth century Italian literature, great explorations and discoveries, the scientific and artistic renaissance, the European politics of the sixteenth century, the religious reform and counter reform, and b) ‘European history from the treaty of Augusta until the peace of Westphalia (1555)’ (pp. 67-106), which covers the political situation in Europe during this time period, the Thirty Year War, the European arts and literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, and the Ottoman Empire and Hellenism from mid-fifteenth century to the seventeenth century.

The second section, similar to the first, focuses on European history. It is entitled ‘From the peace of Westphalia until the peace of Paris (1648-1815)’ (pp. 107-175) and the chapters refer interchangeably to the political situation in England and France and countries of Eastern Europe. We also find chapters on the Enlightenment, as well as the American and French Revolutions.

The third section (pp. 176-247) is devoted solely to Greek history and covers the historical period of Ottoman rule, the Greek Revolution against the Ottomans, and Greece’s declaration as an independent state.

The fourth section (pp. 248-294) covers the period from the peace of Paris to the beginning of the First World War. Half of the section covers French, English, and American developments during that time period and the second half covers Greek history. The chapters focus on the situation in Greece during the era of two Kings, Otto and George the First, and they also refer to the Balkan Wars.

The fifth and final section is entitled: 'From the beginning of the First World War until our times' (pp. 296-332). This section covers the two world wars and the period during the interwar period (1914-1945), Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's Revolution, and the 1922 Asia Minor Catastrophe.

As previously mentioned, after the end of all chapters, the textbook includes historical sources. Following these, there is a chapter entitled: 'A short overview of the history of Asia Minor Greeks' (pp. 352-362). This chapter, which is not included in the contents, describes the presence of Greeks in Asia Minor from ancient times, during the Byzantine period and Ottoman rule, up until the Asia Minor catastrophe.

**The 2015 ninth grade history textbook (15G9).** The currently used ninth grade history textbook is entitled *Neoteri ke Syghorni Istoria* (Modern and Contemporary History) and was published and used for the first time in 2007. In this study, I use the first edition. The writing and publishing of this textbook was part of an initiative aiming at revising the curriculum and writing new textbooks. This project was funded 75% by the European Social Fund and 25% by the Greek state, and the book was chosen from other textbooks after an open competition. The textbook was co-written by Evaggelia Louvi and Dimitrios Xifaras, the former an assistant professor at the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, and the latter a historian. As stated in the textbook's

acknowledgments, it was reviewed and assessed by a three-member committee comprised of another assistant professor at the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, an educational advisor, and a teacher of secondary education.

The textbook is 188 pages long. This is one of the ‘newer generation,’ slimmer textbooks, which followed the 2003 cross-thematic curriculum aimed at decreasing content and allowing room for an interdisciplinary approach to history. It contains many illustrations, such as pictures and maps, as well as multiple historical sources in each chapter. Each chapter ends with a few questions and suggested activities. After the end of all the chapters, the textbook concludes with a suggested bibliography (p. 185) and a glossary of main terms (pp. 186-187).

***Introduction.*** The introduction of the 15G9 addresses students using the second-person plural with a friendly tone. It mostly discusses the purpose of the textbook and the authors’ stance regarding the discipline of history. There is only a brief reference to the historical content of the textbook. Overall, the authors explain their objectives and their rationale for the way they structured the textbook, claiming that their purpose is to ignite questions, encourage students to investigate them, and ultimately, to develop students’ critical thinking: “this book was written to instigate questions, [...] it does not aim to give ready-made answers, and more so, not to dictate them” (p. 7). As the authors suggest, their hope is that their readers search not only within the textbook, but also outside of it, in other sources, to find their own answers to their own questions. In fact, at the end of their introduction they liken their book to a boat:

This boat within which we travel, i.e., this book that you have in your hands, is designed in a way that gives its readers the freedom to choose their own journeys.

Whichever route you choose, there is one thing for us to say... Have a beautiful journey in the world of modern and contemporary history. (p. 8)

In order to align the structure of the textbook with their goals and their standpoint, they claim that they tried to produce a concise narrative that is not to be memorized. For this reason, they argue, they did not provide an extensive narrative, but rather chose to include historical sources from various perspectives, illustrations, maps, diagrams, and exercises. They state their aim is to accustom their young readers with the practices and technics of historical work and to develop students' historical consciousness: "by developing the ability to contemplate about the past, we cultivate the ability to think about the present" (p. 7).

In terms of content, they note that their goal is to present the most important problems that occupied people during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They explain that the textbook focuses on the history of Greece and its links to the histories of other nations, especially those of neighboring and European countries.

**Contents.** The 15G9 textbook covers the period between the seventeenth century and the early 2000s. It is divided into three main sections. The first section is entitled 'The world on the eve of the French Revolution and until the end of the nineteenth century' (pp. 10-54), which is further divided into five chapters. The first chapter is entitled 'The formation of the new world,' and its sub-chapters cover the Enlightenment and the American and French Revolutions. The second chapter (pp. 23-40) examines the Greek Revolution against the Ottomans and frames it within the emergence of nationalism and liberalism in Europe. The third chapter (pp. 41-54) discusses the economic, social, and political developments in Europe and the world within the

nineteenth century, namely the industrial revolution, the creation of new nation states in Europe, colonization, and the developments in the Americas, China, and Japan. The fourth chapter (pp. 55-71) refers again to Greece, from the establishment of the Modern Greek State in 1828 until the beginning of the twentieth century. The fifth and final chapter (pp. 72-81) of this section examines the sciences, and the intellectual and artistic developments in the world during the nineteenth century.

The second section of the textbook is entitled ‘The world from the beginning of the twentieth century and until the end of the Second World War’ (pp. 82-37). This section is also divided into five chapters. The first refers to the Greek state and the Balkan Wars (pp. 82-88). The second chapter (pp. 89-99) covers the First World War and the Russian Revolution, and examines the general causes, developments, and aftermath of the First World War and its impact on Greece. The next chapter is devoted exclusively to the Asia Minor war between the Greek State and the Turkish national movement (pp. 100-110). The fourth chapter (pp. 111-122) refers to the interwar period where three out of the five subchapters cover the 1929 economic crisis and its political and social impact on the world. The two remaining sub-chapters refer to Greece during the interwar period and the arrival of the Asia Minor refugees. The final chapter (pp.123-137) of the second section examines the unfolding of the Second World War in general and its impact on Greece.

The third and final section of the textbook is entitled ‘The world from the end of the Second World War until the end of the twentieth century’ (pp. 138-189). The first chapter (pp. 138-149) of this section is further divided into four sub-chapters that cover the political division of Europe at the end of the Second World War, the Cold War, the end of colonization, the emergence of the Third World, the collapse of social

democracies, and the situation in post-Cold War Europe. The second chapter (pp. 150-165) examines Greece from the end of the Second World War until 2001. It refers to the 1944-1949 Civil War and its aftermath, and to the various political developments that followed; i.e., the 1963-1974 dictatorship and the political governments between 1974 and 1981. The third chapter (pp. 166-170) of this section is very short and refers to the formation of the European Union and Greece's journey toward becoming an EU member-state. The fourth chapter (pp. 171-184), which is also the final section of the textbook, covers the scientific, intellectual, and artistic creations in the world and in Greece during the twentieth century.

### **Analysis of Findings – Grade Nine Textbooks**

Starting with a comparison of the textbooks' structural elements, while both contain many illustrations, the 15G9 textbook includes a greater variety of photos and maps. The 80G9 textbook covers a broader time period and starts from the mid-fifteenth century. By contrast, the 15G9 textbook begins in the seventeenth century. The historical period from the mid-fifteenth century to the seventeenth century is included in the current grade eight textbook, which focuses on medieval history.

**Epistemological orientation.** Continuing with the textbooks' epistemological orientation, and beginning with the authors' explicit intentions, the 15G9's introduction includes an extensive discussion on school history. The authors adopt a friendly tone and in a dialogue with the students, explain the purpose of the textbook and how it could be used. By using the boat metaphor, they highlight the constructive nature of history and present the idea that history is not objective, but is a creative, personal process. Furthermore, by asking students to ask questions and seek their own answers, the 15G9



introduction also promotes the idea that there are many versions to a story, not only one, ‘true’ story. This is contrary to earlier history writings where, as Pingel (2010) notes, textbook authors tended to conceal any points of subjectivity. In the spirit of contemporary approaches to history, it is now widely accepted that if students are to understand the multi-perspective nature of history, then it should be made explicit to them that their textbooks serve to develop their skills in argumentation and evaluation, not only memorization. As such, the 15G9 authors’ statements seem to adhere to the basic principles of a disciplinary approach to history. The 80G9 textbook, on the other hand, uses about three-fourths of its introduction to present historical facts, taking the form of a chapter that needs to be learned. There is a short reference to the purpose of history, which explains how it should foster cooperation and peaceful coexistence. This stance has similarities to the humanistic approach to diversity explained in chapter two, which aims to reduce intergroup conflict and promote acceptance. However, drawing from the critical approach to diversity, history and education that encourage young people to simply like one another is insufficient for our diverse societies. While it is desirable for students to have positive feelings, as I have argued in chapter two, these develop once they are exposed to a multiplicity of stories and perspectives that encourage them to think critically about themselves and the ‘other.’ The 80G9 textbook concludes with questions that require students to recall content from the introduction. By asking students to merely recall parts of the introduction, and considering its overall focus, the 80G9 textbook’s introduction conveys the impression that the content of the textbook is something that needs to be solely memorized and, therefore, the textbook adheres to a traditional, collective approach to history.

Regarding other elements that demonstrate the textbooks' epistemology, both textbooks include questions; the 15G9 textbook poses them at the end of every chapter and the 80G9 includes them at the end of greater sections. The 80G9 textbook's questions ask students to recall information from the narrative, therefore following a more traditional approach. The 15G9 includes similar types of questions, but additionally provides alternative activities that direct students to look at sources outside of the textbook, as well as to discuss the content of the historical sources. For example, most chapters include a small section entitled 'For another look at the past,' which proposes various literature books, movies and music that are relevant to the topic under study. These activities and the questions that direct students to examine historical and other types of sources seem to follow the requirements set by the cross-thematic curriculum (YP.E.P.Th.-Pedagogic Institute, 2003a) and fall within the disciplinary approach to history framework.

Another noteworthy difference in terms of the textbooks' epistemology is the inclusion of historical sources. The 80G9 textbook does not provide any sources within the chapters, but rather presents some collectively in a chapter at the end of the textbook. On the other hand, most chapters of the 15G9 history textbook provide at least two separate historical sources. This is an additional indication of the textbooks' different epistemological orientations. By not including historical sources within the chapters, the 80G9 textbook conveys the idea of an objective and absolute subject matter, where the narrative is the only source of information providing the one, 'best' version of the story. On the other hand, the 15G9 textbook is more in accordance with contemporary

approaches to history teaching, which require the study and critical analysis of evidence (Foster, 2012).

In terms of their organization, both textbooks follow a linear chronological presentation of history. The difference between them is that the chapters of the 15G9's sections interchange between Greek and non-Greek history, whereas the 80G9 textbook narrates the Greek Revolution in a separate section and its connection to the rest of Europe is minor. To give an example of how the 15G9 textbook interchanges its focus, the second chapter, entitled 'The Greek Revolution of 1821 in the framework of the emergence of national ideas and liberalism in Europe' (pp. 23-40), covers the theme of revolutionary movements in Greece and Europe, placing the occurrence of the Greek Revolution within the emergence of nation states during the nineteenth century. Another example is the sub-chapter entitled 'The revolutionary movements between 1820-1821 in Europe' (pp. 26-27), which focuses on the idea of the nation and how it guided the demands of emerging states. In effect, such sub-chapters organize the material on a pervasive theme present in a series of historical events. Although this is not consistent throughout the textbook, these examples reflect an effort to relate the various events to, what Lévesque (2008) terms, colligatory concepts. In the above examples, this concept is the nation-state. As such, the 15G9 textbook is more successful than the 80G9 in connecting various events and promoting chronological thinking.

**Thematic focus.** Starting off with the thematic focus of the 80G9 textbook, its title explicitly denotes that its center of attention is on European history. The textbook's chapters adhere to its title and narrate English and French history, and some Eastern European, American, and Greek history. Those sections that refer to non-Europeans are

usually within a broader section devoted to European history. For example, colonization is included under chapters on French and English history. This reflects what some observe as the turn that occurred in history teaching after World War II and the creation of the European Union. Although this has not happened uniformly across all states, according to some scholars, within Europe, the focus of school history has tended to shift from the single nation-state history to European history (Antonniou & Soysal, 2005; Cajani, 2003).

The Eurocentric focus of the 80G9 textbook is made explicit in its introduction, where it projects the superiority of Greeks and the West by presenting Greeks as the people who, “had political and intellectual leadership of the world” (80G9, p. 5) up until the fall of Constantinople, whose ancient civilization provided the roots for the development of the European civilization. It also depicts Europeans as the major actors of history, who traveled, discovered the world, and promoted the sciences and the arts. All this is discussed in juxtaposition to non-Europeans, who are inclusively termed ‘primitive’ peoples with no further information as to who these peoples are. Similar to the 80G6 textbook, the 80G9’s introduction also presents a negative depiction of Ottomans, describing them as harsh occupiers who inhibited the progress of Greeks. Hence, from the advent, painting a glorifying depiction of Greeks and Europeans and a negative one of non-Europeans, the 80G9 textbook reproduces a Eurocentric and nationalistic way of telling the story, one that projects the superiority of the West in comparison to the rest of the world. On the other hand, the 15G9’s introduction does not include such explicit references about the superiority of the West. However, as I will show in my analysis

regarding the history of non-Western peoples, the 15G9 textbook follows an overall Western-orientated approach.

Continuing with the analysis of the 15G9's thematic focus, in contrast to the 80G9 textbook, the 15G9 textbook's title does not imply a specific regional focus. However, by taking into consideration that the 15G9 textbook's section titles include the term 'world,' there appears to be a turn towards world-focused history in the 15G9. Despite the chapter titles, when looking closer at the contents of the 15G9 textbook, there are only three out of the sixty five chapters that refer explicitly to non-Western and non-Greek history: Chapter 15 – 'Colonization and colonial competitions' (pp. 49-51), Chapter 16 – 'Developments in the American continent, China, and Japan' (pp. 52-54), and Chapter 52 – 'The end of colonialism and the emergence of the Third World' (pp. 144-146). As I will show in chapter five of this thesis, where I analyze the inclusion of non-Western history within the textbooks, even in these chapters the story is told from a European perspective. Furthermore, unlike the 80G9 textbook that devotes only one-fifth of its contents to Greece, the current textbook has a greater focus on Greek history, one almost equal to non-Greek history, as the topics of the chapters interchange between the two.

In my analysis of the six grade textbooks, I briefly mentioned the contrast between the section titles and the fact that the 15G9's chapters refer mainly to Greek and Western history. Here, I will extend my discussion as to why this may be problematic. First of all, such an approach equates the West with the world. As Nash et al. (1997) argue, European history, its philosophies, ideas, literature, and overall achievements are important, but putting the West/Europe at the center of the curriculum may create the impression to students that Western history is synonymous with the history of humankind. However,

the world is not only the West and this should be made clear to students. Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000) has talked about the provincializing of Europe, similarly arguing that Europe should be treated as *one* of several world regions, not as embodying a universal human history. Consequently, the links the textbook makes between the world and Europe creates a false impression that what is included in the textbook is representative of the world or of all that is important to mention about the world. The narrative situates global accomplishments and events within the Western world and relegates anything that happened outside of the West to insignificance. Considering this focus of the textbook and drawing from Huntington's (1996) definition of the West,<sup>3</sup> it would be more accurate if the term 'world' were replaced by the term 'Western world.' This replacement would be representative of what is actually included in the 15G9 textbook.

To a greater extent than the grade six textbooks, both of the grade nine textbooks include history regarding intellectual developments in the arts, literature, sciences, as economy. However, similar to traditional types of history, military and political events still occupy the majority of the textbooks' space.

In terms of what Greek history is included in the two textbooks, the 80G9 devotes one out of its five main sections to the years under Ottoman rule. The 15G9 textbook devotes only one out of the fourteen main chapters to the Ottoman occupation, considerably less space than the 80G9 textbook. More emphasis is given to the later years of the nineteenth and twentieth century.

Finally, the use of the first-person plural in the 80G9 textbook, 'for us the Greeks,' is noteworthy because it implies that the students studying the textbook are all Greek. As

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<sup>3</sup> "The West [...] includes Europe, North America, plus other settler countries such as Australia and New Zealand" (Huntington, 1996, p. 46).

I mentioned in my discussion on the sixth grade history textbooks, such phrasing is exclusionary and disregards the diversity within the country. Furthermore, according to Rüsen (2007), overemphasizing the ‘we’ may result in ethnocentrism, a cultural strategy that imposes negative values on ‘other’ peoples, potentially leading to clashes between different collective identities. We do not find this approach in the 2015 grade nine textbook, at least not in the introduction. The authors refer to the history of the Greek people, but it does not use the first-person plural or any other phrasing that denotes a shared Greek origin between the authors and the readers.

### **Grade Twelve History Textbooks**

#### **Description of Findings**

**The 1980 twelfth grade history textbook (80G12).** The 80G12 textbook used in this study is an edition from 1981. Although the textbook notes that it was published in 1937, sources indicate that it may have an even longer history and may have been used as early as 1923 (Palikidis, 2007). Throughout the years, the textbook has been revised several times, but without any major changes. Considering the fact that this textbook was used until 1984, this means ninth grade history was taught from the same historical source for over half a century. The textbook’s authors are two historians: Haralambos Theodoridis and Ahileas Lazarou. It is entitled: *Istoria Elliniki ke Europaiki ton Neon Hronon* [Modern Greek and European History], comprising 366 pages. The illustrations are typically portraits of historical figures and maps, all in black and white except for three pages in color. The majority of the portraits are of males and the textbook does not contain any questions, activities, or historical sources. The textbook is comprised solely

of text and images. At the end of all the chapters, and before the content pages, there is a chronological list of the historical events.

***Introduction.*** There is no reference to the purpose of history throughout the introduction; rather, it provides an overview of the division of general history into three periods: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern. It indicates that ancient Greek history is part of Ancient history, explaining that this link exists “not only because it is our national history, but also because the ancient Greeks were the first from the historical peoples to create an admirable civilization, one that is the root of the civilization of today’s developed peoples”(p. 5). As part of Ancient history, the authors include Roman history, which is also linked to Greece: “the Romans were the second developed peoples of ancient times, after the Greeks [...], who also came in contact with the ancient Greek civilization, which they conquered but they also continued” (p. 5). They include a quote from Roman poet Oratios: “The defeated Greece subjugated the harsh conqueror [implied: with their great civilization]” (p. 5). Regarding the Mediaeval period, they equate it to the Byzantine time period: “The Medieval history, i.e. Byzantine [history], is considered the uninterrupted continuation of Ancient Greek history, because the capital of the Byzantine Empire was founded on Greek land, the Byzantium, which was the ancient colony of the people from Megara” (p. 6).

