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# Opening the Mind or Drawing Boundaries?

History Texts in Nordic Schools

Redaktion

Roderich Henrý, Susanne Grindel, Wendy Anne Kopisch und  
Verena Radkau

mit Unterstützung durch Anna Stock-Hesketh

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## About the Authors

### **Þorsteinn Helgason**

Þorsteinn Helgason is associate professor of history and history education at the University of Iceland, School of Education. His historical research has centred on the collective memory and history of the so-called *Turkish Raid* in Iceland in 1627. Other areas of his research and teaching include the methodology, philosophy and pedagogy of history.

University of Iceland  
School of Education  
Stakkahlid 5  
IS-105 Reykjavik  
Iceland  
Email: thelga@hi.is

### **Simone Lässig**

Simone Lässig is director of the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, Braunschweig, Professor of Modern and Contemporary History at the University of Braunschweig, and – for the academic year 2009–2010 – Guest Professor of St. Anthony's College, Oxford. She is a member of numerous scholarly associations and committees. Her research interests center around nineteenth- and twentieth-century social and cultural history, particularly Jewish history, religion and religiosity, philanthropy and patronage, entrepreneurial history and European history, as well as aspects of history learning and instruction.

Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research  
Celler Strasse 3  
D-38114 Braunschweig  
Germany  
Email: laessig@gei.de

**Kristín Loftsdóttir**

Kristín Loftsdóttir received her Ph.D. from the University of Arizona in 2000 and is professor of cultural anthropology at the University of Iceland. Her research focuses on the historical construction of racism and race, images of Africa, identity, nationalism, gender and international development. She is currently a board member of the Anthropology Institute and IMER (Research Centre on International Migration and Ethnic Relations) at the University of Iceland.

University of Iceland  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
IS-101 Reykjavik  
Iceland  
Email: kristinl@hi.is

**Nils Andersson**

Nils Andersson is a senior lecturer in teacher education at the University of Malmö, Sweden. Originally from the discipline of the history of ideas he is now conducting research on educational history and textbooks, especially history textbooks.

Malmö University  
Lärautbildningen  
S-20506 Malmö  
Sweden  
Email: nils.andersson@mah.se

**Bente Aamotsbakken**

Bente Aamotsbakken, Professor Dr. Phil., wrote her dissertation on intertextuality (1997) and is currently the head of two research projects, one dealing with literacy and one dealing with learning resources and writing. Both projects are funded by the Norwegian Research Council. She is professor of text science at Vestfold University College, Norway, and holds the position of professor II with the Norwegian Research Council.

Høgskolen i Vestfold  
Avdeling for lærerutdanning  
Boks 2243  
N-3103 Tønsberg  
Norway  
Email: Bente.Aamotsbakken@hive.no

**Monika Vinterek**

Monika Vinterek holds a Ph.D. in education from Umeå University, Sweden. Her research interests are general pedagogy with didactics and history didactics. She is head of the project “Teaching and learning with a focus on learning environment, individualization and linguistic development” and also part of the project ‘Popular History Magazines’ at the University of Augsburg.

Umeå University  
Umeå School of Education  
S-901 87 Umeå  
Sweden  
Email: monika.vinterek@svshv.umu.se

**Amalía Björnsdóttir**

Amalia Björnsdottir received her Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma in 1996 and is associate professor of statistics and research design at the University of Iceland. Her research focus is educational measurement, school motivation and achievement.

University of Iceland  
School of Education  
Stakkahlid 5  
IS-105 Reykjavik  
Email: amaliabj@hi.is

**Karl-Gunnar Hammarlund**

Karl-Gunnar Hammarlund is a senior lecturer in history at Halmstad University where he mainly teaches courses in the Teacher Education Program. His research and teaching both pivot around history as a key element in the construction of identities, individual as well as collective, and narrativity as a common characteristic of both historiography, history teaching, and the construction of identity. Besides his teaching activities he is currently continuing the work presented in this volume through classroom observations and course planning participation in a Swedish upper secondary school.

Halmstad University  
School of Humanities  
PO Box 823  
S-301 18 Halmstad  
Sweden  
Email: kg.hammarlund@hh.se

**Jens Aage Poulsen**

Jens Aage Poulsen is a senior lecturer at University College, Lillebaelt, where he teaches history and history didactics. He is also engaged in the writing and editing of school textbooks. His research interests center around textbook research, “best practice” in education, learning objects in the *Folkeskolen* and in teacher education. He is also interested in pedagogical aspects of travel, particularly with regard to China.

University College Lillebaelt  
Rømersvej 3  
DK-5200 Odense V  
Denmark  
Email: jap@jellingnet.dk

**Monica Reichenberg**

Monica Reichenberg is associate professor of the Department of Education, University of Gothenburg, Sweden. She has published a number of articles and volumes on the readability of texts, reading comprehension and structured text talks. In two studies she has also investigated reading comprehension amongst deaf adults. In a further study she has addressed reading comprehension competencies of students with mild learning disabilities.

Göteborgs Universitet  
Institutionen för pedagogik och didaktik  
Box 300  
S-40530 Göteborg  
Sweden  
Email: monica.reichenberg@ped.gu.se

**Dagrun Skjelbred**

Dagrun Skjelbred, Dr. phil. and professor at Vestfold University College, Tonsberg, Norway. Her research interests center around textbooks and educational texts, textbook history, reading and writing in education and literacy. She is currently coordinating two research projects: “Norwegian textbook history – a cultural- and educational history” and “The reading of curricular texts as a basic skill in different school subjects”, both in cooperation with Professor Bente Aamotsbakken. She has published and edited books and articles in this field.

Høgskolen i Vestfold  
Avdeling for lærerutdanning  
Boks 2243

N-3103 Tønsberg  
Norway  
Email: Dagrun.skjebred@hive.no

**Palmi Magnússon**

Pálmi Magnússon teaches history at Hamrahlid College, Reykjavík. He has a BA in the History of Ideas and Science from the University of Gothenbourg (1985) and a teacher's certificate from the University of Iceland (1986). He is currently completing his MA thesis on the mediation of values in history teaching.

Menntaskólinn við Hamrahlíd/Hamrahlíd College  
Hamrahlíd 10  
IS-105 Reykjavík  
Iceland  
Email: palmagn@mh.is

**Tom Gullberg**

Tom Gullberg, member of the Faculty of Education at Åbo Akademi University in Vasa, Finland, has a PhD in general history and is senior lecturer in didactics of history and civics. He has published widely on aspects of national and regional identity and principles of national self-determination. He published *State, Territory and Identity : the Principle of National Self-determination, the Question of Territorial Sovereignty in Carinthia and other post-Habsburg Territories after the First World War* (Åbo Akademi University Press, Finland, 2000).

Åbo Akademi University  
Academill  
Strandgatan 2  
SF-65101 Vasa  
Finland  
Email: tgullber@abo.fi



## Preface

Only limited space has been allocated to Northern European contributions to the field of textbook research by previous volumes in this series. This is a status quo that can and should be altered by the essays in this book. They shift our attention towards a region that – apart from an interest in the Finnish school system following PISA – has not enjoyed the centre of Central European attention, yet nevertheless possesses a long history of textbook research and, above all, textbook revision. In the aftermath of World War I, it was in the Nordic countries that prejudice and national hatred in history textbooks were investigated in the spirit of peacekeeping, initiated by *Föreningen Norden* (The Nordic Society) in cooperation with the League of Nations and various other societies and institutions.<sup>1</sup>

While this volume continues such work and indeed facilitates far more than merely a concise approach to the Scandinavian research landscape, at the same time it reaches beyond these aims in order to illustrate how international textbook research has developed *as a whole* over the last few years, the directions in which it is currently extending and new questions to be addressed. In this respect there are three aspects which we consider particularly noteworthy.

Firstly, early textbook research pursued the primary goal of revealing stereotypes and concepts of “enemies” which, via the scholarly analysis of textbook writing, should be avoided or removed from the books in the interests of international understanding. In the meantime, textbook research has shifted away from this generally defensive and preventive approach, adopting a more active and creative scholarship. It no longer focuses solely on peace research in a trans-border, bilateral sense; rather, its work now also aims to investigate how diversity and difference are dealt with and to develop new strategies via which

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1 A Swedish-German research project on Nordic and international history textbook revision since 1919 is underway, led by Daniel Lindmark in cooperation with the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (*Historia utan gräns: Den internationella historieboksrevisionen 1919–2009, History Beyond Borders: International History Textbook Revision, 1919–2009*).

educational media can encourage mutual understanding within increasingly heterogeneous societies. In this regard, this collection of essays is marked by a latent, certainly productive and critically reflected tension between the descriptive and analytical approach on the one hand and an approach that might be called “normative” on the other. The majority of the authors wish to analyze teaching materials from different scholarly perspectives whilst contributing to the development of educational media that are as appropriate as possible for the challenges posed by multicultural societies and the ubiquitous call for intercultural education.

Secondly, the volume expressly points out that contemporary textbook research need not exhaust itself in mere content analyses. The *context* of the textbook and, above all, modes of textbook production and use have recently become important subjects of comparative scholarly studies. Research is therefore no longer restricted to investigating what is written or illustrated in the textbook and which assumptions, meanings and values are thus conveyed, directly or indirectly. The question as to who ensures that certain knowledge is deemed worthy of imparting and therefore of being printed in the textbook, how this decision is made and with what degree of success, is of equal importance. Furthermore, research is increasingly focusing on the ways in which textbooks are used and evaluated by teachers, pupils, parents, or peers, on the effects of textbooks and their interplay with other media. Certainly, in the past too, hardly any scholars would have been naïve enough to assume that data, facts and values were adopted or accepted in an unfiltered state by teacher and pupils. Most scholars would certainly have been familiar with the differences between the contents and their reception; indeed, such ruptures were sporadically identified and often criticized. Nevertheless, this omission in research has remained; today there are only few empirically founded and methodologically reflected studies on the assessment and interpretation of textbooks by their readers. In this regard, this volume is certainly venturing into new territories within the academy. While Part One addresses new questions focusing on tried-and-tested processes of textbook analysis such as constructions of the Self and the Other and deconstructions of the Eurocentric perspective via methods of content and discourse analysis, Part Two investigates empirical research on the reception and use of history textbooks by teachers in Scandinavia.<sup>2</sup>

Thirdly, in contemporary textbook research aspects of cultural studies go hand in hand with traditional interests of the arts and humanities and methods specific to the social sciences. For more recent textbook research, the content of a

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<sup>2</sup> Here, an internet-based survey (see appendix) provided questions and answers from 409 teachers and has thus been a major source of data. It has provided information on an important academic terrain, which, for other countries too, has also been new to a large extent.

book not only includes authored texts but also sources, exercises, maps and illustrations. The “turns” of the last few decades, from the visual or pictorial turn and the spatial turn to the postcolonial turn, have also made their mark on educational media research. In this regard, this volume hopes to demonstrate the large extent to which recent research seeks and requires international and – primarily – interdisciplinary cooperation. Even if this may occasionally appear to take the form of an eclectic lining up of various research perspectives, exchange and collaboration between the disciplines does on the whole prove to be fruitful and progressive. This volume presents the results of a transnational “Nordic” project in which historians, history educators, secondary school teachers, and linguists as well as an anthropologist and a historian of religion were involved, focusing on the content and use of history texts in primary and secondary schools. Initiated in Iceland in 2005, it was originally directed at the 26<sup>th</sup> Nordic History Congress in Reykjavik in August 2007 where the results were presented. Soon after its inception a group of around 20 people was formed, which in turn was divided in three subgroups according to focus and agenda of study. In this volume, the results of two of the groups are presented in two separate but interrelated parts. The first section “Us and Others in Nordic Schoolbooks” is most related to the Nordic history textbook revision movement mentioned above. This time, however, the images under scrutiny are of multiple kinds and the presentation is conducted via several theoretical frameworks. The second part, “Ends and Means: Materials in History Teaching,” presents studies on a users’ perspective, in particular the perspective of history teachers. A questionnaire was put together with carefully chosen questions to capture the core ideas of teachers regarding history and their teaching materials.<sup>3</sup>

Nearly all contributors to this volume link questions of traditional textbook research to new perspectives such as those derived from postcolonial studies or transnational approaches to history. The spectrum in this volume ranges from questions and methods from the subjects of history, education science and sociology through approaches from philosophy and political science to those from social anthropology, ethnography, and literary studies. Approaches and ideas from cultural studies enjoy an equal position alongside structural and post-structural concepts; discourse analysis takes its seat – as an extension or a corrective – alongside hermeneutical analysis; questions from postcolonial theory or concepts of intertextuality and intersectionality are tried and discussed.

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3 Alongside this undertaking, a third group worked on “Dramatic Events in the History of the Nordic Countries.” Here, it was decided that instead of studying the treatment of the same event (say, the French Revolution) in textbooks in all the countries an event central to each particular country would be chosen, irrespective of their international fame or obscurity. A separate publication is being prepared about this project.

With this in mind, this volume seeks to provide thematic, theoretical, and methodological inspiration. Firstly, the studies focus on a traditional problem for textbook research: the perpetration and reinforcement of stereotypes and constructed images of Self and Other. The fact, however, that the results do not reproduce familiar concepts, rather conveying exciting new insights, results from the application of this perspective to a region viewed as particularly tolerant, open-minded and socially balanced whilst also enjoying a pioneering role in international textbook revision – Scandinavia. The analyses refer not only to explicit conflict or post-conflict societies; on the contrary, they also pertain to countries ranking amongst the most peaceful in the world: Iceland, Norway and Denmark topped the list of the “Global Peace Index” in 2008.<sup>4</sup> In a sense, the problems dealt with in this volume are the more hidden or seemingly “common” ones: problems of expanding democracy, of constructing and realizing values (as held by the Self and the Other), rendering hidden messages explicit, analyzing the boundaries drawn between “them” and “us,” even in tolerant and open-minded societies. The volume inquires into the external as well as the internal Other. Several essays analyze who is categorized into the “them” and “us” boxes with relation to their immediate social milieus. They ask who is portrayed as the cultural majority and thus the model for demands of adaptation, and who is portrayed as the minority as determined by their differing practices and norms. These are various dimensions of the relationship between inclusion and exclusion, or between uniting and dividing, and various ways in which both perspectives are intertwined within textbooks.

Secondly, this volume develops a critical perspective on latently nationalistic versions of history and towards the widespread Eurocentric positions from which history continues to be primarily written. This is also the case – indeed, especially so – for textbooks, particularly for those expressly wishing to contribute to reconciliation and understanding. The Scandinavian example demonstrates this particularly impressively. Even such books frequently (and unwittingly) reproduce specific “them” and “us” models. The accurate analyses presented here sensitize us to patterns of conscious or sub-conscious social exclusion that can be read into portrayals of non-European cultures, native peoples and populations such as the Samis and Greenlanders, or depictions of immigrants. The volume thus particularly reflects on the challenges for textbook design that derive from the emergence of multicultural societies. At the same time it also addresses Scandinavia’s colonial past, a subject that has only been given superficial consideration in societal discourse.

Finally, the authors and editors also seek to break through the still-dominant

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<sup>4</sup> Global Peace Index, *Vision of Humanity*, <http://www.visionofhumanity.org>. See also “Russia, Us among least peaceful nations,” *Financial Times*, May 19, 2008, <http://www.ft.com>.

structure-and-agency dichotomy and to combine these two aspects by locating them in the context of textbooks. This context primarily involves, alongside other media, stakeholders who convey textbook contents and reinforce, break through, re-code, or question them via performative acts; that is, through specific interaction with pupils and their previous experience within society or the family. As this is particularly relevant for teachers, the two parts of this publication will link text critiques and hermeneutic analyses of textbooks and curricula with empirical analyses of teachers' attitudes, behavior and practices. They reinforce or weaken the values and identities inherent in textbooks, creating a specific learning environment that can considerably influence the reception and effects of textbooks. We still know astonishingly little about how exactly this takes place via textbooks in teaching practice. The experimental approach presented here is therefore also to be seen as an impulse for further research – and of course not only with regards to Scandinavia.

All in all, this volume is designed not only for those working in the specific field of history teaching and history textbooks within Scandinavia; it is rather intended to provide impulses for international educational media research as a whole. It was, therefore, a strategic decision to include it in the publication series of the Georg Eckert Institute and to edit it in cooperation with Þorsteinn Helgason. We hope that the ideas developed by these researchers from five Scandinavian countries fall upon fertile soil within a variety of research contexts, and above all that the approaches towards combining “content” and “Agent” or “Recipient” might be widely discussed, given further methodological thought, and of course development.



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**Part One**  
**Us and Others in Nordic Textbooks**



## Deconstructing the Eurocentric Perspective: Studying “Us” and the “Other” in History Books

### Introduction

The importance of schoolbooks in perpetrating and reinforcing stereotypes has been acknowledged for a long time. After the First World War, there were concerns about the ability of textbooks to increase prejudice towards other nations and to further strain relations between different nationalities. The *Declaration Regarding the Teaching of History (Revision of School Textbooks)*, signed by 26 countries in 1937, reflects these concerns and focused mainly on prejudice in schoolbooks.<sup>1</sup> At a UNESCO conference in 1946, the importance of textbooks was further stressed in this regard,<sup>2</sup> and three years later a handbook<sup>3</sup> was published to improve textbooks and teaching materials in order to make them more likely to increase international understanding.<sup>4</sup> Further studies have increasingly emphasized cultural and geographical diversity in textbooks, including the need to highlight diversity not only between nations, as was evident in these earlier undertakings, but also within the nations.<sup>5</sup> The UNESCO declaration from 1974 emphasized, for example, such a broader scope in textbooks, thus stating their importance for increasing the knowledge and understanding between different groups. In conjunction, the importance of viewing textbooks in relation to the classroom and other settings where they are used has been stressed; that is, how people actually use the textbook and how diverse images are interpreted and conceptualized within society itself must also be considered.

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1 F. Pingel, *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision* (Hannover: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1999), 11.

2 A program for the improvement of text-books and teaching materials as aids in developing international understanding was established see Pingel, *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision*, 11.

3 It was called *Handbook for the Improvement of Textbooks and Teaching Materials as Aids to International Understanding*.

4 Pingel, *Unesco Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision*, 11.

5 *Ibid.*, 15–16.

Typical of ethnographic studies in general, such research can increase the richness of textbook studies, giving a sense of the actual interpretation of textual and visual material within specific social, cultural and historical settings. They also remind us that students, teachers and parents are not passive recipients,<sup>6</sup> but actively engage with, discuss and criticize teaching materials.

The four chapters in this section of *Opening the Mind or Drawing Boundaries?* deal with the representation of “us” and the “other” in schoolbook texts from different Nordic countries. Despite having different focuses in various regards, these chapters share an interest in the construction of the “other” in Nordic schoolbooks combined with a critical engagement in which perspective the history books have been written from. In this introduction to the first part of the book I contextualize some of the theoretical concerns with the pair “us” and “others,” in addition to stressing the Euro-centrism that has often characterized educational material. Textbooks are particularly interesting in relation to prejudice and stereotypes due to the fact that they are often widely distributed and used as educational material in institutions, legitimized to some extent by the state, establishing, as stressed by Leda Glyptis,<sup>7</sup> a knowledge that students later base further learning on.

I start the discussion by locating textbooks used for teaching history within other images and textual representations, focusing on how images create and shape subjectivities. I find the placement of textbook studies within general studies of media and textual material quite important due to the fact that schoolbooks constitute one type of the texts or representations that exist in today’s multimedia and globalized societies.<sup>8</sup> Media studies often tend to focus on the effects of media on the overall society and even though the effects of schoolbooks on overall society is certainly interesting, I am much more interested in textbooks’ *location* within society. This means that schoolbooks are seen as being part of the society they are trying to “educate”; they are derived from particular social contexts where the world is envisioned and imagined in certain ways. Media studies in general often seem to place the media as somehow existing outside of wider society – affecting society while simultaneously conceiving of media as external to it. It is important to see schoolbooks not merely as

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6 Laurie Olsen, *Made in America: Immigrant Students in Our Public Schools* (New York: The New Press, 1997); Daniel A. Yon, “Highlights and Overview of the History of Educational Ethnography,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 32 (2003): 411–29.

7 Leda Glyptis, “Love, Truth and National Identity Prescriptions: Recounting the 1919–1922 War in Greek School Textbooks,” *International Textbook Research* 29 (2007): 103–119, esp. 104.

8 See also Bente Aamotsbakken, “The Pedagogical Text – An Important Element in the Textual World? Reflections on the Concepts of ‘Text’, ‘Context’ and ‘Literacy Culture’,” *Designs for Learning* 1, no. 1 (2008): 24–40, esp. 33.

discourses that create images that are influential in their social setting, but as being derived from, being a part of and interacting with their social setting. Along with other social discourses – in the sense of Foucault where discourses are not restricted to textual or visual means but seen as ways of interaction – textbooks are a part of a larger tapestry of meaning. From this perspective, schoolbook studies can be seen as particularly important ways of contributing toward a general analysis of people's worldview, thus stressing the importance of placing schoolbook studies within theories of subjectivity and identity developed in relation to other images.

After contextualizing schoolbook studies within the analysis of images in general, the focus of this chapter moves on more strongly to schoolbook studies in particular, looking at criticisms that scholars have expressed in relationship to the Eurocentric perspective, which has been so predominant in North American and European conceptions of history. While stressing in the first part of this introduction the importance of placing schoolbook analysis within theoretical orientation in general, I emphasize in the second part that the reverse also holds true: that schoolbook analysis has an important contribution to offer in regard to the formation of national identities and subjectivities. Finally, I will draw together some of the main points in the three articles embodied in this part of the book.

## Theorizing “Us” and the “Other”

As with other images, textbooks entail a reflection of specific cultural, historical and social views and can recreate, resist or rearrange dominant views within a society. The importance of images in shaping and preserving certain stereotypes has been recognized by scholars for a long time, for example in regard to gender roles and the nature of the sexes.<sup>9</sup> Discourses locate, transfer and maintain links of certain groups to specific socially defined spaces,<sup>10</sup> despite also offering opportunities for resistance and deconstruction. Textbooks, as with other types of media, influence the creation of specific types of subjectivities and remain influential in categorizing individuals in particular ways. Scholars have in various ways analyzed how human beings classify their environments and categorize other individuals into “us” and “others,” i. e. those who are similar and those

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9 Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1993).

10 Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and The Body*, 25; Kristín Loftsdóttir and Helga Björnsdóttir, “Í fréttum er þetta helst: Myndræn og kynjuð orðræða fjölmiðla,” in *Rannsóknir í Félagsvísindum VI*, ed. Úlfar Hauksson (Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan, 2005), 367–375.

who are not. Structuralist scholars place an emphasis on how binary oppositions are used in order to classify and understand the world. Ferdinand de Saussure<sup>11</sup> observed that signs, rather than having intrinsic meaning, gain meaning from their interplay with other signs, and underlined intertextuality and semiotics as important in capturing the construction of meaning. Saussure thus argued that we have to approach the “units” of the language as defined by relationships with others in the system, their “most precise characteristics is in being what others are not.”<sup>12</sup> The anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss brought Saussure’s theory of structural linguistics to the study of human society. He combined Saussure’s idea of the arbitrary character of the linguistic sign with Jakobson’s idea that basic structures of language consist of pairs of opposites and with Marcel Mauss’ notion that there were social structures not visible to the actors themselves (unconscious social structures).<sup>13</sup> Levi-Strauss’s structuralism thus attempted to find universal grammar or syntax in human thought where division into dualistic pairs was a key component in organizing meaning in different human societies. His insights in general shifted the focus from the earlier emphasis on function to the exploration of mental or cultural phenomena.<sup>14</sup> Structuralism was, however, criticized for being too distant from the experiences of social actors and their intentions, individual agency was not clearly visible,<sup>15</sup> and often did not take into account social or historical variables.

Post-structural theorists have sought inspiration from Michel Foucault’s work, effectively demonstrating the complex links between power, identity and discourses, and theorizing power as both visible and invisible.<sup>16</sup> Power to Foucault is, furthermore, productive for inducing pleasure and knowledge. As stated by Foucault “what makes power hold good, what makes it accepted is simply the fact that it does not weight on us as a force that says no but that it traverses and produces things.”<sup>17</sup> The use of the concept “discourse” by Foucault has been important for viewing images in relation to the various institutions of society, the role of discourses in creating specific subjectivities and their link to in-

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11 Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (London: Fontana, 1974).

12 *Ibid.*, 117.

13 David Pace, *The Bearer of Ashes* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), 150 and 161.

14 George E. Marcus and Michael Fischer, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), 29.

15 *Ibid.*, 29.

16 Michael Payne, *Reading Knowledge: An Introduction to Barth, Foucault and Althusser* (London: Blackwell, 1997), 13.

17 Michel Foucault, *Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 119.

dividual actions.<sup>18</sup> Foucault's concept of discourse is complex and multilayered, a point underlined by Foucault himself when stating that one of his goals is to examine how "effects of truth are produced within discourses which in themselves are neither true nor false."<sup>19</sup> Lila Abu-Lughod stresses that the concept of discourse is meant to reject the distinction between ideas and practice, allowing for the possibility of recognizing the play of multiple, shifting and competing statements with practical effects within a social group.<sup>20</sup> Nils Andersson points out how discourse analysis calls for deeper reading of particular texts, to where their meaning is found on the subconscious level.<sup>21</sup>

Scholars have stressed how discourses shape and constitute identities in various senses. Feministic scholars have stressed identity as composed by various dimensions of the self, such as gender, skin-color, religion and age, which interrelate in diverse manners.<sup>22</sup> Bente Aamotsbakken demonstrates how the concept of intersectionality has been of great importance in this regard, used – as she points out – "etymologically [...] to the process of crossing,"<sup>23</sup> thus capturing the different identities at play. Interpellation can, as demonstrated by L. Althusser, be seen as a process where subjects learn to locate and recognize themselves within certain discourses; identities are not only created and manipulated by the individuals themselves, but are also imposed by others. As argued by Fredrick Cooper and Rogers Brubaker, the contemporary scholarly emphasis on identity too often tended to prioritize agency as if identities were only recreated and reinvented by the individuals themselves, thus failing to recognize how discourses recruit individuals, in addition to forcing them into historically constituted subjectivities.<sup>24</sup>

The dualistic pair "us" and the "other" was important in many post-structural theories analyzing various discourses, then especially in post-colonial ideas. Edward Said's book *Orientalism* (1978), often seen as having laid the foundation for post-colonial theory,<sup>25</sup> demonstrated the powerful way in which "other"

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18 Ibid., and Michel Foucault, "Space, Power and Knowledge," in *The Cultural Studies Reader*, ed. S. During (London, New York: Routledge, 1993).

19 Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 60.

20 Lila Abu-Lughod, "Writing Against Culture," in *Recapturing Anthropology: Work in the Present*, ed. R. G. Fox (New Mexico: School of American Research Press, 1991), 148.

21 See Nils Andersson, "Intercultural Education and the Representation of the "Other" in History Textbooks," in this volume.

22 E.g. Henrietta L. Moore, *A Passion for Difference: Essays in Anthropology and Gender* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994).

23 See Bente Aamotsbakken, "Pictures of Greenlanders and Samis in Norwegian and Danish Textbooks," in this volume.

24 Frederick Cooper and Rogers Brubaker, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 59.

25 Bill Ashcroft and Pal Ahluwalia, *Edward Said* (London: Routledge, 2001).

people (the “Orient” in this case) were created in canonical European literature. His book demonstrates how European discourses of the Orient tended to represent the “Oriental others” as foreign and exotic, while simultaneously hegemonically and textually stressing European superiority. Bill Ashcroft and Pal Ahluwalia<sup>26</sup> argue that the power of Said’s argument is based on how it demonstrates that texts can affect people’s lives through constructing the world in a certain way. Said’s work has been criticized on various fronts, the most salient criticism being that he over-emphasizes the hegemony of the West,<sup>27</sup> homogenizes Orientalist discourses, and fails to take into account counter-hegemonic positions.<sup>28</sup> In spite of the validity of this criticism, Said’s work remains important in bringing the construction of “us” and the “other” into the foreground and placing these constructions within a political and historical context. The historian Fredrick Cooper states that Said’s contribution lies in demonstrating how the visions of certain societies are “deeply woven into canonical European literature,”<sup>29</sup> that colonialization is thus not something having to do with other places, but an integral part of European culture and identity.

## Analyzing “Us” and the “Other” in History Textbooks

Simply stated, “us” and “them” can be viewed in two interconnected ways in textbooks. Firstly – as characterized the first schoolbook studies – prejudice or views of other nations or societies as perpetrated in schoolbooks can be analyzed; secondly, the focus can be placed on the diversity within the nation states, that is, who is classified and included in schoolbooks as the collective “we,” and who is not. Regarding the first emphasis, it can be stated that textbooks place identities and connections of societies and nations in a bigger international context. As Faye D. Ginsberg, Lila Abu-Lughod and Brian Larkin<sup>30</sup> point out, the nation state is for most people among the most important scenes of sympathy, identification and self-images; it could thus be said that textbooks are an especially interesting source for studying the self-representation of nations and

26 Ibid.

27 For example Dennis Porter, “Orientalism and Its Problems,” in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. P. W. a. L. Chrisman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 152; and Aijaz Ahmad, “Orientalism and After,” in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. P. W. a. L. Chrisman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 165.

28 Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, *Edward Said*, 79–80.

29 Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*, 14.

30 Faye D. Ginsberg, Lila Abu-Lughod and Brian Larkin, Introduction to *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain*, eds. F. D. Ginsburg, L. Abu-Lughod and B. Larkin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 1–36.

what images are portrayed of other nationalities. However, as I address in my chapter “Encountering Others in Icelandic Schoolbooks” in this book, the analysis of how “others” are perceived in this sense can also reflect a nationalistic project, in the sense of creating a collective “us.” Images of other nationalities can thus be seen as reflecting intrinsic characteristics of national unity.

Regarding the latter emphasis, in the textbooks’ discussion about “us,” there is a reference to the nature of the nation and who belongs to it. The emphasis on the nation itself can entail a study of diversity with regard to gender, religion and social class, to name some examples, or in regard the images of “us” and the “others” in connection to today’s multicultural societies. Contemporary and past schoolbooks can thus be seen as holding a certain reflection or image of the nation itself, the body of the nation so to speak: who represents the nation, what parts are invisible, in what contexts are they visible and how different socially defined groups are seen as constituting different roles within the nation state. Such an analysis can be crucial in identifying and combating racialized praxes and discrimination within contemporary society, with the acknowledgement of diversity as an important aspect of the nation state.

History books used for teaching are particularly valuable in this regard, as they traditionally embody the history of the nation, its creation, its links with others and they narrate events, classifying and interpreting the history of what is seen as “the” world. Foucault’s emphasis on researching societies’ institutions and the creation of identities through various discourses draws attention to the textbook’s purpose of serving and maintaining the goals of a main curriculum where a collective objective is laid out for all elementary and secondary schools for each country. Multiculturalism can be defined as a perspective or project, in Ella Shohat’s<sup>31</sup> words, that “calls for envisioning world history and contemporary social life from the perspective of the radical equality of peoples.” Even though the term can be criticized in various respects,<sup>32</sup> it still aims at capturing diversity. Within the field of multiculturalism the categories used traditionally to establish great canonical works, as well as to divide “high” and “low” culture, have been duly criticized as Eurocentric and as excluding various “marginal” perspectives.<sup>33</sup> Henry Giroux claims, in this regard, that these studies have enhanced our understanding of how higher education produces certain knowledge and legitimizes certain meanings and understandings of the world.<sup>34</sup> The point here is that diversity in relation to education must not only

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31 Ella Shohat, Introduction to *Talking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Transnational Age* (New York: MIT Press, 1998), 1–62.

32 U. Wikan, “Culture: A New Concept of Race,” *Social Anthropology* 7 (1999): 57–64.

33 Henry A. Giroux, “Racial Policies, Pedagogy, and the Crisis of Representation in Academic Multiculturalism,” *Social Identities* 6, no. 4 (2000): 493–510, esp. 494.

34 *Ibid.*, 493.

attempt to incorporate “alternative” histories of minority groups but must also involve a critical perspective of how history has been understood and represented. Paul Gilroy’s<sup>35</sup> perspective, which questions the way in which key ideas that foreground history, such as the ideas of modernity, civilization and nationalism, are often seen as having risen within Europe and as isolated from imperialistic and colonial contexts, is apt here. Gilroy’s book, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*,<sup>36</sup> brilliantly demonstrates the interconnectedness of the world that existed long prior to the point when globalization became a dominant term for speaking about the world. Criticizing what he calls “cultural insiderism,” which focuses on national entities as fully formed within their own spaces rather than as products of transverse dynamics,<sup>37</sup> Gilroy uses the term “Atlantic world” to capture the transnational and intercultural perspectives which have formed the world and the nationalistic identities of today. Gilroy’s argument can be placed alongside criticism from other scholars regarding the way in which ideas of modernity, civilization and nationalism have often been seen as coming from within European contexts and as isolated from imperialistic and nationalistic situations. Nicholas Dirks<sup>38</sup> points out that the much celebrated meta-narrative of the Enlightenment as the age of discoveries that lead to the advancement of science, has to a great extent ignored the colonial project as stimulating and facilitating the scientific imagination. Meta-narratives of civilization have thus focused on how Europeans brought civilization to “others,” rather than seeing the idea of “civilization” itself as taking shape within various transnational and geographical encounters. As Ann Stoler has demonstrated in her work,<sup>39</sup> European gendered identities were to a great extent shaped by racial and gendered policies in the overseas colonies. The signifier “European” itself also refers to diverse units that stood in power relationships with each other and held different positions in relation to the world outside of Europe. One can agree with Stoler’s<sup>40</sup> criticism that within post-colonial theories the “West” (or Europe) is often seen as a collective whole and in the process loses the particularities within the different countries and social groups located within this entity known as the “West.” Her arguments point to how we need to pay closer attention to the “us” part of the division of the “us” and the “other”

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35 Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London, New York: Verso, 1993).

36 *Ibid.*

37 *Ibid.*, 3.

38 Nicholas B. Dirks, “Introduction: Colonialism and Culture,” in *Colonialism and Culture*, ed. N. B. Dirks, (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 1–26.

39 Ann L. Stoler, “Rethinking Colonial Categories: European Communities and the Boundaries of Rule,” in *Colonialism and Culture*, ed. N. B. Dirks (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 319–352.

40 *Ibid.*

dichotomy. Different European countries obviously had specific relationships with the colonized parts of the world that were manifested in their different policies and in their relationships with each other. The relationship of Nordic countries to colonialism has not been explored much by scholars, but the Nordic countries have both engaged in overseas colonialism as well as colonized each other. Analyzing the differences in the European “us” can also be seen as a part of the deconstruction of whiteness, which, as scholars have shown, was normalized in various ways.<sup>41</sup> The invisibility of skin-color and gender of certain social groups secured their positions of power; the power of being white and male is located in that these categories are unmarked and thus seen as normal and self-evident.<sup>42</sup> Feminist scholars have, furthermore, pointed out that the nation is often seen as inhabited by male bodies. For a long time, theories of nationalism did not take into account the gendered aspects of nationalism and how women and men are constructed differently within discourses and policies of the nation state.<sup>43</sup>

## The Chapters in this Section of the Book

Nils Andersson’s chapter focuses on the way in which non-European cultures are represented in history textbooks used in Sweden, using the notion of social exclusion as a key term. Asking how the textbook can be used as an “intercultural instrument” that reduces, instead of increases, the feeling of social exclusion among pupils with a non-European background, Andersson stresses the importance of the schoolbook in generating feelings of inclusion or exclusion within the nation states. He pays special attention to the textual representation of three historical events: The discoveries of the new world, North America’s independence from Britain and the liberation of former colonies. His discussion demonstrates that even though history books were not subject to restrictions, they were remarkably similar, dealing with the same historical events from a similar perspective. Nils’ article gives a brief overview of policies regarding

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41 Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993); John Hartigan Jr., “Establishing the Fact of Whiteness,” *American Anthropologist* 99, no. 3 (1997): 495–505.

42 Nirmal Puwar, “Thinking About Making a Difference,” *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 6, no. 1 (2004): 65–80.

43 Mary L. Pratt, “Women, Literature and National Brotherhood,” in *Women, Culture, and Politics in Latin America: Seminar on Feminism and Culture in Latin America*, eds. E. Bergmann et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 48–73; and Joanne P. Sharp, “Gendered Nationhood: A Feminist Engagement with National Identity,” in *Body Space: Destabilizing geographies of Gender and Sexuality*, ed. N. Duncan (London/ New York: Routledge, 1996).

multicultural education in Sweden and debates regarding multicultural perspectives in schoolbooks, pointing out the importance of deconstructing Europe itself, especially when using the concepts “us” and “others” in relation to older historical events.

Bente Aamotsbakken discusses the representations of Greenlanders and Samis in Norwegian and Danish textbooks. Her chapter especially draws attention to the absence of the perspective of the natives when the schoolbooks discuss these conquests of new territories in Greenland and northern Norway, referring to this absence as “a missing element” in the texts. The native population in Greenland, Aamotsbakken points out, is visible, but more as a discursive strategy, underlining the problems faced by the Norse population. Newer textbooks on the Sami, however, have more critical discussions on the Sami and are more democratic and less racist than earlier views. As Andersson does, Aamotsbakken also draws attention to the perspective from which this history is written, furthermore stressing the intertextuality of different texts, where newer texts reproduce important elements of older ones. She points out that in all textbooks the reader is

“unconsciously relying on intertextual phenomena,” with newer textbooks relying on certain patterns and ways of representing certain phenomena that have gained legitimacy through older textbooks.

My own discussion focuses on the representations of European exploration and colonialization in Icelandic schoolbooks in connection with the schoolbooks’ images of race and racial identity. The discussion is limited to schoolbooks from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which was an important time period in the formation of Icelandic nationalism. The chapter explores how ideas of sameness and difference are narrated through tales of exploration and colonial encounters, asking how gendered aspects are manifested and how they relate to the racial construction of Icelandic and European identities. I call for the importance of recognizing how European identities were made meaningful through various textual means in stories of colonization and exploration, drawing attention to, as Aamotsbakken and Andersson do, the importance of making visible the perspective from which history books are written.