At the end of the introduction, the authors make the distinction between the division of Modern history according to Greeks and that according to the rest of the world. For Greeks, the Modern time period began with the fall of Constantinople in 1453, while for the rest of the world it starts with the discovery of America in 1492. According to the authors, for Greeks the first part of the Modern time period ends before the ‘Great



Greek Revolution' against the Ottoman Empire. The second part starts from 1821 (the Greek Revolution) to date.

**Contents.** The 80G12 textbook covers the period from the mid-fifteenth century to the First World War. It is divided into five main sections; four out of the five sections are devoted to European history and one to Greek history. Overall, the textbook presents political and military history, but each section also includes chapters devoted to the intellectual developments of humanity in a specific time period.

The first section is entitled 'Modern Europe until the peace of Westphalia (1492-1648)' (pp. 7-52) and covers the following themes: the economic, political, and intellectual Renaissance, the humanistic movement, religious reform and the religious wars, the German empire, and the creation of nation states.

Similarly, the second section focuses on European history. It is entitled 'From the peace of Westphalia until the Enlightenment' (pp. 53-83) and the chapters interchangeably refer to the political situation in England and France and their monarchies.

The third section is entitled 'The years of the Enlightenment' (pp. 84-159) and the chapters refer to the developments of the nineteenth century in Eastern Europe, Germany, England, France, the European colonies, the Great French Revolution, Napoleon, and literature, sciences, and the arts during the nineteenth century.

The fourth section is devoted solely to Greek history and covers the historical period during the Ottoman rule, the Greek Revolution against the Ottomans, and the establishment of the independent Greek state in 1828.

The fifth and final section is entitled ‘The Modern years’ (pp. 276-361), covering the period from the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the German/French War, the Eastern Question, the Great Powers from 1870 until the First World War, and literature, sciences, and the arts during the twentieth century.

**The 2015 twelfth grade history textbook (15G12).** The currently used twelfth grade history textbook is entitled *Istoria tou Neoterou ke Syghronou Cosmou* [History of the Modern and Contemporary World] and was published and used for the first time within Greek schools in 2007. In my study, I used the second edition, which was published in 2008. The writing and publishing of this textbook was a direct assignment from the Greek Ministry of Education to the five authors, who all have a background in history: Ioannis Koliopoulos, History Professor at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki; Constantinos Koliopoulos, History Professor at the University of Athens; Evanthis Haztivasiliou, Assistant Professor at the University of Athens, Theodoros Nimas; Educational Advisor, PhD in literature; and Haris Sholinaki-Helioti, Teacher in secondary education, Phd in Art History. As stated in the textbook’s acknowledgments, it was reviewed and assessed by a five-member committee.

The textbook is 256 pages long and contains many colorful visuals, like images and maps. Most illustrations are followed by a brief commentary. Each chapter also includes multiple historical sources, usually placed as a sidebar along the page. Additionally, each chapter ends with two or three questions, most of them asking students to recall information from the text. After the presentation of all the chapters, the textbook ends with eight pages of tables, each providing a timeline or lists of accomplishments and events of the past two centuries: 1) important scientific and technological

accomplishments, 2) great thinkers, 3) great creators of Romanticism, 4) great creators of Realism, 5) great poets of Symbolism, 6) Impressionist – meta-Impressionist painters, 7) great Greek artists, and 8) important architectural works of Athens. Those of the twentieth century include: 1) important scientific and technological accomplishments, 2) great thinkers, 3) important artistic movements and creators, 4) literature – forerunners – Modernism, 5) theatre – cinema, 6) music, and 7) Greek reality. The final two tables provide two glossaries: one with general historical terms and one with terms related to artistic, scientific, and literary terms.

***Introduction.*** The introduction of the 15G12 textbook is quite formal, and unlike the other textbooks of the study that often include the salutation ‘Dear students,’ it does not address students directly. It is also very short, only two paragraphs long. In the first paragraph, the authors explain that the textbook aims to examine the international events of modern and contemporary history in a systematic and objective manner, while staying away from sentiments of fanaticism or bigotry. They also note that they examine Greek history in the wider framework of world history, especially European history, of which Greek history is an organic part. In the next paragraph, which is twice as long, they state that writing the textbook was a collaborative effort and they identify the authors of the various parts of the textbook.

On the page following the introduction, there is a note within a frame, which states in small font that historical sources are an integral part of the historical narrative because they make it more direct and help to illuminate and provide deeper interpretations.

Furthermore, the note states that the dates and biographical notes are to be used to orient

students within historical time. The note explains that the sources, the dates, and the biographies should not be considered part of any examination.

**Contents.** The 15G12 textbook covers the period between the nineteenth century and the early 2000s. However, references to the early twenty-first century are quite limited. The start of the twenty-first century is covered in the epilogue of the book, which refers to post-millennium challenges.

Overall, the textbook is divided into seven main sections, each further divided into chapters. The first section is entitled ‘Europe and the world during the nineteenth century (1815-1871)’ (pp. 9-52). In this section, as with all others, the chapters interchangeably present Greek and non-Greek history. The chapters cover a variety of topics: the Congress of Vienna, the national and liberal movements in Europe, the 1821 Greek Revolution, the Greek state and its development, the Eastern Question and the Crimean War, the industrial revolution, the crisis of the Habsburg Empire and the Italian/German union, and the rise of the American continent.

The second section, entitled ‘From the nineteenth to the twentieth century (1871-1914)’ (pp. 53-74), includes chapters that refer to European colonization, the Far East, the modernization of Greece, the national movements in Southeastern Europe, and the Balkan Wars.

The third section is devoted to the First World War and its consequences. In addition to the various chapters that directly cover the events of the First World War, this section includes chapters on the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the Russian Revolution.

The fourth section, entitled ‘Europe and the world during the interwar era’ (pp. 97-110), includes chapters covering a variety of topics: the world between 1920-1930, the

global economic crisis, and the developments in Greece during the interwar period. There is also a chapter titled ‘The rest of the world’ (pp. 109-110).

The next section is devoted to the Second World War. The chapters here cover themes related to the expansion of the German occupation in Europe and Greece, Greece’s participation in the war and its National Resistance, the counterattacks of the European powers and the defeat of Nazi Germany, the capitulation of Japan, the war crimes and the Holocaust, the various peace treaties, and the inclusion of the Dodecanese to Greece.

The sixth section covers the after-war period and deals with themes related to the creation of the United Nations, the Cold War, the Greek Civil War, colonization and the Third World, the path towards the European Union, Greece after the war until its EU membership, and the issue of Cyprus.

The seventh chapter of the textbook is entitled ‘The intellectual and artistic movements from the time of Romanticism until the start of the twentieth century’ (pp. 167-227) and covers these developments in both the world and Greece.

The final section, which is labeled the epilogue of the textbook, refers to the challenges during the twenty-first century in the world.

### **Analysis of Findings – Grade Twelve Textbooks**

Starting with a comparison of the textbooks’ structural elements, the 15G12 textbook is more colorful and includes a greater variety of images, whereas the majority of photos in the 80G12 textbook are black and white portraits of historical figures. Although these textbooks are for older students, the visual aspect of a textbook is still important because, as research has shown, visuals are an integral part of the learning

process (Pingel, 2010). They allow students to approach a phenomenon not only through text, but to draw information from a variety of sources. Furthermore, the 80G12 textbook covers a broader time period and starts from the mid-fifteenth century until the First World War. By contrast, the current textbook begins from the nineteenth century. The historical period between the mid-fifteenth and the nineteenth century onward is included in the current grade eleven textbook, which covers mainly medieval history.

**Epistemological orientation.** Continuing with the textbooks' epistemological orientation, and beginning with the authors' explicit intentions, the 80G12's introduction does not discuss the purpose of the textbook and how it should be used. Rather, it provides an overview of historical facts, similar to the other textbooks from the same era. The 15G12 textbook's introduction, on the other hand, does not present a historical overview, but describes the authors' goal when writing the textbook. What is interesting in the 2015 textbook is that the authors state that their aim is to present the historical facts in 'a systematic and objective manner.' This perspective resembles Leopold von Ranke's (1956) view, which, as I mentioned in chapter two, subscribes to the idea that it is possible to study and reproduce the past in an objective manner. Their statement is also in contrast to the constructive nature of knowledge, an idea that is at the foundation of the disciplinary approach to history. As Seixas (2000) argues, the problem with viewing school history as objective subject matter is that it may foster the impression that historical knowledge is something fixed and indisputable, consequently promoting, according to Foster (2012), a selective, narrow, and uncritical view of the world.

In regards to other elements that reveal the textbooks' epistemology, another major difference between the two twelve grade textbooks is that the 80G12 textbook does not

include any questions or activities. As I noted in my theoretical framework, the inclusion of questions and interdisciplinary activities are important elements for the development of historical thinking. Of course, according to Lévesque (2008), it is imperative that the questions direct students to think critically on the various issues. In this respect, the 15G12 textbook has certain weaknesses because most of those questions ask students to merely recall information from the narrative.

Another noteworthy difference between the textbooks is the inclusion of historical sources; namely, the 80G12 textbook does not include any, whereas in the 15G12 textbook, each chapter provides a number of sources in addition to the narrative. The latter textbook, therefore, is more in tune with the historical thinking approach, which demands the study of evidence as part of learning history (Lévesque, 2008). As I explained earlier in this chapter, I do not examine and discuss in further detail the kind of sources that are included in the 15G12 textbook in this part of my analysis. This is something that I will discuss in the fifth chapter, where I explore narratives regarding non-Western peoples.

In terms of the textbooks' organization, both follow a linear chronological presentation of history. The difference between them is that the 80G12 covers Greek history separately in one of the five sections. By contrast, and similar to the 15G9 textbook, the 15G12 does not focus separately on Greek history and non-Greek history. Instead, each section examines a specific time-period and interchanges between Greek and non-Greek history. As such, the textbook does not narrate the history of a specific region in isolation. By narrating the various events that happen in different countries and

regions during the same time period, it creates links between the events and connects them to larger frameworks of development.

**Thematic focus.** Moving on to the textbooks' thematic focus, I begin with the textbook titles. The 80G12 title explicitly denotes that it focuses on Greek and European history. The textbook's chapters adhere to its title and narrate mainly English, French, some Eastern European, and American history. On the other hand, the 15G12 textbook's title expands its focus to world history. However, similar to the 2015 grade six and nine textbooks, a closer examination of the 15G12's contents reveals that this opening is not reflected in the themes it covers. Apart from two chapters that refer to colonization and one chapter that refers to the Far East, the rest narrate European, Greek, and American history, which constitutes Western history, not world history. Hence, despite the 15G12 textbook's title, the content does not correspond to what is actually included in the textbook. As I argued in my discussion on the ninth grade history textbooks, this contradiction has several consequences, one of them being that the title is misleading and may create misconceptions in students as to what constitutes the world and what is important to know.

In terms of the type of history presented, both textbooks focus on military and political history, but while the 80G12 textbook includes a chapter regarding the intellectual and artistic accomplishments of each time period it examines, the 15G12 follows another approach. It devotes only its final chapter to covering the history of artistic and intellectual developments within the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. And so currently, throughout the year, students study conflicts and political developments during times of war, leaving the history of human kind and its accomplishments during



times of peace at the end of the 15G12 textbook. Drawing from my experience as a teacher, chapters at the end of the textbooks are not covered because there is usually not enough time in the school year. This means that this topic is probably excluded from the overall narrative. As I argued in my discussion of the sixth grade textbooks, the problem with learning only military history is that it places great emphasis on conflict while moments of peace are rendered less significant.

With respect to Greek history, the 80G12 textbook covers the Ottoman period. In contrast, the 15G12 textbook devotes only two chapters to the Ottoman occupation and the emergence of the Greek state, placing greater emphasis on the later years during the twentieth century. In terms of its overall focus, the 15G12 textbook does not extensively cover recent history, as it covers briefly the decolonization processes around the world and Greece's political developments up until the country's EU membership. Although the textbook includes a final chapter entitled 'Challenges of the twentieth century' (pp. 228-231), there is little coverage of recent developments around the world that have greatly influenced the formation of our multicultural societies. Contrary to this, a number of leading European historians have highlighted the importance of modern history, and of studying and reflecting on the broader forces that have shaped the world during the past century, as they regard it as an effective way to help students comprehend the complexities of their present-day lives (Stradling, 2001).

Concluding with the textbooks' thematic focus, a common element throughout all the 1980 textbooks is their highly nation-centered approach. By using the inclusive term '*our* Greek history' and by emphasizing the role of Ancient Greece, the progress of the developed nations, the 80G12 promotes the linear, uninterrupted continuity of the Greek

nation and the superiority of Greek culture. It also emphasizes that the Byzantine Empire is the continuation of Ancient Greek history, and follows what Anna Fragoudaki (1997) refers to as the national ideological myth of Greek continuity, which connects Ancient Greece to Modern Greece, via the Byzantium. As I mentioned in my analysis of the sixth and ninth grade textbooks, this practice has predominated in Greek education and school history since the establishment of the Modern Greek state in 1828. In fact, research has shown that this strong link between the Ancient Greek past and Modern Greece was promoted even before Paparrigopoulos' work on the history of the Greek nation. By reviewing history textbooks of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Zervas (2012) demonstrates that the construction of Modern Greek identity was in fact based on the connection of the Modern Greek citizen with Ancient Greek history and culture. The 15G12's introduction does not have explicit references to Greek superiority. However, as I will show in my analysis regarding non-Western peoples, the 15G12 textbook does follow a highly Eurocentric approach.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

In this chapter I presented my analysis related to the first two questions of my study, namely the textbooks' epistemological orientation and their thematic focus. As I explained in chapter three, since my answers to these questions are also informed by the third question of the study—narratives of non-Western peoples—I provide an overall response to the three questions in the final chapter of this thesis, chapter six.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### LOUD SILENCES

#### **Narratives of Non-Western Peoples**

We know of course there's really no such thing as the 'voiceless.'  
There are only the deliberately silenced or the preferably unheard.  
*Arundhati Roy, 2004 Sydney Peace Prize Recipient*

In this chapter, I address the third research question of my study: How do the 1980 and 2015 Greek textbooks of modern history differ in the way they narrate histories of non-Western peoples?

Similar to chapter four, I present my findings for each grade level separately. First, I summarize how each textbook of the same grade level treats each historical event. Following the description, I include an analysis section, where I analyze and compare how the two textbooks present the same topic.

In chapter four, I explained that the textbooks vary with regard to the time periods they cover; thus, certain historical events are not included in all textbooks. For the sake of comparison, I chose to limit my investigation and focus on the narratives that refer to non-Westerners within a common time period for both the 1980 and 2015 textbooks. Within each time period, I examine the events or chapters that include text on the history of non-Westerners in either one or both of the textbooks. I follow the order of events as they are listed in the 2015 textbooks.

As discussed in chapter one, non-Westerner is a complex term because it refers to peoples of diverse cultures, religions, and identities. Being aware of these complexities, I define the term non-Western in juxtaposition with the West. I follow the terminology used in the textbooks of the study and employ the geographical definition used by

Huntington (1996): “The West [...] includes Europe, North America, plus other settler countries such as Australia and New Zealand” (p. 46). I use the term ‘non-West’ to denote the remaining areas. However, in regards to the three latter regions, I treat indigenous history and the history of the victims of the European slave trade as distinct from the Western history for the purpose of this study.

The historical themes under examination for each grade level are as follows:

#### Grade six textbooks

- The discovery of the New World

#### Grade nine textbooks

- The American Revolution
- Colonization during the nineteenth and early twentieth century
- The American continent during the nineteenth and early twentieth century
- Asia: China and Japan during the nineteenth and early twentieth century
- Decolonization

#### Grade twelve textbooks

- The American continent during the nineteenth and early twentieth century
- Colonization during the nineteenth and early twentieth century
- Asia: China, Japan, and India during the nineteenth and early twentieth century
- Decolonization

### **Grade Six History Textbooks**

#### **The Discovery of the New World**

##### **Description of findings**

***The 1980 sixth grade history textbook (80G6).*** As I mentioned in chapter four, the 80G6 textbook is devoted solely to Greek history. The larger part of the textbook covers the Ottoman period and the Greek Revolution against the Ottoman rule. The negative presentation of the “savage and uncivilized Turks” (80G6, p. 8) and their role in Greece’s lack of progress is prevalent throughout the textbook. As I noted in my literature review, the representation of the Ottomans/Turks in GHT is a subject matter that has been studied extensively. For this reason, and because Greece’s neighboring countries are not the focus of this study, I will not go into further detail on this matter.

***The 2015 sixth grade history textbook (15G6).*** As discussed in chapter four, the 15G6 textbook’s title indicates that it narrates the history of the modern and contemporary world. However, non-Greek history is included in only one of the five sections of the textbook and is fourteen pages long. The section is entitled: ‘Developments in Modern Europe (mid-fifteenth century – beginning nineteenth century)’ (pp. 9-24). Its chapters cover the Renaissance and religious reform, geographical discoveries and the Enlightenment, and the American and French Revolutions. Among them, I found reference to non-Europeans in only one chapter.

This reference is included in the chapter that covers the ‘discoveries’ of the New World (pp. 16-19). In the first page (p. 16), the chapter includes an image of a painting portraying Christopher Columbus and his men arriving on the shore of the American continent and placing a flag on the ground. Below it, the textbook includes a timeline that indicates the geographical discoveries of Diaz in 1487, Columbus in 1492, Vasco da Gama 1497-1498, and Magellan’s voyage around the world from 1519 to 1522.

The text describes these men as ‘bold sailormen’ (p. 17) who, due to the development of the science of geography and the invention of the magnetic compass, “traveled until the end of the world in order to carve out new trade routes” (p. 17). The textbook gives an account of the outcomes of these discoveries; that is, new food products and precious metals made their way to Europe and trade developed at a global scale. Europeans founded colonies in the new lands, where they came into contact with ancient civilizations like the Incas and the Aztecs. Regarding these examples, the textbook notes, “they [the Europeans] were minimally influenced by them” (p. 17), explaining the consequences of settlement as follows: “often the new residents treated the indigenous with contempt and they took advantage of them. Slavery, especially in the colonies, was the most negative consequence of the discoveries” (p. 17). The following paragraph narrates advancements happening simultaneously in Europe, such as the birth of capitalism, the founding of banks, artisanal businesses that competed with one another, new techniques in agriculture, and the importation of new agricultural products like corn and potatoes. The remaining half of the chapter covers the Enlightenment.

In terms of historical sources, there is only one, and it is an extract from the memoir of Columbus’ ship. It narrates the moment the ship arrived and when travelers declared that they conquered the land in the name of the King and the Queen of Spain. Apart from the memoir’s reference stating that the newly arrived saw “naked people” (p. 18), the sources include no further reference to the indigenous.

The chapter includes several illustrations of white European men, namely famous inventors and French philosophers of the Enlightenment. It also contains maps portraying Columbus and Magellan’s journeys. In addition to the aforementioned first-page image of

Columbus' arrival in the Bahamas, another painting representing settlement is captioned "The Spanish soldiers destroying the indigenous' worshiping idols" (p. 19). Overall, the chapter includes no visual images of the indigenous, apart from the memoir's description of "naked people."

In terms of suggested activities, the chapter has one question directing students to recall: "the most important geographical discoveries of the Europeans during the fifteenth and sixteenth century" (p. 19). In the students' workbook, there is no activity that deals with the indigenous peoples of America. Exercise eight is one activity that refers to the era of the geographical discoveries (p. 8) and asks students to place certain events in chronological order, one of them being the discovery of America. A second activity concerns the magnetic compass; it asks students to look in their geography and physics textbooks to describe the magnetic compass, which the workbook considers the most important tool for the development of sea travels.

**Analysis of findings.** In comparing the two grade six textbooks for the presence of non-Western peoples, my findings show the following: The 80G6 textbook focuses on the Greek/Ottoman history and does not have references outside of Greece, its neighboring countries, and Europe. The 15G6 textbook, on the other hand, broadens its focus to include references to non-Western peoples and, specifically, to indigenous peoples of the Americas at the time of first contact. Since the 80G6 textbook does not include this subject, I cannot compare the two textbooks, so I will discuss my findings solely in terms of the 15G6 textbook.

The 'discovery' of America, as a historical event, is a controversial topic and, as such, has generated various conflicting historical views and interpretations. The official,

Eurocentric version prominent in most European textbooks is that Columbus discovered America in 1492. However, some scholars argue that this event was not a ‘discovery,’ but rather an encounter between the Americans and Europeans, or an intellectual invention of European thought (Carretero, Jacotta, & López-Manjóna, 2002; O’Gorman, 1961). The story also alters depending on the narrator. For Europeans, the ‘discovery’ of the New World is understood as an expansion of the known world, whereas for the indigenous, this ‘discovery’ is interpreted as the moment that led to their material and physical extermination (Todorov, 1999). Furthermore, the term ‘discovery’ itself is problematic and misrepresentative as it connotes finding something that was lost or unknown. The so-called ‘New World’ was already populated by many peoples, who later became subjugated and colonized by the incoming Europeans.

Drawing from my analysis of the chapter about the ‘discovery’ of the American continent, my findings show that the 15G9 textbook presents Europeans and indigenous peoples in an unequal way. On the one hand, the arrival and settlement of Europeans on the American continent is presented as a glorious, courageous event, which led to further progress in Europe. In contrast to the brave Europeans, the textbook does not include much information about the Incas and the Aztecs. It notes that they are ancient civilizations and it includes a source that describes them as those ‘naked people’ (p. 18), but it offers no further references about their culture and its value. Additionally, the textbook comments that Europeans were not influenced by the indigenous, but rather felt contempt for them. Although indigenous peoples are not explicitly evaluated negatively, the chapter implicitly conveys a stereotypical depiction: superior European culture versus inferior indigenous culture. Scholars have acknowledged that this type of representation



is typical in history textbooks; the historical narrative usually focuses on the achievements and triumphs of one group, the dominant, and ignores or downplays the contributions of other groups (Foster, 2012).

Furthermore, the chapter refers to slavery as one of the most negative consequences of the ‘discoveries,’ but it does not elaborate beyond this and devotes the subsequent paragraph to the progress that occurred in Europe. In this way, the textbook’s narrative focuses on the dominant group’s experiences and on Europe’s progress, while ignoring the negative effects that the settlement had on the lives of ‘others.’ It does not mention the large number of people who were killed as a result of the settlement. The image that shows Europeans destroying indigenous’ religious idols partly depicts the violence of that time, but omits what some have termed the American Holocaust (Stannard, 1992). In fact, some describe the European destruction of indigenous peoples in the Americas as the most massive act of genocide in the history of humankind (Todorov, 1999). The fact that this brutality is ignored in the textbook’s narrative is not surprising; as Rüsen (2007) explains, in historical memory, whatever belongs to oneself is subject to positive evaluation. In contrast, any negative aspects of the experience or of one’s self are pushed out of memory.

This asymmetrical depiction of history also tends to project a distorted notion of progress. Drawing from Lévesque’s (2008) criteria for effectively presenting historical ‘progress and decline,’ the textbook neglects the idea that the ‘discoveries’ did not exclusively lead to progress alone and was not to the benefit of all parties involved. In effect, the textbook does not fully explore how European progress simultaneously meant decline in the lives of indigenous peoples.

Carretero, Jacotta and López-Manjóna's (2002) comparative study on Mexican and Spanish textbooks shows similar findings. In analyzing the narratives related to the 'discovery' of America, they found that within Spanish textbooks, the voice and culture of indigenous peoples are neglected. The Spanish history textbooks contain no information about the socio-economic, cultural, or political life of the indigenous before the arrival of Columbus. The indigenous are described as objects rather than active agents and are often referred to as the 'conquered territories' or the 'colonized lands.' Contrary to the Mexican textbooks, which see the arrival of the Spaniards as a tragedy for the indigenous, like the 15G6 textbook, the Spanish textbooks tend to stress the heroic nature of the Spaniards' actions and the glorious nature of the conquest and colonization of the New World. Similarly, Christine Rogers Stanton's (2014) study of five widely adopted U.S. history textbooks showed that these textbooks misrepresent the historical agency of indigenous peoples while reinforcing the patronizing, normative, dominant-culture narrative. Hence, my findings are representative of an approach that adopts a Western interpretation of this event and indigenous peoples' history.

Overall, the analysis of the 'discovery' of America within the 15G6 textbook shows that the event itself and the histories of all involved were not approached in their complexity. The textbook does not devote enough space, questions, and activities on the negative effects of the 'discovery' and promotes a stereotypical representation of Europeans and the indigenous peoples of the Americas alike. By not including opposing versions of the story and activities that encourage readers to question the narrative regarding the 'great' accomplishments of Europe and its effects on others, the textbook

fails to address the issue from multiple perspectives and tells the story from a Western viewpoint alone.

## **Grade Nine History Textbooks**

### **The American Revolution**

#### **Description of findings**

*The 1980 ninth grade history textbook (80G9).* Overall, this chapter narrates the circumstances that led to the American Revolution, particularly the financial pressure enforced on the colonies by the English. It also refers to the Seven Year War between settlers and the English, and the involvement of the French and Spanish. The chapter ends by explaining the political organization of the newly formed independent United States of America. It also includes three illustrations of paintings showing the Americans throwing English tea into the sea and portraits of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. The textbook includes no historical sources associated with the American Revolution in the chapter or in the historical sources section at the end of the book. It concludes with two questions and a conversational topic; the questions ask students to recall the causes, important events, and general importance of the American Revolution, as well as the structure of the American system of government and how it differs from the ancient Greek system.

*The 2015 ninth grade history textbook (15G9).* The 15G9 chapter on the American Revolution comprises two pages, including a map of the Northeastern territories, which at the time were under English control, two illustrations, and one historical source. Similar to the 80G9 textbook, the first image shows Americans throwing tea from England into the sea as a reaction to enforced taxation (p. 14). The second image shows the signing of

the Declaration of Independence. Beside this image, the textbook includes a historical source with a small extract from the Declaration, which begins by stating that all people are made equal. The chapter ends with two questions that ask students to connect the Declaration and the political organization of the USA to the ideas of John Locke and Montesquieu, respectively. The questions direct students to compare the sources and the information of this chapter with the previous one, which covers the Enlightenment.

The reference of this chapter to non-Westerners is regarding the African population. The chapter describes the composition of the settlers, explaining that most of them were from England, France, Germany, and Sweden. According to the textbook, these people were “craftsmen, small businessmen that had been destroyed, victims of religious prosecution, convicts, all of them searching for a better fortune” (p. 14). The textbook acknowledges the presence of African peoples by noting:

In 1763, the Northern colonies had a total population of 1,000,000 people, out of whom around 40,000 were black slaves. [...] In 1763, the Southern colonies had around 750,000 people, 300,000 of them were black slaves. The economy was based on [the cultivation of] the large plantations of tobacco, rice and cotton. The owners of the plantations were exclusively European settlers, who also dominated the economic and social life. The land was cultivated by black slaves whose living conditions were miserable. (p. 14)

The chapter provides no further details about these black slaves, who they were, or when and how they arrived on the continent. The rest of the chapter narrates the settlers' efforts to free themselves from England's control and how North America eventually

became independent. The chapter has no reference to the indigenous population and their presence in society.

**Analysis of findings.** In both grade nine textbooks, the text, the sources, and the questions all project the prevalence of European settlers. Neither of the textbooks have narratives that include references to the indigenous population. Roughly three hundred years after the arrival of Europeans, indigenous peoples seem to have disappeared from the story of the Americas these textbooks present. Further, both textbooks explain that settlers were fighting for their independence and their political freedom, yet they do not address the fact that the settlers, both in the past and in that present, were depriving others of their freedom; i.e., the indigenous and African populations. The Declaration of American Independence, which is quoted in the 15G9 textbook, states that everyone was created equal. However, by not mentioning the fact that some peoples were enslaved and deprived of their political rights, the textbooks choose to silence their experience and, therefore, solely promote the European ‘glorious’ efforts towards independence.

In contrast to the chapter on the American Revolution in the 80G9 textbook, which includes no references to non-Westerns, the 15G9 textbook refers to people of African descent residing in the English colony. However, the lack of an inclusive and critical approach to this event is manifested not only through the absence of other groups, like the indigenous, but also through the one group it actually does mention: the ‘black slaves.’ The text, sources, and questions do not provide any information as to who these ‘black slaves’ were or how they arrived in the colonies. Further, they do not explain or question the normalized, uncontested category of ‘black slaves,’ who, in contrast to the English, French, and other settlers, are not attributed a country of origin. They are grouped under a

homogenous category named after a physical characteristic, their skin color, and their social status as slaves. The reader who knows some history may presume that the black slaves are from Africa. However, Africa is a continent and there is as much variety within its land as there is among its people. From a critical approach to diversity, it could be argued that the narrative projects a simplistic and uncritical depiction of these peoples. It uses an umbrella descriptive term, 'black slaves,' to group these peoples into a homogeneous whole, which fails to recognize their varying identities and experiences.

This, of course, is not unique to Greek textbooks. In fact, this historical topic has been at the center of many US textbook revisions. During the nineteenth century, evidence shows that black Americans were absent from most of the historical narrative. When they were mentioned, the characterizations were highly negative. Nash et al. (1997) explain that schoolchildren using these textbooks never had the chance to read that black Americans fought in the American Revolution. By accusing white historians of the nineteenth century of suffering from historical amnesia, Nash et al. point to the extremity of certain narratives that describe slavery as a blessing, one that saved Africans from darkness and their savage lands. Arguing for the need to include conflicting perspectives in regards to this theme, they claim that "the story of the [American] nation's birth will seem more real, concrete, and just plain interesting when students explore the Revolution as an event both terrifying and inspiring, heroic and mundane, divisive and binding" (Nash et al., 1997, p. 86). The Greek textbook does not utilize expressions as extreme as those found in the nineteenth century US textbooks, but the homogenizing phrase 'black slaves' and the absence of their story are elements that demonstrate, at the very least, a lack of multiperspectivity.

Concluding with the textbooks' suggested questions and activities, both textbooks connect the content of this chapter with other historical moments: The American system of governance with Ancient Greece (80G9) or with John Locke and Montesquieu (15G9). The current textbook also directs students to explore the historical sources and to compare the story told here to one from a previous chapter. This promotes what Lévesque (2008) has termed chronological thinking: rather than relying on a mere sequence of events, these questions direct students to think about issues across time and space. On the other hand, the link that the textbooks make between Ancient Greek/European thought and America's system of governance hints at the notion of the centrality of European civilization. As a result, Europe is seen as having set the standards of progress and intellectual thought for the rest of the world (Soysal & Schissler, 2005). This idea of the universality of European heritage has been widely critiqued for its narrow outlook. Nash et al. (1997) argue that inasmuch as democracy and its attendant ideas originate from Europe, democracy as a way of organizing society "went out to the world" (p. 276) from the eighteenth century. Since then, societies around the world have been experimenting and adapting this structure to their own culture and circumstances. Democracy has been negotiated and reinvented throughout the centuries. As such, Nash et al. suggest that democracy belongs to the world, and it is within this framework that students ought to understand and analyze it.

### **Colonization during the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century**

#### **Description of findings**

*The 1980 ninth grade history textbook (80G9).* In the 1980 textbook, nineteenth century colonization is included as part of three broader chapters. One covers the history

of France: 'France between 1815-1870' (pp. 249-251). The second chapter covers the history of England: 'England during the 19<sup>th</sup> century' (pp. 256-258), and the third refers to 'Europe from the end of the French-German War of 1870 until 1914' (pp.267-270).

In the first chapter, colonization is part of a subchapter on Napoleon (pp. 250-251). The reference is one paragraph long and is subtitled 'Foreign Policy' (p. 251). It basically explains that Napoleon was able to extend his influence to Greece and Egypt and expand the French colonial state by conquering Algeria, Senegal, and Indochina. The textbook notes that Napoleon also attempted to extend his influence in Mexico, but after the reaction of the locals and USA's intervention, he was forced to remove his army. The chapter includes no questions, historical sources, or images related to this theme.

The chapter on England includes a subchapter entitled: 'England's colonial expansion' (p. 257). This half-page section begins by noting that England expanded its conquests to India during the nineteenth century. It goes on to explain that, having India as its base, England conquered Singapore and financially penetrated China. At the end of the eighteenth century, England took over part of Australia and started to breed sheep for wool. In the mid-nineteenth century, the English also discovered goldmines and the population in Australia tripled. At the same time, they began to colonize New Zealand and the population of Canada increased. All the English colonies eventually formed a federation, called Dominion. The chapter ends with a note stating that the following changes took place starting from the second half of the nineteenth century and onwards: the slave trade was forbidden within the English colonies and those colonies populated by Europeans declared their autonomy. The chapter includes no further questions, historical sources, or images related to this theme.



The third chapter on colonization is divided into two sections. The first section is entitled ‘Colonial expansion’ (pp. 267-270) and begins by explaining the reasons that led to colonization: first, the industrial revolution created the need for the industrial powers to seek raw materials, and second, Europeans were in search for new markets to sell their industrial products. The text defines colonization as the new imperialism, which reflects a new tendency whereby European countries were no longer looking to create empires within Europe, but to conquer new lands. The textbook notes that, during this time, European powers were interested primarily in Africa and China, noting “Africa was explored and divided in colonial states” (p. 267). The rest of the text narrates French and English expansion, how they “created a large colonial state,” “dominated the two countries,” “took possession,” and how “England bought Egyptian shares of the Suez Canal,” “The English settled in Transvaal, after winning the locals and the Dutch” (p. 267). The latter phrase is the only one explicitly describing conflict during the expansion of the European powers. This is also the only part of the text that refers to local populations. The chapter includes a map of Europe and a question asking students to recall most of the chapter: “What was the general situation of Europe and the world from 1870 until 1914?” (p. 271). The rest of this section refers to China and Japan, which I will discuss later.

***The 2015 ninth grade history textbook (15G9).*** In the 2015 textbook, nineteenth century colonization falls under the chapter entitled: ‘Colonization and colonial rivalries’ (pp. 49-51). On the first page, the chapter presents the framework of colonization by defining imperialism and colonization:

Some of the European states that accomplished high levels of capitalistic growth began to search, from a certain time period and onwards, regions beyond Europe to exploit. This phenomenon, intrinsic to the development of capitalism during this specific time period, was called *imperialism*, (from the Latin word imperium: power, authority) and was expressed with efforts to attain colonies, *colonization*[.] [I]t was manifested with intensity during the period 1870-1914. (15G9, p. 49)

The rest of the paragraphs refer to the main factors that led to colonization, and the social classes and pioneers associated with the process. Each of these three themes appears in bold letters and is covered in a separate paragraph. Firstly, the textbook explains that the founding of the colonies is attributable to three factors: the industrially advanced European states' demand to find new markets for their products, the search for new sources of raw materials, and new regions to invest their capital. While the conquest of the colonies allowed European states to control the seas, the textbook notes that it also strengthened the colonized states and heightened the prestige and 'superiority' of the indigenous population. Secondly, the textbook explains that the colonial states' bourgeoisie and lower social classes supported colonization because it benefited both groups financially and socially. Thirdly, the people that pioneered colonization were explorers, Christian missionaries, and merchants. Explorers were looking for new knowledge and discovered new lands, while the missionaries, by spreading Christianity, prepared the ground for solidifying the European presence in the new territories. Finally, the merchants, who were in search for new markets, paved the way for the colonizers through the pursuit of profit.

Alongside the page, the textbook includes the chapter's three historical sources, entitled: 'Some reasons for colonization,' 'The social base of colonization,' and 'The missionaries as the forerunners of colonization.' All three are secondary sources and taken from the same book, Bernstein and Miltza's, *The History of Europe*. Each source is placed side-by-side with the paragraph that covers the same theme and supports the information provided in the main text.

On the second page (p. 50), the chapter describes the methods Europeans used in colonization: the seizing of the land, the subjugation of the locals, and financial penetration, the latter used to conquer and partially colonize independent states. The textbook notes that Great Britain was the most powerful colonial state, with colonies all around the world. It also distinguishes between the colonies with "populations [comprised] mainly of white people (Canada, Australia, New Zealand) [and] colonies with populations [comprised] mainly of locals (India, Pakistan,<sup>1</sup> Afghanistan, South Africa, etc.)" (p. 50). It then goes on to list the colonies of other European countries around the world.

The chapter continues with two final sections, the first referring to the results of colonization and the second to the colonized states and their people. The text describes the negative results that colonization had on the colonized peoples and what the colonizers offered to the colonies. Without explicitly naming by whom, i.e., the Europeans, the English, etc., the textbook states:

Their wealth was looted. The peoples treated them like they were inferior and were converted, almost, into slaves. Their cultures were devalued. At the same time, the

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<sup>1</sup> The textbook includes Pakistan, although Pakistan as an independent state did not exist at the time of the narrated historical period.

colonizers brought to the colonies all the elements of their cultures: language, technological accomplishments (railway, steamboat), religions, institutions, ideologies (liberalism, nationalism, socialism), and lifestyle. Against this invasion, the people of the colonies reacted in many ways, from total submission to revolution. (15G9, pp. 50-51)

The chapter ends by reiterating the consequences of colonization on the colonizers.

This time naming the colonizers, the text explains:

The Europeans drained the colonies and many European societies reaped part of their wealth. At the same time Europe became the center of the world. The colonial conquests were considered by the Europeans ample proof of their intellectual superiority and of their economic and technological omnipotence. The European culture was considered superior. The Europeans became culturally arrogant. (15G9, p. 51)

In terms of visuals, the chapter includes a color-coded map of Africa that shows the colonies of each European state. At the end of the chapter, there is a black and white photo with the caption: “Under the gaze of the German emperor William the Second and his wife [they are portrayed in the hanging frames on the wall], African students taking a class with their white teacher” (p. 51).

The chapter concludes with three suggested activities. The first asks students to draw a star and write the word colonization in the middle. The second asks students to comment on the fact that colonization was based on a triad of missionaries, merchants, and military. The final exercise directs students to look at the historical source that refers

to the missionaries and the chapter's image. It then asks them to create a brief text regarding the cultural dimension of colonization.