## Final Remarks

Schoolbooks aim to transmit knowledge that is generally not contested but more or less accepted as “true” or at the very least not harshly questioned, and thus play a powerful role in interpreting and giving meaning to the world. Textbooks can, furthermore, be seen as texts about relationships and identity that tie local societies to larger contexts, creating a common sense of knowledge of the

world.<sup>44</sup> The chapters in this section of the book are diverse in various senses and analyze schoolbooks from different Nordic countries. Their common ground is a critical perspective with regard to the Euro-centric position that history tends to be represented from, and how schoolbooks are often based on and reproduce certain dualistic models of “us” and the “other.” Even though not all of the articles use the concept of multi-culturalism as an analytical term, they engage with, in one way or another, the importance of an increasingly pluralized society and critically analyze what is said, to whom and from what standpoint.

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44 Kristín Loftsdóttir, “Learning Differences: Nationalism, Identity and Africa in Icelandic Schoolbooks,” *International Textbook Research* 29, no. 1 (2007): 5–22.

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## Intercultural Education and the Representation of the Other in History Textbooks

### Introduction

The term “intercultural education” first appeared in official documents in Sweden in 1983. This was a confirmation of the fact that immigration placed new demands on Swedish education and new patterns of relating to one another were becoming essential. A parliamentary resolution passed in 1985 stated that all teaching in Sweden would have to adopt an intercultural perspective.<sup>1</sup> Naturally this has to be looked at against the background of Sweden’s relatively mono-cultural history. It should be noted, however, that the problem then as well as today, is not so much a question of an absence of immigration per se. The immigration during the 1950’s and 1960’s mainly took the form of labor migrants who fulfilled specific needs in the Swedish labor market and who have for the most part successfully assimilated into Swedish society. A change took place in the 1970’s when Sweden accepted a large number of refugees from Latin America. This new pattern of immigration has continued to the present day, involving refugees from a wide range of geographical areas and labor related immigration is almost non-existent, aside from temporary workers from Eastern Europe, especially Poland. This brought about a change in living conditions for immigrants, as Sweden became a society segregated in terms of housing and employment opportunities. In short, the earlier period of relatively frictionless immigration was replaced by a situation where immigrants and their children were faced with exclusion from Swedish society.

From the standpoint of Swedish schools, it was not possible to keep social problems, caused by this exclusion, outside of the classroom. The societal situation of marginalized immigrants had an effect in the classroom as well. Instead of integrating pupils independently of background, as the situation had

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1 Pirjo Lahdenperä, “Interkulturell pedagogik – vad, hur och varför?” [Intercultural Education – What, How and Why?] in *Interkulturell pedagogik i teori och praktik* [Intercultural Education in Theory and Practice], ed. Pirjo Lahdenperä (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2006), 11.

been earlier, teachers met children who did not feel they were a member of society and who were therefore not motivated to follow the norms in school or society. Neither teachers nor the school system could handle the situation and a lot of pupils felt that going to school was meaningless. An increasing number of Swedish schools were characterized by a total absence of pupils from Sweden as well as by a growing inability to meet the basic educational requirements of the school system. Research indicates that non-Swedish pupils have been subject to discrimination by social structures and by the lack of staff members experienced in dealing with multicultural environments. This paper tries to deal with the growing inability in the multicultural classroom to meet the requirements of “school for all.”<sup>2</sup>

The aim of this article is to examine the way in which non-European cultures are represented in history textbooks in order to ascertain whether or not this representation reinforces or reduces a feeling of social exclusion among pupils from a non-European background. This purpose may also be expressed in the following terms: How do history textbooks act as an intercultural instrument that can be used to reduce a feeling of social exclusion among pupils from a non-European background? This study is based on the analysis of four history textbooks used in the Swedish upper secondary and comprehensive schools. The selection of history textbooks will thereby cover the literature that is read by almost all Swedish upper secondary pupils who study history, which is not a mandatory subject in upper secondary school. These books are studied from the perspective of a discourse analysis in order to see how “the other,” i.e. non-Europeans, is represented.

The historical events analyzed here are the “voyages of discovery” and the US’s independence from Britain, which is compared with the struggle of the “Third World” for freedom from European colonialism.<sup>3</sup> This choice has been made in order to examine how other cultures are represented in their direct contact with the West with regard to the voyages undertaken by Western explorers. A comparison between the United States and the Third World provides

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2 This concept is an expression of the state’s school policy rhetoric to include everyone in the school system and to make active citizens out of the pupils.

3 The term “the Third World” is used here due to the lack of a better alternative. I have the same reservation as Robert Young: “Everyone feels the need nowadays to qualify the term ‘Third World,’ stating quite correctly that it should not be taken to imply a homogeneous entity. The inadequacy of the term, however, insofar as it offers a univocal description of an extremely heterogeneous section of the world, also means that a suitable alternative general category cannot by definition be produced.” Robert J.C. Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 43. It is important to keep in mind that the term also includes a hierarchical world order. B.R. Tomlinson, “What was the Third World?” *Journal of Contemporary History* (2003): 320.

the basis for an examination of the way in which different countries and their inhabitants are presented in the historical process.

## Theoretical Outlines

The field of discourse analysis ranges from the critical realism of Norman Fairclough to that of Ernesto Laclau who considers all practice to be discursive. In the following presentation, use will be made of the discourse analytical theories employed by Fairclough that have drawn inspiration from the theory of ideology formulated, for example, by Terry Eagleton and John B. Thompson.<sup>4</sup>

A common element in discourse analysis and the theory of ideology is that the surface of the text is called into question and that it is possible, through analysis, to make implicit suppositions explicit. These suppositions “interpellate” individuals. The process of interpellation is unconscious and influences the reading of the text and the individual’s consciousness.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, language becomes a central factor in the analysis as it creates meaning. Language is not however autonomous in relation to social practice but both influences it and is influenced by it.

Fairclough has constructed a model for the linguistic analysis of texts from a discourse analytical perspective. The model consists of the text, discursive practice and social practice.<sup>6</sup> In contrast to linguists, according to Fairclough, the ability to take account of these three dimensions provides the opportunity to deal with the social dimension in text analysis while at the same time and in contrast to more sociologically based interpretations, it also allows the analyst to work at the level of the text. Using this procedure, it becomes possible to construct connections from text production to the social framework that governs it.

Some of the texts that will be examined here are analyzed at the level of the word in order to see whether certain groups are constructed as more active than others. In addition, account is taken of whether persons from different cultures are portrayed as individuals or as parts of a more anonymous collective. The importance of statutory documentation for this study can be seen in relation to the provisions concerning intercultural education and the degree to which they are seen as prescriptive for both the authors of textbooks and academic publishers.

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4 Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An introduction* (London & New York: Verso, 2007); John B. Thompson, *Studies in the Theory of Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

5 Judith Butler has taken over and developed Louis Althusser’s concept of “interpellation” in *The Psychic Life of Power* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1997).

6 Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1992), 73.

## Statutory Documents

The concept of intercultural education suffers from a lack of definition in the statutory provisions covering schools. It was mentioned for the first time in 1983 in an official government report entitled *Språk- och kulturarvsutredningen* (A Report into Language and Cultural Heritage). It provided the basis for a government resolution stating that an intercultural perspective should characterize all education. According to the government bill:

Education from an intercultural perspective should seek inter alia to bring about positive changes in attitudes while at the same time working to counteract negative attitudes and prejudices held not just by the majority population but also by various ethnic minorities. Education would also seek to increase understanding and mutual respect for a range of different cultural perspectives.<sup>7</sup>

The concept of intercultural education never succeeded in gaining a foothold in the Swedish school statutory documents, however. This is evident from the fact that the most detailed references to an intercultural perspective are to be found in commentaries to the statutory provisions that accompanied government legislation. These commentaries were directed at first language teachers and teachers of Swedish as a second language.<sup>8</sup>

Although the concept of intercultural education is not actually mentioned in the current school curriculum, it is nevertheless present. One of the key concepts in the school curriculum is that of core values (*värdegrund*) which could be said to be synonymous with intercultural education, as exemplified in the following quotation:

The sanctity of human life, individual freedom and integrity, the equal worth of all human beings, the equal standing of men and women and a sense of solidarity with the weak and vulnerable are the values that the school system should embody and communicate.<sup>9</sup>

7 *Prop. 1984/1985: 100, bilaga 10 s. 95* (Government bill 1984/1985: 100, Annex 10, p. 95), quoted in Monica Eklund, *Interkulturellt lärande: intentioner och realiteter i svensk grundskola sedan 1960 talets början* [Intercultural Learning: Intentions and Realities in Swedish Compulsory School since the Early 1960s] (Luleå: Luleå College of Technology, 2003). "Undervisningen ur ett interkulturellt perspektiv bör bl.a. syfta till att åstadkomma positiva attitydsförändringar och motverka negativa attityder och fördomar inte bara hos majoritetsbefolkningen utan också hos olika etniska minoritetsgrupper. Undervisningen bör också syfta till att öka förståelsen och den ömsesidiga respekten för olika kulturellt betingade förhållningssätt."

8 Eklund, *Interkulturellt lärande: intentioner och realiteter i svensk grundskola sedan 1960 talets början*, 344.

9 Skolverket [The National Agency for Education], *Lpf-94 [Curriculum-94]* (Stockholm: Fritzes, 2006), 3. "Människolivets okränkbarhet, individens frihet och integritet, alla människors

This is contradicted by a formulation, which could be viewed as a compromise with regard to the views of the Swedish Christian Democratic Party. "In agreement with the ethics embodied in the Christian tradition and Western humanism, individuals should be brought up in a spirit of justice, generosity, tolerance and responsibility."<sup>10</sup> On the one hand everyone is free to choose his or her religion, for example, but on the other hand it is the Christian tradition regulating ethical questions. Finally, schools should "help to develop an understanding of other human beings and a capacity for empathy. No one at school should be subject to discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, religious or other beliefs, sexual orientation or disability. Nor should he/she be subject to any other type of abusive treatment."<sup>11</sup>

This is very much in keeping with the definition of intercultural competence given by Michael Byram. For Byram, intercultural competence involves: "attitudes," "knowledge," "skills of interpreting and relating," "skills of discovery and interaction" and "critical cultural awareness/political education."<sup>12</sup> A person with intercultural competence is a person who can relativize one's own cultural position and see various cultures as socially constructed. Possessing these skills makes it possible to handle cultural differences in social interaction. This means, from my point of view, that intercultural education in school practice implies striving to give pupils the capacity to recognize oneself as well as the other, which also implies that pupils should gain a personal autonomy in the classroom.

Neither intercultural education nor a variation of something intercultural is mentioned in the general statutory documents but it is present in the description of the upper secondary school's "A" course in history. "The capacity for analysis and problematization is strengthened by the ability to link the past, present and future. This helps to develop a greater awareness to deal with issues such as emancipation, migration or intercultural understanding."<sup>13</sup> The document goes on to state:

The use of an intercultural perspective in teaching history can help to illustrate the similarities and differences between different cultures and develop an understanding for cultural diversity. Insights into the historical background and devel-

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lika värde, jämställdhet mellan kvinnor och män samt solidaritet med svaga och utsatta är de värden som skolan skall gestalta och förmedla." And "I överensstämmelse med den etik som förvaltats av kristen tradition och västerländsk humanism sker detta genom individens fostran till rättskänsla, generositet, tolerans och ansvarstagande."

10 Skolverket, *Lpf-94*.

11 Skolverket, *Lpf-94*.

12 Michael Byram, "Assessing Intercultural Competence in Language Teaching," *Sprogforum* 6, no. 18 (2000). The article is written in English.

13 Skolverket. *Historia Ämnets syfte [History: The Subject's Goal]*, 1.

opment of different countries provides us with the opportunity to better understand our own cultural bearings and gives us a heightened awareness of the factors that both bring us together and keep us apart. This also applies to studies of multicultural relations in Sweden as well as to the situation confronting various ethnic minorities.<sup>14</sup>

Teaching history is said to not only give us the opportunity to equip pupils with the ability to develop an awareness of “emancipation, migration” and “inter-cultural understanding” but also to influence their actions. The above quotation focuses on the role of history teaching in providing education in a civic society and on the multicultural environment that is nowadays a normal feature of the school classroom in Sweden. This intercultural understanding is intended to give pupils an opportunity to understand people with a migration background both with regard to the country’s own officially recognized ethnic minorities as well as with people from other cultures.

The statutory documents make it possible for the authors and publishers to freely choose what they want to write about. The regulations state nothing more than major historical events and cultural heritage. Nothing is said concerning what cultural heritage could be, which is problematic from an intercultural perspective. Whose cultural heritage should be represented?

There is currently no government authority responsible for monitoring school textbooks. Up until 1991 there was such an authority, which essentially operated as a censor. Publishers had to submit textbooks and teaching aids that were then either given immediate approval or received approval subsequent to certain changes being made. Textbooks naturally had to reflect the content of curricula and course syllabuses but, as we have seen, these are quiet broad and there are no other restrictions for the publishers. One could assume, given this freedom, that the content of the textbooks would thus vary quite a bit, but the textbooks are remarkably similar – they deal with the same historical events and from more or less identical perspectives.

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14 Skolverket, *Historia Ämnets syfte*. “Ett interkulturellt perspektiv i historieämnet kan belysa likheter och skillnader mellan olika kulturer och utveckla förståelse för kulturell mångfald. Insikter i olika länders historiska bakgrund och utveckling ger vid jämförelser med den egna kulturkretsen kunskap om och förståelse för vad som förenar och vad som skiljer. Detta gäller även studier av det mångkulturella inom landet och situationen för de nationella minoriteter som finns i Sverige.”

## Ethnicity and History Books

The authorities did not show any greater interest for the subject of history or history textbooks until quite suddenly in 2006, when history books and ethnicity received an unusual amount of government attention. An official report, *Utbildningens dilemma* (The Dilemma Facing Education)<sup>15</sup> was published as part of an official government inquiry into power, integration and structural discrimination.

It was followed by a report from the National Agency of Education, Skolverket, *I enlighet med skolans värdegrund?* (In Accordance with the School's Core Values?) that dealt with core values in the Swedish school system.<sup>16</sup> The same year also saw the publication of Kenneth Nordgren's doctoral dissertation *Vems är historien? Historia som medvetande, kultur och handling i det mångkulturella Sverige* (To whom does History belong? History as Consciousness, Culture and Action in Multicultural Sweden).<sup>17</sup> The two aforementioned titles will serve as a point of reference for my discussion of the intercultural implications of the history textbook presentations of the "voyages of discovery" and the United State's "anti-colonial struggle," as the liberation of the English colonies in the US is called in contrast to the "liberation of the colonies" after the Second World War. The quotation marks themselves already say something about the perspective in the books. After presenting and commenting on *The Dilemma Facing Education* and the report from the National Agency for Education, I will examine the history books covered in this study.<sup>18</sup>

15 Masoud Kamali and Lena Sawyer, eds., *Utbildningens dilemma: Demokratiska ideal och andrafierande praxis* [The Dilemma Facing Education: Democratic Ideals and the Practice of Constructing "the Other"], eds. M. Kamali and L. Sawyer (Stockholm: Fritzes, 2006).

16 Skolverket, *En granskning av hur religion/trosuppfattning framställs i ett urval av läroböcker. Underlag till Skolverkets rapport 'I enlighet med skolans värdegrund?'* [An Examination of how Religion is Represented in a Selection of Textbooks. Preparatory Work for the National Agency For Education's Report 'In Accordance with the School's Core Values?'], (Stockholm: Fritzes, 2006).

17 Kenneth Nordgren, *Vems är historien? Historia som medvetande, kultur och handling i det mångkulturella Sverige* [To Whom does History Belong? History as Consciousness, Culture and Action in Multicultural Sweden], (Umeå: Karlstad and Umeå universitet, 2006).

18 The following upper secondary textbooks were analyzed: Hans Almgren, Börje Bergström and Arne Löwgren, *Alla tiders historia A* [History for all times: A] (Malmö: Gleerups, 1996); Hans Almgren, Börje Bergström and Arne Löwgren, *Alla tiders historia* [History for all times: A] (Malmö: Gleerups, 2004); Per-Arne Karlsson, Karl Molin, Ann-Sofie Ohlander and Robert Sandberg, *Epos: För gymnasiskolans kurs A och B* [Epic: For Upper Secondary School: A and B] (Stockholm: Almqvist och Wiksell, 2003); Torbjörn Norman, Karin Skrutowska, Jan Stattin and Gunnar T. Westin, *Människan genom tiderna: Historia för gymnasiet A-kursen* [Man Throughout History: History for the Secondary Upper School A] (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1997); Hans Nyström and Örjan Nyström, *Perspektiv på historien* [Perspective on History A] (Malmö: Gleerups, 2001). Regarding *History of All*

To return to the report mentioned above, the dilemma is one that could be resolved in a number of ways. However, none of the ways can actually be implemented. Finding a form of schooling that is able to suit everyone is undoubtedly as impossible a task as writing a history book that is universally accepted. In short, authors of school textbooks and not least teachers are confronted with the dilemma of dealing with a multiplicity of pupils.

For the editors of *The Dilemma Facing Education*, it is problematic that there is “a dilemma between the declared democratic and inclusive goals of the educational system on the one hand and its practice on the other.”<sup>19</sup> Together with Lena Sawyer, Masoud Kamali has written an introductory chapter for the report in which they present their own perspective on education and multiculturalism. Their views are highly critical. They present an opinion of the Swedish school system with the help of, for example, post-colonial theory – which is too polemical and lacks nuance. Unfortunately, much of what is of value in *The Dilemma Facing Education* is lost due to this approach. Their use of post-colonial concepts including “otherness,” “we-category,” “the deviants” and “we and them” are at the center of the study. They are further strengthened by reference to the concept of “symbolic violence,” as borrowed from the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. These concepts are employed in order to allow the use of language, written or spoken, as a means of indicating how various individuals belong in certain positions in the society. In this context, power is of central importance. This is also the essential meaning of the term “symbolic violence” as used by Bourdieu. It is also possible, however, to use the concept in a more subtle fashion with reference to Bourdieu himself when he demonstrates how power can be challenged by means of symbols and symbolic action. He draws on an example from a small French town where the mayor gives a speech in the local dialect, which is seen as a provocation to the central government in France.<sup>20</sup>

Kamali has analyzed textbooks in the fields of religious knowledge and history because he considers religious knowledge and history as subjects that

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*Times*, a new edition has been published since this article was written and is commented on in the text. The following textbooks used in the comprehensive school were analyzed: Bengt Almgren, Berndt Tollerud, Hans Thorbjörnsson and Hans Tillman, *Historia direkt* [History Direct] (Stockholm: Bonnier utbildning, 2005); Lars Hildingson, and Kaj Hildingson, *Levande historia* [Living History] (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 2003); Göran Körner and Lars Lagerheim, *Puls Historia För grundskolans senare del* [Puls History: For the Secondary School] (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 2002); Erik Nilsson, Hans Olofsson, och Rolf Uppström. *Historia punkt* [History Point] (Malmö: Gleerups, 2001).

19 Masoud Kamali et al., “Förord” [Preface], in *Utbildningens dilemma: Demokratiska ideal och andrafierande praxis* [The Dilemma Facing Education: Democratic Ideals and the Practice of Constructing “the Other,”], eds. M. Kamali and L. Sawyer (Stockholm: Fritzes, 2006).

20 Pierre Bourdieu, *Language & Symbolic Power* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2005). It can be said that this concept is closest to the perspective of the ideological theory that is used in this article.

“every nation state uses to recreate its national identity and to reproduce the group that belongs to the ‘we-category’ and the group that doesn’t.”<sup>21</sup> He concludes that the textbooks present “the others” as inferior Westerners and that the books contain a “we” and “them.”<sup>22</sup> He starts by providing an overview of Swedish society in which he finds its inhabitants to be prejudiced against those who come from other cultures. Both teachers and pupils take these prejudices into the classroom. According to Kamali, the textbooks reinforce the negative attitude that teachers have towards immigrants.<sup>23</sup> He concludes by stating that:

From time to time, ruthless use is made of symbolic violence. The concepts of “The West” and “We in the West” are continually recurring representations used by teachers to discipline pupils [...]. Phrases such as “We in the West have difficulty understanding” other religions or imagined “religious-cultural” characteristics and actions that are repeated in such a fashion that they belong to the “we” category which only contains “white members of the Swedish majority” and books are exclusively written for them.<sup>24</sup>

There is a lack of discussion here regarding the meaning of phrases such as “We in the West” and “books are written exclusively for” [...] “white members of the Swedish majority.” I will return to these questions in the discussion below. However, I wish even now to question Kamali’s total rejection of the books, which according to him, are solely written for pupils who are Swedish. This may seem obvious as the majority of pupils are Swedish, but the treatment of interculturalism in the official documents creates an opportunity for discussion.

Kamali’s tendency towards an exaggerated attempt to find examples of “the praxis of otherness,” which leads to tendentious interpretations may be illustrated by the following quotation from *The Dilemma Facing Education*: “The book [history textbook] draws a sharp distinction between a Christian Europe and Muslims, both Arabs and Turks. The otherness discourse characterizes the entire text.” This is supported by the following quotation that Kamali has drawn from *History for the Upper Secondary School*:

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21 Masoud Kamali, “Skolböcker och kognitiv andrafiering” [Textbooks and Cognitive Construction of ‘the Other’] in *Utbildningens dilemma. Demokratiska ideal och andrafierande praxis* [The Dilemma Facing Education: Democratic Ideals and the Practice of Constructing “the Other,”], eds. M. Kamali and L. Sawyer (Stockholm: Fritzes, 2006), 51.

22 Kamali, *Textbooks and Cognitive Construction of ‘the Other’*, 93.

23 Kamali, *Textbooks and Cognitive Construction of ‘the Other’*, 51.

24 Kamali, *Textbooks and Cognitive Construction of ‘the Other’*, 93. “Det symboliska våldet utövas stundtals hänsynslöst. Begreppet ”västerland” och ”vi i västerlandet” är en ständigt förekommande föreställning som lärarna disciplinerar eleverna med. [...] Fraser som ”vi i västerlandet har svårt att förstå” andra religioner eller föreställda ”religio-kulturella” egenskaper och handlingar upprepas som om de som tillhör ”vi”-kategorin endast utgörs av ”vita majoritetssvenskar” och att böckerna är skrivna uteslutande för dem.”

Following the fall of Byzantium in 1453, the Turks *rapidly penetrated Europe*. During the next two hundred years, *Europe lived in dread of the Turks* who introduced Islam in all of the conquered countries.<sup>25</sup>

What conclusions can be drawn from this quotation? Kamali contends that the authors of the history textbook present the fall of Byzantium as “unnatural,” do not consider the city as part of Europe and “adopt a threat discourse.” It is not self-evident that Byzantium belonged to Europe at that time as the borders were not clearly defined. Moreover, it was after the fall of Byzantium that Christianity began to use the Christian faith as a common denominator for what was considered part of Europe. In other words, it is a matter of discussion whether or not Europe actually existed. From a pedagogical point of view, the authors presumably considered “Europe” as what is currently accepted as Europe. The question as to what constitutes “natural” and “unnatural” conquest may also be raised. The alleged threat discourse consists of the words “rapidly penetrated Europe.” The question should instead be raised as to why the authors present the Turks as a threat. As people at this time considered the Turks to be a threat it seems unjustified without a supporting argument to criticize the authors for mentioning this fear.

The report from the Swedish Board of Education, “I enlighet med skolans värdegrund (In correspondence with the school’s core values?),” is based on a number of individual contributions that the Board has subsequently compiled into a report. The textbooks have been assessed from the standpoint of five aspects: gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief and ethnicity. It is the latter two perspectives, written by Kjell Härenstam and Harald Runblom respectively, that are of interest in the present context.<sup>26</sup> The overall summary of

25 Kamali, *Textbooks and cognitive construction of ‘the Other’*, 71. The italics are provided by Kamali. ”Sedan turkarna hade erövrat Konstantinopel 1453 *trängde de snabbt in i Europa*. Under de följande två hundra åren levde *Europa i skräck för turkarna*, som införde islam i alla erövrade länder.”

26 Harald Runblom, *En granskning av hur etnisk tillhörighet framställs i ett urval av läroböcker. Underlagsrapport till Skolverkets rapport ‘I enlighet med skolans värdegrund?’* [An Examination of how Ethnic Background is Represented in a Selection of Textbooks. Preparatory Work for the National Agency for Education’s Report ‘In Accordance with the School’s Core Value?’] (Stockholm: Skolverket, 2006); Kjell Härenstam, *En granskning av hur religion/trosuppfattning framställs i ett urval av läroböcker. Underlag till Skolverkets rapport ‘I enlighet med skolans värdegrund?’* [An Examination of how Religion is Represented in a Selection of Textbooks. Preparatory Work for the National Agency for Education’s Report ‘In Accordance with the School’s Core Value?’] (Stockholm: Skolverket, 2006). The authors have been able to call on the support of two “referees” Hans Ingvar Roth (ethnicity) and Eva Hellman (religion/beliefs). Runblom has also checked the factual content in one of the books that was in Kamali’s study, *Man Throughout History*. This book is more comprehensively analysed by Runblom since in his view, Kamali has been somewhat reckless in the assertions that he made. *Man Throughout History* is one of the most comprehensive texts (360 pages)

Kamali's text made by Runblom is worth quoting in its entirety as it accurately captures both its merits and its shortcomings:

There are certain grounds for Kamali's criticism. It is indeed regrettable that textbooks that make general references to "The West" and "Western traditions" fail to define or critically analyze these concepts. Kamali's criticism is however far too sweeping and I am unable to accept the way in which he characterizes certain textbooks that are part of my study. It would appear that he is unwilling to accept the need for textbooks to provide balanced descriptions of cultural meetings between European and Asian cultures. His methods have to be called into question since they lead to unjust descriptions. This may be exemplified by his assertion that the criticized textbooks fail to take account of the influence of Eastern civilizations on ancient Greece, etc. This study attempts in part to provide a detailed rebuttal of this criticism.<sup>27</sup>

Kamali is correct in his assertion that Western history is the centerpiece of history textbooks and that other cultures are viewed in relation to Europe. Taking Africa as an example, the continent appears in prehistory as the cradle of civilization. This is followed by Egypt, which is seen as a prelude to ancient Greece. After a period of silence, Europeans went on to explore the coasts of the continent in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The next occasion that Africa is mentioned is with regard to colonialism. The final stage is when Africa liberates itself from colonialism during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Kamali is not alone in referring to this Eurocentric approach.<sup>28</sup> There is no doubt that a Eurocentric approach prevails in the sense that it is European history that is under discussion.

Kjell Härenstam analyzed "images of Islam" in history textbooks in 1993. He found that Islam was largely represented in terms of fundamentalism and popular leaders. War and conflict were the predominant themes and the text-

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included in my survey of upper secondary history textbooks. I have given it a relatively extensive treatment in view of the criticisms that Kamali (2006) has levelled against it. Runblom, *An Examination*, 26.

27 Runblom, *En granskning* [An Examination], 48. "Det finns ett visst fog för Kamalis kritik. Sålunda måste man beklaga att läroböcker som gör generella hänvisningar till Västerlandet och västerländska traditioner inte definierar eller kritiskt behandlar detta begrepp. Kamalis kritik är emellertid alltför svepande, hans karaktäristiker av vissa läroböcker som ingår även i min undersökning måste jag underkänna, och jag kan konstatera att han inte tycks vilja se balanserade beskrivningar i läroböckerna av kulturmöten mellan europeiska och asiatiska kulturer. Man måste sätta frågetecken för hans metod, som leder till orättvisa beskrivningar. Detta kan exemplifieras med hans påstående att utpekade läroböcker inte nämner östliga civilisationers påverkan på det antika Grekland m.m. Hans kritik har delvis bemötts i detalj i denna undersökning."

28 For example, Vanja Lozic, "Historieundervisning i kanons skugga" [History Education in the Shadow of a Canon?], *Aktuellt om historia*, 1 (2008) and Kenneth Nordgren, "Vems är historien? [To Whom does History Belong?], *Aktuellt om historia* 1 (2008).

books failed to provide any historical background for the conflicts.<sup>29</sup> In 2006, he stated that “The results from my previous study of Islam in Swedish school textbooks are still valid today.”<sup>30</sup>

In summary, it can be stated that recent research into Swedish history textbooks in relation to ethnicity have concluded that these textbooks have adopted a Eurocentric perspective and that non-Western cultures have not been dealt with to any great extent. When they do receive attention, it is usually within the context of Western history rather than as part of an independent examination. Kamali is exaggerating when he describes what he calls a stereotypical treatment in history textbooks. Runblom finds that there are no stereotypes in the history textbooks and I find that he is more convincing than Kamali.<sup>31</sup> There is a Eurocentrism in the books which excludes pupils that are not European, but it does not go so far as to stereotype people. The same can not be said of countries such as India, which will be clear from my analysis. There is a general tendency to focus on misery when the textbooks depict the “Third World.”

## The United States: The Anti-Colonial Struggle

As stated before, in spite of the freedom given to the authors of school textbooks, the history textbooks are all remarkably homogeneous. The treatment of the US War of Independence does not deviate from this pattern. All of the textbooks adopt a “history of ideas” approach that concentrates on the US’s constitution and its relationship to the ideas of the Enlightenment, especially those of Locke and Montesquieu. These ideas are still considered to prevail, although certain additions have been made.

All of the textbooks take up the roles played by specific groups: merchants, lawyers, settlers and landowners are all actors in history. The various textbooks devote considerable space to a detailed account of specific historical events such as the Boston Tea Party. The colonial settlers are represented as pugnacious rebels who react angrily to the imposition of taxes by Britain in the wake of the Seven Years War. The colonialists “protest violently”<sup>32</sup> against these taxes and it is in relation to these protests that all of the textbooks cite the quotation “No taxation without representation.” *Man Throughout History* describes the colonialists as “lovers of freedom” and states that they had a strong antipathy to

29 Härenstam, *En granskning* [An Examination], 34.

30 Härenstam, *En granskning* [An Examination], 48.

31 Runblom, *En granskning* [An Examination], 47.

32 Almgren et al., *Alla tiders historia* [History of All Times], 147

being “ordered around” by Britain. This assertion is followed by an explanation of the revolt that is also taken up by other textbooks:

Many of the colonialists had lived their entire lives in America and felt that they had little in common with the British. [Colonists living there] had begun to develop their own characteristic culture and to call themselves Americans.<sup>33</sup>

In other words, the textbook authors depict the colonialists as individuals with their own identity and their own culture. Individuals who became causal powers through the historical process. Another explanation of the revolt of the colonial settlers is that they had left their mother countries to escape oppression. A picture emerges of the North American as searching for independence. By mentioning the professions of the North Americans such as merchants, craftsmen or some similar occupation, their individuality is underlined. Nothing similar to this is mentioned for the other colonies. Despite these individual characteristics, the colonialists share common values – a culture – with their fellow settlers. These elements of individualism and freedom from oppression represent, in other words, a longing for democratic freedom and justice which is supported by the references to the historical ideas presented above.

If one is to believe the quotation below, history textbooks emphasize the progressive nature of the US constitution, i. e. that it indicated a way forward for Europe and other parts of the world. This was most clearly expressed in *Perspective on History* where it is emphasized that human beings had a right to freedom, stating:

The American Revolution became a source of inspiration for those forces in Europe and subsequently in other parts of the world that wished to change society. [...] When one saw the community of free, equal human beings that appeared to be taking form in the United States, one also understood the type of ideals that one wished to achieve in Europe.<sup>34</sup>

This quotation appears under the heading “All Men are Created Equal,” which in this context may be interpreted as indicating that all countries are expected to

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33 Norman et al., *Människan genom tiderna* [Man Throughout History], 173. “Många av dem [kolonialisterna] hade levt hela sitt liv i Amerika och kände föga gemenskap med engelsmännen. Amerika hade börjat skaffa sig sin egen karaktäristiska kultur och kolonisterna började kalla sig amerikaner.”

34 Karlsson et al., *Epos för grundskolans senare del* [Epic: For Upper secondary school: A and B], 260. “För de krafter i Europa (och senare i andra delar av världen) som ville förändra samhället blev den amerikanska revolutionen en viktig inspirationskälla. [...] När man betraktade den gemenskap av fria, jämlika individer som tycktes ta form i USA såg man också det ideal man ville uppnå i Europa.”

follow the American example. The same progressive message is to be found in the references to the political philosophy of the Enlightenment. Frequent references are made to Montesquieu, especially to his theory on the division of political power between judicial, legislative and executive bodies.

If attention is shifted from what is actually described, to the words used to convey these descriptions, it is evident that North Americans are actors who have the capacity to intervene in history and thereby shape their own destinies. This pattern may be seen in the choice of words used with regard to the struggle for independence: Britain was “forced to accept that some of the North American colonies became independent” and that the colonialists “protested violently” against British policy. In the description of the Boston Tea Party, the tea chests were “violently thrown overboard” and British goods were “boycotted.” Finally the colonialists “declared” themselves “independent.”<sup>35</sup> In *Epic*, “the colonialists decided to issue a declaration of independence.” They “protested loudly” against the tax increases and Britain was forced to “give in.” It is also stated in *Epic* that “members of the resistance” “threw” the cargo overboard, albeit without violence, while the merchants who had been granted the monopoly to sell tea became “the butt of American anger.” Finally peace was established and Britain “recognized the thirteen colonies as an independent state.”<sup>36</sup> In other words Britain was forced to give in to a superior power.

## The Liberation of Former Colonies

The space given to descriptions of the liberation struggles in the Third World exceeds that given to the American War of Independence (with an average of 133 words for the Third World and 104 for the United States of America). The space given to the anti-colonial liberation struggle, however, is spread over a wide range of countries, which inevitably means that certain countries receive a brief rhapsodic treatment while others appear to act as representatives for those countries that are not dealt with at all.

In *History of All Times*, a section dealing with the anti-colonial liberation struggle begins with a general explanation for the independence of former colonies. It is assumed to apply to all colonies and comprises four points. Summarizing, it states the following: First, Japan had demonstrated during the Second World War that “it was not impossible to defeat the whites.” This refers to the initial Japanese successes at the outset of their participation in the Second

35 Almgren et al., *Alla tiders historia* [History for all Times], 147.

36 Karlsson et al., *Epos för grundskolans senare del* [Epic: For Upper Secondary School: A and B], 260.

World War. Second, Japan had also supported liberation movements in their struggles against the former colonial powers. Third, the latter had become weakened and the opposition to colonialism on the part of the United States and the Soviet Union benefited the domestic elites when they undertook their struggle for liberation. Fourth, in addition a large number of Europeans were opposed to colonialism at the same time as the colonial powers hoped “by means of a spirit of cooperation [...] to ensure that they maintained a certain degree of economic and political influence in the former colonies.”<sup>37</sup>

*Epic* also suggests the following general explanations for the liberation of the colonies: the colonial powers had been seriously weakened by the Second World War; neither the Soviet Union nor the United States supported the possession of colonies; public opinion in the colonial powers was also opposed to the retention of the colonies. *Man Throughout History* also presents a list of the negative effects of the Second World War on the colonial powers and draws attention to the hostile attitude of the United States and the Soviet Union and the lack of investment capital available to the colonial powers.

In addition to the general explanations presented in *Epic*, the book outlines three “principal characteristics” of the liberation process. First, there is a national awakening in the colonies. Second, this awakening is accompanied by demands for independence by the local elite and these demands were subsequently embraced by the entire middle class. Third and finally, the nationalist movement became a “mass movement that inevitably led to independence.”<sup>38</sup> External factors were supplemented here by what could be called internal factors.

Two points can be raised with regard to these summaries. Firstly, that they are said to apply to “the colonized and oppressed peoples of the world.” The specific characteristics of the history of individual countries disappear with the result that one liberation movement appears to be based on the same conditions as the next and ultimately, they become identical. Secondly, that the liberation movements are influenced by factors that are external to the colonies. There was undoubtedly a “native elite,” educated in Europe, which benefited from the negative impact of the Second World War on the colonial powers as well as other external factors. There is a failing here, however, to take the perspective of those on the receiving end of colonization into account, their individual concerns or that the oppressed could have a subjectivity that is similar to the depiction of the North American anti-colonialist struggle.

In the descriptions of the particular countries’ liberation the broad sweep of

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37 Almgren et al., *Alla tiders historia* [History for all Times A], 306.

38 Karlsson et al., *Epos för grundskolans senare del* [Epic: For Upper Secondary School: A and B], 531.

the introduction has to be made somewhat more complex in order to take into account the differences that existed between the various anti-colonial liberation movements. For example, the general introduction to the liberation movements that is provided in *History of All Times* becomes more refined when South-East Asia is discussed. It is pointed out, for instance, that British colonies such as Burma, Malaysia and Singapore gained their freedom without a violent struggle but that it was an entirely different matter for the Dutch and French colonies. This is followed by a relatively detailed account of the liberation of Vietnam over the period 1945 – 1975. The declaration of a free and unified Vietnam is said to have led to a war with the French. The FNL was formed and it was not long before the communists had taken over power in the organization. The liberation movements in Laos and Cambodia followed more or less the same development. Finally, the text deals with the terror of the Khmer Rouge and the conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia.

In a similar fashion, the other books also present a more detailed account of events in their general introduction. For instance, *Epic* states explicitly in its sweeping introduction that development followed different paths: “The colonies followed different paths in their struggle for liberation.”<sup>39</sup> Here the colonies are considered to have taken deliberate action as they “chose” to take part in a “struggle.” The choices that were actually made, however, were “largely dependent on differences in the behavior of the colonial powers.” Here the local population is actually offered a limited opportunity to influence events. However this possibility is almost immediately toned down and is followed by a presentation of the three “principal characteristics of the liberation process.”