**Analysis of findings.** When comparing the two textbooks, the 15G9 devotes a separate chapter on the topic of colonization, whereas the 80G9 textbook includes it briefly as part of the French, English, and European historical narrative. The narrative of the 80G9 does not discuss causes and consequences in detail. Only in the third chapter of the 80G9 textbook does the text mention the reasons Europe sought colonies: industrial progress. The 80G9 textbook does not provide any information regarding the indigenous peoples, how they reacted to colonization, or how their lives were affected. In the chapter that narrates English history, the textbook notes that the population in Canada increased, but it does not explain which population was growing. If it is referring to the settler populations, the text fails to include information regarding the population of indigenous peoples. It does not inform the reader whether the latter population was also growing and, if not, the reasons for that lack of growth. Considering the absence of the indigenous experience, the 80G9 textbook examines colonization solely from the perspective of the colonizers and neglects to include another perspective. It is, therefore, unsuccessful in offering students the opportunity to challenge this phenomenon and understand how differently it affected peoples all over the world.

The 15G9 textbook, on the other hand, goes into more detail regarding the phenomenon of colonization. While not directly titled as such, it tells the story of the colonizers, similar to the 80G9 textbook. The chapter refers to the colonized people in only one brief paragraph, the bulk of which explains how Europeans spread their power across the world. Similarly, and to a greater extent than the 80G9 textbook, the chapter

presents colonization as the consequence of economic growth and European advancement, one that eventually led to further progress. In addition, the chapter explicitly and implicitly repeats the notion of European superiority with phrases like “European culture was considered superior” and “Europe became the center of the world” (15G9, p. 51). In the first sentence, it is not clear if this is something that the Europeans thought at the time or if it is a statement that the text aims to convey as true information to the reader. In these phrases, and throughout the chapter, the text gives the impression that colonization was necessary, justified in the name of economic growth, inevitable, and a great European accomplishment.

In both textbooks the absence and misrepresentation of the colonized peoples’ voices are very loud. For example, the 15G9 textbook mentions the population composition of the British colonies and notes that in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand the “population [was comprised] mainly of white people” (15G9, p. 50). By portraying these countries as ‘white,’ the phrase dismisses the existence of indigenous populations.

Furthermore, in the 15G9 chapter the colonized peoples are referenced in only eight brief lines within the three pages of the chapter; only one and a half of these lines explicitly describe the negative consequences of colonization in their lives. In these one and a half lines, the text uses a passive voice to present the negative effects: “Their wealth was looted,” “Their cultures were devalued” (15G9, p. 50), while not explicitly stating who did the looting and devaluing. The text also avoids directly linking Europeans with negative aspects of colonization, or uses general, vague terms like “the peoples [implied: Europeans] treated them like they were inferior and were converted, almost, into slaves” (15G9, p. 50). By stating that the indigenous peoples were *almost* enslaved,

this phrase misrepresents, silences, and dismisses their experience. We can assume this stance reflects Lowenthal's (2000) suggestion that, "because we want our ancestors to mirror ourselves, we feel the need to clean up their act" (p. 71). Following this line of reasoning, the narrative seems to downplay the negative consequences that colonization had on the indigenous population.

In a further attempt to shun the negative consequences of colonization, the 15G9 textbook devotes double the space to highlight its positive aspects. In this case, the narrative no longer uses passive voice, but in active grammar states that it was, "the colonizers [who] brought to the colonies all the elements of their cultures: language, technological accomplishments (railway, steamboat), religions, institutions, ideologies (liberalism, nationalism, socialism), and lifestyle" (15G9, pp. 50-51). The text creates the impression that these were positive consequences for indigenous populations. However, this representation fails to raise awareness to the fact that the spread of European languages, ideologies, religions, etc., was in fact a way of imposing power, and as a result of these impositions, many peoples lost elements of their own cultures. It also does not question the fact that "European societies reaped part of their wealth" (15G9, p. 51) and how this links to the wealth of the West and the subsequent poverty of former European colonies, which continue to be burdened with the social and material effects of colonization to date.

In terms of the 15G9 chapter's historical sources, they fail to present an alternative perspective. As I showed in the description of my findings, the historical sources simply support what is narrated in the text situated beside them.

Similarly, the 15G9 suggested activities do not question the chapter's narrative and do not direct students toward alternate perspectives. In fact, the third activity asks students to discuss the cultural dimensions of colonization by directing them to explore it in terms of the colonial states' contribution to the indigenous populations.

Overall, in both textbooks, the Europeans' side of the story dominates. Although the 15G9 textbook deals with the issue of colonization in more depth, my findings show that the chapter downplays its negative consequences and presents it as an inevitable accomplishment of the developed Europeans. Both textbooks present the story of the dominant group, the Europeans, and fail to examine the aforementioned events from the perspective of the colonized, while also neglecting to address the inherent complexities and contradictions of all the involved historical actors. As a result, the textbooks are not successful in showing how the past shaped the present and how it is linked to issues such as the Third World, poverty, and immigration, to name a few.

Despite the fact that such representations of Europe have been widely criticized for being prejudiced and irrelevant for multicultural societies, my findings are not unique. In fact, Europe's claims to objectivity, universality, and progress are still widespread as a mode of writing history (Soysal & Schissler, 2005).

## **The American Continent during the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century**

### **Description of findings**

*The 1980 ninth grade history textbook (80G9).* Starting in Latin America, the 80G9 textbook devotes very little space, only a three-line paragraph, to its development. This historical issue is found under the general chapter: 'England during the nineteenth century' (pp. 256-258). The paragraph explains that at the beginning of the nineteenth



century, the South American Spanish colonies and Brazil became independent states. It notes that the states did not manage to unite into a federation and constitute a great power. From the text, it is not clear if their lack of power was due to the fact that they did not form a federation, or for other reasons. There are no images, questions, or historical sources associated with this topic.

Within the same chapter, the textbook narrates the developments in the northern part of the American continent. The textbook explains, “In contrast [to Latin America] the USA expanded towards Central and Northeastern America. They bought Louisiana from the French and they took California, Florida, Texas, and a part of Mexico” (p. 257).

In the following subsection of the chapter, the textbook refers to the American Civil War. Here, the narrative includes reference to the African population in the American society of that period: “The Southern states of the USA, which were agricultural, used black slaves in their farms. The tragically difficult life of these people provoked reactions and the Northern states declared that they are against slavery” (p. 258). The text goes on to explain that, after the end of the war:

Freedom was given to the blacks and the congress acknowledged their legal and political rights. The victory ensured the unity of the USA, but the issue of the blacks did not end, because the Southern states did not completely adhere to the decisions. A few days after the end of the war, President Abraham Lincoln was killed by a fanatic racist. (p. 258)

The section includes no images, questions, or historical sources on this topic.

***The 2015 ninth grade history textbook (15G9).*** The 15G9 textbook covers developments in the American continent in the chapter entitled: ‘Developments in the

American continent, China and Japan' (pp. 52-54). It is divided into four subsections, each one covering the revolutions in Latin America, the American Civil War, China, and Japan.

In terms of the Latin American revolutions, the text attributes the establishment of the regional independent states to the spread of liberalism and the emergence of nationalism. This section refers to the political developments of the region and narrates the involvement of leading figures in the struggle for Latin American independence, namely members of the elite class Simón Bolívar and José de San Martín, Mexican dictator Porfirio Díaz, and the revolutionaries of peasant descent, Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa. In terms of the economy, the textbook notes that the independence of South America did not change its economic situation, as the economy remained agricultural. It explains that the land was in the hands of a few people and the farmers, who were the majority, lived in terrible conditions. The chapter includes a map of Latin America, but no further questions or historical sources refer to this period.

For the American Civil War, the text explains that the USA experienced rapid economic growth due to “the coexistence of rich raw materials, the [existence of] plenty of working hands, relatively high education levels, stability, and a risk-taking business attitude” (p. 52). The chapter further explains that the expansion of the USA, as far as the Pacific, was possible either by buying the land or by seizing it after collisions with the indigenous peoples. The section then introduces the issues that resulted in the American Civil War:

In the South, the property-owners had plantations where black slaves were working.

In the North, they believed that slavery impeded industrial growth ([although] in

reality, the slaves did not have income and so could not buy industrial products), so it was morally unacceptable and had to be abolished. (p. 53)

One of the two historical sources of this chapter includes a reference regarding the reasons behind the American Civil War, which serves as commentary to the above quote. It introduces a perspective that juxtaposes what is said within the text and highlights another one. The source notes:

It is certain that the industry of the North was more concerned about a nation in which half of it implemented free trade and the other half protectionism, rather than [being concerned about] a nation in which half of them used slaves and the other half had abolished slavery. (p. 52)

The text explains that the abolishment of slavery was institutionalized at the end of the war, but it took several years to be fully implemented. The section ends with the years following the civil war when, the textbook explains, the USA experienced further industrial growth, which was due to the advent of new immigrants and the development of the railway. Simultaneously, the settlers started to occupy land away from the coasts, what the textbook defines as the conquest of the West, which was accompanied by the extermination of the indigenous peoples who resided in these territories.

The chapter includes a color-coded map showing the expansion of Europeans in the USA, as well as several questions and suggested activities related to this topic. One question directs students to look at the historical source and explain, “apart from the disagreement on the issue of slavery, what other reasons led to the American Civil War?” (p. 54). Additionally, the textbook proposes a number of interdisciplinary approaches, such as watching the Steven Spielberg movie *Amistad*, which refers to the slave trade

between Africa and America, the movie *Gone with the Wind*, regarding the civil war, and reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, about the lives of black slaves in America.

**Analysis of findings.** The 80G9 textbook does not devote much of its narrative to developments in South America. It briefly compares South to North America in terms of the amount of power they acquired—with the South lagging behind in comparison to the ‘progressive’ North—but it does not go into further detail regarding the sociopolitical situation of the region. Neither textbook includes questions or sources related to this issue.

In contrast, the 15G9 textbook provides a more extensive account of the events in South America. It focuses on the political developments and the economic situation of that period and mainly references the actions of key political figures, most of them belonging to the elite and being of European descent. The Latin American revolutions are also attributed to the spread of liberalism and nationalism, which implies that these revolutions had their roots in European thought, rather than within Latin American society. In terms of the wider population, there is only a brief reference to farmers who, according to the textbook, comprised the majority of society. Although they are the majority, the textbook does not explain their origin; it does not discuss who was living in terrible conditions, if they were Europeans or indigenous peoples, and it provides no explanation as to why they were living under these conditions and what their contribution was to national developments. In addition, the text does not refer to the role of the indigenous population within this process of independence, nor does it acknowledge the existence or their heroes and heroines during these events. These are people who lived in Latin America for centuries before the arrival of the Europeans, who developed a unique

civilization; and yet, their contribution and their presence during this time of upheaval is silenced. For the most part, both textbooks neglect the perspective of the majority and the indigenous peoples of South America; they deprive them of any type of agency and instead, focus on the accomplishments of prominent figures of European decent.

Moving on to the American Civil War, both textbooks include references to black slaves and the role of slavery within the conflict. Both narratives present the abolishment of slavery as the main issue that led to war. However, by including a historical source that challenges this stance, the 15G9 textbook introduces the idea that the matter at hand was more about the implementation of free trade and the further advancement of industry, rather than about slavery. The inclusion of this interpretation opens up the scope of the subject matter under examination and provides a different perspective. By presenting a variety of reasons that led to civil war, the 15G9 textbook makes an effort to uncover the complexities of the event and of peoples' motives. This challenges the dominant narrative, which projects the idea that the North took actions only because they were fighting the injustices against enslaved peoples, and reveals another interpretation.

A noteworthy common element in both textbooks is that they both fail to mention the participation of enslaved people in the fight for their freedom. They both promote the idea that slaves were given their freedom because of the actions that were initiated by the settlers. For example, the 80G9 textbook notes: "The tragically difficult life of these people provoked reactions and the Northern states were declared to be against slavery" (80G9, p. 258). By this and in the extracts I presented in the description of the 15G9 textbook, these narratives give the impression that the end of slavery was due to the concern and actions of *only* the settlers. It does not attribute any agency to enslaved

peoples. In both textbooks, there are no references to the actions of slaves, what they did, and how they struggled to regain their freedom. Thus, the textbook presents the settlers as the sole entity that possesses historical agency. It projects the universality of Western thought where Europeans are the agents of freedom, those who abolished slavery, are at the forefront of human rights, brought the industrial revolution, and led to economic growth (Soysal & Schissler, 2005). As such, both textbooks seem to follow Dunn's (2000) Western Heritage Model of world history, where the non-Westerners' contribution is absent from the story and the West is the agent of freedom.

Regarding the indigenous populations, the 2015 textbook refers to them twice within the section explaining the American Civil War. In both instances, the narrative presents the displacement of these peoples as something that was implicitly justified and therefore inevitable, stating "[one of] the manifestations of economic growth was also the expansion towards the West" (15G9, p. 52). In this description, the conflicts and the extermination of indigenous peoples appear to be the natural consequence of economic growth and industrial advancement. Their story and the consequences of the European expansion into their territories are not included in the textbook. Rather, it chooses to minimize the effects of the dominant group's actions by drawing attention to the progress that was made. Once again, the 15G9 textbook fails to address the indigenous experiences and focuses on the story of the 'great conquerors.' As such, the narrative follows a strategy common in most historical accounts; it 'cleans up the act' of the settlers, downplays the negative aspects of this historical event (Lowenthal, 2000), and positively evaluates whatever belongs to 'our ancestors' (Rüsen 2007). It could also be argued that the text gives the impression that anything is justifiable in the name of

progress, economic growth, and advancement in capitalist terms, even what happened to the indigenous and African Americans.

A difference between the two textbooks is that the 15G9 textbook includes suggested interdisciplinary activities, which direct students to read and watch movies about the slave trade. Although this is a step towards presenting an alternative perspective, the inclusion within the chapter of extracts presenting the story of the slaves and indigenous peoples is still missing.

Overall, both textbooks tell the dominant group's side of the story over the history of any other actors. Although the 15G9 textbook's sources and suggested activities attempt to present an alternate perspective, my findings show that, similar to the 80G9 textbook, the chapter's narrative neglects the experience of the African and indigenous populations in the name of progress and economic advancement. Once more, the negative consequences of expansion on non-dominant groups are downplayed and presented as the inevitable result of progress. Both textbooks equally fail to address the experiences of all involved historical actors.

## **Asia: China and Japan during the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century**

### **Description of findings**

*The 1980 ninth grade history textbook (80G9).* In the 80G9 textbook, China and Japan are mentioned briefly as part of a broader topic, within the section entitled: 'Colonial expansion (new Imperialism)' (pp. 267-270). Japan is described as an upcoming power in the Far East, "which developed [its] military and industry" (p. 267). Within one paragraph, it quickly runs through the country's efforts to conquer China and invade its market, its competition with the European countries, the Russian-Japan War,

and how it took over Korea, Port Arthur, and Manchuria from Russia. The next reference in the textbook regarding Japan is about the interwar period within the section: ‘The national movement in the colonies’ (pp. 308-309). In this five-line paragraph, the textbook refers again to the country’s growing industrial development, its imperial politics, the conquest of Manchuria, and the declaration of war against China in 1937. Japan is also mentioned in the section that refers to two Second World War events (p. 325): the Pearl Harbor incident that led America to declare war against Japan and the atomic bomb. “The disaster was something terrific: 150,000 victims, and those who lived were scarred by the radiation. Japan was forced to ask for peace” (p. 324). All sections refer to military events and the textbook does not provide any further information regarding Japan in terms of its culture and history.

China is referenced very briefly only in one section: ‘The national movement in the colonies’ (pp. 308-309). The five-line paragraph refers to China’s Civil War and the competition between the country’s national and communist parties.

The textbook includes no further historical sources or specific questions regarding these two countries.

***The 2015 ninth grade history textbook (15G9).*** The 15G9 textbook includes a chapter that covers inclusively the developments in the American continent, China, and Japan (pp. 52-54). The section on China describes it as “a vast country with rich culture that had not managed to progress” (p. 53). It explains that the country was attacked by the colonial powers (England, France, and Japan), but was unable to react and was forced to open its markets to Western merchants. It also describes various competitions with other countries and the subsequent loss of its land, like Indochina and Taiwan. The text notes



that China's response to colonial control was expressed via the Taiping movement and the revolution of 1911, which abolished monarchy and put in place a presidential democracy. The section ends with a note explaining the reasons China's situation did not change, even after the advent of the democratic party: "China, showing difficulty in accepting and adapting to modernization, became easy prey for the colonizers" (p. 54).

By contrast, the textbook presents Japan as a success story. It notes that the country "gave emphasis to the industry and adopted Western institutions (a constitution, the parliamentary system, education). Japan started to integrate, gradually, into the Western world" (p. 54). It concludes with examples of how the industrialization of the country led to imperialism, such as the war against China and Russia and the conquest of Korea. The textbook includes an image with the caption: "The modernization of Japan, showing a harbor with railway and boats" (p. 54).

In the chapter that covers both Japan and China, one question asks students to explain the factors that allowed the Westerners to penetrate China and Japan. It directs students to look at the second historical source of the chapter and the aforementioned image on p. 54. The source is entitled 'The character of colonial expansion' (15G9, p. 53) and it describes England and France as the pillars of a global revolution, England with its industrial/economic development and France with its political/ideological accomplishments. As the source notes, the impressive expansion of Europe into the rest of the world has no parallel in history. "Against the merchants, the steam machines, the boats, the canons of the West—and against the ideas—the ancient civilizations and the empires of the world subsided and collapsed" (15G9, p. 53).

In terms of additional references within the 15G9 textbook, similar to the 80G9 textbook, Japan is briefly mentioned in the chapter detailing the Second World War, the Pearl Harbor event and the atomic bomb, with thousands left dead or disabled. No sources or questions are associated with these events.

**Analysis of findings.** The narratives referring to China and Japan are covered more extensively in the 15G9 textbook. Furthermore, in contrast to the 80G9, the 15G9 textbook includes a chapter that is devoted specifically to these countries (and to the American continent). The 80G9 textbook includes them in broader chapters that cover European history and focuses solely, and very briefly, on their military/political history. It includes no sources, images, or questions referring to these two countries.

In the 15G9 textbook, China and Japan occupy their own space, but their story is told in the framework of European history. In fact, both countries are compared to Europe in terms of their development. “Despite its ancient civilization” (15G9 p. 53), China is presented as a country that is falling behind, because of its inability to follow modernization. In contrast, the 15G9 textbook explains that Japan’s growth was possible because it was able to adopt Western institutions on an economic, political, and educational level. Once more, we can observe how Europe is presented as the universal standard, one that the rest of the world must follow in order to succeed (Soysal & Schissler, 2005). Europe’s superiority is further promoted in the historical source, where the West is praised for having conquered the world and for having caused the fall of important civilizations. As such, the destruction of these countries is projected as the triumph of European supremacy. The textbook does not question this fact, but, as with the aforementioned activity, directs students to conclude that those countries who follow

the European model progressed (like Japan), and those who did not, fell behind the rest of the world (like China).

Drawing from Lévesque's (2008) concept of empathy, this historical interpretation does not take into account the social, cultural, and economic context of the historical period under examination. Rather, the 15G9 textbook offers a decontextualized and presentist interpretation of these countries and judges their progress according to Western, present-day standards. However, China, Japan, and other actors of the past had social structures, so any interpretation or judgment of them or their actions should take into consideration the context of the past and the countries' particularities.