The normal case in the representation of colonial liberations is that few individuals are presented, but India and Gandhi are always described. There is a tension in the following quotation between the more common non-personal approach such as “The liberation struggle adopted” and Gandhi, the leader. In *History of All Times*, the liberation of India receives the least attention of the books surveyed in this article and can be quoted in its entirety:

The man who was to ignite the Indian masses in its decisive struggle for independence appeared as the leader of Indian nationalism after the First World War. His name was *Gandhi* and he was called *Mahatma* (great spirit) by the Indians. The liberation struggle adopted the tactic of non-violent protest as the means by which to secure victory. He advised Indians not to obey laws that they considered unjust and not to pay taxes to “an unjust government.” He became famous throughout the world by fasting on several occasions in protest against British policy.<sup>40</sup>

39 Karlsson et al., *Epos för grundskolans senare del* [Epic: For Upper Secondary School: A and B], 531.

40 Almgren et al., *Alla tiders historia* [History for all Times A], 306. “Som ledare för den indiska

This is followed by a much longer historical account of peninsular India after independence. It is symptomatic of the tendency to pay more attention to what is considered as misery than to what is considered promising. Much more space is given to the history of India after the liberation than the liberation itself. It is sufficient to read the headings to get a picture of the perspective that the authors have adopted on the history of a free India: "Liberation and Division", "Overpopulation, Poverty and Famine", "Democracy and States of Emergency" and "Inherited Problems." It is understandable that the latter phrase may be seen in terms of the problems that Britain, as the ex-colonial power, had created and handed over to the Indians. This is not the case, however, but rather refers to the problems that Rajiv Gandhi inherited from Indira Gandhi. The only positive reference to development in India is that the country has succeeded in raising its agricultural productivity.

The treatment of India is revised in the latest edition of *History of All Times*. In my opinion, these revisions mark an improvement. The text dealing with Gandhi has been substantially expanded in the most recent edition. The content is, however, largely the same. The negative slant in the text has been toned down. It states that "many Indians wanted to get rid of Britain" and were "humiliated" when they were automatically drawn into the Second World War on behalf of Britain. Pupils are also able to read that it became impossible for Britain to hold on to India because of "the overwhelming hatred felt by the Indians for the British." Moreover, the Congress Party "negotiated" for Indian independence, or in other words, it was not handed to them on a plate. It is interesting to note that this depiction of Indian independence is much more in agreement with the descriptions that we have of the US struggle for independence. There is a dialectic between the oppressed and the oppressors where the former are given space for human action.

The negative account of the wretched state of India following independence has received less emphasis. The initial overemphasis given to this negative interpretation ensures that there is still substantial misery to discuss, however. The authors state "the immediate consequence of the British withdrawal from India was characterized by chaos and violence." This is followed by a description of the conflict in Kashmir, India's support of West Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh. It is stated that hundreds of millions of Indians live in "abject poverty." Referring to the western model however, India is seen as a nation of contrasts

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nationalismen framträdde efter första världskriget den man som skulle lyckas elda massorna till den avgörande kampen. Han hette *Gandhi* och kallades av indierna för *Mahatma* ("stor ande"). I befrielsekampen var passivt motstånd det medel segern skulle vinnas med. Han rädde indierna att inte lyda lagar som han ansåg orättvisa och att inte betala skatt till en "orättfärdig regering". Själv blev han känd i hela världen för att flera gånger fasta i protest mot brittisk politik."

where some people have reached a western standard of living. India is also able to provide the West with computer engineers. It is also evident from the following quotation that history is written from a Western perspective:

Compared to its neighbors India's most positive feature is its retention of Western democracy despite the major difficulties that come with millions of Indians who can neither read nor write. Pakistan has never succeeded in achieving democracy, but has instead been more or less subject to dictatorship.<sup>41</sup>

It is perhaps at the level of the text that the differences between the descriptions of the US's "freedom fighters" who took part in "the war of independence, and the "anti-colonial struggle" of "the Third World" is most readily apparent. The North Americans are portrayed as actors who are able to intervene in history and influence its development. They are described as individuals who are united by means of a common culture. The countries of the Third World are often presented as being without individuals. With the exception of the odd individual leader, it is tribes or groups that are given space. This leader however is usually replaced fairly quickly – or murdered as in the case of Gandhi or Lumumba.

History textbooks have a common language and present the peoples of the Third World in a different manner than the Americans. They have, as was mentioned above, been removed from history. It is significant to note the verbs that are used to describe the anti-colonialist struggle for freedom. In *Man Throughout History* "a process of liberation was started" and "ideals were drawn from the West."<sup>42</sup> India "became" independent,<sup>43</sup> while in Africa "demands for independence" "were raised."<sup>44</sup> France "gave [...] independence to *Morocco* and *Tunisia*" while "the liberation of *Algeria* was delayed."<sup>45</sup> These verbs portray the inhabitants of the former colonies as standing apart from history and being at the mercy of powers that they are unable to control. To some extent this is balanced by the "creation" of a "resistance organization" by Ho Chi Minh or that "*Katanga* declared itself independent." *Epic* begins with the statement that "the colonies show different paths in their struggle for freedom," which may be said to be one of the most powerful statements with regard to the depiction of the Third World and its inhabitants as a subject within the liberation process. It is also stated that "an elite raised demands for independence." However passivity

41 Almgren et al., *Alla tiders historia* [History for all Times A], 335. "Men det som positivt skilt Indien från grannländerna är landets fasthållande vid den västerländska demokratin, även om problemen är stora när miljontals indier inte kan läsa och skriva. Pakistan har däremot aldrig lyckats uppnå demokrati utan har styrts mer eller mindre diktatoriskt."

42 Norman et al., *Människan genom tiderna* [Man Throughout History], 334.

43 Norman et al., *Människan genom tiderna* [Man Throughout History], 335.

44 Norman et al., *Människan genom tiderna* [Man Throughout History], 338.

45 Norman et al., *Människan genom tiderna* [Man Throughout History], 339

appears in expressions such as “a national awakening occurred” and “movements arose.” India’s struggle for freedom is presented almost as an event of nature: “During the third stage, there was growing support for the demand for independence. The nationalist movements became mass movements and independence became irrevocable. The question was how long and how many victims this development would require.”<sup>46</sup>

### “The Voyages of Discovery”

All of the analyzed books, except one, deal with “voyages of discovery” without any discussion about the meaning of the concept. This could be said to be symptomatic of the Eurocentrism in the books. Seeing the voyages as voyages of *discovery* means that the textbooks transmit a narrative in which the Europeans were the first people to set foot in the respective locations. It is as if the inhabitants who were already there were non-existent. Aside from this, the travelers did much more than just “discover land” which was new to them when they suppressed the people living there. The concept of “voyage of discovery” is an example of how ideology functions in that it conceals parts of history (the exploitation of indigenous peoples, for example) behind a neutral expression.

However, this Eurocentrism is not unchallenged as there are descriptions of the cultures before the invaders arrived which depict Europe as inferior. Narratives on the treatment of the Indians provide another example. These are written in a way that encourages pupils to react against the European pattern of exploiting the indigenous inhabitants. It also provides pupils with the opportunity to discuss experiences of violence against themselves, friends or relatives and to make connections between the past and the present situations. The books actually contain similarities with one of the most celebrated post-colonial theoreticians, Stuart Hall.<sup>47</sup> To say that the books have a post-colonial perspective would be an exaggeration; they are never so close to such a perspective in any other respect. Even though the homogeneity of the books is striking, you can find variations among them. Especially one, *History Direct*, stands out in comparison with the others.

The authors of all the books chose to devote a lot of space to how the voyages were carried out, especially Columbus and his relationship with the courts in Portugal and Spain. The origin of these voyages is the fall of Byzantium and the

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46 Karlsson et al., *Epos för grundskolans senare del* [*Epic: For Upper Secondary School: A and B*], 531.

47 Stuart Hall, “The Rest and the West,” in *Formations of Modernity*, eds. Bram Gieben and Stuart Hall (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992).

closure to trade with the East. The Europeans “were forced” to find another route for the desirable goods.<sup>48</sup> The narratives start, in other words, with Europe as inferior, first and foremost to India and China in the Eurasian economy and in their striving for eastern commodities. It is also stated, though not with the same emphasis, that the trade from Arabian ports was not totally closed, but that finding another way to China, Japan and India would be profitable for the European courts and merchants.

*Living History* mentions the conquest of the North African town Ceuta and the riches that the Portuguese discovered. These were brought to the town from the inland. In *History Point* under the heading “African Kingdoms,” there is a description of the astonishment of the Europeans when they came across powerful kingdoms such as Benin, Mali and Congo. It is also pointed out that the Arabs had been trading with the Africans before the Europeans arrived. Keeping an eye on the later history of the conquest of America, the Africans were not conquered, as they knew how to make weapons from iron.<sup>49</sup>

Despite the similarities among the textbooks, they differ in some respects regarding their presentations of the eastern voyages of Europeans. I wish to examine three aspects: the space which is given to the voyages, the choice of mediated knowledge and the manner of representation. The number of lines devoted solely to these voyages varies from 19 to 260, excluding introductory texts dealing with this epoch, which discuss Diaz, for example. It is not possible to explain this difference by to the total length of the various books. The difference between 19 and 260 lines does not, in and of itself, however, say anything about the intercultural possibilities of the texts. It says more about the importance that the authors ascribe to the events.

*Puls History*, which devotes 19 lines to the subject, mentions only isolated episodes. The Portuguese chose a different route than the Spaniards. The ships were loaded with spices and they established commercial cities. A ship lost its way and Brazil was found. The section on Portugal ends with the following paragraph:

However Portugal was not large enough to guard and defend all of its extensive commercial territory. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, England and Holland took over large parts of this trade.<sup>50</sup>

The text concentrates on the Spaniards and the conquest of America. *Living History*, which uses 260 lines to deal with “voyages of discovery,” does not pay

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48 Körner et al., *Puls historia* [Puls History], 76.

49 Nilsson et al., *Historia punkt* [History Point], 122.

50 Körner et al., *Puls historia* [Puls History], 80.

much more attention to the territories that the Europeans conquered. The greater part of the text concerns economic and general history, from a Western horizon, and little is said about meetings with “the Other.” Nevertheless, certain African kingdoms are represented. Gold handicrafts were the catalyst for finding a sea route along the West African coast. I must take a short detour here: mentioning an alternative explanation of a fact is quite rare in history textbooks. Here it is said that gold objects were the driving force for what would later become the voyages of discovery.

The rise of Western superiority is explained by technological skills and the fact that ships could carry heavy guns. This is in contrast to the Arab ships which were joined together by ropes. No attention is paid to the fact that the Arabs did not have any need of guns. The pupil is informed of Europeans brutalities, however, as a story about Vasco da Gama makes clear:

When Vasco da Gama met a ship with Muslim pilgrims he commanded everybody on board to hand over their riches. When he found the process too slow, he burnt the ship. Everyone on board, men, women and children, died. The town Calicut was bombarded by guns.<sup>51</sup>

European brutality is mentioned in *Living History* but not as extensively as one would expect given the amount of pages dealing with the Eastern voyages. The perspective is European and there is no description of foreign cultures in the text. Even though the history is still told from a European angle in *History Direct*, it is this book that, in its first sentence, relativizes the Eurocentrism by the formulation “we who live in Europe say” and by writing “The era of the great geographical voyages” instead of “voyages of discovery.”<sup>52</sup> From what is said about the Orient, a pupil may conclude that at the beginning of the contact between Asia and Europe, Europe was culturally inferior to the East. This can be concluded from the references to Marco Polo and others who described the marvelous splendor that they had seen there in the form of golden buildings, huge cities, perfumes and gems.

The accounts of the westward “voyages of discovery” have also been studied. I will restrict myself, however, to a comparison of the main features. The cultural and economic inferiority of the West that became apparent in its meeting with Asia does not appear in the descriptions of America, although the authors do point to what they call an advanced level of Indian culture which is evident in the quotation below. European culture is never described as inferior, though, as it is

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51 Hildingsson and Hildingsson, *Levande historia* [Living History], 294.

52 Almgren et al., *Alla tiders historia* [History for all Times A], 151.

in comparison with Asia. It is evident that it is European culture that represents the yardstick for other civilizations, as is made clear in the following quote:

The remarkable feature of these peoples [Indian tribes] was the high level of social, artistic and scientific development that they had attained. On the other hand, their technological progress had lagged behind.<sup>53</sup>

Conquest was achieved by military superiority, the superstitions of the Native Americans and the conflicts between different Native American communities. Military prowess is considered to be the single most important explanatory factor. Pupils are given a relatively detailed account of how the Native Americans lived prior to the arrival of the Europeans. No attempt is made to conceal the brutality and ruthlessness of the Europeans in their subjugation of the Native Americans and their cultures.

## Discussion

An overall comparison of history textbooks suggests that the sections on the “voyages of discovery” contain more possibilities for a pupil to improve their intercultural perspective than the other parts analyzed here. This can be attributed to the questioning that appears in the texts in relation to the superiority of the cultures that the Europeans encountered and the lack of interest shown by the indigenous inhabitants with regard to carrying on trade with Europe. This disinterest was due to the fact that the Europeans simply lacked the goods in which they could have been interested. Europe’s dominance over other parts of the world was attributable to their military superiority. Furthermore, one lesson to be learned is that the West has not always ruled the world and that the West achieved hegemony by using violence. This knowledge can improve intercultural capacities as it gives a historical explanation about the present situation. Both immigrant pupils and Swedish pupils see that it is social processes and not something coming from nature that has caused Western supremacy.

The comparison between the US’s “struggle for independence” and “decolonization” provides a different set of results that is symbolized by the terminology used. For the US, the history books state it was actually a question of struggle, while they represent the liberation of the colonies as a process more or less without a driving subject unless history is seen as the subject that “decolonizes.” The difference in the number of pages devoted to the United States in comparison to the former colonies is an indication that the United States is

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53 Almgren et al., *Alla tiders historia* [History for all Times A], 79 ff.

substantially more interesting than the other colonies. There is no Third World country that is given more attention than the US. It is necessary to lump the whole of the Third World together to reach a higher number of pages on the anti-colonial struggle than the number that are devoted to the US. The most extreme example can be found in the treatment of India, which one book gives four lines. An analysis of the language used reveals that the representatives of the Third World are anonymous individuals who are unable to act as subjects in their history and are exposed to external events and processes largely outside their control.

There is a wide degree of consensus that the content of history books is focused on the West. Other parts of the world are mentioned only in so far as they come into contact with the West. For instance, Kamali has shown that classical antiquity is interpreted from a European perspective solely in terms of the Mediterranean World, where Persia, for example, is seen only as an enemy of Greece and students learn nothing about the Persian culture.

Another criticism of history textbooks is that the teleological philosophy of history can be said to be written in the future tense where western democracy represents the end of history.<sup>54</sup> This is most evident in the chapter on the United States where the American constitution is presented as the goal for which other countries may strive. The liberal political philosophy and optimism regarding the future that is the cornerstone of the Enlightenment is also present, and it is evident that the development of the Third World is measured in relation to the West.

Can history books be said to contribute to or counteract the exclusion of pupils from a non-European background? Can they be said to have an intercultural dimension? A quotation from *Historia, Ämnets syfte*, (History, the Subject's Goal) taken from the course syllabus for History "A," expresses what could be considered a point of departure for an understanding of intercultural education without actually mentioning this concept:

The subject also aims to further the development of historical consciousness and education. In this way, the pupil develops an understanding that encourages cooperation across social, ethnic and geographical boundaries that better prepares the individual to cope with future challenges. History provides the opportunity to develop basic values such as human consideration, solidarity and tolerance, which in turn contribute to strengthening citizenship and the foundations of democracy. Historical insights into other peoples, countries and cultures create opportunities

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54 Nordgren, *Vems är historien? Historia som medvetande, kultur och handling i det mångkulturella Sverige*, 201.

for international cooperation and an increased understanding of a multiethnic world full of conflict.<sup>55</sup>

These are lofty objectives. However the dynamism of history and, by extension, the subject of history may make it possible to achieve these goals. Nevertheless, the history books that have been studied here must be seen as counter-productive in terms of developing the intercultural competence of school pupils. Three reasons for this can be mentioned. First, as Kamali has shown, albeit in a somewhat overstated manner, people are categorized in terms of “us” and “them.” The consequences of this among “them,” the non-European students, can produce a feeling of being excluded from the society in which they live. Second, there is the Eurocentrism in the books: almost nothing is written about non-European countries and when they are mentioned it is in connection with the history of the West. The exceptions to this are the pre-historical period when the human race emerged in Africa and the little on Asian empires that are mentioned. The Egyptian and Sumerian states are described, but only as a historical context for the Greek civilization. Third, the over-all pattern against which the Third World is measured is Western democracy based on a market economy. The centrality of the American constitution is an example of this and the shortcomings of the decolonized countries, from the textbook authors’ points of view, as well as the misery that the textbook authors choose to concentrate on. Pupils from non-European countries could easily think that their or their parents’ native countries are worth next to nothing, which could create a distance between “them and the Others,” with “the Others” being those who are connected with the Swedish society. To unilaterally declare without any discussion that a Western type of social order ought to prevail is to invalidate the countries from which many non-European pupils come. If an equal sign is placed between Islam and terrorism, which Härenstam has shown the textbook authors do, the intentions contained in the above description of the subject of history will be jeopardized. The same effect will occur when the West is seen not only as the template for other cultures, but also the form of society for which others should strive.

The thorough, albeit non-reflective, approach adopted by Kamali in his analysis identified shortcomings in these history textbooks. To a certain extent, Harald Runblom agreed with his findings. It is Kamali’s lack of sensitivity regarding the way in which these textbooks will function in a classroom that is his principal shortcoming. He draws conclusions about how the textbooks are used

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55 Skolverket, *Historia ämnets syfte* [History: the Subject’s Goal], <http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/2503/a/13845/func/amnesplan/id/HI/titleId/Historia>

and what effects they have, which can not be done without observations in the classroom.

Kamali finds it unreasonable for school textbook authors to assume that pupils belong to the Swedish majority. A large majority actually does however, although there are regional variations. It would seem to be unreasonable to write textbooks that do not categorize peoples and cultures, although this appears to be unacceptable to Kamali, for as soon as phrases such as “the West” and especially “We in the West” are used, those who do not feel that they belong in the West become categorized as belonging to “the other.” There is validity in this argument, but categorizations are essential or as one of Masoud Kamali’s theoretical mentors states: “We have to use short-hand generalizations like “West” and “western,” but we need to remember that they represent very complex ideas and have no simple or single meaning.”<sup>56</sup> The use of greater subtlety in his argumentation would have made his analysis more applicable than it turned out to be.

In other words, one can agree with Masoud Kamali that there is a discrepancy between the democratic assignment and inclusive goals given to the school system and actual school practices, which determine the content of history textbooks at the upper secondary school level. There is perhaps a risk of exclusion on three levels. First, and most apparent, there is an absence of countries outside Europe and North America. Second, the representation of these countries, when it does occur, is conducted in generalized terms which may well communicate a feeling of inferiority to those pupils who have their cultural origins in these societies. The message is that their own cultures lag behind those of the West. Third, the individuals in these cultures, and thereby the cultures themselves, are represented as being passive within the historical perspective. There is an obvious risk that pupils from non-Western backgrounds will feel excluded and consequently increase the risk that they will become excluded.

The difficulty lies in writing a history textbook that excludes pupils as little as possible. Doing this includes explanations of why the textbook is written in the way it is. It also includes discussions of Eurocentric concepts, such as “voyages of discovery,” and how they are used. And of course, a representation of all countries and cultures in their own right must also be included. As far as I know, such a textbook has not yet been written. When it finally appears, it will be radically different from the history textbooks that are currently in use, although this does not necessarily mean that it will contravene the guidelines laid down in the statutory documents. While waiting for this text, teachers will have to work in an intercultural fashion with the available history textbooks.

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<sup>56</sup> Stuart Hall, “The Rest and the West,” 276.

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Bente Aamotsbakken

## Pictures of Greenlanders and Samis in Norwegian and Danish Textbooks

### Introduction

As a school subject, history has continuously struggled with the choice of perspective when presenting historical facts and assumptions. By choosing to focus on one element the author runs the risk of excluding other elements. Authors of educational texts are used to coping with this dilemma, but authors writing textbooks for a history curriculum have to pay special attention with regard to mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. The problematic aspects in the history subject have to do with the presupposition that history should deal with truth and facts. In history textbooks students mostly rely on validated conclusions, which are thoroughly documented. The strict claims of documentation and validity represent a difficulty for history textbook authors because the content of the textbooks should represent facts, not fiction, communicated in a comprehensible and precise manner. This article will draw attention to what I refer to as “a missing element” in narratives related to the indigenous population in Denmark and Norway. The missing element is related to the absence of the perspectives of the native population in the presentations of the conquest of new territories in Greenland and the northern part of Norway. A quotation from a frequently used Norwegian history textbook from the 1970’s will start the discussion of this omission:

På Grønland bukket den norrøne befolkningen under på 1400-tallet, etter at forsyningene fra Norge hadde opphørt. Sammenstøt med eskimoer og hungersnød kan ha blitt for mye, og avgjørende var det kanskje at skip ikke lenger brakte tømmer og jern til Grønland.<sup>1</sup>

In Greenland the Norse population died out during the 15th century after supplies from Norway ceased to arrive. Skirmishes with the Inuit population and starvation

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1 Halvorsen, Terje and Tore Linné Eriksen, *Fortid og samtid: Norsk historie før 1870* [Past and Present. Norwegian History Prior to 1870] (Oslo: W.C. Fabritius & sønner, 1978), 76.

might have been fatal also and the decisive factor might be that ships no longer brought timber and iron to Greenland. (Author's translation)

This quotation reveals a rather one-sided perspective as the focus is solely on the fate of the Norse population. The Inuit population of Greenland is seen as a nuisance and no light is shed on possible explanations for the skirmishes. Behind the surface of this short text, assumptions such as “the Inuit population is the troublemaker,” “the Norse population died out because of attacks from the natives,” etc., could be detected. It might be claimed that it is unfair to isolate a quotation from its context. In the narrowest sense the context is a chapter in a textbook in use in a classroom. In a broader sense, however, contextual factors like the intertextual patterns of presentation of historical facts play an important role.<sup>2</sup> History textbooks are written and published in an intertextual manner, i. e. the books are structured like previous history textbooks and they contain, to some extent, similar narratives, conclusions and discussions found in older textbooks. History textbooks more or less inherit structural and narrative patterns from previous literature. In other words, Nordic students are used to studying the narrative of the Norse population in Greenland from the point of view of the colonists. It is of course quite natural to focus on the Norse population and its fate when you deal with Norwegian history in secondary school. However, by choosing one clear focus you may risk excluding another. In this case the natives get little or even negative attention in the quoted text. They appear in the text, but they are placed there only to underline the problematic aspects of the situation for the Norse population.

The theoretical concepts of intersectionality and intertextuality can be drawn upon to shed light on perspectives chosen in history textbooks. The use of these two concepts is not contradictory as they are both cross-disciplinary and based on various kinds of interactions. For instance, the concept of intersectionality has frequently been used to look into the relationship between majority and minority cultures. The Danish researcher Dorthe Staunæs regards intersectionality as “a useful tool to trace how certain individuals tend to be posi-

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2 For a discussion of intertextuality applied to the field of pedagogical and non-fiction texts see Bente Aamotsbakken, “Pedagogiske intertekster: Intertekstualitet som teoretisk og praktisk begrep” [Pedagogical Intertexts: Intertextuality as a Theoretical and Practical Concept], in *Tekst i vekst: Teoretiske, historiske og analytiske perspektiver på pedagogiske tekster* [Text in Growth: Theoretical, Historical and Analytical Perspectives on Pedagogical Texts], eds. S.V. Knudsen, D. Skjelbred and B. Aamotsbakken, (Oslo: Novus forlag, 2007). See also Luis Ajagán-Lester, Per Ledin and Henrik Rahm, “Intertekstualiteter,” in *Teoretiska perspektiv på sakprosa* [Theoretical Perspectives on Non-Fiction], eds. B. Englund and P. Ledin (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2003).

tioned not only as different, but also as problematic, and in some cases also as marginalized.”<sup>3</sup>

In the example above, the Inuit population is regarded not only as different but also as problematic. The concepts of intersectionality and intertextuality can be used simultaneously to analyze how the problematic and marginalized position of the Inuit population is revealed in various layers of the textbook. All textbooks are in fact striking examples of intertextual practice and intertextual ways of writing and thinking. Etymologically, the word “intersectionality” refers to the process of crossing; i. e. lines crossing other lines or roads crossing each other. This inherent conceptual metaphor has been used to illustrate the interplay between categories such as race and gender.<sup>4</sup> Later on, the “crossing” of majority and minority groups attracted attention, and today the concept of intersectionality is often drawn upon when categories such as disability, nationality, ethnicity and sexuality are brought together.<sup>5</sup> In the example from the history textbook, the Inuit population, who represents a minority group, is confronted with the intruders, the Norse colonists. The description of the Inuit population gives a rather threatening and destructive impression. The quotation from the textbook also reveals a possible link between starvation and the Inuit population. This textual connection is, of course, not visible on the surface of the text, but is hidden deep in the structure, where inferences have to be made to detect it. Consequently, the Inuit population does not only represent a problematic ethnic minority, but a true threat for the Norse population.<sup>6</sup> Intersections are thus drawn between the categories nationality, ethnicity and race.

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3 Dorthe Staunæs, “Where Have All the Subjects Gone? Bringing Together the Concepts of Intersectionality and Subjectification,” *NORA*, no. 2 (2003): 101.

4 For a discussion of the topics gender and race see Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics and Violence against Women of Color,” in *Critical Race Theory. The Key Writings That Formed the Movement*, ed. Kimberlé Crenshaw et al. (New York: The New Press, 1996).

5 For developments in the concept of intersectionality see Nina Lykke, “Nya perspektiv på interseksjonalitet: Problem og muligheter” [New Perspectives on Intersectionality: Problems and Possibilities], *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift*, no. 2–3 (2005): 7–17, and Leslie McCall, “The Complexity of Intersectionality,” *Signs*, no. 3 (2005): 1771–1800. See also, Susanne V. Knudsen, “Intersectionality – A Theoretical Inspiration in the Analysis of Minority Cultures and Identities in Textbooks,” in *Caught in the Web or Lost in the Textbook*, ed. Eric Bruillard, Bente Aamotsbakken, Susanne V. Knudsen and Mike Horsely (Caen: Stef, IARTEM, Iufm, 2006).

6 As there are only very uncertain estimates on the number of inhabitants in Greenland in the century in question, it is problematic to speak of minority versus majority population. There is reason to believe that the contact between the Inuit and the Norse population was poor. This is related to the fact that it is assumed that the Norse population starved when the climate changed and the possibilities to cultivate the land diminished. The colonists had not learned the Inuit way of life, which required hunting and fishing to survive. Another reason for the poor contact between the two groups was found in the fact that the Inuit population were

Julia Kristeva has also used the expression “intersections” with regard to the crossing points between textual surfaces. Kristeva’s concept, however, does not have implications related to recent theoretical reflections on intersectionality. Her concept is solely related to textual expressions, but all the same, it is worth bringing her reflections into this context for several reasons. According to Kristeva, the creation of new texts is dependent on the existence of previous texts and the traces transferred from one text to another make the intersections possible. Central metaphors in Kristeva’s theories about intertextuality are “texture” and “mosaic.”<sup>7</sup> The metaphor “texture” is related to the concept of implicit intertextuality, which implies that influence and patterns from previous texts are unconsciously integrated into new texts. Such patterns and influences are hard to trace, and the reader of the texts therefore experiences a feeling of something “already read.”<sup>8</sup> The metaphor “mosaic” on the other hand implies a type of intertextuality that is quite explicit. This kind of intertextuality is revealed in the text as references that are easier to trace. Furthermore, the explicit intertextuality implies a ludic attitude, which plays with the reader and challenges his cultural and literal competence.

The conventions tied to the textbook as a concept are, as already pointed out, highly intertextual. The quotation above shows intersections with other similar texts in history textbooks. In other words, the sequence reveals, on the one hand, examples of well-known writing conventions and ways of presenting a theme, and, on the other hand, the same sequence clearly describes the native population as a problematic, but simultaneously marginalized group. The interesting aspect of the sample text lies in the complexity revealed by intertextual patterns connected to the intersections of ethnicity, nationality and race.

The textbook also contains a paragraph concerning Greenland in which the focus is solely on the missionary achievements of Hans Egede. His efforts to introduce Christianity to the Inuit population are commented upon in connection with the Danish control of Greenland:

Det er først og fremst gjennom den misjonsvirksomhet blant eskimoene som nordlendingen *Hans Egede* drev, at det danske herredømmet ble sikret. I femten år

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scattered around the country whereas the Norse population were concentrated in the two small villages, Austrabygdi and Vestrabygdi.

7 Julia Kristeva developed the concept of intertextuality. See, for example, Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980).

8 Roland Barthes, “From Work to Text,” in *The Rustle of Language*, ed. R. Barthes (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 60.

først på 1700-tallet reiste han rundt, misjonerte og gransket landet. Han er blitt kalt "Grønlands apostel".<sup>9</sup>

It is first and foremost the missionary campaign among the Inuit population undertaken by the Norwegian Hans Egede that secured Danish supremacy. For 15 years at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century he traveled around, evangelizing and exploring the country. He has been named "Greenland's apostle." (Author's translation)

Again the mention of the Inuit population is inadequate in that they constitute a missing element. In the quotation, the focus is on the missionary achievements, and nothing is said about the impact it must have had on the native population. It is more or less taken for granted that the missionary work had positive effects. Reflections on the native population's belief in the forces of nature and multiple gods are not in any way integrated in the presentation.

Another striking feature in this brief fragment is the selection of verbal expressions. The use of words like "secured" and "evangelized and surveyed" conveys in this context a positive view of the work of the missionaries. Consequently, the perspective once more belongs to the ruling class and administration. In the first quotation the verbal expression "bukket under" (ceased to exist/died out) reveals a perspective linked to the fate of the Norse population in Greenland. In this expression, which has very negative connotations, a transfer of responsibility on to the native population can be sensed behind the textual surface.

The textbook also contains a chapter called "Kamp om kontrollen over Finnmark" (The Struggle for Control of Finnmark). This chapter represents a somewhat different attitude towards the native population than that which was seen in the presentation of Greenland quoted above. The difference might have to do with Finnmark's role as an attractive region for Norwegian control. Since clear national borders and jurisdiction did not define Finnmark, the northern county of Norway, this territory was exposed to colonial interest by the neighboring countries Russia, Sweden and Finland. The textbook describes the attempts by the Norwegian government to gain a firm foothold in this territory and it is in this context that the Sami population is mentioned. It is said that the Sami people were exposed to taxation from Russian, Swedish and Norwegian authorities, i. e. before laws and regulation brought an end to this. In addition the textbook focuses on the Coastal Samis who were forced to retreat to the inner parts of the fjords when the Norwegian settlers occupied the coastal areas. The quotation below does not point in particular to the fact that the Coastal Samis

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<sup>9</sup> Halvorsen and Eriksen, *Fortid og samtid: Norsk historie før 1870* [Past and Present. Norwegian History Prior to 1870], 118.

must have faced considerable obstacles as the Sami population increased during the decades that followed.

The textbook is more nuanced in the description of the Sami population than in the corresponding description of the Greenlanders, however. This is seen in the tendency to use modifying adverbs in the descriptive sequences:

Den samiske befolkningen var ikke avhengig av konjunkturer og tilførsler utenfra. På 1500-tallet ble nok sjøsamene trengt bort fra sesongbeboede fiskeområder av den norske bosetningen, og de trakk seg lenger inn i fjordene. [...] Ved grenserereguleringen ble flyttsamene sikret rett til flytting med reinen over landegrensene, uten å bli skattlagt i mer enn ett land.<sup>10</sup>

The Sami population was not dependent on economic fluctuations and supplies from other parts of the country. It must be admitted, though, that in the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Norwegian settlers forced the Coastal Samis to retreat from the seasonal areas of fishing. They withdrew to the inner parts of the fjords. [...] Through the regulation of the national borders the Sami nomads were secured the right to move with reindeer across the national borders without being submitted to taxation in more than one country. (Author's translation)

The use of the modifying adverb “nok” which I have translated with “it must be admitted, though,” expresses the authors' hesitation regarding the situation for the Coastal Sami population. On the other hand, it is claimed that the Sami population was in a lucky position because of their self-sufficiency. In other words, the perspective is once again twisted; i. e., the focus is drawn away from the situation the Sami population faced and Norwegian settlers get the closest attention. This tendency persists throughout the presentation.

## Textbooks' Dependency on Patterns – The Inevitability of Intertextuality

The samples presented above originate from one single textbook, but a variety of history textbooks reveal the same tendencies to under-communicate the existence or the importance of the indigenous population. This way of presenting historical events for students has a solid tradition, and this tradition is rooted in what I want to refer to as an intertextual practice. In many kinds of textbooks the reader is unconsciously relying on intertextual phenomena such as patterns, quotations with or without quotations marks, texts borrowed from other books,

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10 Halvorsen and Eriksen, *Fortid og samtid: Norsk historie før 1870* [Past and Present. Norwegian History Prior to 1870], 114 f.

encyclopedias, etc.<sup>11</sup> This practice is quite natural and almost axiomatic for anyone writing textbooks at any level in the educational system.

As textbooks are designed to be readable for most students in an ordinary class or group, they tend to repeat the patterns from former textbooks. History textbooks are dependent on recognizable patterns and ways of depicting events and phenomena. The reader, i. e. the student and his and her teacher, expects to find certain patterns represented in the exercises, follow-up questions, illustrations and textual elements. If these expectations are not fulfilled, the textbook and its texts will break down or not be taken seriously.<sup>12</sup> Roland Barthes described in one of his essays the concept of intertextuality as “quotations without quotation marks.”<sup>13</sup> As mentioned before, he has also referred to the feeling of something “already read” or “déjà lû”. The conscious reader or the user of textbooks strongly senses this when reading a textbook or otherwise using it.

The patterns referred to above could, in addition, be regarded as “mental patterns” for everybody writing a text. In other words, such patterns seem inevitable. The textbook author, consequently, seems to submit to them rather than trying to get rid of them or bend and stretch them in order to create something new.<sup>14</sup>

We should expect ‘something new’ when new educational reforms are launched and implemented. There seem to be only minor changes when it comes to the presentation of such themes as referred to above in the history textbooks. A relevant comparative basis for the presentation in the history textbooks can be found in textbooks for the mother tongue. Both history and the mother tongue are curricular subjects characterized by long texts accompanied by exercises, illustrations and explanatory comments. In other words, these subjects have

11 Graham Allen has reflected upon the more recent use of the concept of intertextuality. See Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge, 2000). See also Bente Aamotsbakken, “Pedagogiske intertekster: Intertekstualitet som teoretisk og praktisk begrep” [Pedagogical Intertexts. Intertextuality as a Theoretical and Practical Concept], in *Tekst i vekst: Teoretisk, historiske og analytiske perspektiver på pedagogiske tekster* [Text in gGrowth: Theoretical, Historical and Analytical Perspectives on Pedagogical Texts], edS. S.V. Knudsen, D. Skjelbred and B. Aamotsbakken (Oslo: Novus forlag, 2007).

12 A striking example of an untraditional textbook concept is found in Egil Børre Johnsen, *Verden* [The World] (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1992) on the subject of social science. This textbook was untraditional and new due to its length and volume, and because it had a fictional figure acting as a guide throughout the chapters in order to create coherence and recognition for the students. The textbook concept raised debate and received a lot of attention, but it proved too extraordinary to be sold. Although this example of an untraditional textbook practice occurs in a different subject than history, it may illustrate the problem of breaking with expectations and intertextual patterns.

13 Barthes, “From Work to Text,” 60.

14 Michail Holquist goes even further than Julia Kristeva in grounding intertextuality in Bakhtin’s thought including the social and cultural contexts of his work. See Michail Holquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World* (New York/London: Routledge, 2001 [1991]).

ample room for reflection, and as a result we want to look upon them as subjects fit for training the ability to reflect critically. A survey of the presentation of minority groups in Norwegian and Danish as a first language textbooks reveals the same kind of view of the indigenous population that has been revealed in the history textbooks, as well as one which lures the reader in from deep within. The colonial class and the administration of the two countries are also focused on in more recent editions of textbooks written for mother tongue education. Examples of this will be given in the following section, but it is relevant to point to the fact now that the indigenous populations in both countries have been secured special rights and protection through separate paragraphs in the national curricula. In the case of Norway, it is stated that Sami culture, language and literature should be taught as a part of the teaching of the mother tongue. The newest national curriculum in Norway (LK06), implemented in 2006, has secured the position of the Sami language by claiming that all students should be acquainted with the Sami alphabet. An example of the willingness to safeguard the Sami population's constitutional and educational rights can be sensed in a speech delivered by the Secretary of State, Lisbeth Rugtvedt, on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006, when she addressed a conference dealing with questions related to indigenous populations:<sup>15</sup>

Norway is clearly committed to making arrangements so that the Sami population can secure their language and identity. This is a result of Norway's approval of the ILO-convention no. 169 "About Indigenous Populations and Tribes in Independent Nations." The Sami statutes, the constitution and the educational statutes also impose such an obligation on the government. In addition to being a clear commitment, the preservation of the Sami language and identity is part of what secures the cultural diversity in Norway and what enriches us as a nation. (Author's translation)

There is a clear contrast between today's official policy and the presentation of the Sami population in older textbooks. Today the Sami population is granted the same constitutional rights as the majority in Norway. The Sami language has obtain equality in status compared with the two official Norwegian languages.

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15 Lisbeth Rugtvedt's speech is available via the following link: [http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/dep/politisk\\_ledelse/-Lisbet-Rugtvedt/taler\\_artikler/2006/Politiske-visjoner-og-sat-sing-pa-samisk-.html?id=113935](http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/dep/politisk_ledelse/-Lisbet-Rugtvedt/taler_artikler/2006/Politiske-visjoner-og-sat-sing-pa-samisk-.html?id=113935)

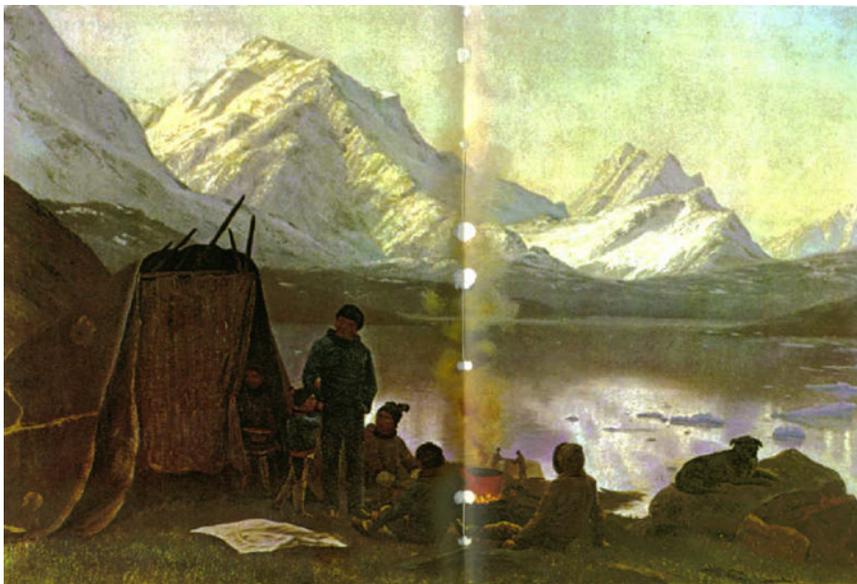
The text in Norwegian is: "Norge har klare forpliktelser når det gjelder å legge til rette for at den samiske folkegruppen kan sikre sitt språk og sin identitet. Dette følger av at Norge har sluttet seg til ILO-konvensjon nr. 169 om urfolk og stammefolk i selvstendige stater, men også sameloven, grunnloven og opplæringsloven gir staten en slik plikt. I tillegg til at det er en klar plikt, er ivaretagelse av samisk språk og identitet en del av det som sikrer det kulturelle mangfoldet vi har i Norge og med på å berike oss som nasjon."

History textbooks still tend, however, to describe and discuss problematic questions related to the Sami culture without taking the official status of the Samis today into consideration.

### **A Comparative Perspective – the Greenlanders in a Danish Mother Tongue Textbook**

The textbooks for first language instruction will also have to deal with all ethnic groups inside the borders of a country. The textbooks for Norwegian as a first language must consequently integrate literature written by Samis, whereas Danish textbooks must contain literature written by Greenlanders. A random sample from Danish textbooks reveals that there has been some progress in the integration process mentioned above if we compare it with the trend a decade earlier. The textbook *Dansk i fjerde: Grundbok* (Danish in Fourth Grade: Basic Book) by Ib Kokborg and Poul Rosenberg (1984) contains a special section of 24 pages dedicated to the Greenlanders. The section may seem modest, but the textbook is relatively small, only a total of 160 pages. The section has the heading “Grønland – Menneskenes land” (Greenland – The Country of Humanity), and contains stories, pictures and a poem that focus on the Greenlanders. The only negative aspect of the book worth mentioning is linked to the fact that Danish authors write all of the stories. The only exception is the poem, which has an “unknown author.” The first story “Narua og Apuluk” is written by Jørn Riel, the second and third, “Gamle Amanda” (Old Amanda) and “Akraluk, den forældreløse dreng” (Akraluk, the Orphan) are by Kirsten Bang. The last story with the title “Absalon og fuglehovederne” (Absalon and the Birds’ Heads) is written by Agnete Lindhardt, and is placed before the final text, “Når byen ta’r det roligt” (When the City Calms Down), the poem which is presumably written by an unknown Inuit. The illustrations are drawn by Danish illustrators and the two-page copy of a painting entitled “Sommerboplads i en stille fjord” (Summer Location in a Quiet Fjord) was painted around 1860 by Carl Rasmussen.

From this section about Greenlanders in a textbook for first language instruction, the reader receives an initial impression of a textbook concept where the authors are well aware of the necessity to include an ethnic group like the Inuit population. The textbook is primarily produced for Danish children, but it is a fact that many Inuit children live in Denmark on a permanent basis and visit Danish primary schools. The Inuit children in Danish schools are therefore well acquainted with the same textbooks as the native Danes. In this respect, a reasonable assumption would be that using the book would strengthen the Inuit children’s identity. However, a closer look may modify this first impression and



Sommerboplads i en stille fjord (Summer Location in a Quiet Fjord), a painting by Carl Rasmussen (1860) in the textbook *Dansk i fjerde: Grundbok* (Danish in Fourth Grade: Basic book) by Ib Kokborg and Poul Rosenberg (1984)

change it due to mechanisms of inclusion. As Danish authors write most of the texts in this textbook, the Inuit children are left with only the potential of what I would call content adaptation. How much more encouraging would it have been with at least a mixture of Danish and Inuit authors? One may oppose this presumption by pointing to the fact that this is a Danish textbook for the subject of Danish as a first language and that it is thus quite obvious to use Danish writers for most of the content. The Danish children who use the textbook are also deprived of the possibility to get to know Greenlandic authors, however.

I can also refer to similar presentations of the Sami population in textbooks for Norwegian as a mother tongue. In recent years, however, the integration of Sami authors of fiction in textbooks has improved. As Susanne V. Knudsen has shown, the bestseller textbook *Fra saga til CD* (From Saga to CD) by Marit Jensen and Per Lien (1998) contains a separate chapter dedicated to the Samis. Knudsen discusses how the Samis are included in this way, but points out that they are simultaneously excluded because they are presented in a very different manner than the majority population. The chapter studied by Susanne V. Knudsen is cross-cultural and it is a fact that the literature written by Sami authors is far from being integrated into the school canon. The chapter seems to be part of an

enlightening project, through which the Norwegian students are supposed to obtain more knowledge about the Sami way of life and ways of thinking.<sup>16</sup>

## A Change of Focus?

It is worth mentioning that more recent history textbooks seem to have shorter chapters about the Sami population than the textbooks in the 1970's and 1980's. One example is Karsten Alnæs' book *Norges- og verdenshistorie før 1850* (Norwegian and World History Prior to 1850), published in 1988. A revised edition from the 1990's shows the same tendency. The Inuit population of Greenland is not mentioned at all, and the Sami population in northern Norway is dealt with in a short chapter of less than one page. A drawing of a Sami shaman accompanies the text. The presentation is balanced, however, by the thematization of the violation of Sami civil rights. The tendency to shorten the chapter has obviously had no impact on the way of depicting the Samis, as the following quotation proves:

På 1500-tallet trengte nordmennene også inn på samenes enemerker lenger sør i landet. Nordmennene ryddet nå mange nye garder nord i Østerdalen, og de kom i konflikt med samene da de begynte å jakte og fiske i fjellene. [...] På 1600-, 1700- og 1800-tallet økte den norske innvandringen til sameland. På 1700-tallet foregikk det en utflytting av østerdøler og sørtrøndere til Målselv og Bardu. Innvandrerne slo seg også ned på sameområder i Nordland, Trøndelag og Finnmark. De brakte med seg norsk-dansk administrasjon og seinere også norsk-dansk språk og skole. De utnyttet natur-ressursene som samene til da hadde brukt alene: fisk, vilt og bær.<sup>17</sup> In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Norwegians intruded into the Sami territory further south in the country. The Norwegians established many new farms in the northern part of Østerdalen and came into conflict with the Samis as they started hunting and fishing in the mountains. [...] In the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries Norwegian emigration to Sami territory increased. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century people from Østerdalen and Sør-Trøndelag moved to Målselv and Bardu. The immigrants settled in Sami territories in Nordland, Trøndelag and Finnmark. They brought with them the Danish-Norwegian administration and later on the Danish-Norwegian language

16 Susanne V. Knudsen, "Interseksjonalitet – teoretisk inspirasjon til analyse af minoritetskulturer og identiteter i lærebøger, eksemplificeret ved samerne i en norsk lærebog" [Intersectionality – Theoretical Inspiration for the Analysis of Minority Cultures and Identities Exemplified by the Samis in a Norwegian Textbook], in *Tekst i vekst: Teoretiske, historiske og analytiske perspektiver på pedagogiske tekster* [Text in Growth: Theoretical, Historical and Analytical Perspectives on Pedagogical Texts], edS. S.V. Knudsen, D. Skjeldbred and B. Aamotsbakken (Oslo: Novus forlag, 2007).

17 Karsten Alnæs, *Norges- og verdenshistorie før 1850* [Norwegian and World History Prior to 1850] (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1988), 380.

and schools also. They exploited the resources that the Samis had access to alone until then: fish, game and wild berries. (Author's translation)

On one hand this quotation reveals an apparent urge to be neutral as the focus this time is on the Norwegians' path of ruthless dominance. We may, therefore, ask ourselves if this shows a willingness to change the focus. A closer look reveals, however, that the tendency to depict the native population as a problematic element persists. We can analyze the lines with the concept of intersectionality in mind again: the Samis are the problematic element because the Norwegians come into conflict with them. Nothing more is said about the reasons for this confrontation. This is, of course, also a way of writing that expresses a rather one-sided view of power, an element that is central to research on intersectionality. Many researchers refer to Michel Foucault's views on exclusion and inclusion procedures.<sup>18</sup> According to Foucault the wielding of power appears in discourses and discursive networks. Power is executed in processes, and Foucault's point is to analyze how power is in continuous movement. Rather than viewing power exclusively as a question of oppression, contradictory discourses are highlighted in order to look at the various negotiations of, for instance, ethnicity, gender, nationality or race. Instead of concentrating on the nature of power, Foucault's discourse analysis strives to examine how power is being produced in a certain discourse, for example in an educational discourse. Such points of view can be applied to my approach to texts in history textbooks. There is a clear tendency to depict the Sami history, consciously or unconsciously, by showing the Samis in a biased way. When the intruders occupy Sami territory, it is the Sami people that represent the problem. The power to do justice to the Sami population rests with the author writing the text, the editorial modifications and the finalizing of the textbook. In the quotation, the discourse reveals an execution of power that stresses the Norwegian population in its eagerness to conquer new territories and get access to natural resources. It is an under-communicated fact that the Samis suffered due to this intrusion. It could have been thematized in the text, but instead it is left for the reader to draw such conclusions.

Another sample from history textbooks is found in *Spor i tid. Norge før 1850* (Traces in Time. Norway Prior to 1850) by Jørgen Eliassen, Knut Sprauten, Claus Krag and Sigmund Støa and published in 1995. This textbook shows a different approach to both Samis and Greenlanders. It can in no way be said to be neutral

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18 For development of the concept of intersectionality inspired by Michel Foucault see Nina Lykke, "Nya perspektiv på interseksjonalitet: Problem og möjligheter" [New Perspectives of Intersectionality: Problems and Possibilities], *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift*, no. 2-3 (2005): 7-17.

in its description, but the very constellation of textual elements can be said to present a more balanced view on the questions concerning both groups of natives.

There is no separate subchapter dealing with this Samis, instead comments and reflections on questions relating to the Sami population are put into in the chapter called “Nord-Norge” (Northern Norway). A diachronic presentation of the number of inhabitants in the northern territories of Norway claims that among the 3228 registered individuals living in Finnmark county in 1690, the Samis were about 1500. It is stated that most of them were Coastal Samis. The focus in this presentation is not on the struggle over resources, but rather more on demographic aspects. The textbook sheds light on the fact that the Norwegian authorities wanted to increase the low number of inhabitants in the north by sending women convicted of crimes to the coastal fishing communities, in the hope that they would settle and marry there. The unemployed were also sent north against their will and another attempt to increase the population was to promise a cancellation of debts.

The textbook contains two extra-textual elements dealing with the Sami population in particular. One is a caption for a drawing that states:

Tegningen skulle gi folk i København et bilde af Fjell-Norge og vise en same med sin tamrein. Folk kunne lett få inntrykk av at samene bare levde av reindrift, men samene drev også med jordbruk og var et fangst- og fiskerfolk. Sjøsamene var fremragende båtbyggere og drev fra 1700-tallet av en utstrakt handel med russerne, den såkalte pomorhandelen.<sup>19</sup>

The drawing was supposed to give people in Copenhagen a picture of the mountainous part of Norway and show a Sami with his reindeer. People could easily get the impression that the Samis only lived by having reindeer, but the Samis were also farmers, hunters and fishermen. The Coastal Samis were excellent boat builders and from the 18<sup>th</sup> century on they had extensive trade relations, the so-called Pomor trade, with the Russians. (Author’s translation)

A framed text with the title “Fordommer overfor samene” (Prejudices Against the Samis) also makes the reader reflect in a more nuanced way on the relationship between the minority and the majority population. Examples of expressions used to describe the Samis in this text are chosen in a satisfactory didactic manner and make the reader deal with the questions regarding the Samis in a critical way. For example, one sentence quoted in the textbook goes like this: “De [samene] er nærmest å sammenligne med de ville bergskotter i Skottland” (They (the Samis) are almost comparable to the uncivilized Moun-

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19 Jørgen Eliassen, Knut Sprauten, Claus Krag and Sigmund Støa, *Spor i tid: Norge før 1850* [Traces in Time.. Norway Prior to 1850] (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1995), 129.

tain-Scots (in Scotland)). The authors use such quotations to make the students reflect critically on the content of the wording. Such variety of textual elements normally opens the way for reflection and discussion. For comparison it is worthwhile returning to Alnæs' history textbook again as this textbook only has a short description of the Sami way of life and it gives no background for reflection:

Folk bosatte seg i torvgammer, kledde seg i skinn, kastet med harpun og lasso, padlet i skinnbåter på elvene, og jaktet på rein, sel og bjørn. Alt før Kristi fødsel begynte en del samer å holde tamrein, og noen begynte også å drive jordbruk før Kristi fødsel.<sup>20</sup>

People settled down in turf huts, dressed in fur, threw harpoons and lassos, paddled hide boats on the rivers and hunted reindeer, seals and bears. As early as before the birth of Christ some Samis had already started to keep domestic reindeer, and some had also started farming. (Author's translation)

The last quotation reveals very clearly the tendency to make the Samis different and marginalized. This tells us that neutral descriptions and presentations tend to reproduce prejudices and that this is, to a large extent, caused by a seemingly straightforward way of describing so-called facts. The theories of intersectionality can help us to go behind the surface of such sentences and thereby become aware of differences in the way the Samis are presented.

The history textbook by Eliassen et al. has incorporated more potential possibilities for critical reflection, a trait that Alnæs' textbook lacks. The Greenlanders or the Inuit population are not mentioned in Alnæs' textbook whereas Eliassen et al. mentions Greenland and the Greenlanders on many occasions. It is, however, interesting to notice the expression "grønlandingene" (the Greenlanders), which only seems to apply to the Norwegian settlers in Greenland. The native population is referred to as the Eskimos (eskimoene). We can see this from the following quotation:

Grønlandingene hadde sluppet svartedauden, men likevel bukket de norrøne småsamfunnene under. 200 år senere fantes det ikke en eneste grønlanding igjen. Nedgangen i Norge førte til at færre og færre skuter drog til Grønland. På slutten av 1400-tallet var all forbindelse brutt og dermed også tilførselen av nødvendige varer. Det er også mulig at grønlandingene ble angrepet av eksimoer, og at klimaforverringen gjorde livsvilkårene umulige.<sup>21</sup>

The Greenlanders had escaped the Black Death but despite this fact the small Norse communities ceased to exist. 200 years later there was not a trace of a Greenlander. Due to the decline, a decreasing number of ships left Norway for

20 Alnæs, *Norges- og verdenshistorie før 1850*, 379.

21 Eliassen et al., *Spor i tid: Norge før 1850*, 86.

Greenland. At the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century the connection was broken and consequently also the supply of necessary goods. It is also possible that the Greenlanders were attacked by Eskimos, and that aggravation due to the climate made the living conditions impossible. (Author's translation)

In another context the expression "the Greenlander" would probably be interpreted as the indigenous population in Greenland and not as the group who settled in Greenland. The quotation shows that by choosing to refer to the indigenous population as the "Eskimos," they are clearly regarded as "the Other."

We see now that this history textbook, which reveals a nuanced and balanced view on Sami questions and invites critical reflection on the part of the reader, does not treat questions connected to Greenland in the same way. The textbook does have, however, framed texts for reflection and questions that make the readers start thinking. Consequently, we can see that there is some positive development in the history textbooks from decade to decade. How much is needed to make the reader reflect critically on what the textbook presents? This is hard to decide, but in my opinion I see an improvement in the last textbook I dealt with in this paper. It is in no way good enough, as we have seen in case of the Greenlanders, but it is still far better than the textbooks from earlier decades.

## The Questions Related to the Indigenous Populations in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century History Textbooks<sup>22</sup>

The positive tendency to give a more balanced and critical view of the questions concerning the indigenous populations in Greenland and Norway continues if we look at history textbooks produced in 2001. The textbook *Historie 1* (History

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22 The new curriculum implemented in 2006 in Norway states under the heading "Purpose" that: "Historiefaget kan ha stor betydning for hvordan individet forstår og oppfatter seg selv og samfunnet, og for hvordan den enkelte skaper sin identitet og tilhørighet med andre. Opplæringen skal styrke elevens viten om og innsikt i sentrale begivenheter og utviklingslinjer i historien. Faget skal fremme evnen til å bearbeide og vurdere historisk materiale og annen informasjon. Historisk innsikt kan bidra til å forstå egen samtid bedre, og til å forstå at en selv er del av en historisk prosess og skaper historie." [The subject of history may have a great impact on how the individual understands himself or herself and the society, and how the individual creates his or her identity and relationships to other individuals. The instruction should strengthen the students' knowledge of and insight into essential events and lines of development in history. The subject should enhance the ability to elaborate on and evaluate historical documents or other information. Historical insight may contribute to a better understanding of one's contemporary era and make one understand how he or she is part of the historical process and thereby creates history. (Author's

1) by Ivar Libæk, Øyvind Stenersen, Asle Sveen and Svein Arild Aastad<sup>23</sup> contains various comparative aspects concerning the indigenous population of Norway. When the authors describe the so-called hunting cultures on the Northern Cap, the perspective relates to the development of the Sami culture. Language and hunting methods are described, and there is special mention of the Samis' use of iron even before Anno Domine.<sup>24</sup>

Although the description of the Sami population has undergone an improvement in the latest history textbooks in Norway, the perspective belonging to the ruling class, the colonizers, still prevails. This can also be seen in the textbook mentioned above with regard to the description of Greenland: Greenland is mostly seen as a colony and it is the Norse population's perspective that is given attention. The colonization of Greenland is described thus:

Under ledelse av Eirik Raude fra Rogaland ble Grønland kolonisert av islendinger I 980-årene. I tiden som fulgte, ble det reist over 250 gårder i Austbygda og nesten 80 gårder i Vestbygda. De norrøne samfunnene bestod fram til omkring 1500, da befolkningen døde ut. Eiriks sønn Leiv var den første europeer som gikk i land i Nord-Amerika.<sup>25</sup>

Under the leadership of Eirik Raude from Rogaland, Icelanders colonized Greenland around 980. From then on, more than 250 farms were built in Austbygda and almost 80 in Vestbygda. The Norse societies survived until about 1500 when the population died out. Erik's son, Leiv, was the first European who went ashore in North-America. (Author's translation)

In another chapter of the same textbook the impression of the Norse perspective is strengthened as it is stated that Iceland and Greenland submitted to the Norwegian throne. This was regarded as a gain for Norway, as compensation for the loss of the Hebrides and the Isle of Man around 1260. This chapter also describes a slow territorial decline for the country as the Orkneys and Shetland were given to Scotland as a dowry never to be returned to Norway.

The impression of the colonization of Greenland is further strengthened if we look at the discussion of the so-called "Arctic Sea Imperialism" in the history

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translation)] The document is available via the following link: [http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/templates/udir/TM\\_Læreplan.aspx?id=2100&laereplanid=166874](http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/templates/udir/TM_Læreplan.aspx?id=2100&laereplanid=166874).

23 New history textbooks in this context means history textbooks that have been published in accordance with the curricular reform in 1994 (R94). These books have been used and some of them revised and reprinted, over a period of more than 14 years. Although Norwegian teachers now submit to a new curriculum in all school subjects, the new textbooks for many subjects have been delayed .

24 Ivar Libæk, Øyvind Stenersen, Asle Sveen and Svein Arild Aastad, *Historie 1: Verden og Norge før 1850* [History 1: The World and Norway Prior to 1850] (Oslo: Cappelen, 2001), 310.

25 From Ivar Libæk, Øyvind Stenersen, Asle Sveen and Svein Arild Aastad, *Historie I: Verden og Norge før 1850* [History 1: The World and Norway Prior to 1850] (Oslo: Cappelen, 2001), 329.

**textbook** *Spor i tid: Norge etter 1850* (Traces in Time: Norway after 1850) written by Ole Kristian Grimnes and Berit Nøkleby. The textbook discusses the struggle between Denmark and Norway with regard to the Eastern part of Greenland; a conflict that culminated in an “occupation” by a private Norwegian expedition in 1931. It is stated about this event that:

Konflikten tilspisset seg da en privat norsk ekspedisjon “okkuperte” et område der i 1931, heiste det norske flagget og kalte stedet for “Eirik Raudes land”. “Okkupasjonen” ble godkjent av bondepartiregjeringen. Den skapte en bølge av nasjonalisme som stod sterkest i Bondepartiet, men som også strakte seg inn i Venstre og i mindre grad Høyre. Saken ble brakt inn for Den internasjonale domstolen i Haag, som i 1933 slo fast at Øst-Grønland tilhørte Danmark. Norge måtte gi seg.<sup>26</sup> The conflict escalated when a private Norwegian expedition “occupied” an area there in 1931, hoisted the Norwegian flag and called the place “Eirik Raude’s Land.” The “occupation” was approved by the Farmers’ Party government. This created a wave of nationalism, which was very strong in the Farmers’ Party, but the support also came from the Liberal party and to a certain extent from the Conservative party. The case was taken to the International Court of Law at the Hague, which proclaimed that East-Greenland belonged to Denmark in 1933. Norway had to yield to the decision. (Author’s translation)

Even though the sub-chapter has a heading containing the word “imperialism,” the content of the quotation underlines that this was a serious matter, which indicated a true loss for Norway. The matter is solely a Norwegian political affair and no word is mentioned about the population in Greenland. The land of the region in question is regarded as a colony over which two neighboring countries claim sovereignty.

The same textbook presents a quite different perspective when it describes racism in connection with the indigenous population in Norway, i.e. the indigenous Samis and the immigrated Finns. In the following quotation, the wording offers evidence of an alternative viewpoint, compared with the one quoted about the issue on Greenland above:

[...] to minoriteter i Norge var ikke av nordisk rase slik man oppfattet den, nemlig samene og kvenene (innvandrede finner) i Nord-Norge. Overfor dem forente den norske nasjonalismen seg med klare rasefordommer og munnet ut i åpen forskjells-behandling. En lærerinstruks fra 1880 slo fast at alle samiske og kvenske

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26 Ole Kristian Grimnes and Berit Nøkleby, *Spor i tid: Norge etter 1850* [Traces in Time: Norway after 1850] (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1995), 111 f.

barn skulle lære norsk i skolen, men ikke sitt eget morsmål. Lærerne hadde plikt til å passe på at barna brukte norsk også utenfor undervisningen.<sup>27</sup>

[...] two minorities in Norway were not conceived of as a Nordic race; i. e. the Samis and the Finns (immigrated Finns) in the Northern part of Norway. Norwegian nationalism with its clear racist prejudices turned against them, and it resulted in open discrimination. A teachers' manual from 1880 emphasized that all Sami and Finnish children ought to learn Norwegian at school, but not their mother tongue. The teachers were obliged to see to it that the children used the Norwegian language outside school. (Author's translation)

It suffices to stress words like “Norwegian nationalism,” “racist prejudices” and “open discrimination” to point out a difference in the depiction of these minorities. Whereas the Greenlanders remain unmentioned in the sub-chapter dealing with the sovereignty of Greenland, the internal problems related to the minorities in the Northern part of Norway are discussed in a manner and with a wording that express sympathy towards the persecuted groups and criticism towards the Norwegian authorities.

## Final Remarks

In the study of Norwegian history textbooks above, an improvement in the level of objectivity in the description of the Sami population, their civil rights, language and culture is evident. When it comes to the Greenlanders and the territory of Greenland, it can be postulated that the country is still regarded as a colony. The colonial past of Greenland is history, but the depiction of the country in the Norwegian history textbooks is still affected by a rather nationalistic view on the issue. The indigenous population is rarely mentioned and its fate is still not taken into account even in the more recent textbooks. This difference in description offers an interesting distinction: when it comes to indigenous population within the Norwegian national borders, the history textbooks reveal more democratic and less racist perspectives, but with regard to more distant regions like Greenland, the view of the native population has not changed remarkably from the 1970's until now. This means that there is still need for a more balanced view regarding the description of the indigenous population in Greenland.

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27 Ole Kristian Grimnes and Berit Nøkleby, *Spor i tid: Norge etter 1850* [Traces in Time: Norway after 1850] (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1995), 39.

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## Encountering Others in Icelandic Textbooks: Imperialism and Racial Diversity in the Era of Nationalism

### Introduction

Extensive studies of colonialism and imperialism have been conducted over the last thirty years, analyzing colonial relationships and representations of colonized subjects from various angles. Within the field of post-colonial theories, scholars have increasingly pointed out the role of Africa and colonized people as a counter-identification to Europe. They have stressed the importance of acknowledging the part played by imperialism and colonialism in shaping the nationalism and self-conception of European countries.<sup>1</sup> Mary Louise Pratt's term "contact zone," which refers to the spaces of colonial encounters where people, who were otherwise geographically separated, came into contact with each other and established ongoing relations,<sup>2</sup> can also be used to analyze such encounters through textual means. Europeans who had never traveled outside of their own countries were able to meet people in far away places through texts of various kinds. As stressed by Robert Thornton,<sup>3</sup> various parts of the world were available to the majority of Europeans through such textual means.

This discussion focuses on Icelandic identity with regard to how non-European people were presented in Icelandic schoolbooks, especially in relation to images of race and racial identity. I limit the discussion to books published during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, which was an important time in the formation of Icelandic nationalism. Schoolbooks are an interesting medium, aiming at synthesizing and representing "information" that is generally seen as

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1 See Nicholas Dirks, "Introduction: Colonialism and Culture," in *Colonialism and Culture*, ed. N. B. Dirks (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992); Timothy Mitchell, "The Stage of Modernity," in *Questions of Modernity*, ed. T. Mitchell (Minneapolis/London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

2 Mary L. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 6.

3 Robert Thornton, "Narrative Ethnography in Africa 1850–1920: The Creation and Capture of Appropriate Domain for Anthropology," *Man* 18, no. 3 (1983): 502–20.

objective and useful. They are also connected to the nation state; schoolbooks are generally meant to execute the goals of the curriculum composed by the nation state.<sup>4</sup> The discussion explores how ideas of sameness and difference are narrated in these older Icelandic schoolbooks through tales of explorations and colonial encounters, asking how gendered aspects are manifested and how they relate to the racial construction of Icelandic and European identity.

What do these narratives say about European identity as constructed with regard to others and about Icelandic identity as a part of a collective European heritage? To what extent did racial classifications serve as borders between different selfhoods? What kind of “archive of information” – to utilize Edward Said’s term<sup>5</sup> – do Icelandic schoolbooks provide in regard to exploration and relationships with non-European people? The analysis emphasizes how certain ways of framing and thinking about the world perpetrated by the colonial empires also infiltrated conceptions of the world by peoples who had no colonies themselves and were not directly involved in colonial enterprises. As stated in the introduction to this section of the book, it is urgent to analyze how colonial thinking was also a part of the world-views of those on the periphery of the colonial system.

The presence of racial classifications in past textbooks is not surprising, as racial classifications constituted a dominant framework in conceptualizing the world in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe, which reified boundaries and interacted within the dimensions of gender and class. Scholars have, to some extent, disputed when to date the appearance of racism, some seeing it primarily as arising in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, while others see its roots as much older.<sup>6</sup> The question underlying these disputes evolves essentially around how racism is defined; classifications based on skin color were certainly evident in work prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century – in studies by scholars such as Carl Linnéus<sup>7</sup> – but going further back it is certain that even though we find negative references to dark skin color, human diversity was not conceptualized in the same manner as in

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4 Kristín Loftsdóttir, “Learning Differences? Nationalism, Identity and Africa in Icelandic School Textbooks,” *International Textbook Research* 29 (2007): 5 – 22.

5 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 41 – 42.

6 Ann Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 1995), 27 – 28; and Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004). Ann Stoler’s re-reading of Michel Foucault’s writing on race maintains that Foucault’s location of racism as it appears in the 19<sup>th</sup> century primarily refers to the state-racism which he was primarily interested in – not to the more generalized notions of race within the wider society, which are much older (Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*, 27 – 28, 91).

7 Joseph de Gobineau divided, for example, human beings into three main racial categories: black, yellow and white, suggesting that the ‘black’ race has limited or nonexistent (*nulles*) ability to reason and is thus controlled by desire. See Christopher Miller, *Black Darkness: Africanist Discourse in French* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985).

later racist ideologies.<sup>8</sup> In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, racism became institutionalized and was given scientific legitimacy, backed up by recent advances in studies of human diversity, as well as in a firm belief of scientific progress as the key to future human well-being. The number of racial groups and subgroups and how exactly to define them was seen as a problem, which would be solved with the further advances of science. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century an entire generation came of age in Europe who did not generally question the basic racist hypothesis that humans could be divided into several racial types.<sup>9</sup> This shows the integration of racial ideology with ‘common sense’ as a way of understanding and relating to the world. Racial ideologies can thus be seen as a part of discourses that create “archival information” in Edward Said’s sense – supplying people with a mentality, a genealogy, an atmosphere,<sup>10</sup> as well as a point of reference and understanding. In more recent time, scholars have rejected race as a scientific tool for understanding human diversity, seeing it as reflecting a certain social-historical reality, and as being a social construct that came into being at a certain time.

This analysis starts with a brief discussion of the methodology used in analyzing the books and a contextualization for the paper. I then explore to what extent the European body is racialized and gendered in these schoolbooks, furthermore analyzing what is said about exploration and colonization in the textbooks, and how these historical encounters between Europeans and the rest of the world are framed within the narratives.

## Meeting “Others” in Icelandic Schoolbooks

### *Methodology*

The data used for this discussion is based on information collected for the project *Images of Africa in Iceland*,<sup>11</sup> which focuses on historical representations of Africa in various kinds of media. Within this project an extensive analysis was conducted in regard to Icelandic textbooks intended for primary schools focusing on geography, sociology, Christian education, and history. The oldest books examined for

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8 Kristín Loftsdóttir, “Þriðji sonur Nóa: Íslenskar ímyndir Afríku á miðöldum,” *Saga: tímarit sögufélags XLIV* (2006): 123–51.

9 M. Pickering, *Stereotyping: The Politics of Representation* (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001), 125.

10 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 41–42.

11 See Kristín Loftsdóttir, “Learning Differences? Nationalism, Identity and Africa in Icelandic School Textbooks,” *International Textbook Research* 29 (2007): 5–22 and Kristín Loftsdóttir, “Þriðji Sonur Nóa: Íslenskar Ímyndir Afríku Á Miðöldum,” 123–51. The project received funding from the Icelandic Centre for Research (RANNÍS), the Research Fund of the University of Iceland and the Assistant Fund of the University of Iceland. Þórunn Dietz, research assistant, assisted with the data collection for the part of the project discussed here.

this study were from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the most recent from 2000.<sup>12</sup> The texts were analyzed by a type of discourse analysis based on close readings of the texts, in which reading was incorporated with a focus on the representation of particular themes and in which the text was gone through as much as possible without such preconceptions. Some of the data was also based on content analysis (sometimes labeled qualitative discourse analysis), which utilizes checklists where preconceived categories are used to classify and identify the main themes and characteristics of each book. Only history and geography books were analyzed for the discussion here. The geography and history books identified as having information about non-European people (listed in table one and two) were read closely, revealing that the focus of the discussion of non-European people differed greatly between these two types of books. Geography books often held more detailed information about societies that were perceived to be located in remote parts of the world from the perspective of the Icelandic authors, giving extensive descriptions of vegetation, social structure and even some scant historical information. In these books, non-European people are usually discussed within the framework of racial classifications. The mention of non-European people in the history books, however, was most often limited to discussions of European exploration and colonization. The history of “other” people thus only held importance as long as it was seen as connected to European history. The opening words of one schoolbook are a clear reflection of this: it is stated that the history of the world does not tell us about everything that has happened, but only “the most significant events among the most significant nations.”<sup>13</sup>

Table 1: Overview of history texts analyzed that focused on exploration

Author	Title	Publication year*
Eiríkur Gíslason	Ágrip af mannkynssögunni handa barnaskólum	1882
Nordahl Rolfsen	Veraldarsaga	1908
Þorleifur Bjarnason	Mannkynssaga handa unglíngum	1913
Þorleifur Bjarnason and Jóhannes Sigfússon	Mannkynssaga fyrir gagnfræðaskóla	1927
Knútur Arngrímsson and Ólafur Hansson	Mannkynssaga handa gagnfræðaskólum	1943
Ásgeir Hjartarson	Mannkynssaga	1943
Jón Jónsson Aðils	Íslandssaga	1946
Axel Hagnell and Gunnar Olander	Mannkynssaga handa skólum á gagnfræðastigi	1952

12 A total of 164 books in these four disciplines were studied; of these, 43 referred to Africa.

13 Nordahl Rolfsen, *Veraldarsaga: Fyrri hluti, fornöld og miðaldir* (Reykjavík: Ísafoldarprentsmiðja, 1908), 1. Original: “ekki um alt, er gerst hefir, smátt og stórt, heldur það er gerst hefir merkast með hinum merkustu þjóðum.” Translated by Björn Jónsson.

Table 1 (Continued)

Author	Title	Publication year*
Þorleifur H. Bjarnason and Árni Pálsson	Miðaldasaga	1953
Jónas Jónsson	Íslands saga	1966

Table 2: Overview of geography books analyzed in relation to racial categorization

Author	Title	Publication year(s)
Halldór Kr. Friðriksson	Kennslubók í landafræðinni	1867
Þóra Friðriksson	Stutt landafræði handa byrjendum	1897
Karl Finnbogason	Landfræði handa börnum og	1931, 1913
Steingrímur Arason	Landfræði unglungum	1924
Bjarni Sæmundsson	Landfræði handa gagnfræðaskólum	1937

\* Many of the geography and history books have been re-published many times, I have only indicated the publication date available to me here.

### *Racial Classifications in Geography Books*

Racial ideologies in Icelandic schoolbooks published from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century clearly demonstrate how racial ideologies were a blueprint by which to relate to and understand the world as a whole, its diversity and the current position of different individuals and societies. The fact that discussions of racial categories were geographical subjects reflects the interconnectedness of ideas of the body and climate diversity. Human diversity in these books is generally divided into five main racial groups – probably due to the five continents – but the names used for these racial groups vary, especially the names of the European or the “white” group. To give a few examples: Halldór Kr. Friðriksson<sup>14</sup> sees Europeans as belonging to the *Kákususflokkurinn* (Caucasian group), originally named after the Caucasus region in Turkey; Þóra Friðriksson<sup>15</sup> simply refers to color terms saying that they are white men or Indo-Europeans; red men or Indians; black men or “negroes.” The clear vision of firm boundaries is revealed by statements such as those made in Þóra Friðriksson’s book that, in addition to these racial groups, mixed individuals (*blendingar*) can be found due to the fact that “men and women, who were from different groups have had children together.”<sup>16</sup>

14 Halldór Kr. Friðriksson, *Kennslubók í landafræðinni* (Reykjavík: Prentsmiðja Íslands, 1867).

15 Þóra Friðriksson, *Stutt landafræði handa byrjendum* (Reykjavík: Sigfús Eymundsson, 1897), 32.

16 *Ibid.*, 12.

The explanations given by the authors for the criteria behind the classification are also not completely coherent even though the books generally combine physical features with language or cultural properties. The distinctions of humans into these racial categories are for example, according to Karl Finnbogason, based on “outer appearances and physical structure,” (*ytra útliti og byggingu manna*) and on language. The primary tools of identification are, according to Karl Finnbogason, the shape of head, hair type, skin color, and aspects relating to linguistic properties. Even though he prioritizes physical and linguistic characteristics in his categorization, his descriptions of the different “races” reveal an association with personal traits, which are seen as a part of racial makeup. He describes, for example, Native Americans (labeled as “Indians” in the text) as serious, cruel, silent, and devious (*undirförlir*)<sup>17</sup> and Africans (labeled “Sudan-negroes”) as kind, but loud and talkative.<sup>18</sup> Another book by Steingrímur Arason characterizes racial differences as deriving from habits and appearances (*háttum og útliti*)<sup>19</sup> but directly states that racial classification is mostly based on skin color. The descriptions of races list different physical characteristics and the emphasis on the cultural stage of these races is stronger than the other books analyzed, but the idea of cultural stages was also used to differentiate Europeans from colonized people.<sup>20</sup> This is especially apparent in the discussion of the Australian aboriginals who are portrayed as on the lowest cultural stage of “savages,” who in general are said to have more developed senses,<sup>21</sup> but it is also apparent in discussions about different climates leading to different cultural stages, which reflects an age-old ecological determinism. In the Northern areas the natural habitation is too harsh for culture to be fruitful – Steingrímur Arason explains – while the hot areas of the world suffer from nature being too generous for culture to progress.<sup>22</sup> The descriptions of the physical bodies of different races aim at scientific objectivity, objectifying the individuals concerned with wild generalizations based upon different appearances.