Additionally, by promoting the idea that the West is the superior entity that creates the standards according to which every other country is compared, both textbooks arguably fail to recognize other countries' contributions to humanity. This is further amplified by the fact that the textbooks provide no references regarding the intellectual, artistic, or other cultural developments of these countries. Following a Western Heritage Model (Dunn, 2000), then, both textbooks mention China and Japan insofar as their experience contributes to the making of the West and the supremacy of Europe.

In regards to the tendency to place Europe and Western history at the center of the historical narrative, Huntington (1996), who was criticized for placing the West at the center of human history, notes "Every civilization sees itself as the center of the world and writes its history as the central drama of human history" (pp. 54-55). However, he claims that this has been "even more true of the West than of the other cultures" (p. 55). As I mentioned previously, such mono-cultural perspectives are highly critiqued, but they nevertheless continue to be the dominant form of telling history.

## **Decolonization**

### **Description of findings**

*The 1980 ninth grade history textbook (80G9).* In the 80G9 textbook, the first steps of the twentieth century decolonization process are covered in the chapter titled: ‘The world between the two wars (1919-1939)’ (pp. 307-320), within the subchapter ‘The national movement in the colonies’ (pp. 308-309). The subchapter begins by explaining how the colonized were inspired to fight for their independence: “After the [First] World War, those colonized peoples who had taken part in it, learned to live and fight like the Europeans, and hoped that they would obtain their national freedom” (80G9, p. 308). Following this, it recounts the various national movements around the world, in North Africa, Indochina, and the British Dominions, for example. The text also gives an account of developments in India and Gandhi’s nonviolent civil disobedience movement. According to the textbook, after the country’s boycott of British products, the English were forced to recognize India’s autonomy.

The next phase of decolonization is covered in the chapter ‘The world after the war’ (pp. 325-328) within the section ‘The liberation of the colonies: Non-Aligned countries’ (p. 327). This eleven-line section gives an account of the countries that regained their independence, explaining the various problems that these countries encountered after colonial control: “The states had many internal problems; they were missing capital, their economy was agricultural, and their standard of living was very low” (p. 326). The text notes that eventually India and Yugoslavia initiated the formation of a coalition, the Non-Aligned Countries, which played an increasingly important role in the solution of world problems.

The textbook includes no historical source, images, or specific questions related to this issue.

*The 2015 ninth grade history textbook (15G9).* Similar to the 1980 textbook, the 15G9 textbook recounts the initial steps of the twentieth century decolonization process in the chapter ‘The time of the interwar (1919-1939)’ (pp. 111-113), within the section detailing the consequences of the First World War (p. 111). The text explains that one of the major consequences was that Europe “saw the disruption of its global hegemony” (p. 111). This disruption was due to Britain and France’s financial problems, as well as the participation of colonized peoples in the war. In terms of military participation, the text explains that the colonized people started to foster the idea of independence after fighting in the war, when “many of the soldiers went back to their countries and brought with them the ideas they acquired in Europe. [These ideas were related] either to the peoples’ right to self-determination or socialists and communists’ anti-imperialistic ideas” (p. 111). According to the text, all these ideas and experiences eventually strengthened the independence movements in the colonies after the First World War. In this chapter, the textbook does not include any historical sources, images, or questions related to this issue.

The next phase of decolonization is covered extensively in the chapter: ‘The end of colonization and the emergence of the Third World’ (pp. 144-146). Initially, the chapter gives an account of the various factors that led to the development of decolonization movements. The first factor is related to the emergence of an educated social class in the colonies who recognized the gap between freedom and the authoritarian colonial regime. According to the text, people from these groups eventually adopted radical ideas and led

their countries to independence. The second factor was the Second World War, when major metropolises were defeated, which weakened their image of global supremacy. Third, similar to what the previous chapter mentioned, “the colonized soldiers’ participation in the war that was conducted in the name of freedom, eventually made them intolerant to the deprivation of their own freedom” (p. 144).

The chapter continues with a section entitled ‘The emergence of the Third World’ (pp. 144-145), which gives an account of the countries that gradually gained their independence. This section focuses on the case of some African countries, like South Africa, which experienced the imposition of a racist political system, apartheid. The text notes that apartheid was imposed on the local black majority population by a white minority and it divided people according to their race. The chapter includes a photo from South Africa (p. 146) showing a staircase separating Europeans and non-Europeans. Beside the image, the chapter includes a quote from Nelson Mandela’s testimony in 1964, supporting the idea of “a democratic and free society, in which people live together harmoniously and with equal opportunities” (p. 146). The issue of apartheid is also addressed in one of the questions that asks students to draw a star-diagram, to write apartheid in the middle, and brainstorm ideas associated with it.

Following the emergence of the Third World section, the text devotes a small section to the Non-Aligned movement (p. 145). It explains that this was founded by Third World nations striving to independently organize themselves and promote their own economic growth.

The rest of the chapter refers to the problems the Third World is currently encountering as a result of colonization (pp. 145-146). The text states that the

decolonized countries' first and most important problem is related to economic development, going on to explain the source of these problems and attributing them primarily to the colonizers: "The way [they] had organized the economies of the colonies did not serve the locals' needs, but [it rather served] the demands of the metropolis" (p. 145). It also notes that these problems are ongoing, since "they are forced, even today, to buy many products from the metropolises" (p. 145). This issue is also addressed in one of the chapter's historical sources, which presents a testimony from the president of Uganda, who states: "If a farmer refused to cultivate coffee after a colonial order, he would be whipped... We were forced to produce products that we did not consume and to consume what we did not produce" (p. 146). Additionally, one of the included questions asks students to read this source and to discuss the colonizers' responsibility in the underdevelopment of the former colonies.

According to the chapter, the second major problem of the Third World is overpopulation. As the text explains, the population increased dramatically between 1950 and 1990, mostly in the poor countries of the world. This caused several issues, especially in Africa, like undernourishment and mass death due to starvation. Related to nutrition is a lack of clean water, which the text warns may result in millions of deaths in the future, especially in the poorer countries. Finally, the text mentions other problems related to colonization, like political instability, authoritarian regimes, violent wars between tribes, and AIDS, the latter two prominently associated with Africa. The text concludes by linking all the aforementioned problems with current immigration, stating "all the above are the main reasons that caused the mass immigration of the recent years, from the Third World to the First World" (p. 146).

Apart from the images and historical sources that I mentioned throughout my description, the chapter contains a photo of Pandit Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi together, two maps showing the decolonization of Asia and Africa, and an extract from Vietnam's declaration of independence with a photo of its leader Ho Chi Minh beside it. The activities and questions direct students to look at the historical sources and to comment on the key figures of the decolonization process.

**Analysis of findings.** When comparing the two textbooks, it is apparent that the topic of decolonization is covered more extensively in the 2015 ninth grade history textbook. The 80G9 textbook gives only brief accounts of the colonies and how they gained their independence. It also does not go into depth about the problems that occurred as a result of colonization; the 15G9 is more successful in providing a detailed discussion.

A common element between the two is the idea that colonized peoples were initially inspired to fight for independence after they participated in the First World War, where they were acquainted with European ideas: “the ‘peoples’ right to self-determination or socialists and communists’ anti-imperialistic ideas” (15G9, p. 111) and European ways of life: “they learned to live and fight like the Europeans” (80G9, p. 308). This stance is prevalent in both the narrative and the sources. For example, the historical source in the 15G9 textbook, which quotes the Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh, explains that he studied in France. Moreover, the extract includes reference to the ideas of the French Revolution, thus attempting to showcase the link between European ideas and the independence movement.



It is not necessary to reject the notion that European ideas may have influenced the independence of the colonies; however, it is a perspective that raises certain questions. First of all, there is an inherent contradiction in the idea that the colonized peoples learned about freedom from those people who deprived them of it. Additionally, by stating that colonized peoples learned to live and fight like Europeans, the 1980 textbook equates European life to an ideal standard to which non-Europeans must compare in order to progress, succeed and become empowered. As scholars have observed, this viewpoint is highly Eurocentric; it promotes Europe as an ideal, and it deprives colonized peoples of their contributions and historical agency (Dunn, 2000; Nash et al. 1997; Soysal & Schissler, 2005). Furthermore, the textbook does not explain, for example, Gandhi's non-violent independence movement in India and its success in overthrowing the British colonial powers. Gandhi's success contradicts the textbooks' assumptions, as his movement was rooted in non-Western ideas. Furthermore, by aiming to emphasize the supremacy of European ideas, the textbook misses the opportunity to acquaint students with the experience and ideas of Gandhi, a non-Westerner, and to thus present an alternate perspective to the narrative of a 'glorious' Western civilization. Admittedly, as I showed in my description, the 15G9 textbook is more successful in including additional reasons for decolonization in the second of the two chapters that I discussed in this section. However, it also follows a Eurocentric approach that places non-Western ideas at the periphery.

A major difference between the two textbooks regards the problems that the former colonies are currently facing. The 80G9 textbook presents the problems briefly, without elaborating on what caused these issues and how the colonizers contributed to them. By

contrast, the 15G9 textbook is more successful in explaining, for example, the reasons that led to a lack of economic development. Additionally, it provides the perspective of colonized peoples, an important element that hints at the multidimensional aspects of underdevelopment and the consequences of colonization to date. It promotes a chronological way of thinking about events because it relates the past with the present and discusses causes and consequences. Apart from the problems of economic development, the 15G9 textbook lists a number of other issues as well, like clean water, overpopulation, undernourishment, and so forth. However, here, it could be argued that the text does not sufficiently address and question the reasons these problems exist in our current age of immense progress and development.

Another difference between the two textbooks is that the 15G9 textbook, by referring to apartheid in addition to the other problems these countries are facing until now, brings to the surface the fact that independence was not a straightforward process. That is, it was not a success story of linear progress. Decolonization was a complex event and the 15G9 textbook provides a description that hints to the complexities and the effects of this process in the present.

A commonality between the two grade nine textbooks is that they consistently use the term ‘Third World.’ In the glossary, the 15G9 textbook explains that this term refers to “poor countries, outside of Europe and the former colonies” (p. 187). Similar to what was discussed in chapter one of this thesis regarding the division of the world into clusters, this blanket term is problematic because it groups several countries into one common category. Moreover, it is a value judgment that attributes inferior status to certain countries in comparison to the First World; that is, the ‘superior’ West. Therefore,

it not only places the West at the center, but it homogenizes ‘Third World’ countries into a uniform category that disregards the variety and the differences among them. Overall, the textbooks seem unable to challenge this term and explain the consequences of its uncritical use.

Moving on to other elements of the narrative, the 80G9 textbook does not include any historical sources, images, or questions. In contrast, the chapter on the end of colonization in the 15G9 textbook (pp. 144-146) includes a variety of sources, images, and activities that direct students to investigate the sources and to question certain issues. As I explained in my discussion earlier, these elements are fairly successful in providing a variety of perspectives. However, comparing this chapter to others in the 15G9 textbook, it is noticeable that this is the only one that includes images and perspectives of non-white peoples. There is only one other chapter, earlier in the textbook, which depicts African students with their white teacher (15G9, p. 51). Considering the textbook’s section-titles, which indicate world history, the absence of people of color is contrary to the textbook’s declared focus. Therefore, similar to the 1980 textbook, whose title explicitly indicates that it covers European history, the 15G9 textbook is not successful in reflecting the diversity of the world, whose history it claims to narrate.

In conclusion, the issue of decolonization has evolved in terms of its prevalence within the two textbooks. The 15G9 textbook is more successful in including the experience of the peoples from former colonies and in presenting the complexity of various causes and consequences. However, certain elements, which highlight Western supremacy and which place the rest of the world in the background, still reflect a Eurocentric way of telling the story.

## **Concluding Thoughts**

In conclusion, the analysis of the two grade nine textbooks indicates that, apart from a few brief references in some chapters, neither includes extended references to non-Western peoples. In fact, in the sections regarding the intellectual developments in the world, the 15G9 textbook primarily includes peoples of European and North American origin. The only mention of thinkers outside of the Western core is included in the chapter ‘Poetry and literature in the twentieth century’ (15G9, pp. 177-178). The textbook references three Latin Americans: Jorge Francisco Isidoro Luis Borges, Gabriel García Márquez, and Isabel Allende, as well as Toni Morrison, the first black woman to receive a Nobel Prize in Literature. The rest of the chapters in the 15G9 textbook about the world’s intellectual accomplishments do not include references outside the West. This is noteworthy as it implicitly conveys judgment on the rest of the world, which either did not produce anything or did not produce anything important. However, humanity is diverse and the 15G9 textbook misses the opportunity to include the vast contributions of all groups.

## **Grade Twelve History Textbooks**

### **The American Continent during the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century**

#### **Description of findings**

*The 1980 twelfth grade history textbook (80G12).* The 80G12 textbook refers to developments on the American continent, but only in terms of North America, in the chapter ‘The development of the United States of America’ (pp. 335-336). This chapter is part of a broader section entitled ‘The great powers from 1870 until the First World War’ (pp. 324 -340). The first half of the chapter gives an account of the country’s expansion

through gradually seizing the continent. It also refers to the Monroe Dogma of 1823, with which America declared that it wanted to break ties with Europe, explaining: “the Europeans do not have the right to be involved in the matters [of America], and likewise the Americans would not be involved in the political adventures of Europe” (p. 335).

Overall, the chapter emphasizes and praises the USA’s rapid growth. The text conveys an admiration for developments that occurred in the later years: “today colossal creative energy rejuvenates the great Democracy. Beyond the Atlantic everything is movement, life, and creation” (p. 336). It also commemorates the newly founded nation of that time: “Americans are proud, because they live in a new land, and they have a special kind of patriotism, which is founded on their faith that they constitute a new race” (p. 336).

The chapter discusses the American Civil War, presenting the reasons that led to the war and commenting on its successful outcome:

In the next few years, the United States went through a very serious internal crisis, because of the conflicts between the Northern and Southern colonies, which intensified, especially because of the slaves. The people of the North, who were mainly Anglo-Saxons, Protestants in terms of their religion, and liberal, wanted to abolish slavery. In contrast the people of the South, who were mostly Latin, had interest in keeping the Blacks in slavery, because they were involved with the cultivation of the land and they used them in their plantations. [...] Slavery was abolished and the war made the bonds between the States tighter, because [the war] showed that their common interests were incomparably greater than their differences. (p. 336)

The textbook includes no historical sources, images, or questions related to this chapter.

***The 2015 twelfth grade history textbook (15G12).*** The 2015 textbook refers to developments in America in the chapter ‘The rise of the American continent’ (pp. 50-52). It begins with a brief overview of the establishment of America, from the European colonies to the independent nation states, and then emphasizes the merits of the USA’s democratic system and its cultural, scientific, and technological advancements. Throughout the chapter, the text praises the country’s economic developments, which it attributes to the adoption of liberal economic policies:

Driven by strong individualism, faith in freedom and human dignity, and by adhering to the principles they inherited from the British political thinkers, especially from John Locke, acceptance of the laws of a free and unguarded market, the former British colonizers formed a dynamic and democratic society, which during the twentieth century saved the torn Europe during the two world wars. (p. 52)

The chapter also includes a section devoted to the American Civil War (pp. 50-51) explaining, “the war occurred because of the Southern states’ refusal to abolish slavery, especially because of their secession from the federation and the declaration of their independence” (p. 50). This section describes that the South was eventually defeated because, in comparison to the North, it was industrially and economically underdeveloped and its people were fighting for the continuation of slavery.

In terms of slavery, the chapter includes two historical sources. The first is an extract from M. Couzet’s book, *The World History of Culture*, a short passage that

describes the terrible living conditions of the slaves. It also explains that the number of slaves did not correspond to an increase in production and, therefore, prices continued to rise: “In some areas they engaged in a real livestock breeding, [of] ‘colored livestock’” (p. 51). The second source is an extract from Abraham Lincoln’s presidential speech to congress, where he stated: “By giving freedom to the slaves, we ensure the freedom of the free [...]” (p. 52). The chapter includes a question that asks students to explain this phrase. The second question concerning the American Civil War directs students to discuss why the war led to the industrial and economic growth of the Northern states. The chapter contains two illustrations related to this issue: a color-coded map showing the states that were either for or against slavery, and a cartoon showing a black man tearing a map of the USA, dividing the North from the South. On either side of the black man there are two men standing. On the southern side there is a farmer and on the northern side an English man; the caption explains that the British were discreetly supporting the South. However, the Confederation’s support of slavery discouraged the UK from further siding with the South.

The chapter concludes with a short section about the rest of the American continent. It suggests that the countries of the South did not follow the USA’s technological and economic development. Despite its rich resources, the text explains that South America did not advance because of its population’s composition—without explaining this composition—and because its institutions were not similar to those in the USA: “Soon these countries, just like many other underdeveloped countries of the world, fell into an economic, custodian regime, which was under the control of the USA and the economically powerful European countries” (p. 52). One of the questions from the

chapter asks students to discuss the differences between the USA and the countries of Central and South America.

**Analysis of findings.** Overall, the narratives of both textbooks present North America as an admirable success story of freedom and advancement. Both of them praise the country's European-inspired democratic and liberal practices. The 15G12 textbook gives special emphasis to the economic advancements of the USA. North America's supremacy, in contrast to other countries, is particularly promoted in the 15G12's section about South America, affirming that they did not advance because they did not follow the North American example. This presents the USA as an objective 'standard' that all must follow in order to succeed. This same section explains that one of the reasons the Southern countries did not advance is due to the composition of their population, because it was not the same as the USA's. Furthermore, it does not explain how the composition of the population was different and, if it was, why this contributed to the region's underdevelopment. This standpoint is not only explicitly discriminatory and prejudiced, but also imposes a superior/inferior division between North and South. As the 15G12 textbook explains, a natural outcome of this division is less advanced countries falling under the control of the USA and powerful European countries. However, with this statement, the text consents to an imposed control of developed countries over those less developed. The problem with this viewpoint is that, by presenting this economic global structure as natural and inevitable, it fails to question the causes and consequences of this structure for all concerned parties. Another issue of the one-sided presentation of the USA as a success story is it fails to present the complexities and contradictions inherent in the development of a nation. Progress often leads to inequalities within society and is



not a straightforward process. Contrary to an idealistic notion of inevitable progress, not all groups benefit equally, and progress is not simply linear or upward. While the textbooks praise the democratic and liberal foundations of the USA, they fail to include the stories of indigenous peoples, slaves, and all those oppressed by what are described as the ‘pioneers’ of democratic and economic advancement. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, democracy is not exclusively European or American. Despite the fact that the 15G12 textbook makes a direct link between European thinkers, such as John Locke, and the advancement of the USA, many scholars dispute this monolithic, Western-centered view. They argue that freedom, democracy, and human rights belong to the world and that all peoples have contributed to their formation throughout history (Nash et al., 1997; Soysal & Schissler, 2005).

The linear presentation of progress is also evident in the narratives regarding the Civil War. The 80G12 textbook presents an unrealistic version of a happily-ever-after story, where the two sides amicably realize that their common path is stronger than their differences. Furthermore, regarding the reasons that culminated in war, both textbooks explain that the abolishment of slavery was its primary motivation. However, they present the abolishment of slavery as a matter that primarily concerned European colonizers. Similar to the grade nine textbooks, they fail to mention the contribution of slaves in the fight for their own freedom. Similar to the 80G12 textbook, the 15G9 textbook does not present the voice of the slaves, despite the fact that it includes two sources that refer to the issue. In both sources, the ‘white others’ speak about the slaves’ experience: a French historian and an American politician. The photos and the questions

also direct attention towards the experience of the dominant group and the successful outcome of the Civil War.

One noteworthy point in the 80G12 textbook is the direct praise of patriotism. In the 15G12 textbook, this praise is directed towards economic advancement. This difference is understandable, considering that the 80G12 textbook was first written in 1923, a time of strong Greek nationalism and the predominance of a traditional type of history. On the other hand, the current textbook is written at a time when economic advancement is at the center of global discourse and practices.

Overall, in both textbooks, we read the story of the dominant, superior group. The experience of the non-dominant groups is silenced and the textbooks tell a linear version of a Western success story.

## **Colonization during the Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Century**

### **Description of findings**

*The 1980 ninth grade history textbook (80G9).* In the 1980 textbook, nineteenth and twentieth century colonization is included as part of the broader section: ‘The great powers from 1870 until the First World War’ (pp. 324-340), within the chapter ‘Foreign policy’ (pp. 327-340). This chapter is further divided into three subchapters entitled: ‘New imperialism’ (p. 327), ‘The colonial state of England’ (pp. 327-331), and ‘The colonial state of France’ (pp. 331-332).

The first subchapter, ‘New imperialism,’ explains the reasons that led to the growth of nineteenth century colonialism. It notes that it was imperative to find markets outside of Europe because these countries were implementing protective trade, and European markets had been closed off to foreign industries. The text explains that colonization was

necessary due to European industrial growth: “The possession of a country outside of Europe for exploitation became a vital necessity for the peoples/countries” (p. 327). The subchapter concludes that, with the new type of imperialism, the countries obtained rich natural resources, raw materials, and markets for their products. An interesting addition to this list of material benefits is people: the colonizers also obtained “living material for their wars. At the same time, they were able to channel the excess population to the vast lands of their colonies” (p. 327).

The subchapter on the English colonial state accounts how England took over its various colonies, praising England’s great power over others and its ability to spread its culture around the world. For example, the Dominion of Canada “had perfect administration, a unique Constitution, a unique parliament, and a unique army” (p. 328), “its power was very large and it dreamt of [becoming] a global empire” (p. 331). In Africa, “the English language was spoken, the English culture was spreading and, in addition to the language, the colonized peoples learned about the political freedoms of the metropolis. [The colonized peoples] were proud of their origins” (p. 331).

When the textbook mentions the indigenous peoples’ resistance during the confiscation of their lands, they are described with vague, totalizing phrases or words that attribute a negative connotation to their societies. The English, on the other hand, are always referred to with phrases that reveal order and structure: “the warmonger indigenous” *versus* “England” (p. 328), “dense masses of disorderly [indigenous peoples] gushed to the streets of Alexandria, grappling and burning” *versus* “the English fleet bombarded the city, disembarked its army” (p. 330), “the Arab traffickers and the fanatic

Islamic religious battalions” *versus* “The English expeditionary corps, General Gordon, the renowned Lord Kitchener” (p. 331).

The subchapter on France’s colonial history is shorter, but it is similar to the one on England in that it gives an account of various French colonies. The text explains that colonization became a necessity for France “in order to recover from the accidents of the war and to support its industry, [which] needed clients” (p. 332). After mentioning the lands France conquered, the chapter concludes by praising France’s power and culture, but also by ranking it second to England, stating: “France created the second [largest] colonial state after that of England and, although it lagged behind England, its civilizing policies at the colonies were notable” (p. 332).

The section contains three maps: The Dominion of Canada (p. 328), English India (p. 329), and The Union of South Africa (p. 330). The textbook does not include any sources or questions related to the issue of colonization.

***The 2015 twelfth grade history textbook (15G12).*** The 2015 textbook covers the issue of colonization for the period 1871-1914 in the chapter, ‘The peak of European colonization’ (pp. 53-56).

This chapter gives an extensive account of the reasons that led to the intensification of colonization from the mid-nineteenth century until the First World War. First, the text clarifies the motives for this period’s colonization, which differ from the past. According to the text, during the nineteenth century, European states were not in search of new lands because of overpopulation or unwanted religious groups; rather, they were searching for new markets and natural resources. Europeans created colonies across Asia, Africa, and the Pacific Ocean “with the aid of force or violence, in order to serve the economic and

the strategic interests of the metropolitan countries” (p. 55). In addition to economic interests, European ventures were also driven by ideological pursuits, namely “their firm belief in the superiority of the European civilization and the duty to export its ideas and institutions, as well as philanthropy” (p. 53). The text expands on this view by linking colonialism with the widespread nationalism of the time. It explains the motives behind the European expansion as strongly related to the strengthening of a country’s national prestige: “The colonies in the underdeveloped and distressed Africa and Asia came to be regarded as the recognition of [...] the [states’] power and [it eventually became] a national goal” (p. 55). This description is followed by several examples, such as Britain, which viewed colonialism as the duty/burden of the white man, and France, which regarded it as a cultural duty. The chapter provides two sources related to the idea of duty; one is Kipling’s text supporting colonialism, ‘The White Man’s Burden’ (p. 55), and the second is an extract from Mark Twain’s ‘The War Prayer’ (p. 56) that critiques imperialism. The chapter’s first question further directs students to study these two sources and to compare their opposing views.

The chapter ends by presenting the consequences of colonization. Overall, this section argues that colonization was beneficial for both the colonizers and the colonized. By placing emphasis on the creation of institutions in the colonized countries, the text highlights Europe’s contribution to the lands they seized, saying “the Western colonizers created governing institutions and national units in place of the linguistically and religiously fragmented human entities” (p. 56). Accordingly, once the colonizers left, those former colonies where Europeans had not created strong institutions became

“problematic nation states without cohesion that were [eventually] struck by harsh civil wars” (p. 56).

The textbook further highlights Europe’s positive contribution to the rest of the world by explaining,

The European colonization of the nineteenth century completed the penetration of the Western man into the non-European world. The Western man tried to integrate into the Western culture peoples with social structures and cultures different from the West and to endow them with institutions similar to theirs. (p. 56)

One other consequence that is presented as positive, though without critically examining its effects on the colonized peoples, is the ‘sharing’ of natural resources whereby “the colonized peoples’ raw materials and productive capacities were adjusted in a way to serve the needs, not only exclusively of the indigenous inhabitants, but also [to serve] the productive needs of the metropolitan countries” (p. 56).

Although the text does consider the negative effects of colonially imposed institutions by focusing again on the benefits, it devalues their importance: “In many colonies the Western man dislocated traditional social structures without creating vital Western institutions, but nonetheless succeeded in eliminating deadly epidemics, slavery, and other endemic scourges” (p. 56). At the end of the chapter, one of the questions directs students to name the most important consequences of colonization for the former colonies.

Apart from the historical sources previously mentioned, the chapter also contains a color-coded map of the colonial states of the nineteenth century.

**Analysis of findings.** Overall, in both textbooks the chapters on colonization narrate the history of the colonizers and not the history of the colonized peoples. Both textbooks project the superiority of the West, which spread its civilization across the globe.

The 80G12 textbook is explicit in extolling the virtues of the colonial powers and devaluing the negative consequences of colonization. It diminishes the colonized peoples to ‘living material’ for war and, despite the fact that they were deprived of their freedom, the text promotes the contradictory idea that people learned about freedom from those who, in fact, deprived them of their liberty. In addition, the 80G12 textbook projects a one-way relationship between two entities: the colonizers influence the local populations, but the locals do not influence the colonizers.

Overall, the 80G12 textbook presents the story of colonization solely from the European perspective, to the point where it disregards the experience and voice of the indigenous populations. It also fails to question or reference the negative consequences of colonization on the lives of the colonized. Following a Eurocentric approach that deems progress, freedom, and democracy as exclusively European (Soysal & Schissler, 2005), the colonial powers are presented as the agents of freedom and of culture, who can civilize the ‘uncivilized’ indigenous, and those peoples were, in turn, simply ‘proud’ to be part of the colony. Thus, the 80G12 textbook presents colonization as a heroic tale in which the colonized people do not have worthy civilizations or agency and only benefit from their contact with the ‘great’ Western civilization.

In the 2015 textbook, a similar Eurocentric narrative is discussed, but it includes elements that demonstrate a contemporary orientation, such as the use of colligatory

concepts. By linking colonialism with nationalism and by including a reference to Greek nationalism at the time, it allows for connections across time and space and across phenomena. This practice is conducive to the promotion of chronological thinking and to the historical thinking concepts of continuity and change.

Another element that is successful in promoting multiperspectivity is how the chapter includes an opposing perspective. By including a historical source that criticizes imperialism and asking students to discuss opposing views, the textbook succeeds in presenting a perspective outside of the glorious accomplishments of the West. However, similar to the chapter on American history that I analyzed from this same textbook, the source is not from the perspective of the indigenous peoples, but from an enlightened, white man who comments on injustice. Hence, once more, the textbook does not give the reader the opportunity to hear the voice and perspective of the colonized peoples.

Despite certain elements mentioned above, overall, the 15G12 textbook, like the 80G12, presents a narrative that praises the West and disregards the negative consequences of colonization. It fails to show how colonization affected the lives of all involved. The text even presents the fact that colonizers exploited the natural resources of the colonies as something that benefited humanity overall, since it covered the needs of all peoples. This in itself distorts history; it does not raise the question of whether the exploitation of the colonies' resources may have been at the expense of the colonized peoples, which, in turn, may have led to their underdevelopment after decolonization. Furthermore, by unquestioningly presenting the colonizers and their institutions as the default best option, the text dismisses the value of other traditional institutions. The anthropomorphized West, 'the Western man,' with its culture, religion, and ideas is



promoted as the force that brought progress to the lives of the less developed and changed everything for the better. The grade twelve textbooks project the idea that the West had a duty to educate the ‘uncivilized’ and, in turn, the colonized were proud to be part of the ‘great’ Western powers and to adopt their culture, social structures, and institutions as their own.

Overall, the comparison of the two textbooks shows that they both promote the superiority of the West, which influences, but is not influenced by, others. Both textbooks present colonization as a justified and inevitable consequence of industrial development, ignoring the devastating effects on former colonies. Once more, the non-Western peoples’ experience is neglected in the name of Western progress.

### **Asia: China, Japan, and India during the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century**

In this section, I cover the materials in the textbooks that refer to China, Japan, and India. While the latter country is only referenced in the 2015 textbook, China and Japan are included in both grade twelve textbooks.

#### **Description of findings**

*The 1980 twelfth grade history textbook (80G12).* The 1980 textbook covers history related to China and Japan in the section: ‘The great powers from 1870 until the First World War’ (pp. 324-340), within the chapter ‘Foreign policy’ (pp. 327-340) and its subsections: ‘Development of Japan – Competition regarding China’ (p. 333) and ‘Russian-Japanese War’ (p. 334).

Overall, the text praises Japan’s progress. By employing various examples, it attributes this progress to the fact that Japan adopted elements from Europeans: “The Japanese were the only ones from the yellow race, which showed the ability to progress

and managed within only thirty years to absorb the European political and military systems” (p. 333). The renaissance of Japan was named ‘the century of light’ when the Japanese Emperor Mutsuhito “imported the European civilization, [and] immediately many young people were sent to Europe to learn the arts and sciences of the West” (p. 333). After giving an account of various military competitions between Europeans, China, Russia, and Japan, the text describes Japan’s expansion as the “awakening of the Yellows [and the start of] the ‘yellow danger’” (p. 335).

For China, the textbook narrates Europe and Japan’s military attempts to invade the country. A noticeable aspect of this narrative is when it refers to European intruders; that is, the text does not use any further adjectives to describe them and does not present images of violence during their invasions: “France, Germany, and England managed to penetrate China. After that, European engineers entered China from all directions. They started to lay railway tracks and design large enterprises for the exploitation of the country” (p. 333). In contrast, the local Chinese are described as nationalistic, those who organized revolutions against the Europeans and “slaughtered the missionaries and merchants” (p. 334). In summation, the Europeans penetrate and the nationalistic Chinese slaughter.

The textbook provides no further images, questions, or historical sources related to this issue.

***The 2015 twelfth grade history textbook (15G12).*** The 2015 grade twelve history textbook refers to India, China, and Japan in the chapter entitled ‘The Far East’ (pp. 57-59), which is included in the broader section on nineteenth and twentieth century world

history. Japan is referred to again in the chapter ‘The rest of the world’ (pp. 109-110) during the interwar period.

In the introduction entitled, ‘The infiltration in Asia’ (p. 57), the segment on the Far East refers primarily to Europe’s role in Asia. The section begins by giving an account of the contribution of European penetration: “it formed unities where they did not exist, it exported products and institutions” (p. 57). On the other hand, the text explains that Asia nurtured the West’s imagination as being a mysterious, enigmatic, and attractive area. This section compares Asia to Africa, America, and Oceania and comments that Asia did not succumb to Europe as easily as the other three continents. This comment, in connection to the phrase that follows it, “Asia was the cradle of great civilizations” (p. 57), conveys an implicit evaluation that positions the peoples of Africa, America, and Oceania as inferior to Asia and, of course, Europe.

The following section refers to India, giving an account of India’s history and religious background starting from the eleventh and twelfth century and narrating the various peoples who invaded the country throughout the intervening years. Among these various groups, the textbook devotes two paragraphs to the presence of Europeans in India, starting with “the great Portuguese seaman Vasco De Gama, who opened the West coast of India, first to the Portuguese and then to the European merchants [...] The Portuguese controlled the trade of the greater area for about a century” (p. 58). It then describes Britain’s role as the power that “established commercial stations in key areas of the country, [and eventually] attached the various state formations of the country, and became a colony under the Crown” (p. 58).

The next section is on China. It gives an account of China's history starting from the sixth century B.C., narrating the various dynasties and peoples who invaded and controlled parts of the country over the centuries. It also mentions the country's religious diversity. The chapter includes a historical source and a cartoon, the former explaining the Opium War and its consequences in China and the latter portraying Europe and Japan attacking the revolt of the Boxers. The historical source is an extract from a book written by Svolopoulos, one of the authors of the 15G12 textbook. It explains how Europeans imposed indirect control on the commerce of countries that were not officially their colonies.

The last part of this chapter refers to Japan. The textbook notes that the country imported several cultural and institutional elements from China and that its religion was primarily Buddhist. In terms of the Western presence, it explains that the first Europeans "who visited the country were Portuguese merchants and missionaries in the mid-sixteenth century. However, the West did not manage to conquer Japan until the mid-nineteenth century" (p. 59). At the end of the nineteenth century, "with rapid steps, Japan adopted Western institutions, it created a constitution, and promoted the development of industry" (p. 59). The section concludes by stating that after defeating the Russians, Japan established its place as a great power at an international level and "became worthy of the Great Power's respect" (p. 59). The chapter includes an illustration of a painting depicting Western influences in Japan, with the caption: "In the nineteenth century, Japan opened its markets to the West, adopted many contemporary institutions and experienced great industrial growth. The painting portrays symbolically the Western penetration in

Japan” (p. 59). The painting shows peoples from the West (USA, France, Britain, Russia) standing in line, holding their flags.

The chapter concludes with two questions; one asks students to analyze the relationship between the West and the countries of the Far East, and the second introduces the concept of Orientalism and directs students to think about the stereotypical images that the West holds for Asian peoples, discussing this in the framework of the present.

In the chapter ‘The rest of the world’ (pp. 109-110), the textbook includes a second extended account of Japan in the early twentieth century by describing Japan’s imperialist practices during the 1930s. In contrast to how the textbook presents European imperialism, this section describes Japanese expansion as violent, resulting in “ruthless economic exploitation, even the imposition of forced labor on the locals for the execution of public construction of strategic importance” (p. 110). This chapter includes no images, historical sources, or questions related to Japan.

**Analysis of findings.** Both textbooks seem to support the same line of reasoning: the West is the peaceful agent of progress and the rest of the world is violent and inferior, unless it has adopted Western ways.

The textbooks measure the countries’ progress by determining the extent to which they have adopted Western structures. For example, both textbooks praise Japan’s progress and highlight the fact that it was possible because Japan adopted European institutions. As previously mentioned, many scholars have criticized similar positions; Arnold J. Toynbee (1947), for example, has characterized such viewpoints as the ‘egocentric illusions’ of the West, which assume that the world revolves around the West

and there is “only one river of civilization, our own, and that all others are either tributary to it or else lost in the desert sands” (p. 37).

Additionally, progress is measured only in economic and military terms and the countries that did not advance in those domains are presented as inferior. For example, the 15G12 textbook devalues the indigenous populations of Africa, America, and Oceania when it implies that they did not resist the colonizers as Asia did, which was described as ‘the cradle of great civilizations.’ Also, the same textbook notes that Japan became worthy of the Great Powers’ respect only after its military success against Russia. These descriptions tend to group continents and peoples together and to subsequently dismiss any differences between them. Further, they promote the idea that a country is worthy of respect through military success only. However, this idea disregards acts of passive resistance, like the example set by Gandhi, and does not consider that they may not be a sign of weakness, but the sign of a non-violent culture worthy of respect.

Another common element that stands out in both textbooks is the portrayal of Europeans as peaceful and non-Europeans as violent. The Europeans ‘visit’ and ‘open the coast,’ they ‘control the trade,’ they ‘founded trade stations,’ ‘they penetrate China,’ ‘the European engineers entered,’ ‘Europeans formed unities,’ and they ‘exported institutions and products.’ On the other hand, non-Europeans are ‘nationalists,’ they ‘slaughter;’ Japan’s imperialism was called the ‘yellow danger’ and ‘violent,’ its economic exploitations were ‘ruthless’ and it imposed forced labor. This method of presenting these two groups further supports the tale of European superiority, presenting a one-sided story, which serves to subtract legitimacy from other historical actors. It seems to adhere to the Western Heritage Model of history (Dunn, 2000), where the West is the great agent of

freedom and progress and the rest of the world is violent and self-serving. Similar to previous findings in this chapter, this arguably reflects a tendency in most historical accounts, whereby whatever belongs to oneself is presented positively, and negative aspects must be pushed toward the ‘other’ (Foster, 2012; Lowenthal, 2000; Rüsen 2007).

In regards to differences, the two textbooks differ, first of all, in the fact that the 15G12 textbook includes a more extensive account of the individual countries’ histories, whereas the 80G12 textbook focuses only on the part of history that relates directly to the West. Furthermore, although both textbooks focus mainly on military history, the 2015 textbook includes some brief references to cultural heritage; i.e., religion. However, the 2015 textbook still fails to provide sufficient information regarding non-political and non-military aspects of Asian societies. The 80G12 textbook also includes the blanket term ‘yellow race,’ which does not appear in the 2015 textbook. Similar to other instances discussed in this chapter, this term lumps all Asian peoples into a homogeneous whole, which effectively disregards their diversity and difference. Further drawing from the critical approach to diversity, the use of this term perpetuates the idea of ‘difference’ according to biased classifications, in this case on the basis of race. As I argued in chapter two, differences conceived on the basis of physical characteristics (race and ethnicity), biological characteristics (gender), or other social differences (class and economic status) appear to be natural, and divide people into uncontested groupings, even though these differences are socially derived and constructed. The problem with these categories is that they are often difficult to dispute because they are presented as value-free descriptions (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004). The 15G12 textbook does not use terms such as ‘yellow race,’ and it also takes some steps to address stereotypical views of peoples, for

example, by asking students to discuss the idea of ‘Orientalism’ and how it is expressed in the modern era.