Explanations of different races give vivid descriptions of bodily forms, the white race featured as the most ideal form. Bjarni Sæmundsson’s “white race” is

17 Karl Finnbogason, *Landafræði handa börnum og unglíngum* (Reykjavík: Bókaverzlun Guðm. Gamalielssonar, 1931), 111–112.

18 *Ibid.*, 102–103.

19 Steingrímur Arason, *Landafræði (með myndum)* (Reykjavík: Prentsmiðja Gutenberg, 1924); Steingrímur Arason, *Landafræði (með myndum)* (Reykjavík: Prentsmiðja Gutenberg, 1929).

20 Steingrímur Arason, *Landafræði* (1924), 11–14.

21 Steingrímur Arason, *Landafræði* (1924), 14.

22 Steingrímur Arason, *Landafræði* (1924), 6–7; see also Ásgeir Hjartarson, *Mannkynssaga: Fyrsta bindi* (Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 1943), 55. The same emphasis of humans being divided into five races can be seen in Bjarni Sæmundsson, *Landafræði handa gagnfræðaskólum* (Reykjavík: Bókaverzlun Sigfúsar Eymundssonar, 1937).

characterized by tall foreheads and soft curly hair (*liðast í lokkum*).<sup>23</sup> Halldór Kr. Friðriksson's *Kákasusflokkurinn* is characterized with white skin color, a "beautifully" shaped head and soft blond or dark hair.<sup>24</sup> The text modestly states that the bodies of individuals in this group are composed in the most perfect manner (*fullkomnasta líkamsvöxt*).<sup>25</sup> In another history book, the Germanic people (*Germanar*) are identified as the ancestors of the Nordic people. They are described earlier as being large and strong with light head and facial hair and blue eyes as well as being "sharp eyed" (*snareygðir*).<sup>26</sup>

Descriptions of different racial groups are often accompanied by pictures of men, which clearly reflect how men represent the normal body. This can also be seen in the texts, such as in Karl Finnbogason's book that states that Indians are beardless (*skegglausir*).<sup>27</sup> In Finnbogason's texts, the position of women is singled out in particular, meaning that to some extent he felt the need to briefly mention women and their status and role within society. He underlines the difficult position of women in these societies, stating for example that Africans buy as many women as they can afford and then let them work because they themselves are "said to be very lazy,"<sup>28</sup> while Native Americans use their women as slaves and let them handle all the domestic chores,<sup>29</sup> but Australian aboriginals steal or inherit their wives, who then become their slaves — the relationship symbolized in that he bites the upper part of one of her fingers on the left hand.<sup>30</sup>

Not only is the white male body the norm, but Europe is constructed as the norm in terms of its people, societies and climate. Bjarni Sæmundsson's text reflects this conception in stating that Europe "is well designed by nature as discussed previously [in relation to its geographical features] leading it to be more advanced in regard to culture and to having been more advanced for quite a while."<sup>31</sup> Karl Finnbogason observes that no powerful culture or civilized nation is composed by "negroes," and adds that nations do not prosper under their rule, and that Europeans must thus control these states.<sup>32</sup> To underline the quality of this control, Karl Finnbogason informs us that only one "Negro-Republic"

23 Bjarni Sæmundsson, *Landafræði handa gagnfræðaskólum*, 9.

24 Halldór Kr. Friðriksson, *Kennslubók í landafræðinni*, 12.

25 *Ibid.*, 11.

26 Þorleifur H. Bjarnason and Árni Pálsson, *Miðaldasaga* (Reykjavík: Bókauktgáfa Menningarsjóðs, 1953), 9.

27 Karl Finnbogason, *Landafræði handa börnum og unglíngum* (Reykjavík: Bókaverzlun Guðm. Gamalielssonar, 1913), 111.

28 *Ibid.*, 103.

29 *Ibid.*, 112.

30 *Ibid.*, 122.

31 Bjarni Sæmundsson, *Landafræði handa gagnfræðaskólum*, 12.

32 In Icelandic: "Engin menningarþjóð sem nokkuð kveður að er Negrakyns, og illa þrífast ríki undir stjórn Negra. Enda lúta þeir flestir Evrópumönnum. Karl Finnbogason, *Landafræði handa börnum og unglíngum*." (1913), 110.

exists, Liberia, where things are completely out of hand.<sup>33</sup> Bjarni Sæmundsson states that the European climate is “just right” for culture to blossom and that European culture has gradually spread out to the rest of the world, especially in America and Australia where it has become the “only” culture, thus pushing other cultural traditions out of the way.<sup>34</sup> This remark not only places emphasis on its superiority but also leads the reader to envision a slow and natural process where an objective unchanging European “culture” becomes the norm for the rest of the world.<sup>35</sup>

The geography books generally seem to share a common vision of the world as composed of neat and well-organized diversity, where bodies, intellectual capacity, culture and language are bound closely together. The authors’ descriptions of “other” races reveal great interest in the physical characteristics of the human body, as well as the branding and normalizing of the European male body as unmarked and natural, making gendered narratives where males are the point of reference, defining not only humanity itself but also humanity’s different “types” or races.

## Common Heritage in History Books

As can be seen from the previous discussion, the authors of the geography books generally do not talk about Icelandic nationality but rather see Icelanders as naturally part of a specific racial group. The history books from the same period, however, have interesting information about the historical origin of Icelanders, which becomes particularly interesting when read in light of the racial classifications provided by the geography books. Jón Jónsson Aðils was one of the most influential persons in shaping Icelandic nationalistic sentiments in the early twentieth century.<sup>36</sup> His ideas stress the origin of the Icelandic nation as derived from the most “noble” part of the Nordic and Irish populations, along with emphasizing its isolation as leading to its unique character.<sup>37</sup> In the textbook *Íslandssaga* (The History of Iceland), Jón Jónsson Aðils states that 84 % of Icelandic settlers originated from Norway, coming from the best and most noble families.<sup>38</sup> Another book published around the same time, which also focused on

33 Ibid., 110.

34 Bjarni Sæmundsson, *Landafræði handa gagnfræðaskólum*, 12.

35 Bjarni Sæmundsson, *Landafræði handa gagnfræðaskólum*, 141.

36 Sigríður Matthíasdóttir, “Réttlætning Þjóðernis: Samanburður á alþýðufyrirlestrum Jóns Aðils og hugmyndum Johanns Gottlieb Fichte,” *Skírnir: tímarit hins íslenska bókmenntafélags* 164 (1995): 36–64.

37 Jónas Jónsson, *Íslands saga: Fyrri bindi* (Reykjavík: Ríkisútgáfa námsbóka, 1966), 245.

38 Jón Jónsson Aðils, *Íslandssaga* (Reykjavík: Ísafoldarprentsmiðja, 1946), 22.

Iceland's history by Jónas Jónsson frá Hriflu,<sup>39</sup> was originally published in 1915 (the first part) and 1916 (the second part), and has been republished many times since.<sup>40</sup> Ideas similar to those expressed in Jón Jónsson Aðil's book are present here as well. Jónas Jónsson states that the Icelanders originated primarily from Norwegians who left their country due to hardship inflicted by Harald Fairhair (*Haraldur hárfagri*), and that these people were from the "best part" of the Norwegian population. Historian Unnur B. Karlsdóttir<sup>41</sup> notes in her analysis of eugenics movements in Iceland in the late nineteenth / early twentieth century, that the Icelandic self-conception of coming from the most noble part of Nordic and Irish populations fit well with the general ideology of the eugenics movement, where some populations were seen as better bred than others. Thus, while the geography books place emphasis on Iceland's place within a white racial group – a European racial group – these two books about Iceland's history demonstrate the superiority of Icelanders in comparison to the rest of Europe.

The "discovery" of the New World is an important aspect of world history in these textbooks, often seen as a turning point from the rather static middle ages toward the scientific revolution leading to modern times. The meta-narrative of the Enlightenment as the age of discoveries that led to the advancement of science seems, according to Nicholas Dirks,<sup>42</sup> to ignore the importance of the colonial project as stimulating and facilitating "active exercise of the scientific imagination" to a great extent. The accounts given by the schoolbook authors are of course varied with somewhat different emphasis and varying in length. Through analyzing these narratives side-by-side, several themes can be seen as foregrounding how these events are narrated. The themes revolve around what is emphasized, what is implied and what is not mentioned.

First of all, we see heroic descriptions of the individual explorers as people who were successfully able to do the impossible against all odds. The texts speak of Prince Henry the Navigator, Vasco de Gama and Christopher Columbus. Columbus is in fact the most frequently evoked hero and one account stresses that he has received little recognition for his discoveries.<sup>43</sup> A history book by Knútur Arngrímsson and Ólafur Hansson provides an extensive discussion of Columbus, portraying him as a self-made man of poor origins who believed in

39 Jónas Jónsson was Iceland's most influential politician in early 20th century, as well as being important in shaping the educational policies of the Icelandic nation state.

40 The copy I have was published in 1966. The book was, however, used much longer than this. I read it as a child in primary school in the 1970s. The fact that the teachers repeatedly selected it over newer textbooks was probably due to the fluent narrative skills that the book exhibits.

41 Unnur B. Karlsdóttir, *Mannkynsbætur: Hugmyndir um bætta kynstofna hérlendis og erlendis á 19 og 20. öld* (Reykjavík: Sagnfræðistofnun, Háskólaútgáfan, 1998), 151.

42 Dirks, "Introduction: Colonialism and Culture," 6.

43 Þorleifur Bjarnason, *Mannkynssaga handa unglíngum* (Reykjavík: Bókaverzlun Guðm. Gamalielssonar, 1913), 84.

his mission and who could be “tough” (*harðjagl*) when needed, resourceful (*ráðkjænn*) and persistent in attaining his goals.<sup>44</sup> The text states that he “showed white people the way to the endless resources of the western part of the world.”<sup>45</sup> Even though most other books do not give such subjective evaluations of Columbus, they still describe him as someone who achieved great accomplishments.<sup>46</sup> The explorers are, furthermore, seen as the movers of the grand wheel of history, leading to the advancement of Europe and European history. Of primary importance in the books are how the colonial period benefited Europeans and how the explorations changed European history and thus world history. One book gives a brief discussion of the explorers Prince Henry the Navigator, Vasco de Gama and Christopher Columbus. It underlines the accumulation of knowledge for Europe that these explorations brought.<sup>47</sup> The countries they explored were constructed more as reservoirs of raw material than as a part of an active creation of the ‘modern’ world. Columbus’s accomplishments were interpreted as causing so much change in the development and progress of Europeans that many saw it as a new stage in the history of human kind.<sup>48</sup> The focus is not only Eurocentric but also features males as the embodiment of civilization and of European identity.

Furthermore, the stories of exploration are highly personal but tend to focus on only one main character, excluding both his crew and more importantly the native people living in the countries explored, who are often not visible at all. An interesting exception to this is the exploration and colonization of Middle and Central America is discussed and where a great deal of sympathy expressed for the Native Americans.<sup>49</sup> This becomes especially striking when compared to the discussion of Africa where the actual people there are almost invisible. The horror of the slave trade and the colonial period is usually dealt with in one or two sentences, and the tone of the text is objective and formal. One book mentions slavery states, for example, stating that the Spanish: “bought blacks (*svertingja*) or kidnapped them from Africa and took them to America. They

44 Knútur Arngrímsson and Ólafur Hansson, *Mannkynssaga handa gagnfræðaskólum: Nýja öldin fram að 1789* (Reykjavík: Bókaverzlun Sigfúsar Eymundssonar, 1943), 8–11.

45 In Icelandic: “[M]aðurinn sem hafði vísað hvítum þjóðum leið að óþrjótandi auðlinum Vesturálfu.” Knútur Arngrímsson and Ólafur Hansson, *Mannkynssaga handa gagnfræðaskólum*, 10.

46 Þorleifur H. Bjarnason and Árni Sigfússon, *Mannkynssaga fyrir gagnfræðaskóla: Miðaldir* (Reykjavík: Bókaverzlun Sigfúsar Eymundssonar, 1927), 63.

47 Þorleifur Bjarnason, *Mannkynssaga handa unglíngum*, 74.

48 Afrek Columbusar “hefur valdið svo miklum aldahvörfum í þróun og framsókn Evrópuþjóða, að mörgum telst, að með því hefjist nýtt tímabil í sögu mannkyns og að miðöldum sje að fullu og öllu lokið.” Þorleifur H. Bjarnason and Árni Sigfússon, *Mannkynssaga fyrir gagnfræðaskóla: Miðaldir*, 63.

49 For example: Eiríkur Gíslason, *Ágrip af mannkynssögunni handa barnaskólum* (Reykjavík: Ísafoldar-prentsmiðjan, 1882), 49.

were stronger than the Indians and tolerated work better. This was the origin of the slavery in America that lasted for several centuries.”<sup>50</sup> In another book by Þorleifur H. Bjarnarson and Árni Pálsson, the text objectively states that when the coast of Guinea was found by the Portuguese, they took slaves and sand of gold (as the text says) with them.<sup>51</sup> When giving a brief discussion of the conflict between the English government and the Boers in South Africa (not in fact focusing on the actual conflicts but more on a discussion of the interactions between the governments), the African people are nowhere to be seen.<sup>52</sup> Þorleifur Bjarnarson mentions Livingstone and Stanley as explorers of the interior of Africa in his discussion of explorations of powerful (*þrekmiklum*) explorers.<sup>53</sup> When the texts speak of the European rule of the world, they are clearly speaking of men’s bodies and men’s intellect as ruling the rest of the world’s populations and environments.

Þorleifur Bjarnason briefly speaks about the thirst for power by the more powerful countries (mentioning, for example, England, Germany and France). He claims that the six most powerful nations do what they like in their relations with other countries and do not show much consideration for the interests of smaller nations. Their competition in gaining colonies in other parts of the world, the author states, results in a situation in which war can always be expected between the European nations. What is interesting from a contemporary perspective is that the sympathy still does not lie with the colonized countries but more with the marginalized European states.<sup>54</sup>

Finally, it is interesting to see how Icelanders enter the picture in history books focusing on world history. In the textbook by Knútur Arngrímsson and Ólafur Hansson, it appears as if the Icelanders are primarily to be thanked for initiating the age of discoveries: “Since Icelanders had found Greenland in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and Vínland in the year 1000, many people in Southern Europe had known that there was a country west in the Atlantic ocean.”<sup>55</sup> This, the text

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50 In Icelandic: “Þá tóku Spánverjar það til bragðs að kaupa svertingja eða ræna þeim í Afríku og flytja til Ameríku. Þeir voru sterkari en Indíanar og þöldu betur vinnu. Það var upphaf þrælahaldsins í Ameríku, sem hjelzt síðan um nokkrar aldir.” Þorleifur Bjarnason, *Mannkynssaga handa unglíngum*, 75–76; A similar account can be found in in Axel Hagnell and Gunnar Olander, *Mannkynssaga handa skólum á gagnfræðastigi*. Translated by Ármann Halldórsson (Reykjavík: Bókaútgáfa Þorsteins M. Jónssonar H.F, 1952), 66.

51 Þorleifur H. Bjarnarson and Árni Pálsson, *Miðaldsaga* (Reykjavík: Bókaútgáfa Menningarsjóðs, 1953), 184.

52 Þorleifur Bjarnason, *Mannkynssaga handa unglíngum*, 146.

53 Þorleifur Bjarnason, *Mannkynssaga handa unglíngum*, 154.

54 Þorleifur H. Bjarnason, *Mannkynssaga handa unglíngum*, 153.

55 In Icelandic: “Frá því er Íslendingar fundu Grænland á 10. öld og Vínland árið 1000, hafði það verið á vitorði ýmissa manna suður í Evrópu, að land væri vestan við Atlanzhaf.” Arngrímsson and Hansson, *Mannkynssaga handa gagnfræðaskólum*, 8.

continues, encouraged Columbus to seek new routes to Asia.<sup>56</sup> Concluding the discussion, the text states that the *Icelander* Leifur Eiríksson should be given the honor of having found America, but Columbus can be credited with having found a new route there.<sup>57</sup>

When analyzing the interconnected history in Africa and images of explorations, colonization and imperialism in the schoolbooks published prior to the 1950's, it is apparent that most of the descriptions are relatively brief. Several history books address the history of Africa within the context of European explorations from late 14<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>58</sup> thus portraying Africa as entering this stage of world history through its exploration by European men. The exception to this is Egypt, but Egyptian history is often not represented as an African history, but rather as the history of the civilization that eventually led to the birth of Western society.<sup>59</sup> There are, however, also exceptions to this simplistic picture of European people as the rulers of the world. The book *Mannkynssaga* by Þorleifur H. Bjarnarson published in 1913 gives a somewhat detailed description of ancient Egypt, briefly describing its decline and subjectification under foreign powers.<sup>60</sup> He interestingly points out that the Nordic people were “uneducated and uncivilized savages” (*ómenntaðir og siðlausir villimenn*)<sup>61</sup> during this time frame.

## Final comments

My intention here is not necessarily to criticize these images, as they are from schoolbooks that are no longer in use and bear testimony to a different kind of worldview. Simultaneously, however, they are important in that they reflect central aspects of the formation of Icelandic nationalism and self-image. They show European identity – at least in an Icelandic context – as made meaningful in relation to stories of colonialization and exploration. This is shown in how the encounters between Europeans and non-Europeans were not framed in terms of explaining different societies, but instead to reflect on the heroism and resilience of European individuals and the importance of these events for European empires and cultures. These racial classifications in geography books – put forward with such assurance and self-confidence – along with descriptions of colo-

56 Knútur Arngrímsson and Ólafur Hansson, *Mannkynssaga handa gagnfræðaskólum*, 8.

57 Knútur Arngrímsson and Ólafur Hansson, *Mannkynssaga handa gagnfræðaskólum*, 10.

58 Axel Hagnell and Gunnar Olander, *Mannkynssaga handa skólum á gagnfræðastigi*. Translated by Ármann Halldórsson. (Reykjavík: Bókaútgáfa Þorsteins M. Jónssonar H.F. 1952), 64.

59 For example in Hagnell and Olander, *Mannkynssaga handa skólum á gagnfræðastigi*, 64.

60 Þorleifur H. Bjarnason, *Mannkynssaga handa unglíngum*, 3.

61 Þorleifur H. Bjarnason, *Mannkynssaga handa unglíngum*, 1

nization and imperialism are portrayed as natural steps on the route towards the progress of the human kind, but they also reflect a system of thought that is both sexist and Eurocentric. As claimed by Nirmal Puwar,<sup>62</sup> the invisibility of the skin-color and the gender of certain groups secured their position of power; the power of being male and white is located in its invisibility.

In the narratives spoken about here, this is correct to a certain extent, but it would be more apt to say that we find interplay between a visibility and invisibility of male bodies. They are in some sense clearly visible as the heroes of the stories, in both pictures and bold statements of brave explorations and inventions, but simultaneously invisible in the sense that it becomes self-evident in the text that the white male perspective is the one that history should be written from. It becomes evident that they represent their nations; therefore, they should be the ones to speak for women and for the rest of the world. Within a globalized world, heritage, tradition and history are increasingly commercialized and popularized as that which sets different nations apart. It is useful to recognize that racism and sexism are also a part of Iceland's heritage, and that they are inherent and self-evident in Iceland's conception of the self during a specific time period. If we believe that the worldview of the nation today is shaped by its past, as the Icelandic nationalists have claimed, then this is a point that we should not overlook.

## Textbooks

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Karl Finnbogason. *Landafræði handa börnum og unglíngum*. Reykjavík: Bókaverzlun Guðm. Gamalielssonar, 1931.

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62 Nirmal Puwar, "Thinking About Making a Difference," *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 6 (2004): 65–80.

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**Part Two**  
**Ends and Means: Materials in History Teaching**



## **History in the Textbooks and the Teachers Who Use them: a Teachers' Survey and More**

In the first section of this book textbooks and other teaching materials are investigated as tools in the hands of students and teachers and in society at large. Textbooks are indeed powerful tools as every student uses them and every member of society is or has been a student. History texts have a role in “opening the mind and drawing boundaries.” The investigation presented in this section of the book concerns the role of history textbooks and other teaching materials and the expectations of teachers as the users of the materials and the expectations of society in the form of official curricula. The study also looks at the evaluation of specific textbooks made by researchers and teachers.

In order to get a grasp on teachers' opinions, an online survey directed at history teachers was conducted by part of the Nordic research group *History in the Textbooks*. Between November 2006 and April 2007, 409 Nordic teachers answered this questionnaire about their ideas and their evaluation of the role of textbooks and other educational materials in history instruction, both in general and regarding materials of their own choice with which they were familiar.

In the following chapters seven authors from each of the Nordic countries use the history teacher survey as a point of departure or as a frame of reference for their analyses, which concern the ends and means of materials used or not used in history teaching. The survey is a source for further discussion and investigation along with other materials, a tool among other tools. Some of the authors turn a critical eye on certain texts in specific textbooks (Skjelbred and Reichenberg, Poulsen), others turn to the aims and goals of written curricula (Hammarlund, Helgason), the kinds of teaching material used (Vinterek) or look at other surveys (Hammarlund, Vinterek).

The chapters focus on history texts as elements of history as a discipline and on history pedagogy. A variety of approaches are used by the authors. Textual analysis and literacy theory are used in Skjelbred and Reichenberg's investigation of causality in Swedish and Norwegian textbooks. Þorsteinn Helgason and Pálmi Magnússon borrow widely from philosophy and ethics. Jens Aage Poulsen uses narrative theory and compares his results with Hayden White's

ideas of trope and emplotment. Monika Vinterek, Tom Gullberg and KG Hammarlund move within the discourse of curriculum theory. Not only the methodology is different, however, readers will also discern some differences of opinion among the authors, e.g. in their interpretations of the teacher survey.

## The Ideal Textbook

The chapters of this section are descriptive and analytical but many of them are normative as well. Explicitly or implicitly, the authors want to improve the teaching of history in general and history textbooks in particular. They argue against history education based on “naïve realism” (Pálmi Magnússon) where history is told as “a single, fact-based account” (Hammarlund) which is “absolute and objective” (Poulsen) and against using textbooks which pivot on “the notion that the way things are told is simply the way things were” (Þorsteinn Helgason, citing Wineburg, 2001). This criticism is very much in line with official written curricula in the Nordic countries where critical thinking and causal connections are emphasized. At the same time, surveys on actual teaching and student perceptions of history do not point to many rewards for the efforts of the curricula standards (Hammarlund). Where do textbooks and other educational materials stand in this struggle? The positions of the authors are somewhat different in these matters. KG Hammarlund’s view is that “...history textbooks are of limited use for those teachers that want to take classroom work beyond a one-dimensional and fact-based mediation.” At the other end of the spectrum, Þorsteinn Helgason asserts that textbook authors *can* stimulate critical thinking by taking certain measures.

The contours of the ideal textbook can be discerned by putting different aspects that arise in the chapters of this section of the book together. In an ideal textbook the author would be aware of the values she/he is conveying, as a value-free textbook does not exist (Pálmi Magnússon). The author’s choice of subjects to be dealt with would be conscious, well motivated and yet still always arguable (Þorsteinn Helgason). The factual presentations would be vivid and inspiring, containing emotional and aesthetic dimensions (Vinterek, Poulsen). Where possible, the documentary record would be cited and the style and tone non-authoritative (Þorsteinn Helgason). Wherever an opportunity can be found, authors would bring “together the pupil’s individual history and the public narrative” of each country’s history (Hammarlund) which are “neither completely absolute and objective nor relative and subjective (Poulsen).” In the narratives, context and causal links would be observed and cultivated (Skjeldbred and Reichenberg, Hammarlund). The questions and tasks in the textbook would encourage critical thinking and reflection and the book would “provide

the students with knowledge or help so they can produce an acceptable, qualified answer” (Poulsen). Of course, this rosy portrayal of a textbook can also be questioned as can the *role* of the textbook in history instruction in relation to other elements.

Whether the textbook of the type described above is wanted and welcomed by teachers, students, or the public at large is yet another matter. The power of tradition weighs heavily and appears as a continuation from one textbook to another through an obvious “intertextuality” (Aamotsbakken, first section, this volume). Teachers and students are used to “textbook” texts and may oppose non-traditional kinds of texts even though they are weary of the old ones. Politics are also at stake with the national narrative as the great divide. The patriotic role of history teaching is firmly rooted in social institutions and governments. Even democratic Nordic governments sometimes intervene directly in the framework of history education. A recent example of this took place in Denmark where the Minister of Education interfered in the efforts of a committee developing a new history curriculum by personally adding to the overarching aims that “teaching has to familiarize the students with Danish culture and history.”<sup>1</sup> The alertness of governments to changes in the content and scope of history texts in schools is well known throughout the world, from Iceland<sup>2</sup> to the United States<sup>3</sup> and Gilgit, Pakistan,<sup>4</sup> just to name a few examples.

## The Role of Teaching Materials and the Teacher

Ideal or not, the textbook still holds the number one place among teaching materials in history instruction (as with other subjects) as shown in the present surveys (see Vinterek’s chapter) and as confirmed in many other evaluations. Consequently, the quality of textbooks is of utmost importance. Are teachers in agony if the ideal of the perfect textbook is not realized? On the contrary, as stated by Pálmi Magnússon in his chapter on values, “the data does suggest that history teachers are very active in light of their views about the transmission of values and the content of the teaching materials that they use.” When they are

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1 Leni Malacinski, “Undervisningen skal gøre eleverne fortrolige med dansk kultur og historie.” *Avisen.dk*, “Bertel Haarder erklærer værdikamp i historietimen,” *Avisen.dk*, April 7, 2008. <http://avisen.dk>

2 Wolfgang Edelstein, “The Rise and Fall of the Social Science Curriculum Project in Iceland, 1974–1984: Reflections on Reason and Power in Educational Progress,” *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 19, no. 23 (1987).

3 Gary B. Nash, Charlotte Crabtree and Ross Dunn, *History on Trial. Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998).

4 Georg Stöber, “Religious Identities Provoked: The Gilgit ‘Textbook Controversy’ and its Conflictual Context,” *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 29, no. 4 (2007).

dissatisfied with how a topic or issue is dealt with in the textbook which they are using, they do not remain passive bystanders but rather discuss it openly with their students. Moreover, they view their own narratives and lectures as the most used “teaching materials,” second only to the textbook. In addition, they use maps, the Internet, documentary films and many other materials in their teaching practices, which “gives a lot of opportunity to supplement or compensate for an insufficient textbook” (Hammarlund).

Despite this, the authors express their concerns. Vinterek writes, “I conclude that a majority of the Nordic teachers in this study regard communication of subject knowledge as an overarching aim of history instruction.” This seems to be done at the expense of an experiential dimension, the development of skills and “fostering,” which would include conveying values. National identity as “an overwhelming theme in most history textbooks” (Þorsteinn Helgason) can be seen, however, as serving an aim of “fostering.” The interviews Gullberg conducted with teachers in Finland emphasized the (national) identity function of history teaching to a larger degree than the online survey indicated. To what extent the Nordic textbooks follow the pattern of other history textbooks throughout the world needs further research. A closer look at the function of (national) identity in history teaching is also called for by several other authors.

Overall, the crucial role of the teacher arises in all the articles. History texts are important, and above all textbooks, but teachers direct their use, interpret their content, emphasize the values textbooks express and create the environment for fruitful historical learning.

## The Nordic History Teacher Survey

The Nordic history teacher survey consisted of fifteen main questions and contained six background questions on age, gender, educational background and school level. The initial main question (number 7) was:

What are the most important roles of teaching materials in your opinion? (Teachers were asked to arrange the following five options in order of importance.)

- Encouraging independent thinking among students
- Providing a historical overview
- Defining and strengthening student identity
- Offering insight into the theory and principles of history
- Conveying values

Each alternative was then asked about in more detail, e.g., (question 8) “How can teaching materials best encourage independent thinking among students?”

again with five options to be rated according to importance. Next the teachers were asked to choose a specific textbook (or textbook package) with which they were familiar and evaluate it using the same criteria.

The formulation of the questions forced the teachers to think along lines that they were not necessarily used to, for example, textbooks as conveyers of values. The survey was also challenging because of the ranking of the options, which made it impossible to judge all alternatives as equally important. The choice of terminology was a special challenge for the developers of the questionnaire. A survey of this type shouldn't be too extensive and decisions had to be made regarding areas of emphasis. For example, choices had to be made about what values should be included. "Nationalism" was excluded because of its negative connotation but "national identity" was deemed to be valid. "Democracy" was not included for an opposite reason; due to the overriding positive emphasis on democracy in the Nordic countries, it was considered likely that its ranking would be predictable and therefore less interesting to include in the survey. This may have been a wrong conclusion however, considering the fact that the development of democracy received one of the lowest priorities among 31,000 fifteen year old students who participated in the European survey *Youth and History* in 1994/1995.<sup>5</sup> "Independent thinking" replaced "critical thinking" to avoid a term that would make teachers answer too fast, as it is a word often used in special directions. This may have equally been a wrong decision. Difficulties also arose in regard to the translations of terms in the survey, which was originally written in Swedish and then translated into Norwegian, Danish, Finnish and Icelandic.

Aside from "symmetrical" questions, teachers were also asked to answer, "What do you do if you are dissatisfied with a how a topic or issue is dealt with in the textbook you are using?" by choosing between five alternatives (question 13). Finally, teachers were asked to rate how often they used different types of materials (textbooks, films etc., question number 21).

Using questionnaires to survey opinions, attitudes and beliefs is very common in the social sciences and education. From predicting election results to measuring students' attitudes toward learning in the international PISA study, questionnaires are used to get answers to a wide range of questions. But the construction of a questionnaire is not a simple task and requires teamwork as it is never easy to decide which questions and concepts (values) to include. Of the group of people working together to design this survey, some had special knowledge of history and history instruction and others had methodological

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5 Magne Angvik and Bodo von Borries, eds., *Youth and History: A Comparative European Survey on Historical Consciousness and Political Attitudes among Adolescents, Vol. A* (Hamburg: Körber-Stiftung, 1997), A 19, A 76.

expertise in constructing questionnaires. It is difficult to include all the “important” questions in a survey, but the authors believe that the questions included are important and provide valuable information about the opinions of Nordic history teachers with regard to history textbooks and teaching materials.

The validity of the survey results depends on the quality of the questionnaire and how well the participants represent the sample population. Participation in the study was voluntary and was elicited through teacher associations and informal channels such as homepages and Internet post lists. The survey was online and available in five Scandinavian languages. A lack of computer expertise could be a factor leading to non-response but it is likely that almost all teachers in Nordic countries have sufficient computer knowledge to be able to answer an online questionnaire; therefore the web-based format should not have hindered participation.

A total of 409 respondents answered the questionnaire during the six months it was open; 44 from Denmark, 60 in Sweden, 97 in Iceland, 151 from Norway, 19 Finnish speakers in Finland and 38 Swedish speaking Finns. Participation in Iceland and Norway was better than in the other countries. As Iceland has a total population of only 300.000 inhabitants and only a few hundred history teachers total, the participation from this country was particularly good. The small percentage of participants from Finland and Denmark weaken the validity of the responses in those countries.

Men participated in the study more than women (53 % men and 47 % women) in all of the countries except Iceland (42 % men and 58 % women). The average age of participants was 43.8 years old with the oldest coming from Norway (average age of 47 years) and the youngest being the Swedish speaking Finns (average age of 40 years).

Most of the 409 participants (388) referred to teaching either at the primary school level (Swedish *grundskola*, grade levels 1–9) or the secondary school level (Swedish *gymnasium*) when answering the questionnaire. Over half (52 %) referred to the *gymnasium* level, 33 % to grade levels 7–9 and 15 % referred to grade levels 1–6. This varied between countries; for example only 8 % of the participants in Denmark and 22 % in Sweden had the *gymnasium* level in mind as opposed to 78 % in Norway.

Although 409 teachers is not a large proportion of all Nordic history teachers, it does represent five countries, different age groups, both genders and as they took the time to participate in the study, there is every reason to hear their opinions. The participants were not randomly selected from the teacher population, and it is likely that they are more actively engaged on average than teachers in general. It is also likely that this group is similar from country to country making this a fair sample of devoted history teachers in all of the Nordic countries.

The teacher survey, however, is only one reference in this section of the present book. The authors freely utilize other surveys, their own observations and experiences as well as general educational and historical discussions. The scope of interests represented range from written curricula, the writing of textbooks, the text itself and the teachers' choice of educational material to values and ideology as reflected in textbooks and the teachers' opinions.



## **Beyond the Book Cover: Curriculum Goals and Learning Materials**

### **History Knowledge and Learning Outcomes**

The subject-specific learning outcomes in the Swedish history curriculum correspond fairly well with the definition of knowledge, which is a cornerstone of the general curriculum for Swedish compulsory education:

Knowledge is a complex concept, which can be expressed in a variety of forms – as facts, understanding, skills and accumulated experience – all of which presuppose and interact with each other.<sup>1</sup>

Learning outcomes in all subject-specific curricula are divided in two parts. The first, labeled “Goals to strive toward,” expresses and specifies, as the general curriculum puts it, the orientation of the work and the qualitative development desired in the school. The second, consisting of “Goals to be attained,” defines the minimum knowledge – understood as facts, understanding, skills and accumulated experience – that a pupil should have attained by the time he or she finishes school.

The goals to strive toward are addressed to headmasters and teachers (“The school should strive to ensure that all pupils...”) but are nevertheless formulated in terms of what the pupils ought to learn and/or achieve. They are, however, so extensive that not even the most dedicated teacher or pupil can expect to achieve them during the limited amount of classroom hours that are assigned to history as a school subject. A possible interpretation is that they are meant to act as a basis for planning and that pupils should meet the subject in such a form and content that they, in the future, are able to further develop their knowledge and put it to use as the goals suggest.

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<sup>1</sup> *Curriculum for the Compulsory School System, the Pre-school Class and the Leisure-time Centre* (Stockholm: Skolverket, 2006), 6.

The four forms of knowledge specifically mentioned in the general curriculum can all be found in the subject-specific “goals to strive for”:

The pupil should have *factual knowledge* about “important historical figures, events and periods” and also achieve a “broad and in-depth knowledge of their cultural heritage, as well as that developed by different national minority groups.” There are only a few specific topics mentioned, but when leaving compulsory school after school year 9 (age 16) all pupils are supposed to have “knowledge of modern history, covering progress and the striving for peace, as well as genocide, especially the Holocaust, revolutions and war,” and pupils in school year 5 (age 12) should “be familiar with the history of their home district and how this has shaped its culture.”<sup>2</sup>

The *skills* that pupils are supposed to develop include the ability to “differentiate between historical structures, development trends and processes of change,” to “use history as an instrument for understanding other subjects,” and to “assess different texts, media and other sources, which interpret and explain historical processes.”<sup>3</sup>

*Understanding* includes the pupils’ ability to understand the importance of heritage for shaping one’s identity as well as “background to historical phenomena and events and their relationships,” so that “these can be understood, explained and interpreted from different perspectives.” Also mentioned is the insight that “historically determined societal and cultural forms are conditioned by time and that people from different periods should be viewed in terms of the conditions prevailing at that time.”<sup>4</sup>

*Accumulated experience*, finally, is the form of knowledge that is the hardest to grasp. It is sometimes described as a kind of silent knowledge, the craftsman’s safe choice of the proper tool for the given task. When it comes to history as a school subject a certain form of accumulated experience suggests itself as a possibility: the experiential knowledge that can be described as *historical consciousness*. One of the goals is to ensure that the pupils “acquire a sense of history, which makes easier the interpretation of current events and developments, and creates a preparedness for the future.”<sup>5</sup>

Historical consciousness is a concept that has held a central position in the field of history teaching during the last two to three decades in Germany and Scandinavia, and during the last few years in the UK as well.<sup>6</sup> However, this does

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2 *History Syllabus for the Compulsory School Established July 2007*, via Skolverket, <http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/2098>.

3 *History Syllabus*.

4 *History Syllabus*.

5 *History Syllabus*.

6 Peter Lee, “‘Walking Backwards into Tomorrow’ – Historical Consciousness and Understanding History,” *International Journal of History Learning, Teaching and Research* 4, no. 1

not mean that the concept can be unequivocally defined. To the contrary, many scholars have pointed out the concept's ambiguity (see e.g. Jeismann 1979, Jensen 1997).<sup>7</sup> The Swedish historian Peter Aronsson has suggested three distinctive interpretations.<sup>8</sup> He distinguishes between

- “*Historiskt medvetande*” for which I suggest the translation *awareness of history*: to know about the existence of the past and our relationship to it;
- “*Historiemedvetande*” or, according to the wording of the syllabus, *sense of history*: to have an idea of how the past, the present and the future are related to each other;
- “*Historiemedvetenhet*” or *historical consciousness*: to be aware of one's own existential place in the stream of history, the individual ability to relate to dimensions of temporality.

*Awareness of history* can be seen as the least sophisticated form of the three but it nevertheless goes far beyond a concept of history as being nothing but facts about past events; it allows for some kind of connection between the past and the present, and events can be linked together in causal relationships. A *sense of history* opens up the more complex insight that our knowledge about the past is influenced by our views of the present and the future. Our knowledge and understanding of the past is therefore not given once and for all and causal connections can go both ways along history's axis of time. *Historical consciousness*, finally, adds an emotion-based understanding – i.e. history is about *me*.

The school curriculum gives no suggestion as to which of the three varieties of “consciousness” the pupils should develop. The aforementioned wording, “a sense of history, which makes easier the interpretation of current events and developments, and creates a preparedness for the future,” seems to accentuate the past-present-future relationship but not necessarily in a way that underlines that such a relationship goes both ways: the past has shaped the present, but our

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(2004). As found online at the University of Exeter website, <http://www.centres.ex.ac.uk/historyresource/journal7/7contents.htm>; Denis Shemilt, “The Future of the Past: How Adolescents Make Sense of Past, Present and Future” (paper presented at the international invitation conference: “National History Standards: The Problem of the Canon and the Future of History Teaching” University of Utrecht, The Netherlands, October 2006). Available online at the Institute of Education, University of London, <http://k1.ioe.ac.uk/schools/ah/HistoryInEducation/Thefutureofthepast.pdf>.