By promoting the idea that a country progresses only if it follows the European standard, the textbooks highlight the supremacy of Europe and simultaneously disregard the value of anything non-European. Also, by evaluating countries only in terms of their economic and military power, both fail to recognize the multiple ways that a country can contribute to humanity. This is amplified in the 80G12 textbook since it does not provide any other references regarding the countries’ intellectual, artistic, or other cultural developments.

### **Decolonization**

In this section, I cover the material in the textbooks that refer to the decolonization process, a theme that is only covered in the 15G12 textbook. Perhaps its absence in the 80G12 textbook is due to the fact that the first version was written in 1923, and thus covers events up until the First World War.

#### **Description of findings**

*The 2015 twelfth grade history textbook (15G12).* In the 15G12 textbook, the first steps of the twentieth century decolonization process are covered in two chapters; one is included in the section that covers the interwar years, and the second is found in the section referring to the years after the Second World War.

In the first chapter regarding world developments in the interwar period (pp. 109-110), the text comments on Europe’s supremacy in the world:

Until the Second World War, Europe was at the center of world developments: the cradle and the provider of cultural and political movements that dominated at a



global level and the center that determined to a great extent the course of global history. (p. 109)

Following this, the chapter describes the colonial presence of the various European powers around the world, placing Britain at the top of the colonial states, which “controlled the production of vital food products, mineral resources, and fuel” (p. 109). The chapter then refers to France, described as the second world power, and the rest of the colonial powers and their areas of influence. It concludes by placing the first signs of the decline of colonial power during the interwar period, noting that the violent reaction of colonial authorities and the various reforms were insufficient to stop the turmoil in the colonies. The chapter does not include any historical sources or images regarding decolonization; it includes only one question, which asks students to describe the situation in the colonies.

The second chapter, titled ‘Decolonization and the Third World’ (pp. 151-153), refers more extensively to this process. The chapter starts off by stating that the movement of national independence in the colonies was initiated by the two world wars, “which happened in the name of freedom” (p. 151). Additionally, the text refers to several other reasons leading to decolonization; namely, the military organization of the colonial societies, the economic crisis of 1929, the Japanese efforts to drive the Westerners out of Asia with the slogan ‘Asia to Asians,’ and finally, the USSR and USA’s stance against colonization.

The chapter continues by recounting the various colonized countries that gradually gained independence following the Second World War. In most cases, the textbook briefly describes the conflicts and agreements that led the colonies to independence.

Among others, the chapter refers to India and, in passing, to Gandhi: “In India, the British encountered between the two [world wars] Mahatma Gandhi’s movement, a supporter of non-violence” (p. 151). Then it refers to Egypt’s Arabic nationalism under Gamal Abdel Nasser and the Algerian ‘bloody war.’ Regarding the French colonial states, the text praises the French leader of the time: “With a courageous gesture, the new French leader, General Charles de Gaulle, granted independence to the French colonies of North Africa and Algeria” (p. 152). In the case of Africa, it includes the fact that decolonization did not happen uniformly and simultaneously. It explains that in Rhodesia and South Africa “the colonizers imposed racist regimes, which the world isolated. The former [racist regime] gave up its control in 1980, [...] the latter in 1990, after many years of struggle from the majority of its population with their main leader, Nelson Mandela” (p. 152).

The final section of this chapter is entitled ‘The Third World’ (pp. 152-153). It explains that this term refers to countries in Asia and Africa that were former colonies and gives an account of the problems that they encountered; namely, financial difficulties, rapid increase of population, and internal conflicts that often led to civil wars. It does not explain the reasons behind these issues. The section also includes the various individual or collective efforts these countries made in order to advance, but according to the text, most of them failed:

The [former colonies] were the majority in the National Assembly of the UN, but [this organization] did not make binding decisions. Therefore, the Third World did not have the economic or the institutional resources to challenge the realities of the polarized world. (p. 152)

The chapter presents another example of the Non-Aligned countries' failure to eliminate inequality: "Eventually, the Non-Aligned movement did not have enough power and cohesion in order to realize its goals" (p. 153). Finally, despite the economic growth of a number of countries—India, South Korea, Taiwan, China, etc.—the chapter concludes, "most of them encountered many problems and the issue of poverty and instability in the Third World still remains one of the biggest challenges of mankind" (p. 153).

In terms of other elements in the chapter, there are images of Mahatma Gandhi, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Indira Gandhi, and Yugoslavian leader, Josip Broz Tito. The chapter also includes an extract from Edward Said's book, *Culture and Imperialism*, where he quotes Frantz Fanon commenting on how colonizers write history: "Thus, the history of which he [the settler] writes is not the history of the country which he plunders but the history of his own nation in regard to all that she skins off, all that she violates and starves" (p. 152).

The second source is not actually cited, so it is not clear if this is an extract from a book or if it comes from something else. It refers to the Middle Eastern problem and it is not directly connected to anything mentioned in the text. This source narrates the establishment of Israel and its conflicts with other Arab countries, mainly Palestine. Finally, the three questions at the end of the chapter ask students to recall material from the main text regarding the reasons that led to decolonization, the importance of Suez for decolonization, and the aims of the Non-Aligned countries and its main members.

**Analysis of findings.** As mentioned at the beginning of this section, the process of decolonization is not included in the 80G12 textbook; hence, the discussion here will not

include a comparative element. Rather, I will discuss my findings in terms of the 2015 textbook alone.

Similar to its previous chapters, the 15G12 textbook explicitly repeats the idea of Western supremacy by insinuating that Europe was the cradle and initiator of all cultural and political movements. The West is also presented as the agent of freedom; the two world wars, “which happened in the name of freedom” (15G12, p. 151), inspired the colonial independence movements and the colonial leaders’ “courageous gestures” (15G12, p. 152) granted countries their independence. Again, the chapters tell the story of the West and ignore the colonized peoples’ contribution in the fight for their own freedom. This is particularly interesting because the textbook also includes a historical source that critiques and challenges exactly this perspective: telling the story from the side of the settler and ignoring the colonized peoples’ perspective. Despite the fact that the authors are aware of this critique, the chapters on decolonization do exactly this by focusing on the story of colonial power.

Promoting an inferior image of the non-Western world is evident when the text describes the efforts made by former colonies after their independence. In contrast to the victorious story of the West, which is prevalent throughout the textbook, the coalitions they formed to act collectively against inequality and towards economic growth are always followed by failure, either because they did not have enough power or because they did not have the appropriate structures in place. The text fails to examine the role of the former colonizers in these problems, but implies that they are the sole responsibility of the ‘Third World.’ Additionally, when the chapter sums up the problems of former colonies, it again fails to connect them to colonial practices. It does not examine the

responsibilities of the colonizers and it does not explain the deeper roots of these problems. As a result, the issues appear inherent to the countries experiencing them.

A noteworthy element of this chapter is that it is the only one that contains several images of non-white people. Similar to the 2015 grade nine textbook, which also covered world history, the 15G12 textbook has very few images of non-Westerners. In fact, the only other images we find are in the chapter on the American continent, where an African slave is in a cartoon; in the chapter on the culture of the twentieth century, with Louis Armstrong and two other African American musicians; and a third image of Brazilian footballer Pele. Again, this is contradictory because the 15G12 textbook narrates world history, and although our world is diverse, this is not reflected in the textbook.

In terms of questions, both chapters devoted to decolonization fail to inspire critical thinking, especially the questions in the second of the two chapters, which simply direct students to recall the narrative. It therefore misses the opportunity to raise questions on many key issues of the decolonization process.

A final important aspect of this chapter is the reference to the Middle East, which is placed outside of the main text and is introduced as a historical source only. At a time of great migration movements, it is surprising that such an issue is not given more attention and space because it is something that is deeply related to and affects our present.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

In conclusion, it is worth noting that, apart from a few brief references in some chapters, both textbooks fail to include extended references to non-Westerners. In its final and only chapter on the intellectual developments in the world, the 15G12 generally includes peoples of European and North American origin. Among the various

philosophers, artists, and scientists mentioned, the only reference to non-white peoples is an image of Brazilian football player, Pele (p. 187) and Louis Armstrong with his musicians (p. 203). This is noteworthy, as it implicitly conveys the message that great ideas and philosophies come solely from the 'white' population. Further, it promotes stereotypical images, non-Westerners being good only at music and sports. Similar to the 15G9, the 15G12 textbook, which supposedly covers world history, misses the opportunity to include the vast contributions of all groups.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **Overview of the Thesis**

Drawing from the theoretical frameworks of the critical approach to diversity, the disciplinary approach to history, the principles of historical thinking, and Ross Dunn's (2000) three models of world history, my study focused on Greek history textbooks and aimed to unpack the tensions between learning for content and learning to acquire critical thinking skills, between nation-centered and world focused history, and between the history of the Western versus non-Western world.

Specifically, my study compared two sets of textbooks: the 1980 and 2015 grade six, nine, and twelve Greek history textbooks of modern history. My research questions traced the development of three issues in the textbooks: their epistemological stance, their thematic focus, and the narratives of non-Western peoples. For the first research question, I compared the two sets of textbooks and examined their approach to knowledge; that is, whether they follow a traditional, collective approach to history or a more contemporary method, the disciplinary approach to history. Through my second research question, I examined the textbooks' thematic focus in order to detect whether they demonstrated a nation-centered/Eurocentric or a world-centered focus, and to document the extent to which the stories included or excluded the world beyond Greece and Europe. Finally, for my third question, I examined the narratives that refer to non-Western peoples and explored how the two sets of textbooks differ in how they present their voices and histories.

As I explained in chapter three—in the research process section—during the collection and analysis of my data, I discovered that the findings of each question informed the findings of the others. For this reason, although I have addressed my questions in separate chapters, I provide an overall answer in this concluding chapter, where I synthesize my findings and collectively answer the three research questions of this study.

### **Summary of Findings**

My study of the 1980 and 2015 textbooks investigated three broad categories: the textbooks' epistemological orientation, thematic focus, and narratives of non-Western peoples.

In terms of the first category, my findings showed that the 1980 textbooks follow a traditional, collective approach to history because they rely heavily on the text, which follows a linear chronological approach, and because they lack historical sources and critical thinking questions. As such, the textbooks aim to convince the reader about what is projected as an objective version of history. On the other hand, the 2015 textbooks demonstrate a greater adherence to the disciplinary approach to history by placing an emphasis on the inclusion of historical sources and making explicit references to the subjective nature of historical knowledge. However, as I explained in my analysis, additional steps need to be taken in the direction of the disciplinary approach to history and the principles of historical thinking, such as the inclusion of more reflective questions, activities, and multi-perspective sources.

As regards thematic focus, my findings showed that all six textbooks present a history that is nation-centered/Eurocentric. Despite the 2015 textbooks' titles that indicate



a focus on the world, all six textbooks emphasize the stories of Greece and Europe. The rest of the world is included only when it is connected to European/Western history.

For the final category of my analysis—the narratives of non-Westerners—I found that, in all textbooks, the dominant group's (the West) side of the story outweighed that of other actors (non-Western peoples). As such, the narratives often fail to reveal the complexities of each historical event and the conflicting roles/contributions of various ethno-cultural groups. In summation, all six textbooks depict the world following what Ross Dunn (2000) terms the Western Heritage Model.

Beyond these general conclusions, my findings showed that the two sets of textbooks have differences and similarities. In what follows, I discuss in more detail the findings of my study.

### **Epistemological Orientation**

My analysis of the textbooks shows that the 1980 grade six, nine, and twelve textbooks strictly follow the traditional, collective approach to history. They do not include historical sources as part of the narrative and if the sources are given, they are found at the end of the textbook. As such, the omission of evidence arguably conveys the idea of an objective and absolute subject matter where the narrative is the only source of information available, providing the one, 'best' version of the story. There is also a lack of critical and reflective questions for students to consider—specifically, the twelfth grade 1980 textbook does not include any questions at all. In the two 1980 textbooks, most questions that are included rely on students' ability to memorize and recall content and do not encourage them to examine the subject matter following the principles of historical thinking.

On the other hand, by including a variety of historical sources and questions, the 2015 grade six, nine, and twelve textbooks are more in tune with the disciplinary approach to history. In all three 2015 textbooks, each chapter contains multiple extracts from original sources or out-of-text commentaries. As I indicated in chapter two of this thesis, the study of evidence is essential in disciplinary history and for cultivating historical thinking. Stéphane Lévesque (2008) explains that the inclusion of additional sources allows students to experience ways of ‘doing history,’ rather than to mechanically memorize what is included in the text.

In terms of the suggested activities and questions, the 2015 textbooks’ questions make considerable efforts to direct students to examine historical sources. By doing so, they promote the centrality of sources in the teaching of history. Most importantly, the 2015 textbooks’ suggested activities encourage students to look beyond the textbook; i.e., websites, books, or other media, thus promoting the idea that there is not one source of knowledge, but multiple spaces to attain information and other versions of the story. It must be noted, however, that some additional steps need to be made in order to include historical sources and questions that better illuminate the multiple perspectives of historical events.

One additional element, especially of the ninth and twelfth grade textbooks, is that their broader sections interchange between Greek and non-Greek history. As such, the textbooks do not narrate the history of a specific region in isolation. By narrating the various events happening in different countries and regions during the same time period, they create links that connect the events and facts to larger frameworks of development. This is especially evident in certain subchapters of the 2015 ninth grade textbook, which

organize the material based on a pervasive theme present in a series of historical events; i.e., revolutions in the nineteenth century. Although, this practice is not consistent throughout the textbook, or widely used in the other two 2015 textbooks, these examples reflect an effort to structure the narrative according to broader colligatory concepts. This arrangement therefore promotes chronological thinking that is not limited to learning a sequence of dates, but allows for the examination of the relationship between events. Despite the fact that the 2015 textbooks are more successful than the 1980 textbooks in incorporating historical thinking principles, there are still more steps to be made in order to, for example, evoke empathy by interpreting actions of the past, considering the actors' specific context and value systems, and to better reflect the complexities of progress and decline and continuity and change over time.

One noteworthy difference among the 2015 textbooks is that the grade six and nine textbooks are explicit about the constructive and subjective nature of historical knowledge. In their introductions, they encourage students to follow their own path in discovering history, to ask questions, and to create their own interpretations. On the contrary, the authors of the 2015 twelfth grade history textbook state that their aim is to present historical facts in a systematic and objective manner, something that reveals a more traditional understanding of the nature of historical knowledge. As such, this statement diverts from the core idea of the disciplinary approach to history, which advocates the constructive nature of knowledge. Additionally, to a greater extent than the 2015 grade six and nine textbooks, the 2015 twelfth grade history textbook includes historical sources that support the main narrative and do not present evidence from

multiple perspectives. Furthermore, the 15G12 textbook's questions are often memory based, and thus do not foster critical thinking.

Despite these several shortcomings, overall the 2015 textbooks have made steps towards the disciplinary approach to history, in comparison to the 1980 textbooks.

### **Thematic Focus**

Apart from some differences, all six textbooks follow a chronologically linear, nation-centered/Eurocentric focus that mostly presents political and military history; other kinds of history, such as economic history, art history, social history, etc., are mostly ignored.

In comparing the thematic focus by school grade, I concluded the following: the 1980 grade six textbook focuses solely on Greek history, especially on the Ottoman Occupation. It projects the idea of a glorious Greek nation, one that has not been influenced by anyone and is continuous and unchanged. It uses negative terms to describe the Ottomans. The 2015 grade six textbook is slightly more amenable to narrating history beyond the Greek nation. At its beginning, it includes a section devoted to developments in Europe from the mid-fifteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Within this fourteen-page section, there is reference to non-Europeans only in one chapter, which describes the 'discovery' of the New World. A common element in both textbooks is that their introductions use the first-person plural: 'our nation,' 'the history of our homeland,' and so forth. The inclusive 'our' is an exclusive expression, which arguably does not take into consideration the fact that some of the students attending schools in Greece may be of a different origin. Apart from a small section on European history in the 2015 textbook, my findings show that the 1980 and 2015 grade six

textbooks overall adhere to a nation-centered type of history. However, considering that these textbooks address students of elementary school, who are being introduced to modern history for the first time, the importance of acquainting them initially with their local history cannot be dismissed. Despite its weaknesses, the 2015 grade nine textbook's inclusion of non-Greek history is an important step towards connecting local history to a wider, global framework.

Moving on to the grade nine and twelve textbooks, the 1980 textbooks focus extensively on European history and only briefly on Greek history. This is explicitly denoted by the textbooks' titles and the structure of their contents. In regards to the 2015 grade nine and twelve textbooks, their focus is on European and Greek history, despite book and section titles that refer to the 'world.' Moreover, it is interesting to note that the analysis of non-Western history demonstrated that the 1980 and 2015 grade nine and twelve textbooks cover the same historical events. The main difference between them is that the 2015 textbooks provide a more extensive coverage of the themes that refer to non-Western history. Similar to the 15G6 textbook, then, the findings of this study indicate that both 2015 grade nine and twelve textbooks show a tendency towards a nation and European-centered interpretation of history.

### **Narratives of non-Western Peoples**

Starting with the grade six textbooks, as I mentioned in the thematic focus section, the 1980 grade six textbook does not refer to non-Western peoples. On the other hand, within the 2015 grade six textbook, there is a small section on the indigenous peoples of the Americas included in the chapter narrating the arrival of Europeans in America during the fifteenth century. Overall, my analysis shows that the events in this chapter

and peoples' identities are not approached in their complexity. The chapter does not devote enough space, questions, and activities to the negative effects of the European presence in the Americas, but presents a stereotypical depiction of Europeans and the indigenous peoples. By not including alternative versions of the story and activities that encourage the reader to question the narrative regarding the progress of Europe and its effect on others, the textbook fails to address the issue from multiple perspectives and eventually tells the story solely from a Western perspective.

Similar to the grade six textbooks, the analysis of the grade nine and twelve history textbooks showed that they neglect the experience and the voice of non-Westerners. Both in the 1980 and 2015 textbooks, non-Westerners' history is present only to the extent that they have contributed to the making of the West. However, there are two main differences between the 1980 grade nine and twelve textbooks, and the equivalent textbooks of 2015: First, the 2015 textbooks provide a more extensive coverage of non-Western themes. Second, their historical sources sometimes showcase an alternate perspective to the Western story and some of their questions encourage students to reflect on competing historical interpretations. Despite these two elements, both the 1980 and 2015 grade nine and twelve textbooks adopt a Eurocentric perspective when they narrate non-Western history and they both project the supremacy of Europe. The West is anthropomorphized and presented as the agent of culture, freedom, and progress. Europeans are depicted as the major actors of history who traveled, discovered the world, and promoted democracy, the sciences, and the arts. Even the effects of colonization are projected as being justified and inevitable in the name of economic growth. In turn, non-Westerners are not presented with a voice or agency, but are 'saved' and influenced by

the West. Also, the texts often measure a country's progress by whether it has adopted Western structures. By additionally disregarding any negative consequences of the West's actions, they promote Europe as an ideal and give insufficient attention to the rest of the world's contribution and historical agency. Such an approach seems to impose a superior/inferior binary between the West and the rest of the world.