7 See e.g. Karl-Ernst Jeismann, “Geschichtsbewusstsein,” *Handbuch der Geschichtsdidaktik Vol. I*, ed. Klaus Bergmann et al. (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1979); Bernhard Eric Jensen, “Historiemedvetande – begreppsanalys, samhällsteori, didaktik” in *Historiedidaktik*, ed. Christer Karlegård and Klas-Göran Karlsson (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2001).

8 Peter Aronsson, *Historiebruk – att använda det förflutna* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2004), 67–68.

views of the present also shape our picture of the past. Nor does the curriculum mention emotion-based understanding.

Historical knowledge, as it appears in the “goals to strive toward”, nevertheless appears as a complex mixture of facts, understanding, skills, and accumulated experience. This is clearly expressed in the assessment criteria that are given in the curriculum as guidelines for grading:

A basis for assessment in history is the pupil's knowledge of the course of events in history and the ability to discuss their causes and their complex nature as a starting point for understanding the present.<sup>9</sup>

Another criterion is the pupil's ability to identify similarities and differences and continuity and change, when studying events and epochs. The student's ability to observe connections between human conditions and societal change is also a criterion, as is his or her ability to examine and evaluate different accounts and presentations of events in the past.

To sum up: the curriculum promotes a kind of historical knowledge where the capacity of analytic reasoning and familiarity with concepts such as similarity and difference, continuity and change, create the necessary conditions for a personal, reflective relationship with a past that is connected to the present and the future. The memorizing of facts, the ability to recapitulate separate events, is a necessary, albeit not a sufficient, prerequisite for attaining this goal.

## Historical Knowledge and Goal Achievement

To what degree, then, does the Swedish school (and its pupils) attain the stipulated goals? As there are no national standardized history exams, we lack reliable data. *Skolverket* (the Swedish National Agency for Education) has on two occasions, 1992 and 2003, performed major evaluations of the compulsory school. The 2003 evaluation showed that between 25 and 75 percent of the pupils (depending on the questions given) had difficulties identifying important events of our time, even when the questions were related to topics that ought to be well known. A significant pattern that emerged was that the pupils' answers indicated a fragmented knowledge, which led the evaluation committee to ask whether Social Studies education (including history) is dominated by rote learning and collecting information, rather than by giving pupils the opportunity to discuss and reflect over causal connections or similarities and differences.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *History Syllabus.*

<sup>10</sup> Skolverket, Nationella utvärderingen av grundskolan 2003: Huvudrapport – natur-

This question suggests that nothing much has changed since the previous evaluation in 1992, when Skolverket's evaluators concluded that what dominated history education was a study of the past *wie es eigentlich war*: a single, fact-based account to be learned properly and with little room to examine or problematize. Classroom work mainly consisted of a traditional, chronologically ordered description of development, while comparisons or source examinations played a negligible part.<sup>11</sup>

In-depth studies, albeit on smaller populations, show similar results. In a study of how pupils use the Internet, Mikael Alexandersson and Ulla Runesson demonstrated that pupils have an insufficient ability to discern causal connections and to evaluate information in terms of reliability and validity. The Internet search itself appeared often to be of greater importance than the items searched for. Many pupils did not have a well-defined goal for their search. If questions were formulated, they were often forgotten along the way. The pupils tended to choose websites brimming with facts and figures – dates, population numbers, maps, etc. – that later appeared in their work. Courses of events were described chronologically, but without causal connections.<sup>12</sup>

Nanny Hartsmar presents a similar picture in her dissertation *Historiemedvetande – elevers tidsförståelse i en skolkontext*. Hartsmar chooses Halvdan Eikeland's distinction between history instruction as an objectivistic mediation of culture and history instruction as problem solving and active learning with ample room for critical source examination as a starting point. Hartsmar's own conclusion is that the history instruction she studied in seven different classes (in the school years 2, 5, and 9) is wholly dominated by teaching as objectivistic mediation. History is studied within a strict chronological framework. The past is seen as consisting of isolated events, actors, and artifacts. The pupils read textbooks and/or other books; they collect facts and write summaries reproducing this information. Neither pupils nor teachers can give good reasons for why certain events or periods are chosen.

Hartsmar also underlines the incongruity between rhetoric and practice. Pupils and teachers alike are well aware of the correct answer to the question "Why history?": the importance of history studies is to lay a foundation for the understanding of causes and consequences and thereby to obtain an under-

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orienterande ämnen, samhällsorienterande ämnen och problemlösning i årskurs 9, rapport 252 (Stockholm: Skolverket, 2004); Skolverket, Nationella utvärderingen av grundskolan 2003: Samhällsorienterande ämnen. Ämnesrapport till rapport 252 (Stockholm: Skolverket, 2004).

11 Skolverket, *Den nationella utvärderingen av grundskolan 1992: Huvudrapport – samhällsorienterande ämnen, Rapport 17* (Stockholm: Skolverket, 1993).

12 Mikael Alexandersson and Ulla Runesson, "Vår(l)den via webben," *Pedagogiska magasinet* 1 (2003): 38–42.

standing of our present. This is also a frequent answer given in the national evaluations conducted in 1992 and 2003. At the same time, however, pupils have great difficulties in formulating causal explanations on their own, and teachers apparently seldom plan their teaching in order to facilitate the understanding of causal connections or the subject's relevance for the present:

The fact that convention rules the planning while the teacher has no clear idea of why a concept is chosen indicates to me that there is no prepared plan for what, exactly, ought to be developed when it comes to historical consciousness. It is possible that teachers have an implicit trust that the textbook authors choose the parts that are deemed indispensable by the experts. If one learns these parts in the prescribed order, historical consciousness will develop itself automatically.<sup>13</sup>

How teachers deal with this dilemma (if they see it at all) is an open question. Many teachers do probably see school rhetoric as a desirable ideal that unfortunately cannot be realized due to a multitude of causes: insufficient time (classroom hours), lack of sufficient teaching resources, or the expectations colleagues, pupils and parents of what history instruction should be. An example of the frustration that a teacher can feel is given in one of the reports from Skolverket:

I feel like a dealer in a horse-market when informing pupils and parents of what we are supposed to achieve in history class. What I say is nothing but a lot of fancy words that I know I will never be able to realize.<sup>14</sup>

## Historical Knowledge – the Tools

It is not particularly bold to suggest that history textbooks are of limited use for those teachers who want to take classroom work beyond a one-dimensional and fact-based mediation. Elsewhere in this volume Dagrun Skjellbred and Monica Reichenberg point out that textbook accounts and tasks are often inadequate for promoting critical thinking skills. Other studies and reports support this as well.<sup>15</sup> If teachers are supposed to assess their pupils' ability to discuss causes

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13 Nanny Hartsmar, "Historiemedvetande – elevers tidsförståelse i en skolkontext" (Malmö: Malmö University 2001), 238.

14 Skolverket, *Undervisningen i 1900-talets historia. Redovisning av ett regeringsuppdrag. Promemoria 2000-08-23* (Stockholm: Skolverket, 2000), 22.

15 See e.g. Boel Englund, "Lärobokskunskap, styrning och elevinflytande," *Pedagogisk forskning i Sverige* 4 (1999): 327–348; Monika Vinterek, "Fakta och fiktion i historieundervisningen," *Tidskrift för lärarutbildning och forskning* 4 (2000): 11–25; Skolverket, *Lä-*

and consequences as well as to reflect on similarities and differences, continuity and change, the pupils must also be given the opportunity to develop these abilities. If the textbooks mainly consist of condensed reproductions of confirmed facts in chronological order but without clear connections, they cannot even be used as a starting point.

In his examination of textbooks for non-compulsory school (school years 10 – 12), Kenneth Nordgren exemplifies this through a close reading of textbook accounts of migration.<sup>16</sup> Migration as a phenomenon is mentioned only occasionally and described only briefly until the books' chronological accounts reach the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the Swedish migration to North America. This is a topic on which the authors dwell at some length and where a selection of general theories on migration is also presented. The pupils encounter causal explanations as well as generalized concepts – but these explanations and concepts are never used to compare this with other waves of migration. The Swedish experience stands out as more or less unique, without any obvious connections, similarities or differences to other examples of migration. Considering the fact that a significant part of Swedish students are first or second generation immigrants, migration history offers a great opportunity not only for comparative analyses and critical reflection of generalized models of explanation but also for bringing together the pupil's individual history and the public narrative of Swedish society, its past and its present. That the textbooks fail to take advantage of this opportunity must be considered a serious drawback.

The impact of textbooks and other learning tools is difficult to assess. One of the significant differences between the school evaluations of 1992 and 2003 was that a majority of the teachers in 1992 stated that the textbooks guided their work. In 2003, however, almost all teachers (95%) mentioned their own ideas and interests as the most important factor, while 64% stated that textbooks guided their work only to a relatively limited extent. It is of course still possible that the textbook remains the most frequently used tool when teachers give their ideas and interests a concrete form in classroom work. The textbook does not seem to have lost its important role; in the 2003 evaluation 75% of the pupils stated that it is used every day or at least every week.<sup>17</sup>

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*romedlens roll i undervisningen – Grundskollärares val, användning och bedömning av läromedel i bild, engelska och samhällskunskap, Rapport 284* (Stockholm: Skolverket, 2006).

16 Kenneth Nordgren, *Vems är historien? Historia som medvetande, kultur och handling i det mångkulturella Sverige* (Karlstad: Karlstad University, 2001), 191 – 201.

17 Skolverket, *Nationella utvärderingen av grundskolan 2003: Huvudrapport*, 63; Skolverket, *Nationella utvärderingen av grundskolan 2003: Samhällsorienterande ämnen*, 55.

## Means and Ends – the Teachers' Opinions

One issue that was not discussed in the 2003 evaluation of the Swedish compulsory school was whether the teachers found the textbooks sufficient or lacking in any respect and, in the latter case, what additional learning material they chose to make up for the insufficiency. Even if the results from the survey *History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials* (presented in the first chapter of this part of the book) are open to interpretation and the number of respondents is too small to permit any generalized conclusions (especially on a national level) they can nevertheless serve as a starting-point for formulating new questions.

Question number 7 of the survey read “*What are the most important roles of teaching materials in your opinion?*” and aimed at capturing the teachers' expectations of the material used. Five alternatives were to be ranked. The respondents from Sweden (59) gave, using a simple weighting process, the following ranked list:

1. Providing a historical overview
2. Encouraging independent thinking among students
3. Defining and strengthening student identity
4. Conveying values
5. Offering insights into the theory and principles of history

The results from Sweden correspond with the overall Nordic picture. Providing an overview was clearly seen as a top priority by most respondents: 50.8 % of the Swedish and 47.4 % of all respondents placed this alternative at the top of the list. Overviews can have different shapes and serve different purposes. In a following question (number 9) the respondents were asked to rank what was most important when providing a historical overview in teaching materials. The Swedish answers were ranked thus:

1. Context and cause-effect relationship
2. A sense of time and chronological order
3. Major and dramatic events
4. A vivid account
5. Influential and important individuals

In this case, the ranking is not clear-cut and the range is more marked. A relatively large share of the respondents put “a vivid account” at the top, and there were also a large number that put “a sense of time and chronological order” at the bottom of the list. The Swedish results also differ from the overall Nordic picture where the alternatives were given the following order:

1. Context and cause-effect relationship
2. A vivid account

3. A sense of time and chronological order
4. Major and dramatic events
5. Influential and important individuals

It must be noted, however, that the differences could be illusory and dependent on how the alternatives are interpreted. One may draw a line between history as colorful anecdotes of dramatic events with heroes and villains on the one hand, and history as structures and relationships, as a scholarly exercise on the other. The “vivid account” can stand for both alternatives: the dramatic narrative *or* a rendering that underlines context and causal relationships.

Nor should the difference between context/relationship and time/chronology be exaggerated. A chronologically ordered overview does not necessarily visualize a causal relationship or a context but if it is combined with an understanding of temporality, the difference may be seen as one of semantics rather than one of content.

The option “Insights into the theory and principles of history” was given a low priority by the teachers. When asked how the textbooks could facilitate such insights (question number 11) the alternatives were ranked thus:

1. By teaching students methods of source criticism
2. By encouraging an independent search for knowledge among students
3. By showing how knowledge and interpretation of history are in a constant state of review
4. By allowing students to access and use primary sources
5. By giving examples of historical research

The overall Nordic picture corresponds with the Swedish one, and one might conclude that a rigorous use of source criticism, in the tradition of Kristian Erslev and the Weibull brothers, is still seen as fundamental to history education. Even if teachers have some expectations of the books’ qualities when it comes to *presenting* source criticism, however, they do not find it vital that the books also *contain* source material for practice. Teachers may of course find such material elsewhere, but it could also be that they give a lecture on the principles for source criticism without giving the pupils the option to try them out for themselves.

However, textbooks meet teachers’ expectations only to a limited degree. As has been mentioned above, teachers first and foremost expect that the textbook can provide a historical overview. That the respondents, when asked what functions the textbook fulfilled, also placed the option “a historical overview” on top of the list thus seems to fit perfectly. A closer look reveals a picture that is far from perfect – namely that the textbooks do not meet teachers’ expectations in full. While the Swedish teachers prioritized context and causal relationship, they found that the main emphasis of the textbooks lies on influential and dramatic

events. Likewise, the textbooks cannot be said to meet expectations when it comes to providing insights in the methodology of history. While Swedish teachers prioritize knowledge of methods for critical review of sources they do not find the textbooks helpful in this respect – half of the respondents ranked this alternative fourth or fifth and not a single teacher placed it at the top.

The picture, albeit preliminary, rendered by the survey shows that Swedish history textbooks do not fulfill the teachers' expectations, nor are they well adjusted to the goals of the curriculum. This of course does not mean that Swedish history education as such fails to meet the standards of the curriculum. Teachers in the Swedish school system have ample room to plan classroom work after their own preferences and therefore have significant opportunities to supplement the textbook with other teaching materials.

In the survey's final question (number 21) the teachers were asked to what extent they used other tools or materials in class. The following table shows the Swedish teachers' answers with regard what material they use frequently ("Very often" or "Often"):

Table 1: Swedish Teachers' answers (The following types of teaching materials were used "Often")

Teaching material	Percentage of teachers using
Textbook (student textbook)	83.1
Teacher's own narratives and lectures	72.1
Maps	65.5
Internet	61.1
Documentary films	56.0
Academic publications	54.2
Teacher's guide	35.1
Photographs	32.8
Primary sources (texts)	32.1
Student project work	30.4
Feature films	27.1
Educational games (role play, simulation, etc.)	25.4
Fiction literature	22.8
Workbook	10.5
Statistical material	10.2
Artifacts	5.4
Field trips	3.4
Museum visits	1.7

The results fit into the picture of history education (from both teachers' and pupils' points of views) that was presented from the national evaluation of 2003. The textbook remains the most frequently used teaching material. At the same time, and not surprising considering that the teachers themselves say that their own interests and own ideas guide their planning, ample room is also given to

the teachers' own narratives, accounts, and lectures. This gives quite a bit of opportunity to supplement or compensate for an insufficient textbook.

The dominant role played by textbooks and lectures also corresponds with what the national evaluation found was the most common form of classroom work:

Table 2: Mode of work during all/most social studies classes

Mode of work	Pupils' answers (percent)
Pupils listen, teacher talks	54
Pupils work individually with various tasks	37
Teacher and pupils discuss together	33
Teacher talks and asks questions answered by the pupils (one by one)	31
Pupils work with larger projects	15
Pupils work in groups with various tasks	12

Source: Nationella utvärderingen av grundskolan 2003: Samhällsorienterande ämnen, 31 (Table 7)

Also worth noting is that the materials used frequently by at least half of the teachers are of a kind that could possibly deal with the past as something that has occurred once and for all and that does not really need to be questioned and/or discussed: maps, academic/non-fiction books, documentary films, and so on. This of course does not imply that these materials are used in such a way. It is just as possible that they are used to show that there are alternatives to the textbook accounts, thus providing a starting point for discussions about interpretations of history and about how history is written.

The pupils' own essays, projects or reports provide another possible starting point for such discussions. It can be noted here that less than a third of the Swedish teachers state that they frequently make use of these resources. Although the data from Sweden generally corresponds with the overall Nordic picture, this is a point where there is a marked difference – the overall figure for the Nordic countries is 59.9 percent.

Also worth noting is the comparatively sparse use of literature (fiction) and feature films. This is a kind of material that can bring a historic context to life, visualize causal relationships, and offer objects of identification that may lead to a sense of empathy towards people of the past, something that would come close to the curriculum goal that the pupil should be able to view people of the past in terms of the conditions of their time.

Most striking, however, is the rare occurrence of primary sources, artifacts and statistical material. This kind of teaching material is indispensable if pupils are supposed to develop an ability to assess texts and other materials that interpret and explain historical processes. More than two thirds of the Swedish

teachers use such materials only occasionally. Visits to museums or field trips are almost non-existent. Resources of this kind are relatively uncommon in the other Nordic countries as well, but 10.7% of the Nordic teachers (compared to 1.7% of the Swedish) make visits to museums a part of their teaching.

## Conclusions

The overall picture given by the survey data, although preliminary, does not allow us to describe Swedish history teaching as leaning towards an objectivist transmission of factual knowledge even if the textbooks tend to do so. The crucial factor of course is how the teachers use textbooks and other learning material, and how they draw up their own lectures. The experienced teacher has ample opportunities to cover causal relationships, point out similarities and differences, provide useful concepts, and visualize the past in a way that facilitates understanding and empathy.

The data indicating a dominance of fact-reproducing teaching materials (textbooks, maps and so on), taken together with findings from other studies showing that “frontal teaching”<sup>18</sup> still dominates the classroom, give reason for concern. Without sufficient opportunities to exercise thinking skills, it might lead to the pupils learning “to know that” rather than “to know how” – in other words, to learn *about* history rather than to learn *history*. It must be remembered, however, that the survey gives information on teachers’ views on textbooks and learning material. It does not tell us how the teachers actually work in the classroom or how they would wish to work given ideal working conditions. That a comparatively small number of teachers use teaching materials aimed at promoting critical thinking skills might be suggestive but does not say anything about what is really happening in the classroom. A picture can be used in many ways: either as a simple description (“Here you can see what it looked like when the Winter Palace was attacked”) or as a starting point for creative reasoning (“What is happening in the picture? Can you explain why? What do you think happened next?”). Even if teachers stick to frontal teaching they may do it despite their own ambitions. The number of hours assigned to the subject, the school’s library and ICT resources, the expectations of headmasters, colleagues, parents and pupils are factors that can prevent the teachers from trying alternative teaching models.

The preliminary character of the results presented here demands further studies, not least studies that are praxis-oriented and aimed at what is actually

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18 “Frontal teaching” can be defined as when the teacher imparts new knowledge to the pupils with limited problem-oriented learning and pupil collaboration.

happening in the classroom. We still lack well-founded knowledge of how history teaching is carried out in the Nordic countries as well as studies of possible and/or desirable alternatives to current models of teaching. As has been pointed out by Bengt Schüllerqvist, much of the research hitherto performed has been (mainly due to insufficient funding) relatively small case studies with scopes too limited to allow for generalized conclusions.<sup>19</sup> It is to be hoped that the Nordic networking presented in this volume can be carried forward in the near future. As history instruction in the Nordic countries shares many similarities, but also displays differences, a comparative approach comes out as both suitable and valuable.

As a compliment to future research it is also necessary to continue a vital discussion on history teaching, historical knowledge, appropriate teaching material and teaching models, as well as to give teachers opportunities to develop their professional competence. The national Historical Associations and History Teacher Associations as well as institutions for teacher education share a common responsibility to contribute to this goal.

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19 Bengt Schüllerqvist, *Svensk historiedidaktisk forskning* (Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet, 2005).

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Monika Vinterek

## **Different Kinds of Teaching Resources – Different Kinds of Learning? Teachers’ Ends and Means**

In any given classroom, any number of activities is often in progress, frequently centered on different types of teaching materials. As a rule it can be assumed that the teacher’s view of what teaching resources are suitable will also have an impact on the work in the classroom. Talking about what is suitable must be done with regard to something that can be expressed as an aim, as all education, by definition, is comprised of something intentional. Teachers’ choices in teaching materials and how they use them should therefore also be able to reflect how they look upon the aim of the teaching they conduct within the framework of different school subjects and their overall view of knowledge. If we also note that different teaching materials include, exclude or emphasize certain forms of knowledge, teachers’ views on the function of textbooks and other teaching materials for teaching history become particularly interesting.

In the present article I present a compilation and analysis of the results from some inquiry questions from the Nordic survey, described in more detail in the introductory chapter of this section of the book. The survey consisted of 21 questions of which 6 served to give background information about the teachers. The main questions had five response options except question number 21.<sup>1</sup> The teachers were asked to rank the options on a 1–5 scale. The option that the teacher considered most relevant/suitable was to be marked with a “1”, the next most relevant was to be marked “2”, etc. A number could only be used once for each question. If a question was considered irrelevant or not applicable, this could be marked with the response option “Not Applicable.” The inquiry also contained six background questions on age, gender, and educational and occupational background. The answers to questions 7 (What are the most important roles of teaching materials in your opinion?) and 21 (Evaluate how much you generally use the following types of teaching materials in your teaching) primarily form the basis of my analysis. Some parts of the other responses will

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1 See the web survey, “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Teacher Internet Survey,” Appendix 1 in this volume.

also be elucidated to the extent that they can contribute to the understanding of the questions I raised.

It is my hope that this study will contribute to increasing our knowledge of teachers' attitudes toward teaching materials and other educational resources in order to better understand how this can affect the type of learning that is made possible or restricted within the framework of the teaching of history. To some extent I also wish to elucidate similarities and differences in views among Nordic countries as well as possible tendencies towards change. The primary questions I ask are:

- What aims for history instruction appear in teachers' views of the content and use of teaching materials and other educational resources?
- Are there any discernible differences in teachers' attitudes among the Nordic countries?
- Are there any tendencies toward change?

## **Introduction of Theoretical Tools and Assumptions That Form Point of Departure for Analysis and Discussion**

I assume that what teachers see as the aim of the teaching will also be reflected in their view of teaching materials, with regard to both what teaching materials for history should chiefly contain and what types of teaching materials are advocated. Here I pay attention to teachers' views of teaching materials and what types of teaching materials they use in order to approach the question of what teachers view as the goal of teaching history. It is conceivable that it might have been better to ask the teachers directly about their views regarding the function of history as a subject. The point of departure of such an approach would be in the *discourse of teaching*, which is not always the same as the actual teaching that is conducted or the aims on which the teaching practice is based. Strong emphasis on what is politically or ideologically correct can limit teachers' scope of expression for their own ideas. The teachers' notions are sometimes a form of silent knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Using the answers to the type of questions found in the implemented survey may provide a link to the teachers' own practice and hence tell us something about the instruction that pupils receive. In this context it should also be stated that even though the teacher has a particular aim, this does not necessarily mean that what is focused on will result in exactly that which is

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2 For further discussion of the concept of silent knowledge, see e. g., Bernt Gustavsson, *Kunskapsfilosofi: tre kunskapsformer i historisk belysning* (Stockholm: Wahlström and Widstrand, 2000), 108 ff.

desired. There may be discrepancies among the intended instruction, the teaching that actually takes place, and the knowledge developed by the pupils.<sup>3</sup>

The teachers' views on teaching materials are the focus in this study. In order to be able to analyze these views I will use a typology of the different aims of teaching. Based on previous accounts and discussions of what have been described as theories of history instruction, I have formed three main categories of teaching aims: *communicative*,<sup>4</sup> *fostering* and *proficiency-related*.<sup>5</sup>

### *Communicative Aims*

Communicative aims include different types of factual goals such as knowing: what things are, concepts, theories, and models, among others. Knowing different types of explanations and causal connections also belongs to this category. "To know" is the characteristic point of departure for this teaching aim, but it may also be a matter of a desire to communicate "experiences" for example of feelings and aesthetics. On the one hand it concerns individual data or systems of data, and on the other hand, experiences.

### *Fostering Aims*

Fostering aims seek to influence individuals' behavior and values and their self-perception in relation to others. Examples of aims in this category are the espousal of a certain type of social morals (nationalism, patriotism, internationalism, etc.), egalitarian ideas and tolerant and democratic attitudes. Within the framework of behavioral goals there are also issues of behavior such as rules of etiquette that need not be based on any profound value system. As regards individuals' self-perception in relationship to others, there may be different emphases on the individual and/or the collective.

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3 Difficulties connected to teaching that may be a cause of this condition are discussed in David F. Labaree, "On the Nature of Teaching and Teacher Education. Difficult Practices that Look Easy," *Journal of Teacher Education* 51, no. 3 (2000): 228–231.

4 When the term 'educative' is used here, it refers primarily to the type of knowledge at which the teaching aims and **not** to aspects of how the learning takes place with regard to teachers' or pupils' activities.

5 See: Svend Sødring Jensen, *Historieundervisningsteori* (Köpenhamn: Christian Ejlers Forlag, 1978); Jan Bjarne Bøe and Kolbjørn Hauge, *Barn og historie: undervisningsteorier i historiefaget og barns forhold til historie* (Oslo: Univ.forl., 1984); Knut Kjeldstadli, *Det förflutna är inte vad det en gång var* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1998); Bo Andersson, Sigward Casperson and Magnus Hermansson Adler, *Undervisning i historia i skolan: något om historiedidaktikens teori och praktik* (Göteborg: Institutionen för pedagogik och didaktik, Univ., 2001); Bengt Schüllerqvist, *Svensk historiedidaktisk forskning* (Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet, 2005).

### *Proficiency-Related Aims*

When the aim is proficiency-related, it may be a matter of knowledge development of what are usually called the basic skills of education, such as reading, writing and arithmetic. These skills consist of internal and external faculties. In the more practically and aesthetically oriented school subjects, there are also clear elements of what might be called external or craftsman-like knowledge. Among internal faculties within the framework of skills are how to go about valuing, generalizing, comparing, arguing, examining critically, reflecting, co-operating, etc.

In the following I begin with looking at the teachers' relationship to educational resources for the subject of history by examining which resources they do and do not use and by looking at their views on the function of teaching materials. With regard to the teachers' views on the function of teaching materials I will also examine differences between the Nordic countries. I then combine and analyze the results to come to an understanding of these teachers' aims of teaching. At the end I discuss what learning is made possible or restricted within history instruction in the Nordic countries and what tendencies toward change can be found.

## **Teachers' Relationship to Educational Resources in the Subject of History**

### *Teachers' Use of Different Educational Resources*

The textbook is the teaching material that most teachers state they use a lot or to a fairly large extent. Respective teacher's guides are not used to the same extent at all; more than one fifth of the teachers surveyed never use it. Most teachers seem to rely on their own strategies and ideas for how to use the textbook. Next to the textbook, teacher narratives and lectures are most frequently used in addition to the Internet. A majority of the teachers state that they often or fairly often tell stories or lecture their pupils. But there are some teachers who state that they never use themselves as a resource in this way. Maps are used with roughly the same frequency as the teachers' own narrations and lectures to the pupils.

Table 1: The teachers' use of different educational resources in history<sup>6</sup>

	<i>Often</i>	<i>Fairly often</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Little</i>	<i>None</i>	Mis.syst %(ant.)	<i>Sum</i>
Textbook (student textbook)	50.6	23.5	14.2	3.7	3.7	4.4 (18)	100%
Workbook	11.0	15.6	18.1	19.1	27.4	8.8 (36)	100%
Teacher's guide	8.1	20.3	20.5	20.5	22.7	7.8 (32)	100%
Academic publications	25.4	33.7	31.1	5.9	0.2	3.7 (15)	100%
The Internet	21.3	44.5	24.2	4.9	2.0	3.2 (13)	100%
Teacher narratives and lectures	31.3	39.6	20.5	5.6	0.5	2.4 (10)	100%
Fiction literature	6.6	15.2	35.2	29.3	9.0	4.6 (19)	100%
Documentary films	16.4	35.9	35.5	9.0	0.7	2.4 (10)	100%
Feature films	5.9	14.7	34.0	33.0	8.8	3.7 (15)	100%
Photographs	14.4	31.8	31.8	15.2	3.7	3.2 (13)	100%
Maps	31.1	40.1	18.8	5.9	1.0	3.2 (13)	100%
Artefacts	2.0	7.3	26.4	40.3	20.6	3.9 (16)	100%
Statistical material	3.2	19.3	37.7	27.1	8.8	3.9 (16)	100%
Primary sources (texts)	8.8	25.2	36.2	22.2	4.4	3.2 (13)	100%
Educational games (role playing, simulation games, etc)	4.2	10.0	23.7	34.5	24.2	3.4 (14)	100%
Field trips	0.7	6.4	27.6	37.2	24.4	3.7 (15)	100%
Museum visits	1.5	8.8	32.0	39.9	13.4	4.4 (18)	100%
Student project work	21.0	36.7	28.4	8.3	2.0	3.7 (15)	100%

One fourth of the teachers use specialist literature to a very great extent. Fiction seems to be rather sparsely used in the teaching of history and almost one out of ten have never included fiction when teaching. Visiting places outside of school for educational purposes is not a very frequent occurrence, and many teachers have never taken a field trip or visited a museum with their pupils. The use of artifacts, art objects or artificial objects is also unusual in teaching. Only 2% of the teachers report using this type of object very often, and more than one fifth has never used any kind of artifact. Not many teachers state that they frequently use different kinds of games and more than one fourth have never used role-play, simulation games or the like for teaching purposes.

Documentary films are fairly prominent among the teaching materials utilized very often, with less than one per cent stating that they have never shown documentary films in their teaching and 2.4% stating that the use of documentary films is an irrelevant question. As regards feature films, the picture is similar to that for fiction. The majority of teachers have used this type of film on one or more occasions. Statistical material is not frequently used by the teachers and more than one out of ten reports they have never used such material or that they find the question irrelevant. The use of primary sources follows a similar

<sup>6</sup> Web Survey "History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Teacher Internet Survey," Appendix 1 in this volume. Question 21: "In this last question please evaluate how much you generally use the following types of teaching materials in your teaching."

pattern, not being used very often by the majority of teachers, or with teachers finding the question irrelevant.

Though it is not very common to include student projects as examples of teaching materials in investigations, they were included in this investigation and turned out to be a frequently used teaching material among the teachers that took part in this study. This shows that student projects thus also belong on a list of different educational resources as more than 80 % of the teachers surveyed use this kind of material to a considerable extent in their teaching.

To sum up, we can see that a great deal of the educational resources that the teachers state they use involve individual data or systems of data such as textbooks, academic publications, and maps. Less of the resources used seem to be of the type that emphasizes feelings and aesthetics such as fiction, educational games and films.

### *Teachers' Views on the Function of Teaching Materials*

Of the five options given, nearly half of the Nordic teachers in this study think that teaching materials should primarily contribute to communicating a historical overview. If the teachers who think that a historical overview is the second most important contribution are added to this number, this option is strongly supported by 66.8 % of the Nordic teachers. Only one out of the 409 responding teachers considered communicating a historical overview an irrelevant option, thus indicating that there is a great deal of consensus about the importance of communicating a historical overview in instruction.

Table 2: Teachers' views on the primary contribution of teaching materials. The percentage distribution of responding teachers (n 409) divided onto different response options: 1 – 5, “Not applicable,” and missing responses<sup>7</sup>

	1	2	3	4	5	Not applicable	Missing system % (ant.)	Sum
Providing a historical overview	47.2	19.6	10.8	9.5	12.2	0.2	0.5 (2)	100 %
Encouraging independent thinking among students	27.9	37.2	13.2	13.7	7.3	0.5	0.2 (1)	100 %
Defining and strengthening student identity	9.0	14.7	29.1	20.8	20.5	3.9	2.0 (8)	100 %

<sup>7</sup> Web Survey, “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Teacher Internet Survey,” Appendix 1 in this volume. Question 7: “What are the most important roles of teaching materials in your opinion?”

Table 2 (Continued)

	1	2	3	4	5	Not applicable	Missing system % (ant.)	Sum
Offering insight into the theory and principles of history	7.3	16.6	24.7	25.9	23.2	1.5	0.7 (3)	100%
Conveying values	7.3	10.8	20.3	27.6	28.6	4.4	0.7 (3)	100%

When tallying what the teachers consider most important and next most important, yet another of the five response options emerges as essential. Over 65 % of the teachers indicate that stimulating the pupils to think independently is an important role in teaching materials. The teachers who consider this the most important role, however, make up less than half of this proportion.

Of the five response options that could be chosen, the option “conveying values” was considered least relevant for teaching materials. Several of the teachers thought that “conveying values” was not at all relevant. Some support for this view was also expressed when the teachers were asked to state *which* values they thought were most important for teaching materials to deal with. When the teachers were asked to consider to what extent a number of values were communicated in the textbook they were using, it turned out that the stated values were not considered relevant by several of the teachers. Each of the options offered were found irrelevant by some teachers with the proportion varying from 1 % to 4.8 % (Table 3).

Table 3: The values that the teachers consider most relevant for the teaching materials to communicate. The percentage distribution of responding teachers (n 409) divided onto different response alternatives: 1 – 5, “Not applicable” and missing responses<sup>8</sup>

	1	2	3	4	5	Not applicable	Mis.syst % (ant.)	Sum
Internationalism	19.6	19.6	20.0	22.5	13.2	3.4	1.7 (7)	100%
Tolerance	47.4	17.8	12.2	8.1	12.2	1.0	1.2 (5)	100%
Equality	9.3	31.5	28.1	18.8	8.3	2.4	2.0 (8)	100%
National identity	14.4	11.7	14.7	22.7	29.6	4.8	2.0 (8)	100%
Environmental awareness	8.9	16.6	20.8	22.7	28.6	3.9	1.5 (6)	100%

As 4.4 % of the teachers stated that conveying values was irrelevant in and of itself, one might assume even higher figures for indicating irrelevance for each

<sup>8</sup> Web Survey, “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Teacher Internet Survey,” Appendix 1 in this volume. Question 12: “What values are most important for teaching materials to communicate?”

value. The discrepancy might be explained by the fact that question number 7, “What are the most important roles of teaching materials in your opinion?”, came before the question in which they were asked about various values. Perhaps it is easier to identify a meaning in values when they are explicitly written out, as they were in question number 12 (“What values are most important for teaching materials to communicate?”).

The impression that conveying values is not regarded as a self-evident part of the history teaching materials is also supported by the fact that between 6.8 % and 20 % of the teachers find one or more of the stated values as irrelevant in the textbook that they primarily use. There is a factor of uncertainty here, however. The question put to the teachers was (question number 20): “Which of the following values does the textbook communicate?” It is therefore necessary to consider that the teachers chose the option “Not Applicable” as a way of indicating that they do not perceive that the value asked for is dealt with in the textbook, rather than thinking that this feature is irrelevant overall.

Table 4: The proportion of teachers who found each of the values “Not applicable” in the question about which values are most important for a teaching materials to communicate<sup>9</sup>

	<i>Not applicable</i>
Internationalism	11.5 %
Tolerance	12.7 %
Equality	14.2 %
National identity	6.8 %
Environmental awareness	20.0 %

I will return to teachers’ views on the function of teaching materials when I analyze their aims in teaching history, but first a look at some similarities and differences that occur among the answers from the various Nordic countries.

### *Comparing the Nordic countries*

Looking at the teachers in the Nordic countries as a group, there is a consensus that the foremost tasks of teaching materials are to communicate a historical overview and to stimulate the pupils’ to think independently, with communicating a historical overview as the most important task. This picture emerges when putting together the responses for the options 1–5. Conveying values receives the lowest ranking across the board except in Norway. Giving pupils insight into the theory and principles of history and defining and strengthening

<sup>9</sup> Web Survey, “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Teacher Internet Survey,” Appendix 1 in this volume. Question 20: “What values does the textbook emphasize?”

pupils' identity are judged somewhat differently and are at times difficult to distinguish in the various countries. The combined result for all of the countries, however, places the pupils' identity in third position.

Table 5: Ranking of what the teachers consider most relevant for teaching materials to deal with, accounted for by country and in total<sup>10</sup>

	Denmark	Finland	Finland-Swedish <sup>11</sup>	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	Total
Providing a historical overview	1	1	1	1	1♦	1	1
Encouraging independent thinking among students	2	2	2	2	2♦♦	2	2
Defining and strengthening student identity	3	3*	4	3	5	4 <sup>#</sup>	3
Offering insight into the theory and principles of history	4	4**	3	4	3	3 <sup>##</sup>	4
Conveying values	5	5	5	5	4	5	5

The figures below tell what percent of the teachers consider for example “Providing a historical overview” as most and second most (1<sup>st</sup> place + 2<sup>nd</sup> place) relevant for teaching materials to deal with:

\* 1 place + 2 place = 15.8% 1 place + 2 place + 3 place = 36.9% 5 place = 36.8%

\*\* 1 place + 2 place = 10.6% 1 place + 2 place + 3 place = 52.7% 5 place = 10.5%

A total appraisal of the values stated above determined the order of the ranking in the places:

♦ 1 place + 2 place = 59.0% 1 place + 2 place + 3 place = 72.9% Not applicable 1.7%

♦♦ 1 place + 2 place = 60.1% 1 place + 2 place + 3 place = 70.0% Not applicable 0.0%

A total appraisal of the values stated above determined the order in the places:

<sup>#</sup> 1 place + 2 place = 22.4 1 place + 2 place + 3 place = 50.0 Not applicable 6.9%

<sup>##</sup> 1 place + 2 place = 24.5 1 place + 2 place + 3 place = 49.2 Not applicable 1.7%

If we look at the percentages for options 1–5 individually and make a comparison among the countries, some differences appear, but these must be considered with great caution, as the investigated group is small and there is un-

10 Web Survey, “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Teacher Internet Survey,” Appendix 1 in this volume. Question 7: “What are the most important roles of teaching materials in your opinion?” and Land cross tables.

11 In the investigation, teachers from Swedish-language schools in Finland were dealt with as separate group from the Finnish-language schoolteachers.

certainty about differences concerning which teachers responded in the different countries.

“Providing a historical overview” seems to be of most importance in Finland with a majority of the teachers stating that it is the most relevant task of the teaching materials by marking it as response option 1, and the weakest in Denmark concerning the proportion of teachers who regard it as the most relevant alternative. In Denmark this proportion was roughly half as large as in Finland. The proportion of teachers who marked 2 and 3 on the scale is, however, considerably higher than the national average, and in relation to the average values of the individual countries, there are few who marked the option in the fourth or fifth place. The impression of the relatively weak number of those giving it first placement in Denmark is even more divided as 2.3 % of the Danish teachers regarded this response option as not applicable, unlike the other Nordic countries where not a single teacher marked the question as irrelevant.

The other countries, aside from Denmark, have similar average values for all positions on the five-degree scale. The Danish figures also stand out with regards to stimulating independent thinking among students. No other country has an equally large proportion of responses that rate this value as the most important. The average among all countries polled is 27.9%, while in Denmark the proportion is 40.9%. The next closest country is Iceland, where 34.0% of the teachers judged stimulation of the students’ independent thinking as the most relevant factor for teaching materials.

The Danish figures also stand out with regard to the importance of teaching materials dealing with insight into history as a science. A large proportion of the responses placing it in fourth and fifth place, 70.5%, are found in Denmark, while the average of the responses for this in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> place is 49.5% in the other countries. The first and second rankings are also relatively few, making up only 18.2% of the responses, with only Finland lower here at 15.8%.

As regards the definition and promotion of students’ identity, it is striking that a considerable number of teachers found this alternative irrelevant. The proportions vary between 3.2% and 7.9% except for Denmark and Finland, where no teacher marked this alternative as irrelevant. Despite this similarity, Denmark shows the highest proportion of teachers putting this option in the first and second place with 13.6% and 18.2% respectively, and Finland shows the lowest proportion, 5.3% in both first and second place. The national average is 9.2% and 15%.

As mentioned above, it is Norway that deviates to some extent from the fairly strong consensus on the communication of values being viewed as the least relevant of the five alternatives. The Norwegian percentages for the fourth and fifth rated positions were very close, however. In spite of this, Norway had a higher proportion of teachers who viewed communication of values as relevant

in comparison with the other countries in the study. In Norway 25.8% of the teachers marked the first and second positions when ranking the items from 1 – 5 (with 1 as most important). The average for all countries was 18.2%. Sweden was closest to Norway in the distribution of its rankings for this option. Finland and Denmark had the highest number of rankings in fourth and fifth place.

The communication of values is not only that which is seen as the least relevant for content in teaching materials; it is also the option that seems to be questioned by the most survey participants. It is not considered a relevant option for 4.4% of the teachers in the Nordic countries. Finnish teachers differ in this respect, in that all of them regard this response option as relevant, although none of them ranked this option in first place. The proportion of teachers marking this as second or third place is also low in relation to the average of the other countries. The importance of conveying values within the framework of teaching history has the strongest position in Norway and the weakest one in Denmark and Finland.

## Teaching Aims

In order to analyze the teachers' aims in teaching history, the different response options of the inquiry can be grouped in the categories: *communicating*, *fostering* and *training proficiency*. This categorization must however be regarded as blunt, as "communicating" a certain content indirectly can also serve more or less explicit aims that in some cases could also include, for example, fostering. In this description, however, I try to pin down the meanings and aims that the teachers seem to want to emphasize and that hence presumably also characterize the teaching they conduct. "Communicating a historical overview" must be included in the category of *communicating*, and "conveying values" in the category of *fostering*. As fostering aims at influencing individuals' behavior, values and self-perception, the "promotion of a pupil's identity" can also be included in the category of *fostering*.

"Stimulating independent thinking" may be seen as a type of *proficiency-related aim*, as such thinking is constituted by skills like being able to compare, examine critically, reflect, etc. When it comes to giving students insight into the theory and principles of history, this task does not have an equally clear connection to any of the categories used. It may aim at *communicating* theories and models but could also be used for the purpose of training different types of *skills*, one of which could be historical craftsmanship.

The aim of communicating may include purposes of attaining different types of knowledge, such as knowing about things, but it may also be a matter of communicating emotional and aesthetic "experiences." Teacher responses to

which educational resources they use and to what extent they use them, show a predominance of the type of resource that is characterized by content that primarily reflects “knowing about”-knowledge. Educational resources emphasizing other types of knowledge having more to do with feelings and aesthetics are less prominent. Educational resources such as fiction, feature films, games, artifacts, visits to museums and field trips are used to a limited extent (only between 0.7 % and 6.6 % state that they often use these resources) in comparison with 50.6 % who state they often use textbooks and 25.4 % who state they often use academic publications as resources in their teaching.<sup>12</sup> A larger proportion of teachers, however, seem to use photos that can provide opportunities for emotional and aesthetical experiences (14.4 % state that they often use them). Photos can also be used to teach the pupils “knowing about”-knowledge through recognizing. Another exception to the dominant picture might consist of the teachers’ own stories and lectures, which 70 % state that they use a lot to a fairly great extent. It is still hard to determine to what extent the teachers’ narratives arouse emotional or aesthetic experiences.

Based on the categorization of the response options, I conclude that a majority of the Nordic teachers in this study regard communication of subject knowledge as an overarching aim of history teaching. This communication seems to provide preconditions for the pupils to be able to develop “knowing about”-knowledge to a higher extent than knowledge that has an experiential dimension. It seems that the subject of history is seen to a lesser extent as a means to be used for acquiring skills, and at first sight it looks as if fostering plays a minor role in the teaching of the subject. The results even indicate that 1 in 25 teachers might question the aim of fostering. With regard to the view of fostering, the responses indicate, however, that there may be interesting national differences with both Norwegian teachers and teachers in Finnish-language schools in comparison with the teachers in the other countries.

A closer examination of the teachers’ views on the communication of values yields a partially different picture from that of the importance they attach to the goal of fostering. There are fewer teachers here who consider values as irrelevant for teaching materials. It might be the case that fostering aims belong to a category that is not always articulated or written down as a clear goal. The reason might be that such a goal cannot be pointed to in the same way as the communication of, for example, a historical event or a historical process. Such content is often commonly and clearly expressed in the most frequently used

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12 To better understand what here is meant by “knowing about”-knowledge and knowledge that has to do with feelings and aesthetics and the absence of the latter in textbooks see: Monika Vinterek, “Fakta och Fiktion i historieundervisningen [Fact and Fiction in the Teaching of History],” *Lärarytelse och Forskning* 4 (2000): 11 – 26.

educational resources such as history books and academic publications and hence easy to see as an educational objective. It also turns out that when different types of values, which can also be seen as fostering objectives and that hence can constitute a goal in teaching, are specified and written down, as in the case of conveying values, more teachers tend to attach importance to them.

## What Kind of Learning?

By creating a picture of teachers' views of teaching materials in history, it is also possible to see how different aims of history teaching emerge. If my assumption that the teachers answers to the survey questions also provide a link to the teachers' own practice, the results should also be able to indicate something about the instruction that the students receive and the type of learning that is either made possible or limited within the framework of history instruction.

Instruction in the Nordic countries may be characterized by a large amount of subject-related communication where emotional and aesthetic dimensions do not have a prominent position. The attitudes and aims of teaching, as manifested by the teachers in the study, seem to leave little space for developing student skills in relation to more fixed subject knowledge of a factual nature. This picture is still a bit unclear however, and depends on how the teachers view encouraging independent thinking. It might be that teachers think that encouraging independent thinking also has to be done by developing internal faculties within the framework of skills and that there is more emphasis on proficiency than can be noticed at first sight. It may also be questioned to what extent it is possible to develop a deeper historical understanding when the experiential dimension of teaching seems to be limited.

Fostering most likely does not appear as a prominent, integrated and self-evident part of history instruction, at least not at an intentional level. This is not to say that teaching in and of itself does not have a fostering function. Ever since Jackson's classical study *Life in Classrooms*, in which he demonstrated the socialization process that takes place within the framework of the teaching and how it has come to be called the hidden school curriculum, many studies have emphasized how pupils are fostered in different ways by the school culture in which they take part.<sup>13</sup> The hidden curriculum refers to the structures in which the teaching is conducted:

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13 Philip Wesley Jackson, *Life in Classrooms* (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1968); Roland Meighan, *A Sociology of Educating* (Eastbourne: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981); Henry Giroux and Anthony Penna, "Social Education in the Classroom: The Dynamics of the Hidden Curriculum," in *The Hidden Curriculum and Moral Education*, ed. Henry Giroux and

The structure of the [...] educational process silently communicates values held by the larger society. Values are expressed through structures such as where the education takes place, who the participants are, the relationship between the participants, how success is measured, and the overall purpose of the educational process.<sup>14</sup>

By being part of a context, cultures are created and re-created with behaviors and values as well as identities.<sup>15</sup> It may be assumed that the weaker the position of the fostering mission is in the teaching, the greater the scope given to the hidden curriculum will be, which by being hidden can also develop in directions that are never made visible or problematized.<sup>16</sup> It is thus not certain that the instruction conducted within the framework of the subject of history follows the direction of goals as described in the national curricula. It may be issues concerning the fostering of democracy, the understanding of other people, or intentions such as breaking traditional gender patterns.

## Tendencies Towards Change

By grouping the teachers' answers into cohorts based on their years of birth (<=1953; 1954–1962; 1963–1972; 1973+), it is possible to discern some weak tendencies towards change.<sup>17</sup> Close to 50 % of the teachers born before 1953 rank "providing a historical overview" as the most important role for teaching materials. Among the very youngest teachers, those born after 1973, the number ranking this role in first place is about 40 %. At the same time the proportion marking the communication of a historical overview as the two least relevant

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David Purpel (Berkeley, California: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, 1983), 100–121; Neil Postman, *The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School* The end of education : redefining the value of school / Neil Postman (New York: Knopf, 1995); John Taylor Gatto, *Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling* (Gabriola Island, B.C.: New Society Publishers, 1991); Eric Margolis, *The Hidden Curriculum in Higher Education* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

14 Kendall Dunnigan, Navigating by the North Star: Bridging the Pedagogical Gap Between Content and Structure in Higher Education, ISSS, 2006 Papers. <http://journals.issis.org/index.php/proceedings50th/issue/current>

15 Shelia I. Riddell, *Gender and the Politics of the Curriculum* (Routledge: London, 1992); Maria Wester, "Hålla ordning, men inte överordning" Köns- och maktperspektiv på uppförandenormer i svenska klassrumskulturer (Umeå: Umeå universitet, Institutionen för svenska och samhällsvetenskapliga ämnen, 2008), 105, 131, 221.

16 Donald Broady has pointed out that the problem with the hidden curriculum is not primarily the content, but the fact that it is hidden. Donald Broady, "Den dolda läroplanen," *Kritisk utbildningstidskrift* 16 (1980): 8.

17 Web Survey, "History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Teacher Internet Survey," Appendix 1 in this volume. Tables are on answers according to age.

alternatives for what teaching materials should contribute to the teaching of history is higher among the youngest teachers in relation to those born before 1953. These figures may indicate that the perception of the communication of a historical overview as the most important contribution in teaching materials is changing and that the communicative aim is losing ground.

It might be the case that more and more teachers are beginning to consider that it is the stimulation of the independent thinking among students that should be the foremost contribution of teaching materials. Among teachers born before 1953 the task of stimulating independent thinking is top priority by slightly more than 26 % of the teachers. The same top position is supported by almost 35 % of the teachers born after 1973. This could be interpreted as proficiency-related aims having gained ground, but the picture is not unambiguous, as the proportion of teachers putting this alternative in second place is considerably higher among the oldest teachers (42.7 %) than it is among the youngest ones (28.1 %). With regard to the fourth and fifth positions of this question, this proportion is also somewhat higher among the youngest teachers. The promotion of student identity gets the strongest support from the teachers born in the middle, from 1954 – 1972, and is weakest of all among the oldest teachers. These are marked differences. It is also the group of the very oldest teachers that contains the largest proportion of teachers who find this task irrelevant in the context of teaching materials.

Table 6: Teachers' views on the importance of teaching materials contributing to the definition and strengthening of pupils' identity, in relation to their year of birth<sup>18</sup>

From most important to not applicable	Born	Born	Born	Born	Total
	<1953	1954 – 1962	1963 – 1972	1973 +	
1	2.8 %	12.6 %	11.8 %	10.3 %	9.3 %
2	13.1 %	14.7 %	17.3 %	13.8 %	14.8 %
3	32.7 %	29.5 %	30.0 %	26.4 %	29.8 %
4	16.8 %	25.3 %	18.2 %	26.4 %	21.3 %
5	27.1 %	16.8 %	19.1 %	19.5 %	20.8 %
Not applicable	7.5 %	1.1 %	3.6 %	3.4 %	4.0 %

Only a minor percentage of teachers born after 1973 regard the definition and promotion of the pupils' identity as an important contribution in teaching materials in comparison with their middle aged cohorts. In addition, the placing at fourth and fifth position is somewhat higher among the youngest teachers. The differences are small, but they may indicate some degree of declining in-

<sup>18</sup> Web Survey, "History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Teacher Internet Survey," Appendix 1 in this volume. Tables on answers are according to age.

terest in identity issues as well as that proficiency-related aims have lost ground concurrently with a higher proportion of young teachers.

The view of the teaching materials' role in conveying values is very difficult to interpret on the basis of the percentage of support shown by the different age cohorts, and together with the picture of identity issues accounted for above, it does not provide a basis for drawing any conclusions regarding possible tendencies towards change in the teachers' views on aims of a fostering nature.<sup>19</sup>

## Final Remarks

In conclusion, I wish to address another aspect that emerged in this study. It is interesting to note that a large proportion of teachers, about 25%, only sometimes, seldom or never use their own narration or lecturing as an educational resource. This finding however, is in accord with information from Swedish schools, where pupils have received oral presentations to a decreasing extent and have been reduced to using texts for knowledge development from the early 1990 s to the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>20</sup> In a report that deals with the pupils' attitudes with regard to history as a subject and to history education in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, based on the national evaluation of the compulsory nine-year school system in Sweden, it was shown that a large proportion of the pupils, about 25%, wanted the teacher to talk more.<sup>21</sup> Slightly more than 60% were satisfied with the situation and about 13% wanted the teacher to talk less. In order to be able to interpret this properly, one should also know more about what kind of talking the teachers are engaging in. A large proportion of the students in the Swedish evaluation stated that they wanted to discuss more with the teacher, which may be interpreted as the teacher being seen as an important resource in the teaching of history.

This study showed that a majority of teachers use their own narration and lectures to a large extent, while at the same time there are 25% who never or only rarely used themselves as an educational resource. This situation could be interpreted as there being a large proportion of pupils who receive a great deal of teacher narration and lectures, while at the same time there are many who lack narration and conversation in instruction altogether.

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19 Ibid.

20 Skolverket, *Att lära för livet: elevers inställning till lärande – resultat från PISA 2000* (Stockholm: Skolverket, 2004), 45–46; Monika Vinterek, *Individualisering i ett skolsammanhang* (Stockholm: Myndigheten för skolutveckling, 2006), 69.

21 Lars Berggren and Roger Johansson, *Historiekunskap i årskurs 9. Nationella utvärderingen av grundskolan 2003 (NU03) Samhällsorienterande ämnen (Educare, 2006)*, (Malmö: Malmö högskola, 2006).

The picture that emerges here indicates that there could both be pupils that receive an oral presentation of history to a very limited extent and also those that listen to a teacher's presentation to a fairly large extent. If this scenario is true, there is a risk of instruction functioning less optimally if the aim is for pupils to encounter many different ways of learning. This raises essential questions about the view of learning and about how teachers view their role in making it possible for pupils to acquire knowledge in different ways.

Hopefully, it will be possible to use the issues elucidated upon in this chapter in the discussion relating to the teaching practices indicated by the results and the intentions expressed in the Nordic countries' control documents through the objectives they contain. Such a discussion could also lead to development of the issue of the connection between teachers' views of teaching resources and their teaching practices and how this in turn can influence the prerequisites for pupils' learning.

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Jens Aage Poulsen

## Narrativity in Teaching Materials

It is an obvious fact that history – if understood as the past reality or the *lived* history – has disappeared. But this so-called past reality has provided us with traces and sources for interpretation and meaning. For studying and understanding history must be presented or staged as a coherent story, a narrative in order to be studied or understood. Over the centuries a significant discussion among historians has been whether the narrated story can be characterized as a reconstruction or a construction of past reality, i. e. the story *lived* – regardless of the quality of accessible sources.

This article focuses on a comparison of the forms and structures that Nordic history book authors have chosen to give their narratives of the past in contemporary teaching and learning materials. The article opens with a discussion of narrativity and history, and is followed by examples of changes within the conditions of narrativity in teaching and learning materials in history instruction in Denmark since 1900. An interpretation of a quantitative survey about narrativity in teaching and learning materials in the Nordic countries follows.<sup>1</sup> The final part of the article describes the narrative tendencies in three Nordic history textbooks.

### Narrativity and History

In this article the concept *narrative* is used. It is derived from the Latin verb *narrare* which means “to recount” or “to tell.” Regarding history, it is evident that “something” from the past is told – or rather, narrated. In his work *Meta-history*, the American historian Hayden White stresses the fact that historians not only discover or find history in sources, but they also create historical accounts from the past. This is done by the historian first by creating order and

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<sup>1</sup> In Denmark the survey focused on teachers of history in primary and lower secondary schools. Upper secondary education was included in the other Nordic countries.

in events and human actions; second, by suggesting *what* happened, *when* and *why* (i. e. cause – effect, reason – consequences); third, by choosing which elements to include and which elements to omit; and fourth, by appointing major or minor importance to the chosen elements in the story.

According to White, the story of historians has, like other stories, a narrative structure consisting of a beginning conflict, a development of the conflict (middle) and an ending. What seem to be independent incidents and events are linked together into a coherent account which interprets and explains how and why something has happened. As with other types of narratives, the historian makes use of a poetic structure, *trope* (White), defined by a plot structure (emplotment), and combines the elements into a coherent narrative or story. The historian has to formulate valid arguments, terms and conclusions as well. Finally, White emphasizes the *ideological* dimension in the historian's narrative, which reflects "... *the ethical element of the historian's assumptions of a particular position on the question of the nature of historical knowledge and the implications that can be drawn from the study of past events for the understanding of present ones.*"<sup>2</sup>

White describes four categories of plot structures which are not clearly distinct, but which can be combined:

- *Romantic*: Drama of the triumph of good over evil, light over darkness, and the ultimate transcendence of man over the world.
- *Tragic*: The hopeless struggle of men that ultimately ends in resignation and adaptation, defines the conditions of human lives.
- *Comic*: Man's temporary triumph. Comic and festive episodes put his deserved fall into perspective.
- *Satire/Irony*: Man is captive to rather than master of the circumstances and conditions of life and the human consciousness is unable to handle this.

Based on the conditions in which the narrated story was created, White argues that it does not represent past reality – but rather that the history *lived*. Possibilities and limitations to create agreement between the history *told* and the history *lived* are, as mentioned above, not the concern of this article. Besides which, White's theory has been criticized and strongly debated particularly in connection with a discussion of the history of the Holocaust.<sup>3</sup> Elements of White's analysis are usable tools, however, for analyzing the narrative approach in history teaching and learning materials.

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2 Hayden White, *Metahistory – The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London: Johns Hopkins 1993), 22.

3 For example, Saul Friedlander, ed., *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution"* (Los Angeles: Harvard University Press, 1992).

## Framework for Narratives

It is not customary for authors of textbooks in primary and lower secondary schools to do research. Nevertheless, the author has – in principle – certain conditions in common with the historian: As mentioned previously, the past reality, the *lived* history, has disappeared and he or she has to stage history as a narrated story. There are other requirements for the author, though, to create the framework of the narrated story of the learning materials. Firstly, the contents have to agree with accepted historical knowledge, i. e. research based, narrated history, which is a challenge as there is frequently no consensus on what historical knowledge is. Secondly, the teaching and learning material must be usable in history instruction – the simplest explanation being that students should be able to decode, understand and use the contents. In this case, predominant ideas and theories of teaching and learning play a central part. Thirdly, and not necessarily in accord with the previous requirements, political expectations as expressed in governmental aims and curricula are of great significance regarding the implementation of narrativity and how it unfolds in teaching and learning materials. This pertains to the content – what to include and what to omit – and the acquisition of knowledge and skills. An example of this could be that in 2006 the Danish Minister of Education decided – with a governmental majority – that Denmark needed a historical canon. Furthermore, you have to consider the formative aspect of the school subject, as expressed in overall governmental aims.

The fact that governmental requirements have affected the form of narratives given by the authors of teaching and learning materials in Denmark is illustrated in the following examples: In 1900 the aims and content of school subjects were systematically described in the so-called *Sthyrske Cirkulære* – Circular of Sthyr. The task of the subject history was, among other things, to:

... foster a healthy and vivid imagination with warm feelings towards our people and our country, in particular [...] Furthermore, through its wealth of examples that appeal to children's moral appreciation and as it has an inspiring influence on their will, history is also an important means of moral education. Historical persons and events should be presented to the pupils through lucid and vivid accounts and in return they should be asked to repeat and retell just what has been presented to them.<sup>4</sup> (Author's translation)

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<sup>4</sup> "Cirkulære fra Kirke- og Undervisningsministeriet af 6. April 1900 om undervisningsplaner for de offentlige folkeskoler" (København: Kirke- og undervisningsministeriet, 1900). (Translation of original).

As can be seen in the above excerpt from the governmental circular, the story or the storytelling was the most important form of presentation when teaching history. The final part of these aims describes how pupils should work with storytelling: "... they [the pupils] should be asked to repeat and retell just what has been presented to them." There is no room here for reflection, discussion or creative composition. "Repeat and retell" usually meant learning by heart. The examples of presentations of educational and instructional stories focus typically on the struggle between good and evil, such as with Thor and the Giants or Niels Ebbesen and Count Gert. Stories, which according to White, have a typical *romantic* plot structure.

*The History of Denmark for Primary Schools (Folkeskolens Danmarkshistorie)* written by Ejnar Scholl in 1930 provides a characteristic example: history was placed in a timetable and all pupils had the same history book of approximately 150 pages. It has a clear and unequivocal focus on the history of Denmark with a few glimpses of general Nordic conditions and the content is arranged chronologically from the Stone Age to the time of publication. The short chapters of the book have been structured as narratives or stories – often with kings and other "great" personalities playing the dominant and most important parts. Like in fairy- and folktales, the opening conflict and the plotline are often personal and separated from the historical and sociological context. The actors or characters have personal qualities characterized as good/evil (or at least less good), clever/stupid (or less clever), etc. The fictitious narrative form is made stronger by bits of dialogue, and like other stories the history book narrative is concluded with a solution to the conflict and with balance and harmony restored.

The "driving force" of the argument is "great" persons. The stories in the history book form a collected story of the direction and idea of history: by virtue of great (good) personalities "we" have evolved from a primitive and savage stage to the civilized, well functioning society of the present (around 1930). "We" is used deliberately when addressing the readers (for example: "*Our* ancestors ..."). The ideology is unmistakably nationalistic – conveying the message that although there still is a distinction between rich and poor, we – the Danes – have had a common collective identity since the beginning of time that manifests itself in a national unity of people and country in times of distress. This was clearly expressed in the preface of Nikoline Helms' textbook for history in the Danish school *De Danske og deres broderfolk* (The Danes and Their Brother Nations) which was first published in 1913:

Boys and Girls! Denmark is our country, which we love! It is a beautiful country with salt, sea and wind, and our people live – in spite of many daily struggles – under better conditions than almost all other people in the world. Is that why we love our country so much? No, rather it is because this is where our home is. This is

where our father and mother grew up and their parents before them. And we know that our people have lived here since distant times...<sup>5</sup>

In 1930 the Ministry of Education appointed a committee for a critical examination of school textbooks. The committee's report, which was published in 1933, was also critical of The Circular of Sthyr – in particular of the aims and content for the subject of history. The Committee found that Nordic mythology and legendary history took up too much space. Furthermore, the committee blamed teaching that was based on the Circular of Sthyr for not providing the pupils with a historical overview, as the stories had been randomly selected and thus contributed to an unfocused knowledge of history. The committee also believed in strengthening the connection between the science of history and history instruction in schools. Teaching and learning materials in primary and lower secondary schools should be based on “what we nowadays consider the reliable results of science.”<sup>6</sup> In addition, it was essential that teaching materials initiate that pupils learn to “observe, describe and conclude” based on historical material.

Finally, the committee questioned the nationalistic angle of the stories, which often directly or indirectly contributed to creating skepticism towards other nations and states. According to the committee, the formative or educational aims of history as a school subject should be that pupils learned “... to understand the living conditions and ways of thinking of different time periods, in other classes and of human beings based on the conditions of the time – rather than self-righteously judging them by present day qualifications and sympathies...”<sup>7</sup>

The 1937 Law of Primary and Lower Secondary School (*Folkeskolelov*) changed the goals of the school subject and recommendations for textbooks were respected to a certain extent. With regard to teaching materials, the vivid and dramatic stories that used to characterize history lessons were reduced and the content was more in agreement with historical research. Legendary history was cancelled and the history of Denmark continued to be the focus, but kings and other “great” personalities had been removed. Economic, social and other structural conditions were part of the new plan.

Martin A. Hansen, the Danish author, was extremely critical of the textbooks of the day. In the beginning of the 1940's he wrote among other things:

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5 Nikoline Helms, Preface to *De Danske og deres broderfolk* (København: Gyldendal, 1913).

6 Ellen Nørgaard, *Skolebogsbetænkningens historieafsnit: Dens tilblivelseshistorie og træk af dens modtagelse*. I *Årbog for dansk skolehistorie* (København: Danmarks Lærerhøjskole, 1970), 93.

7 *Ibid.*, 95.

... It would be a pity if history in our time was merely “stories” or narratives. History must express facts. That is why it is often boring. The textbook, which really is the history of the people, could not have a more serious flaw.<sup>8</sup>

Hansen wanted the school subject of history separated from the science of history, emphasizing how a good history book must live up to the following demands:

It has to let the persons speak, live, act. Its view on cultural history and social descriptions should be unequivocal as well. They will appear as the setting of the narratives. Furthermore, it should be written as a novel that can be read without a break.<sup>9</sup>

Hansen’s advice was not followed – quite to the contrary. In the 1950’s and in particular after the so-called *Blue Paper* (Blå Betænkning) from 1960, the use of narrativity in teaching and learning materials for history instruction can be characterized as predominantly objective, unbiased and merely informative. The dramatic, spellbinding narratives with which the pupils could identify had mostly disappeared. Moreover, the content was neither up for discussion nor something to stimulate pupils’ own creative narratives.

The early 1970’s placed a focus on pedagogy as an educational science and this view was implemented in the teaching of history as well. The informative way of teaching was to be reduced and replaced by skill-based learning, encouraging pupils to make use of historical methods.

A draft of the Teacher’s Guidelines from 1974 states that the aim is for pupils to “[...] acquire a certain level of skills in finding information (and) drawing conclusions from the source material.”<sup>10</sup> This scientific-centered way of teaching never really succeeded in the Danish school, partially because very few people mastered the form, but mainly because people realized that source analysis was difficult for most pupils – especially when the teaching of history was concluded after year 7 (School Act of 1975).

History as a school subject was again introduced in school years 8 and 9 in 1981. In the 1980’s the Ministry of Education issued two collections of academic texts containing aims, objectives, curriculum and guidelines for school subjects. The connection between the subject of history and the science of history was emphasized here. The booklet of history from 1984 states:

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8 Martin A. Hansen, *Verdensromanen – historiske essays i udvalg* (København: Gyldendal 1966), 26.

9 *Ibid.*, 27.

10 *Udkast til undervisningsvejledning for Folkeskolen, Historie 1974* (København: Lærerforeningens Materialeudvalg, 1974), 7.

The foundation [of the teaching of history] is the historians' attempt to describe the past as truthfully as possible by means of academic methods – to describe people's living conditions and possibilities, to point out similarities and differences, continuity and change.<sup>11</sup>

The history booklets of the 1980's did not restore the colorful narrative, however, and the teaching materials of the time still attempted to be objective, factual and chronologically structured according to the age level. Young primary school pupils started with ancient times and reached the present in lower secondary school (in year 9).

In 1993 a new school act saw the light of day and brought with it new booklets for each subject. In many ways the booklet, *Historie 1995* (History 1995), suggested a break with the traditional teaching of history that had been the topic of continuous discussions on the didactics of history in the Nordic countries in the 1980's. The idea of structuring the content according to age/class level and chronology was replaced by topic-, theme- and problem-based projects.

The most important aim of history instruction was to intensify pupils' consciousness of history, i. e. develop their recognition of – and their competence regarding – the fact that they are “both created by history and creators of history.”<sup>12</sup> This means that the students and their life conditions are framed by processes of continuity and change. The aspect of *creators of history* carries two different but coherent meanings. First, that as active citizens they are co-creators of the present and future conditions of life. Second, that the history of the past, the history *told*, is not unconditional and objective, but rather is being rewritten and reinterpreted from interaction with an interpretation of the past, an understanding of the present and expectations of the future. As a result, it is imperative for history instruction that students create historical narratives based on acquired knowledge. With the introduction of *Historie 1995* the historical narrative was revived with a completely different form and a different goal than the rote reproduction and nationalistic form of the Circular of Sthyr from 1900.

The most dominant role of the textbook as a teaching material was challenged as pupils' historical consciousness was mainly formed by factors from their lives outside school.<sup>13</sup> Movies, historical books for children and young people, ICT and other forms of narratives were legal in the history lessons. Textbooks still represented an essential part, but their style changed significantly beginning at the end of the 1990's. Academic presentations became increasingly alive and

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11 *Undervisningsvejledning for Folkeskolen, Historie 1984* (København: Undervisningsministeriet 1984), 10.

12 *Historie, Faghæfte 4* (København: Undervisningsministeriet, 1995), 9.

13 Bernard Eric Jensen, *Historie – livsverden og fag* (Gylding: Gyldendal, 2003), 88.

reflective, and they were often part of fictitious or imaginary narratives. Suggestions for tasks and activities encouraged students to reflect on the content as well as to form an opinion before producing various forms of narratives.

Currently – in the last half of the first decade of the new millennium – a certain criticism of history instruction is present. It is argued that the organization of themes and topics along with the focus on consciousness of history have resulted in pupils having inadequate historical knowledge and a lack of chronological overview – in particular when it comes to the history of Denmark. Anders Holm Thomsen, a significant debater and a recent PhD graduate, has the following to say about the teaching of history:

... focus on the future has been introduced and contemporary relevance not to mention the constant demands for pupil-centered teaching – teaching which is supposed to free pupils and students from any community of culture across generations.<sup>14</sup>

The current criticism has obtained a sympathetic response from the present government. Since the beginning of the new millennium the government has led a “fight of values” in which cultural heritage and the power of solidarity are significant topics. In 2008, a new curriculum booklet (*faghæfte/curriculum*) became effective. Time will show how it will affect the school subject of history and the narrative approach as well its consequences for narrativity in teaching and learning materials.

## Narrativity in Contemporary Teaching and Learning Materials

What, then, are the expectations of teachers with regards to narrativity in history teaching and learning materials and to what extent can the materials in use live up to these expectations?

These questions were part of a quantitative survey carried out as part of the project “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials.”<sup>15</sup>

The concept of the survey, its methods and results have been explained by project members in other chapters of this volume – therefore two aspects of the survey will be focused on here. First, the respondents (history teachers) had to grade five options with regards to what they found important in teaching and learning materials when presenting a historical overview. Next, the respondents

14 Anders Holm Thomsen, “Den historieløse skole,” *Jyllands-Posten*, Denmark, June 20, 2007.

15 Web Survey, “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Internet Survey,” see Appendix 1 in this volume.

were to assess the teaching and learning materials they employed in history instruction on the basis of the options available.

The following options were to be graded from 1 (most acceptable) to 5 (least acceptable):

- Influential and important individuals
- Major and dramatic events
- A sense of time and chronological order
- Context and cause-effect relationships
- A vivid account

When grading, the respondents were not able to award two alternatives the same rating, which means that the choices provided are considered unique and without any connection to the others. It is likely to assume that many would see a parallel between some of the alternatives, for example between “major and dramatic events” and “a vivid account.” Some respondents stopped responding when the program did not allow them to rate two options identically. This has, of course, affected the results of the survey, which consequently has to be interpreted with caution and seen merely as showing tendencies rather than rules.

## Teaching and Learning Materials – Expectations and Realities

In their expectations regarding the teaching and learning materials (Figure 1) the respondents give the lowest score to “influential and important individuals” (47%).

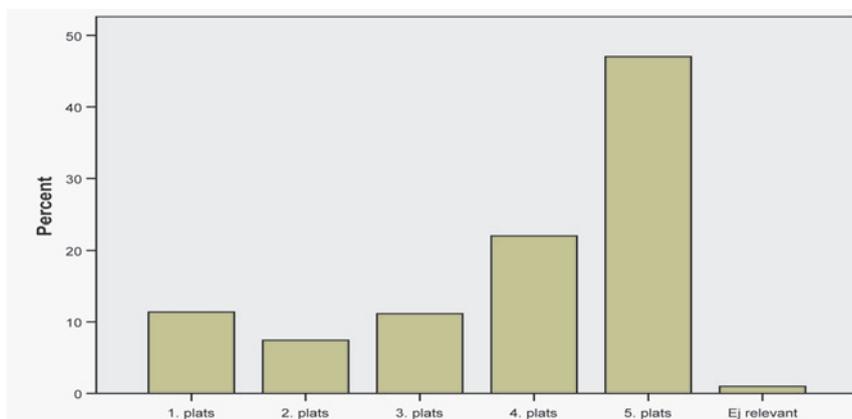


Figure 1: Expectations for materials: Influential and important individuals

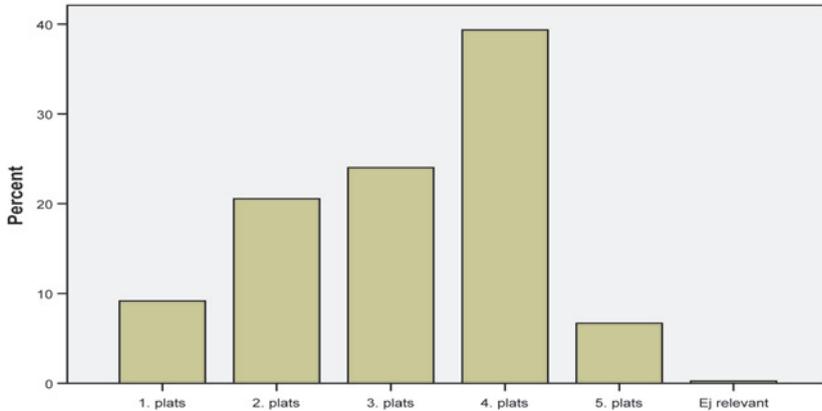


Figure 2: Expectations for materials: Major and dramatic events

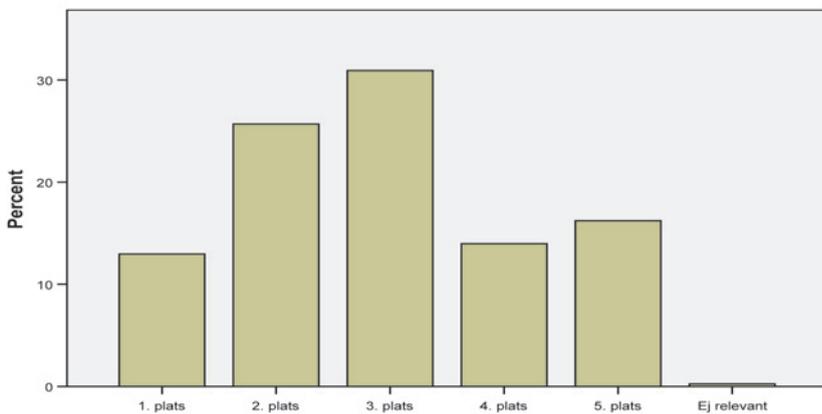


Figure 3: Expectations for materials: A sense of time and chronological order

If you include those who rated this second lowest (22%), you reach more than two thirds. “major and dramatic events” (Figure 2) has a low score as well, but is still higher than “influential and important individuals.” Approximately 39% of respondents placed “major and dramatic events” as the second lowest score, yet almost 30% of teachers placed this in the top two positions.

The grading of “a sense of time and chronological order” is similar to a normal distribution curve – although the tendency goes towards a higher score. It was placed in the middle by 30% of the respondents, in the top two positions by

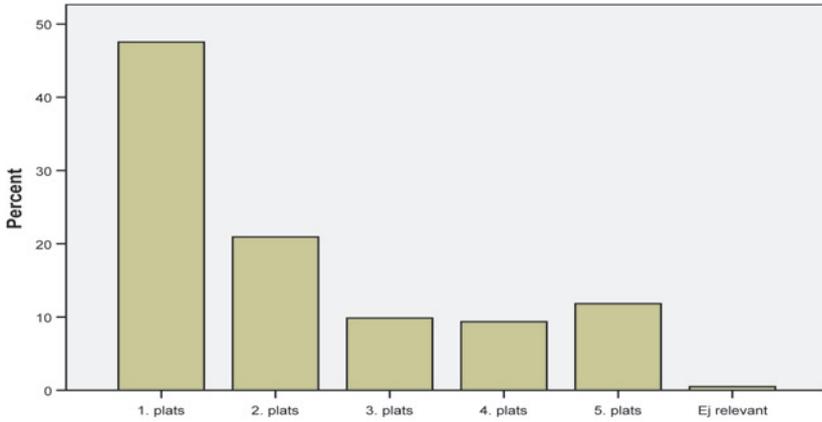
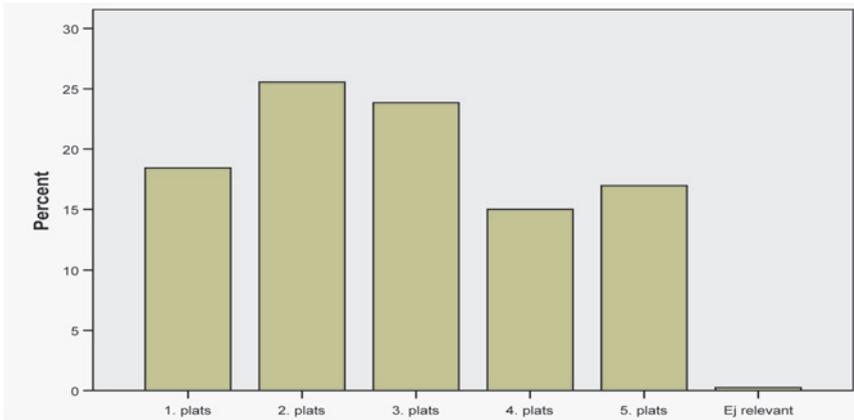


Figure 4: Expectations for materials: Context and cause-effect relationships



1 (most important) 2 3 4 to 5 (least important), N/A (Not Applicable)

Figure 5: Expectations for materials: A vivid account

Figures 1 – 5: Expectations for teaching and learning materials. What is most important when providing a historical overview in teaching materials?