Hence, despite the fact that the 2015 textbooks' titles encompass the world and imply inclusive historical content, my findings show that they follow the same storyline as the 1980 textbooks: the story of the world is the story of the West. This is a model of world history that follows what Ross Dunn (2000) terms the Western Heritage Model.

### **Implications of the Study**

My investigation is situated within the current Greek context, defined by an increasingly multicultural population and the rise of far right ideologies against the backdrop of the Greek economic crisis. This research project is additionally informed by my own questions as a schoolteacher and as an educational researcher, with regards to history education and its role in today's multicultural and interconnected societies. Having this context and my professional concerns as my starting point, my study aimed to unpack certain tensions that arise in school practice, as well as in the relevant scholarly literature. As explained in chapter two, these tensions are located in the following issues: Do we teach history for content or for acquiring critical thinking skills? Should school history tell the story of the nation or should it broaden its perspective and focus on the world? And finally, what is the history of the world? Is it the story of the Western world? What is the place of the non-Western world in the history of humankind?

In attempting to trace these tensions, the results of this study brought up several issues that are commonplace within the scholarly discourse of history education. As discussed in chapter two, according to contemporary approaches to history, school history should teach students to think critically (Foster, 2012; Laville, 2004; Lévesque, 2008; Lowenthal, 2000; Nash et al., 1997; Seixas & Morton, 2013) and school content should be inclusive of multiple perspectives and the world (Council of Europe, 1996; Dunn, 2000; Greyer, 2005; Nash et al., 1997; Soysal & Schissler, 2005; Stradling, 2001, 2003). In comparison to the 1980 textbooks, my findings indicate that the 2015 textbooks show a greater adherence to the disciplinary approach to history. At the same time, my analysis brought forward other elements, such as a lack of multiple perspectives, a tendency for memory-focused questions, a linear presentation of progress, and a focus on Greek and European history, elements that point to traditional and thematically narrow approaches to history.

Of course, this contradiction is not unique to the history textbooks in this study. In fact, similar tensions are inherent in most history textbooks and, generally, in most history education curriculums, according to relevant literature. Policy makers, curriculum designers, and textbook authors tend to support the principles of contemporary approaches to history, but this does not often translate into practice. The theoretical framework is agreed upon, yet the lack of consistency between theory and practice gives the impression of ‘old wine in a new bottle’ (Mavroskoufis, 2008). In regards to the epistemological approach, evidence shows that it is not always easy to implement historical thinking and the ‘doing of history’ within the classrooms, despite good intentions (Von Heyking & Sandwell, 2014). In terms of thematic focus, within the



Western world, evidence shows that nation-centered and Eurocentric history is the most common way of telling the story of the past, in spite of many cosmopolitan tendencies and the proclaimed ideal to prepare students for the participation in a multicultural and interconnected world (Cajani, 2003; Kotowski, 2013; Soysal & Schissler, 2005). Again this is not surprising, Huntington (1996) suggests that all civilizations tend to see themselves as the center of the world, and as such, tend to write their history as the central drama of human history. According to Huntington, this appears to be truer for the West than for any other civilization.

In Greece, despite the stated intentions of the curriculum and of educational actors, the literature brings forward common arguments. Scholars have found that Greek history textbooks tend to give the impression that they are addressing a homogeneous Greek student population, rather than mixed student audiences. This is reflected in the fact that the textbooks follow traditional approaches to history that project the timeless presence of the Greek nation, its uniqueness, and cultural homogeneity, as well as its glorious past. Evidence also points to the fact that, traditionally, Greek history textbooks have tended to avoid divisive issues and conflict readings of the past (Kokkinos et al., 2012a; Mavroskoufis, 2006; Thodis 2013). In addition, they conceal the existence of any kind of diversity within the country and avoid including information on the presence of ‘other’ groups living within Greece, such as Jews, Albanians, Muslims, Slavs, or refugees and immigrants. As such, the literature suggests that the ‘other’ remains mostly unknown throughout a student’s twelve-year education (Fragoudaki, 2013; Thodis, 2013; Vouri, 2006).

Aspects of the Greek education structure have also been accused of limiting the adoption of contemporary approaches to history. For example, as mentioned in chapter four, education in Greece is geared towards highly competitive nation-wide exams, which students need to pass in order to obtain a place in Greek universities. This has several implications for history teaching, as the examination-driven education is blamed for promoting memorization and limiting teachers' initiatives and flexibility (Koulouri, 1999; Xochelis, 2000). The Ministry's strict guidelines on what should be taught in combination with the one and only textbook that is uniformly distributed to all students across the country is also regarded as further restricting teachers' initiatives and students' exposure to diverse sources of historical knowledge (Kokkinos & Gatsiotis, 2010). Another aspect is also related to teacher training, which scholars tend to view as inadequate. The problem is especially evident in secondary education, where teachers who specialize in Modern or Ancient Greek literature are required to teach history, despite their lack of training in this discipline. As a result, teachers are not always familiar with contemporary theories about the teaching of history. They tend to base their teaching on the textbook, by simply narrating its content and adhering to traditional question/response activities (Koulouri, 1999; Mavroskoufis, 2006).

In regards to students and their perception of school history, research has shown that most Greek students finish high school having acquired a traditional understanding of history. They admit to feeling that the history they learned in school was nation-centered and they claim to have received very little training on modern history, the history of the Balkans, and European and world history. Students also reveal that their

teaching did not give them the opportunity to engage with modern learning techniques or acquire contemporary understandings of history (Mavroskoufis, 1999).

In light of the above, one can detect multiple voices advocating the necessity to revise and restructure Greek history education (Kokkinos, Gatsotis, Sakka, & Kourgiantakis, 2009; Mavroskoufis, 2006). Throughout the years, Greek history textbooks have been a central part of this discussion, both in the scholarly field of history education and in the public sphere. In chapter four, I gave an account of the various controversies that took place during the past three decades regarding the content of four history textbooks. As these controversies demonstrate, narratives concerning the past, and therefore history, are highly political in Greece and attract the attention of various actors. For some of these groups, such as the Greek Church and certain political parties, history is national and should strictly tell the story of the nation. Consequently, they support an ethnocentric model of history and forcefully resist any changes. Reforms regarding the school history paradigm are seen as efforts toward the de-Hellenization of the country, as well as its subordination to an agenda of globalization and to foreign decision-making centers (Repoussi, 2009; Vouri, 2006).

At present, the sociopolitical situation has sparked anew conversations regarding history education and its role in shaping citizens' attitudes. As I explained in chapter one, among the various elements that define the current Greek context, the popularity of Golden Dawn (GD) holds a prominent place. Golden Dawn is a far right political party, with Neo-Nazi affiliations that challenge the very principle of democracy, and reject both equality and basic human rights (Dragona, 2013). It adheres to a fascist ideology and supports the establishment of the state on the basis of a common race, blood, and descent.

Most importantly, GD seems to be gaining popularity among the youth. The Greek financial crisis is another key element of the current context. During the past five years, the national economy shrank drastically and high unemployment rates have created feelings of uncertainty, anger, and desperation in society (Dragona, 2013; Fragoudaki, 2013). Within this general disappointment, the public sphere is increasingly overrun by a discourse that is accusative towards any kind of ‘other,’ the political other, the professional other, the national other, the other that holds a different opinion, and so forth. As such, discriminatory language is no longer limited to the far right political parties, but has become widespread across the country. Finally, the ongoing European refugee crisis and the unprecedented influx of people have put a great strain on the state and engendered resentment among Greek citizens (Hendawi, 2015). Within this context, xenophobic sentiments have become increasingly prevalent.

As previously mentioned, the conversation pertaining to the revision of Greek history education was always prominent within the literature. However, with the backdrop of the current context, the highly nation-centered history curriculums and textbooks and the need to revise and transform them seems to be a pertinent issue among those who consider the rise of the extreme right and xenophobic expressions a problem for Greek society (Fragoudaki, 2013; Kesidou, 2007; Leontsinis, 2007; Sakka, 2006; Thanasekas, 2014; Tsiakalos, 2015; Vouri, 2006). Of course, the link between history curriculum and xenophobia is neither isolated nor straightforward. In the introduction of the dissertation, I explained that the rise of the far right is complex and the result of several socio-political factors inherent in Greek society. David Coulby (1997) similarly suggests that, to a great extent, immigration, the economic crises, employment rights,

governmental policies, and other phenomena within society have an important role to play in internal repression and in fostering hostility toward groups within a country or toward other states. Without ignoring the effects of these factors and similar to the arguments brought forward by several Greek scholars (Fragoudaki, 2013; Georgiadou, 2014; Minkenberg, 2014; Tsiakalos, 2015; Thanasekas, 2014), Coulby (1997) supports the idea that curriculum systems, and by extension textbooks, also play a very important role in producing and reproducing xenophobia, especially on the part of the dominant groups themselves. There may be hostility and opposition among groups, but Coulby (1997) argues that it is through the school curriculum that these are transformed into major aspects of consciousness in citizens.

Departing from this strong link between the curriculum and the formation of citizens' attitudes, the revision of Greek history education and history textbooks in the current context is an urgent matter that requires close attention. This study attempts to address this need and to offer an additional perspective in the field of history textbook research.

As the controversies on Greek history textbooks reveal, textbook revisions are not an easy process in Greece (Mavroskoufis, 2008; Repoussi, 2009). Despite this difficulty, my study contributes to the conversation pertaining to the revision of Greek history textbooks with the comparative investigation of the 1980 and 2015 textbooks. I traced the changes in the writing of school history within the past decades, in order to illuminate those steps that were made in the direction of contemporary approaches to history and to indicate certain elements that require further change. The study also offers a theoretical lens for the analysis of history textbooks, one that is founded on the principles of the

critical approach to diversity, the disciplinary approach to history, and the principles of historical thinking.

Additionally, by examining the textbooks' pedagogy and content, my study unpacks the tension between teaching history for the cultivation of critical thinking skills and for content. My study offers an analysis that investigates both of these elements within the textbooks, founded on the premise that no history curriculum reform is successful if it distinguishes between skills and knowledge. Nash et al. (1997) suggest that content-impoverished textbooks have limited pedagogic value, but so do textbooks that rely heavily on learning processes. Furthermore, research has shown that students remember history better if they analyze and interpret the content. In turn, they acquire skills more efficiently if they use them on subject matter that is concretely located in time and space, well narrated and presents multiple perspectives. As such, Nash et al. (1997) argue that textbooks cannot rely on one aspect alone. Similarly, with my work I make the case that research on history textbooks and the writing of textbooks should take into account both these aspects.

Another tension that arises in history textbook writing is related to the content. As an educator, I position myself with those who support an inclusive and open world history that moves beyond military content. Greek society and that of the world at large are changing. Peoples are coming into close contact with one another and our societies are becoming increasingly diverse. In this context, it is imperative that school content reflects the multiplicity of our communities and that all students see themselves within the school narrative. Teaching practices and school materials need to create the conditions in which future citizens feel included in the society and aspire to collectively

participate in its progress. At the same time, the matter at hand is not only about eliminating the history of the nation and subsequently focusing on the world. After all, scholars have argued that it is not possible to dispense with national history, and no one can deny a nation's right to its history. We all belong to one particular nation-state and our experiences are tightly linked to events happening within its borders (Rosa, 2012). With my study, I argue that the issue is not simply about adding references to the 'other.' This tactic is not enough to make the narrative inclusive. By using an analytical lens comprised of the principles of a critical approach to diversity and contemporary approaches to history education, I attempted to demonstrate that, when talking about the self or the other, it is important to illuminate the complexity of human experience and to view national history, and that of others, within a global framework and not in isolation. I consider this approach key in any examination of the past, in understanding the present, and in conversing with the 'other.'

I now go back to my initial point of departure: my profession as a schoolteacher. Despite the important role that textbooks play in the teaching and learning process, evidence shows that what is equally important is how teachers use the textbook and how they organize their teaching (Foster, 2012; Nash et al., 1997). Considering that textbooks do not change easily, another aspect that could be improved is the teachers' approach to history. Hence, in addition to offering suggestions for the revision of history textbooks, this study's aim is to also serve as a guide for schoolteachers. In the Greek classroom, with the current context of increasing diversity, schoolteachers are required to deal with different or conflicting stories, within the textbooks and society. How a teacher deals with these differences and conflicts may eventually determine the students' attitudes and

understandings of the past, the present, and the ‘other.’ In light of this, my analysis aims to serve as an example of how teachers can draw from the principles of the critical approach to diversity. At the same time, it demonstrates how contemporary approaches to history can raise questions that challenge mono-prismatic narratives. It also suggests ways that teachers can bring the arguments into the classroom and provide students with the tools to confront and discuss conflicting accounts and available interpretations, not only of the past, but also stories from their everyday lives. Furthermore, since non-Western narratives have not been the focus of past research on Greek history textbooks, I hope that this analysis serves as an example of how teachers can challenge the Western perspective and question textbook narratives in terms of including the voice of non-dominant groups.

As I mentioned at the advent of this thesis, migration movements and the diversification of populations are not only a Greek phenomenon, but also a global one. In 2015, Europe received and continues to receive unprecedented numbers of migrants seeking political and economic refuge (FRONTEX, 2015). This situation has sparked intense debate among European states. While the Europe Union and the world debate the treatment of refugees and their settlement within member-states, issues such as solidarity, responsibility, and human rights, as well as racism and anti-immigrant sentiments, are becoming part of a global conversation.

At the same time, the popularity of the far right is commonplace across almost all of Europe. Outside of Golden Dawn and its rise in Greece over the past five years, far-right parties, such as the Swiss People’s Party, Austria’s Freedom Party, and the anti-migrant Danish People’s Party, have recently made huge gains in state and local



elections. The Athena Institute (2012), an agency that monitors extremism and reports from the media, confirms that far right, neo-Nazi, neo-fascist political parties and hate groups are on the rise all across Europe.

Additionally, in 2015, the Charlie Hebdo shootings and the Paris attacks in November are examples of crises that brought new heat to old arguments; ‘us’ versus ‘them,’ diversity, inclusion, radicalization, and anti-Islam sentiments, are all issues at the center of a global discourse. The challenge at hand is how to deal with this while abstaining from mono-prismatic understandings that feed the politics of fear and hate.

The Council of Europe (2010) has highlighted the role of education and sees it as the vehicle with the potential to promote core values such as democracy and human rights and, consequently, combat the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination, and intolerance. Hence, although the focus of this research is on Greece, my case study addresses present-day concerns regarding education and history education that are a common ground for many neighboring and European countries. My study contributes to the conversation on the teaching of the past, at a time when Europe is dealing with the largest refugee crisis since the Second World War, and far right political parties and xenophobic groups are on the rise.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

This study compared and analyzed two sets of textbooks from two different time periods that narrate modern history. Future research could examine textbooks from all school grades and from one specific time period. For example, it would be interesting to horizontally trace the overall inclusion and presentation of non-Westerners within currently used history textbooks, from elementary to high school. Since the history

curriculum in Greece is structured in the spiral model, such an examination could also reveal whether the various themes are revisited with increasing depth and complexity throughout twelve years of schooling.

In terms of the theoretical framework, my approach was informed by an educational approach, the critical approach to diversity, and a disciplinary approach to history. Since this study examined stories of non-Western peoples, a framework that also draws from post-colonial theory would illuminate additional aspects of these narratives and enrich the analysis with other perspectives.

Further research could also focus on the teachers' manuals that correspond to each textbook in order to examine the official instructions that are directed to teachers. The analysis could review these instructions in terms of their epistemological orientation and the teaching of non-Western history.

Admittedly, the textbooks that my study investigated are only one part of the equation. As scholars have argued, the textbook alone is not responsible for the outcome of a lesson. Teacher and textbook are intertwined: as Marshall McLuhan (1964) said, "the medium is the message" (p. 1). For this reason, future research could investigate the use of these textbooks and how issues that are brought forward in this study are actually dealt with in class. For example, studies could examine students and teachers' opinions regarding the purpose of history and their understandings of specific themes of history that refer to non-Western peoples. It could examine how teachers utilize the suggested textbooks, historical sources, and activities and to what extent they incorporate historical thinking elements in their teaching.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

At a time of increasing diversity within Greece and the world in general, educators and all other involved actors have an obligation to carefully rethink their role in creating future citizens (Ghosh, 2011). Critically positioned scholars see education as a process that can equip students with the necessary knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will allow them to function effectively both in their communities and beyond their cultural borders (Banks, 2004). At a time when far right ideologies and extremism are gaining ground in Greece and Europe, history can play a key political role: It can be used to foster understanding, acceptance and trust between individuals and between countries, or it can become a factor for division, violence, and intolerance. School history may educate for peace and security, or it may cultivate ignorance that leads to fear and anger due to misconceptions. Hence, how we teach history and what stories we tell about one another may determine to a great extent how we coexist within our multicultural societies.

## APPENDIX I

### Textbooks – Sources of Data

#### 1980 Textbooks

- **Grade six (80G6)**

Diamantopoulos, N., & Kyriazopoulos, A. (1984). *Elliniki istoria ton neoteron hronon* [Modern Greek history]. Athens: OEDV.

- **Grade nine (80G9)**

Koulikourdi, G. (1980). *Neoteri Europaiki istoria* [Modern European history]. Athens: OEDV.

- **Grade twelve (80G12)**

Theodoridis, H., & Lazarou, A. (1981). *Istoria Elliniki ke Europaiki ton neon hronon* [Modern Greek and European History]. Athens: OEDV.

#### 2015 Textbooks <sup>1</sup>

- **Grade six (15G6)**

Koliopoulos, I., Mihailidis, I., Kallianiotis, A., & Minaoglou, H. (2012). *Istoria tou neoterou ke syghronou cosmou* [History of the modern and contemporary world]. Student textbook and workbook. Athens: OEDV.

- **Grade nine (15G9)**

Louvi, E., & Xifaras, D. (2007). *Neoteri ke syghroni istoria* [Modern and Contemporary history]. Athens: OEDV.

- **Grade twelve (15G12)**

Koliopoulos, I., Koliopoulos, C., Haztivasiliou, E., Nimas, T., & Sholinaki-Helioti, H. (2012). *Istoria tou neoterou ke syghronou cosmou* [History of the modern and contemporary world]. Athens: OEDV.

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<sup>1</sup> Online versions of the 2015 Greek history textbooks can be found here:  
<http://ebooks.edu.gr/new/allcourses.php>

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- the Ottoman occupation in the secondary history textbooks]. In A. Andreou (Ed.), *H didaktiki tis istorias stin Ellada kai I erevna sta sholika egheiridia* (The teaching of history in Greece and research on textbooks) (pp. 233- 268). Athens: Metehmio.
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