39%, and 30% placed it in the two lowest positions. Almost half (47%) ranked “context and cause-effect relationships” (Figure 4) as most and 2<sup>nd</sup> most important.

Teaching and learning materials are obviously expected and required to be able to place described phenomena in a sociological perspective and to deal with their causes and effects. The fifth and last alternative “a vivid account” was given relatively high priority, as 44% of respondents gave it the highest and second

highest score, whereas it receives the lowest and second lowest score from 32 % of teachers.

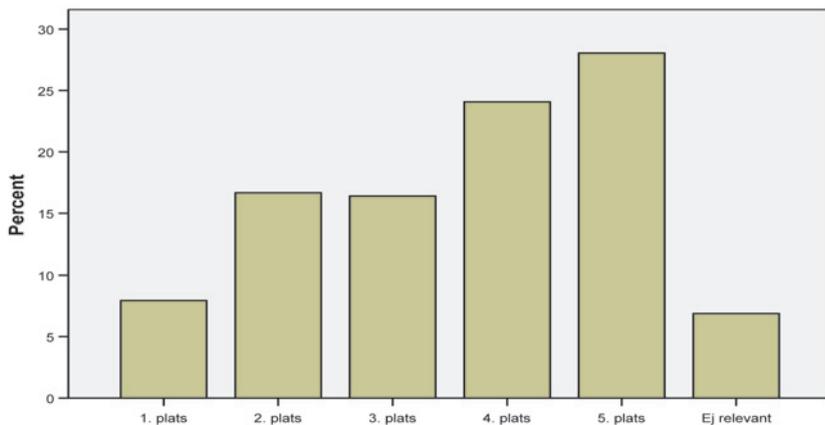


Figure 6: Assessment of own materials: Influential and important individuals

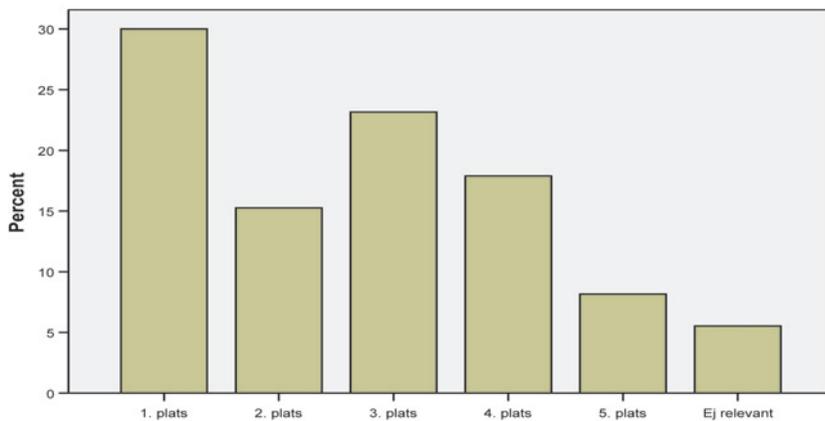


Figure 7: Assessment of own materials: Major and dramatic events

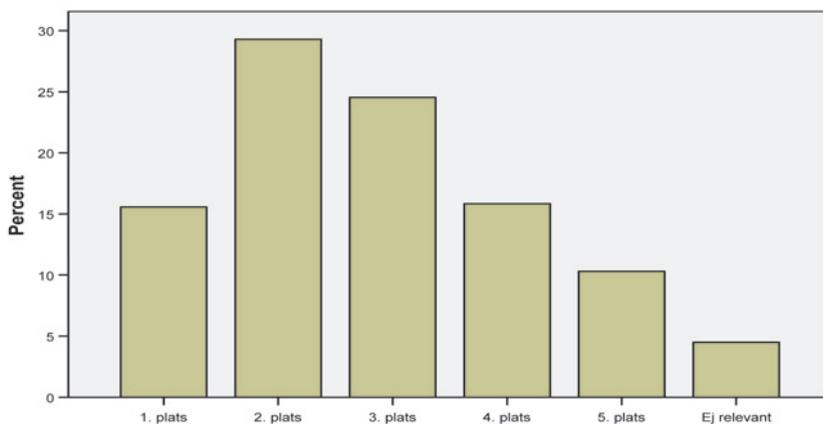


Figure 8: Assessment of own materials: A sense of time and chronological order

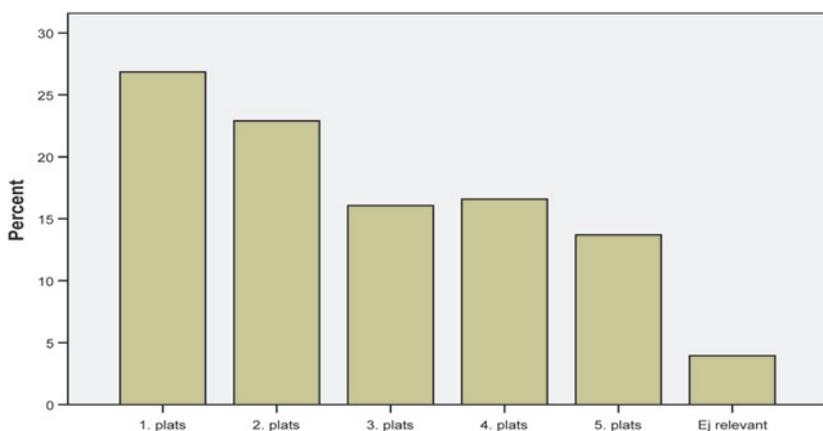


Figure 9: Assessment of own materials: Context and cause-effect relationships

The respondents' assessment of the materials they use when teaching is very compatible with their expectations regarding what priority they placed on "major and influential individuals" (Figure 6). There are, however, a majority of middle scores – and consequently relatively fewer at the top and bottom. There are also no huge discrepancies in "a sense of time and chronological order" (Figure 8). When assessing their own materials, "major and dramatic events" (Figure 7) receives the top score (30%), which is more than three times the 9% that respondents mentioned regarding their expectations for teaching materials. This shows a distinct difference between expectations and "realities." In "context and cause-effect relationships" the difference is significant as well.

For "a vivid account" there are also differences between teachers' expect-

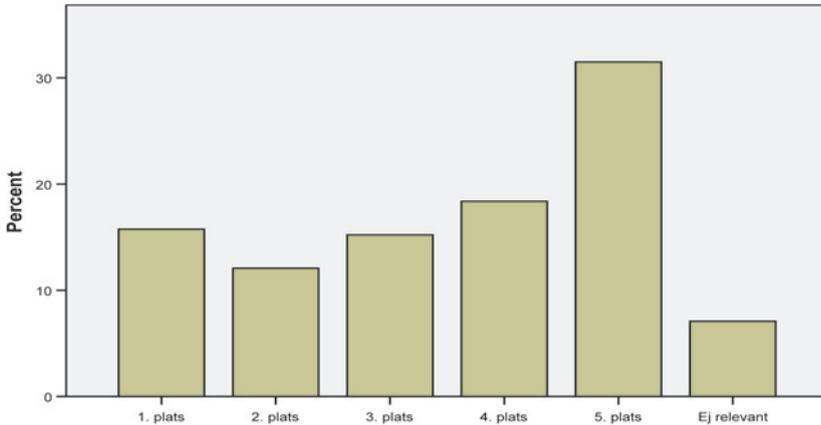


Figure 10: Assessment of own materials: A vivid account

Figures 6 – 10: How do you assess the teaching and learning materials you employ in history instruction?

ations and their assessment of the material they use, although not as distinct: 31 % stated that “a vivid account” (Figure 10) is at the bottom when it comes to the teaching and learning materials that they use, which is double the number of respondents that placed the same expectation for teaching materials at the bottom.

## Materials – Expectations, Realities – Age and Gender

As mentioned, expectations as well as official requirements for teaching and learning materials have changed over the years. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the age of respondents or rather the amount of teaching experience might have a significant influence on their priorities. The questionnaire asked the respondents to state their year of birth. In the analysis of results, four age groups were defined: (1) 1953 or earlier, (2) 1954 – 1962, (3) 1963 – 1972, and (4) 1973 and later. Cross tabulation does not show significant differences among age groups and in light of the modest number of respondents, differences should not be over-interpreted. Still, the two youngest age groups tended to give slightly higher priority to “influential and important individuals” and “major and dramatic events” than the two older age groups. A possible explanation could be that at least the youngest age group attended school during a period when the “vivid account”, including narratives of great personalities, was legalized again. This occurred after a period in the 1970’s and the beginning of the 1980’s when

new materials for history in Danish schools emphasized the history of social groups rather than the history of kings. However, this interpretation is contradicted by the response to “a vivid account” as most of the younger group placed this alternative as lowest and second lowest priority.

In their characterization of the teaching and learning materials that the respondents use, it is difficult to pin down differences between general and age related tendencies, for which possible explanations cannot be found in such a limited number of respondents. A few observations should be mentioned, however. When assessing the importance of “influential and important individuals” for teaching and learning materials, relatively more respondents in the oldest age group place it lowest (38%) compared to the youngest group (23%). The average is 28%, an explanation for which may be found in the above-mentioned change of attitude regarding the “vivid account”.

A large number of the two middle aged groups find that “major and dramatic events” is the most significant feature when it comes to their teaching materials – 38% and 36% respectively – whereas only 19% of the oldest and 27% of the youngest age group choose this priority.

Although hardly statistically reliable, a slight tendency is found among the oldest and the youngest age groups who find “a sense of time and chronological order” in their material somewhat more significant than the two middle-aged groups. In the oldest age group more than half (52%) give “a sense of time and chronological order” the highest or second highest score in their teaching and learning materials.

With regard to expectations for teaching materials, “context and cause-effect relationships” is given the highest priority by the oldest and second oldest group, whereas it is of less importance in particular for the youngest age group. Barely 60% of the oldest group claims that their materials give the highest or second highest priority to this. Teaching material expectations for “a vivid account” are highest among by the two oldest age groups and the lowest priority among the youngest respondents.

Assessed as a whole, the survey shows only minor differences in expectations for materials and for the characteristics of materials in use based on age, if at least a reasonably statistical foundation must be present for a valid assessment. The same goes for differences between men and women with regard to their expectations for teaching materials. Again however, there is an exception concerning “influential and important individuals” which is given higher priority by male than it is by female respondents. It was given highest priority by 14,5% of male and 7,9% of female respondents, but as only 39 of the respondents stressed the importance of “major and influential individuals” there is nothing conclusive with regard to gender differences.

By using cross tabulation, it is also possible to see differences based on the respondents' nationality, at least in theory. In practice this was more problematic. As a whole, the survey is based on 409 respondents, which is rather on the small side. As the number of respondents from the six different nationalities is extremely unevenly distributed, there are certain limitations as to what can be deduced.<sup>16</sup> But as the narrative approach in a Danish, a Swedish and a Norwegian textbook is the subject of the short analysis at the end of this article, a few comments should be made on these, as well as the Icelandic, respondents.

As a whole "influential and important individuals" was given highest priority by very few respondents (11%). Among Norwegians it was placed highest by 17%, and there are relatively more Icelandic respondents (58%) who give it the lowest score (as opposed to 47% among all respondents). Generally, "major and dramatic events" are given the lowest priority (9%), though it receives a slightly higher score among the Icelandic respondents (14%). "a sense of time and chronological order" is generally given high priority, and the variation is limited. If you add the highest and the second highest score, the result for all nationalities reaches 41 – 48%.

Due to the number of responses, the result is more confident when analyzing expectations for materials regarding "context and cause-effect relationships." The difference is limited here, i. e. between 61% (Danish) and 69% (Norwegian). Likewise, "a vivid account" is generally given very high priority.

Therefore, "context and cause-effect relationships" and "a vivid account" emerge with the highest scores. At first glance this may seem like a combination that cannot be easily realized. Setting a plotline, or sequence of events, into a meaningful context while reflecting on a cause and effect relationship will no doubt suggest other forms of presentation than a "living" narrative. On the other hand, a "vivid account" does not necessarily have a traditional and linear structure that both clarifies and discusses context and causal relation – i. e. encouraging pupils to be producers of history themselves.

## Teaching and Learning Materials

As a follow-up to the comments of the survey, I have attempted to describe and compare important features of the narrative approaches in three sets of materials from Denmark, Norway and Sweden, respectively. Concepts from the quanti-

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<sup>16</sup> Number of respondents: Danes (44), Finns (19), Finns-Swedes (38), Icelanders (97), Norwegians (151) and Swedes (60).

tative examination above have been used. Three well-known textbooks have been selected based on the following criteria: First, the target user group is year 8–9 (14–15 year-old students). Second, the historical period examined is the same: The Interwar Period. Third, the books have been structured according to the same principle: Chronological order. The latter entails a rather atypical choice for the Danish material. The current history curriculum from 2005, *Fælles Mål* (Common Objectives), suggests topic and theme based teaching, but topics and themes are not dealt with in a chronological order according to age level. *The textbook Ind i historien* has been chronologically organized – similar to the Norwegian and Swedish textbooks.

#### *Denmark: Ind i historien*

Claus Buttenschøn & Olaf Ries's *Ind i Historien – Danmark og verden*, (Into History – Denmark and the World) Vol. 3, first published in 1994, deals with the interwar period from pages 69–108 under the headline “The Decades of Dictators 1920–45”. The 38 pages have been divided into a number of relatively short sections, containing a couple of pages, which again have been divided into boxes. This textbook makes use of various ways of presentation: faction, academic presentation and a subgroup: facts/fact boxes. The illustrations and the layout play an important part in the narrative structure of the material.

The term “faction” refers to short “vivid” and dramatic literary stories, which partly take place within the timeframe and space of the period addressed and which partly focus on the central problems of the chapter. In the introductory faction of “The Decades of Dictators,” we follow Peter and his friends, all volunteers in the Spanish Civil War, in an episode during the dramatic and decisive battle against the Fascists at the Ebro river. The straightforward suspense in “The Battle of the Ebro River” appeals immediately to the students. The aim is at the same time to make them interested in knowing more about (for example) the Fascists. The main characters of the faction are ordinary people and not “influential and important individuals.” The colorful drawing that shows a blurred and unclear motive supports the faction only to a certain extent.

The academic presentation dominates the section. The texts are interconnected, and with regard to content they are chronologically organized, very informative and descriptive. After a short section on “The Fight of the Isms,” the content focuses on Communism and Stalin in the Soviet Union and Fascism and Mussolini in Italy. The part about Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party is the most extensive. World War II is dealt with in four pages. There is not a large amount of dates and places to remember, but the reader is fully aware of both time and space. “Major and dramatic events”, such as the Reichstag Fire in Berlin in 1933,

have been included. To a certain extent the events are placed within a context and they are usually given one particular reason. The students are not introduced to different interpretations of reasons for a phenomenon or event – and the text does not encourage them to discuss the reasons presented. In this way, the story is absolute and closed – the story appears as the final truth about the lived past – and not as a construction of the past. History took place like this – and these were the reasons. “Influential and important individuals” such as Mussolini, Stalin and Hitler are important characters. The number of characters is limited, however, and emphasis is placed on their actions, which are seen within economic, social or cultural structures.

In regard to White’s categories, which were mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the plot structure could be described as *tragic*. The *romantic* plot structure is also represented later however, when it is revealed that evil (the dictators) is conquered and punished. In “The Decades of Dictators,” a progressive form of narrative is used. It is first and foremost informative, but there are glimpses of “vivid” narrative as well, which can be seen in the following excerpt about the Reichstag Fire: “When the police arrived at the fire, they found a mentally disturbed Dutchman named Marinus van der Lubbe running around half naked striking matches.”<sup>17</sup>

The fact boxes give brief, more detailed information about specific topics such as “Soviet Art,” “Jews and Genocide,” and the Olympic Games in Berlin 1936. The illustrations are contemporary photos, mostly black and white, and a few, such as posters, are in color. The illustrations and texts go well together overall. Moreover, the book has been illustrated with new drawings in black and white with blue as a focus color that neither add extra information nor greater experience.

The academic texts as do not encourage reflection and discussion, in other words, create historical narratives based on acquired knowledge. However, the chapter “The Decades of Dictators” is concluded with a working page entitled “On Your Own” which contains very open suggestions for activities, including for example, “Find a picture of Picasso’s painting ‘Guernica.’ What do you think Picasso wants to say with the painting?”<sup>18</sup> In addition to this, there are suggestions for the teacher in terms of relevant themes to include. For the teacher who is well qualified and well-informed about the didactics of history as well as the subject matter, there are inspiration and ideas for planning and implementing teaching approaches that can enable students to create historical narratives based on acquired knowledge. The less-informed teacher, however, might be

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17 Claus Buttenschøn & Olaf Ries, *Ind i historien – Danmark og verden*, 3 (Aalborg: Gad & Grafisk, 1994), 89.

18 *Ibid.*, 108.

somewhat let down. How, for example, is the decoding of “Guernica” to be used in the history class here and now?

### *Norway: Underveis*

Harald Skjønberg’s *Underveis – Historie 9 – Samfunnsfag for ungdomstrinnet* (On the Way – History 9 – Social Science for Lower Secondary Students), first published in 2007, portrays the interwar period in chapter 6, from pages 92 – 113, under the headline “In the Shadow of Dictatorships.” The 21 pages have been divided into sections, which are somewhat longer than in the Danish textbook. Apart from the general academic text, the book has “frame texts” which support specific topics – for example by including a brief section of source references, adapted for educational purposes. “Margin texts” are also included and provide excerpts of sources in the form of quotations and poems.

With regard to content the focus is on Stalin and the Soviet Union, Mussolini and Italy, Hitler and Germany (the most extensive focus) and a shorter section on Franco and Spain. At the beginning of the chapter, under the headline: “In this chapter, you are going to learn about ...,” the students are informed explicitly about the content.

The academic text is a progressive narrative, which must be characterized as more “vivid” than the narrative in the Danish textbook. There is space to show the drama and create engagement – without the presentation becoming a faction (the murder of the chairman of the St. Petersburg Party in 1934, for example). The main characters are fleshed out, thus strengthening the possibility of identification and distance/dislike (here mainly the latter). In this way we hear about Stalin’s childhood and Lenin’s assessment of him later. The readers have no doubt that at least Stalin and Hitler are evil. When they disappear later in the chapter, a certain harmony is again restored in Europe. With White’s categories in mind, the plot structure tends towards the *romantic*.

“Influential and important individuals” (Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler) take up a lot of space in the informative presentation, and they are unquestionably made responsible for the development of events. This is also emphasized by the three dictators’ dominant role in the timeline at the beginning of the chapter. Social and structural conditions such as Germany during the Weimar Republic are mentioned too, but they merely form a background that might influence the direction of events. They do not however, have a significant influence on the actual occurrences. The actions of the “important” characters are presented as the reasons of the events. There is no discussion of motives or of other possible causes for the chain of events.

The “frame texts” are often created around a source excerpt. The texts are

supplements to the academic text, but they do not challenge or modify it. The text in itself does not encourage the creation of a historical framework for reflection aimed at enhancing the students' own critical thinking. Instead reproduction and repetition are emphasized, which according to Bloom's Taxonomy would mean a low score. This can be seen in boxes headed by "Do you remember?" and containing factual questions, which can be answered by means of the text, such as "What was the name of leader of the Italian Fascist Party?" In a similar fashion, there are questions under a heading "... In short" where students have to answer the question: "In which country was there a civil war in the 1930's?"<sup>19</sup>

The notion of history as something absolute ("wie es eigentlich gewesen") in contrast to something relative is also emphasized in the last sort of text about "context and cause-effect relationships." Such an approach is maintained explicitly here – without any discussion – in four "bullets" regarding why Hitler and the Nazis came into power in Germany and then five bullet points listing the following consequences. "Major and dramatic events" such as the Moscow processes and the Olympic Games in 1936 have been included, but they do not dominate the narrative account. The chapter has been chronologically organized and the actions placed precisely in time and space – without a large number of dates and places.

At the end of the chapter there is a work page headed by "Further work ...," which contains a few suggestions for activities which carefully encourage working with history at a level higher than mere repetition: "Study the posters of propaganda on pages 95 and 104. Give a brief descriptions of the two posters. Find similarities and dissimilarities."<sup>20</sup>

The illustrations are mainly contemporary black and white photos and color reproductions of paintings, which work quite well with the texts.

### *Sweden: Historia*

Elisabeth Ivansson and Mattias Tordai's *Historia del 4*, first published in 2003, has placed the period under the heading "The Interwar Period" and is found on pages 4–25. The main part of the 21 pages is a progressive, academic text. The text has been divided into 7 sections, which again are divided into boxes. The most important topics are the economic crisis of the 1920's, Stalin's dictatorship in the Soviet Union, Hitler and the Nazis on their way to power in Germany, and

19 Harald Skjønsberg, *Underveis – Historie 9 – Samfunnsfag for ungdomstrinnet* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2007).

20 Ibid.

Sweden in the Interwar Period. At the beginning of the chapter there is a timeline showing important events from 1918 until 1939.

The introductory section “The Economic Crisis in the Interwar Period” demonstrates the emphasis on economic, social, cultural and other structural reasons. “Influential and important individuals” play a part here as well – although with less extensiveness than both the Danish and, in particular, the Norwegian textbook. The actors/characters act in cooperation with the social conditions and the social conditions decide the framework for the consequences of their actions. Thus Hitler’s road to power is described as being in tandem with the economic conditions. The great depression in 1929 and the following crisis of unemployment meant “Hitler saw his chance.”<sup>21</sup> According to White’s categories, the plot structure has signs of *satire/irony*.

The priority of a social and economic framework for explanation is also seen in the five pages that are concerned with Sweden in the interwar period. The emphasis is on the description of the economic progress in the 1920’s. Attention is called to the uneven distribution of progress, and the crisis in the 1930’s, which led to a high unemployment rate is explained with the world crisis as a background. Only one character is mentioned in this section, Per Albin, leader of the Social Democratic Party and the Prime Minister of Sweden. The narrative is progressive and structured chronologically. “Major and dramatic events” play a minor part. One of the most significant events of the time, the Reichstag Fire in 1933, is not mentioned. Some events have been included in specific “frame texts” labeled “Deepening.” Examples of this include the attempts of the Nazis to boycott Jewish shops in April 1933 and the demonstrations in Ådalen in 1931.

The events are placed within a context of and with a connection to reason, but there are specific causes and specific effects. The text in the Swedish textbook does not encourage the students to examine and relate to different explanations either. Some of the so-called “Texts for Absorption” do provide possibilities to see the story presented from a different angle as, for example, the text about “Ådalen”: “Demonstrating workers were killed by shooting.”<sup>22</sup> This is also seen in the absorption text entitled “Excluded from the People’s Home,” which argues that racist motives were behind the political concept of the People’s Home: “Politicians wanted to make the Swedes a happier, healthier and better people. But there were groups who were not considered acceptable in the New Sweden, for example gypsies, the Roma people and other ostracized people.”<sup>23</sup>

The notion that the story of the past is absolute and not debatable is supported by frame texts, entitled “Summing Up”, which have 3–4 key facts, like :

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21 Elisabeth Ivansson and Mattias Tordai, *Historia del 4* (Stockholm: Liber 2003), 15.

22 *Ibid.*, 21.

23 *Ibid.*, 24.

“In the interwar period Swedish goods were sold all over the world more than ever. Sweden was becoming a rich country.”<sup>24</sup> But mostly there are several sections of questions with answers immediately found in the text that require no reflection, like: “How many years after 1932 were the Social Democrats in power?”<sup>25</sup> There are also questions, however, which seem to encourage reflection and perspective – thus strengthening the students’ consciousness of history, such as: “Do you think a politician like Adolf Hitler would have any chance of getting into power in a European country today? Please give reasons for your answer.”<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, it is problematic that the book in no way provides the students with knowledge or help so they can produce an acceptable, qualified answer.

The number of illustrations is distinctly lower than in the other textbooks. All pictures, apart from a color reproduction of a Stalin poster, are black/white photos. Several have been reproduced in such a small format that their significance as a source of information is limited.

## Now What?

As appears from the survey, there are distinct expectations with regard to narrativity in teaching and for learning materials fulfilling both “context and cause-effect relationships” and “a vivid account.” Uniting the two is a challenge and according to the analyses of the three textbooks above, the authors have not been successful in complying with these expectations.

The survey also shows differences between expectations and the actual narrativity in the materials. With a limited number of respondents and other elements of uncertainty in the survey – among them elements not included (for example, how the students actually use and conceive of the teaching and learning materials) – it is not possible to clarify the problem area or come up with suggestions for satisfactory solutions. It must be added, however, that at a national level, as well as a Nordic level, there is great need for research in teaching and learning materials for history, among other subjects. The aim must be to develop the concept of teaching and learning materials that have the ability to facilitate challenging learning processes that can produce knowledge. In this case, materials are needed which render visible the process of students’ reflections on the fact that the story told is constructed in continuous interplay with an interpretation of the past, an understanding of the present and ex-

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24 Ibid., 24.

25 Ibid., 25.

26 Ibid., 25.

peceptions for the future. The material must encourage the students to create historical narratives based on acquired conscious knowledge – neither completely absolute and objective nor relative and subjective. The materials and the teaching must have the fundamental aim of boosting the students' historical consciousness, i. e. to increase their competencies to understand themselves and their society within a perspective of historical change.

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## Critical Thinking and the Textbook in History: An Odd Couple?

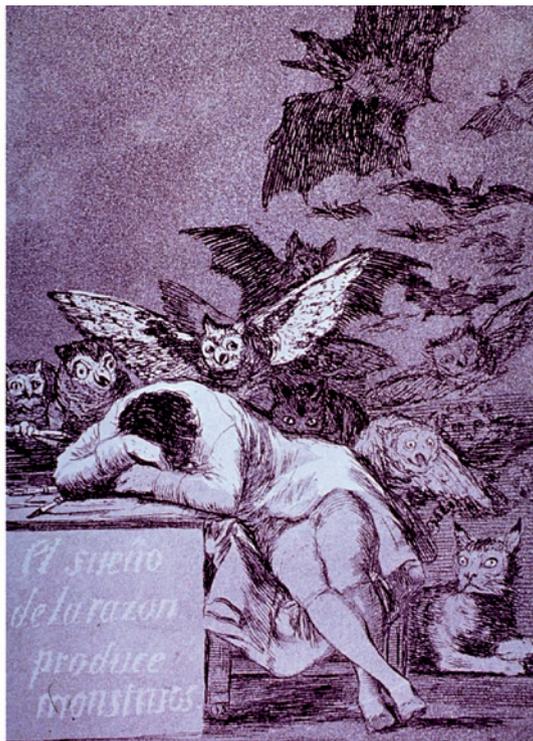


Figure 1: Francisco Goya, The sleep of reason produces monsters.  
Etching, from the collection Caprichos, 1799

Critical thinking is highly valued in Western society as a political, cultural and societal goal and has been so for centuries, albeit with significant and well-known lapses. Some scholars have gone so far as to state that “critical thinking is

foundation upon which democracies are built,”<sup>1</sup> or, as independent thinking is the core of critical thinking, that “independent thinking is the highest human requirement.”<sup>2</sup> If critical thinking is subdued, the road to fanaticism and intolerance opens. “The sleep of reason produces monsters”, Francisco Goya wrote as a title of one of his etchings (Figure 1). This was part of the 1799 published *Caprichos* collection which might be called a mixture of Enlightenment and mysticism.<sup>3</sup> Goya’s dictum had its roots in the irrationalities in Spanish society, the Inquisition, superstition, etc., during a reactionary period which succeeded an interval of enthusiasm for the French Enlightenment and the Revolution. The picture seems to say that reason is the means by which you work against superstition, oppression and folly. *Mutatis mutandis*, Goya’s dictum still holds and the Enlightenment project is still with us. In democratic states, the school system is a guardian of democracy and critical thinking is considered a necessary means to attain this goal.

Within the school context and in this chapter, *critical thinking* is conceptualized in a broad manner so as to encompass *understanding*, which is a precondition for critical thinking and what has been termed *critical literacy*, which includes understanding and reading in the sense of competence in the encoding of text and several other competences which will be revealed in the following definition. Critical thinking is, therefore, defined more broadly than the otherwise excellent philosophical definition by the French educated Icelandic Páll Skúlason in 1985:

Thinking is critical if it accepts no opinion or statement unless it has first investigated its implications and has found satisfactory arguments in its favor. In other words, critical thinking seeks new and better arguments for its opinions and ideas and is, consequently, constantly reappraising them.

Gagnrýnin er sú hugsun sem fellst ekki á neina skoðun eða fullyrðingu nema hún hafi fyrst rannsakað hvað í henni felst og fundið fullnægjandi rök fyrir henni. Með öðrum orðum: gagnrýnin hugsun leitar að nýjum og betri rökum fyrir skoðunum sínum og hugmyndum og er þar af leiðandi sífellt að endurskoða þær.<sup>4</sup>

This definition has been under constant scrutiny by Icelandic philosophers since its conception, but can still serve as a good example of modern understanding of critical thinking. It can be seen as a background measurement as we go further.

1 Cynthia R Hynd, “Teaching Students to Think Critically Using Multiple Texts in History,” *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 42, no. 6 (1999): 428.

2 Florence Montreynaud, “Penser par soi-même est la plus haute exigence humaine. Le féminisme: comprendre, agir, changer.” (Montréal : Le Conseil du statut de la femme, 2003). <http://www.csf.gouv.qc.ca>

3 Alexander Nehamas, “The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters” *Representations* 74, (Spring 2001): 37.

4 Páll Skúlason, *Pælingar. Safn erinda og greina* (Reykjavík: Ergo), 70.

The role intended for critical thinking in written history curricula in the Nordic countries will be scrutinized in this chapter. The pertinent results of the Nordic history teacher survey will then be consulted followed by a discussion of the possibilities and limitations of textbooks in furthering critical thinking, both in the writing of the text and in the way teachers use them. Finally, a moderate stance is taken with regards to the limited, but definite role, which educational texts can play in opening the mind of students instead of drawing narrow boundaries. The key is the teacher who can guide the students in reading, understanding, analyzing and criticizing the educational texts so as to make full use of them without being uncritically dependent upon them. The worst stance is to ignore the textbooks, which may leave the students in the grip of an authoritarian canon with no broader horizon.

## Curricula

Critical thinking is quite visible in official school curricula in the Nordic countries and in this respect much is demanded of history as a school subject. It may be so because of history's preoccupation with source criticism and interpretation of texts. However, it may no less stem from its ideological role and hence its unsavory record as a tool of *uncritical* thinking and indoctrination. Totalitarian governments are typically preoccupied with history and try to mold the past to fit their goals. Democratic states are sometimes aware of this tendency and try to learn from history and make amends.

In Nordic curricula, history's critical task is put high on the agenda. In the recent *Norwegian* curriculum, called *Knowledge Promotion*, the competence aims for after year 10 consist of 13 items, the first five of which embody deliberation and critical thinking:

The aims for education are that the pupil shall be able to:

- find examples of events that have helped shape modern Norway, and reflect on how society might have been different if these events had developed differently,
- present a historic event based on different ideologies,
- create narratives about people in the past, and thus show how frameworks and values in society influence thoughts and actions,
- search for and select sources, assess them critically and show how different sources might present history differently, and
- discuss and elaborate on the value of human life, and place racism and dis-

crimination in a historical and contemporary perspective with pupils from other schools by using digital communication tools.<sup>5</sup>

Even some of the content-based aims include critical elements:

- prepare questions on central international conflicts in the 1900's and in the present century, formulate causal explanations and discuss consequences of the conflicts and
- discuss and elaborate on important changes in society in recent times and reflect on how today's society opens to new changes.<sup>6</sup>

With these aims in mind, historical events do not necessarily possess an intrinsic value, but serve as material for the critical mind. Of course, the two functions should not be separated. A survey of the aims of the subjects in the Norwegian curricula reveals a most prominent place for critical thinking in history. Certainly, other subjects are not devoid of these concerns but offer them to a lesser degree. Thus, for natural science you can find at least one competence aim for after year 10 of this kind:

- explain the importance of looking for relationships between cause and effect and explain why argumentation, disagreement and publication are important in the natural sciences.<sup>7</sup>

In the detailed Norwegian *Knowledge Promotion* curriculum, all subjects have a “basic skill” component. This includes reading in the subject which, in social studies, is defined as follows: “Being able to read in social studies means to read, examine, interpret and reflect on factual prose texts and fiction...” Furthermore, “it is also necessary to be able to read and collect information from reference books, newspapers and the Internet, and to assess this information critically.”<sup>8</sup>

Another related and no less ideological subject area, *Christianity, Religion and Ethics Education*, also has a critical reading role:

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5 Social Studies Subject Curriculum, “Knowledge Promotion,” Oslo: Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2007. <http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no>.

6 Social Studies Subject Curriculum, “Knowledge Promotion,” Oslo: Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2007. <http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no>.

7 Natural Science Subject Curriculum, “Knowledge Promotion,” Oslo: Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2007. <http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no>.

8 Social Studies Subject Curriculum, “Knowledge Promotion.”

Reading is used to collect information, reflect upon, interpret, seek meaning in and deal critically and analytically with narratives and subject material in traditional as well as multimedia presentations.<sup>9</sup>

The Finnish 2004 history curriculum opens with the statement:

The task of history instruction is to guide the pupils in becoming responsible players who know how to treat the phenomena of their own era and the past critically.<sup>10</sup>

The objectives of history education for grades 7–9 in Finland develop this critical stance further:

The pupils will learn to:

- obtain and use historical information,
- use a variety of sources, compare them, and form their own justified opinions based on those sources,
- understand that historical information can be interpreted in different ways, and
- access further alternatives, using information on historical change as an aid.<sup>11</sup>

Critical thinking as an objective of history curriculum is also prominent in Sweden. The same can be said of the other two Nordic countries, although in Iceland historical content receives more emphasis, and in Denmark narration and transmission of knowledge take more precedence.

Critical thinking is an important objective in the curricula but it may not be the final destination. It is more of a *means* to achieve a higher goal: a necessary tool for the student to use as a responsible participant in democratic society. In these curricula, the critical reading of texts is a component of critical thinking, which, in turn, is a bulwark of democracy. It is worth noticing for the forthcoming discussion that the most common form of text in all schools in the Nordic countries, as in most countries, is the textbook, but it is never directly mentioned in the curricula where critical competences are on the agenda. The textbook, so it seems, is not an object of critical scrutiny.

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9 Christianity, Religion and Ethics Subject Curriculum, “Knowledge Promotion,” Oslo: Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2007. <http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no>.

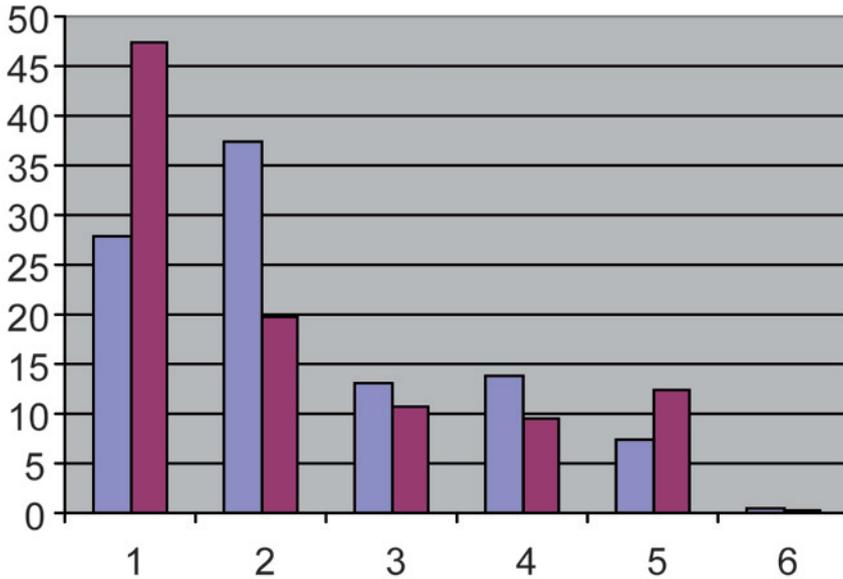
10 National Board of Education, *National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004* (Helsinki: The National Board of Education, 2004), 220.

11 National Board of Education, *National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004*, 222.

## A Survey of Nordic History Teachers

In the survey commonly referred to in this volume, Nordic history teachers chose between five possible choices regarding the purpose of textbooks and educational materials.<sup>12</sup> The results clearly favored the first two options.

(Figure 2).



Left columns: Encouraging independent thinking among students

Right columns: Providing a historical overview

Figure 2: Ranges for the first two alternatives in response to the question, “What are the most important roles of teaching materials in your opinion?” Positions 1–5 (position 6 is “not applicable”) Percentage for each answer from 0–50 % shown

“Providing a historical overview” and “encouraging independent thinking” occupy the two highest positions in the survey. In addition, close to 60 % of those who ranked “historical overview” highest put “independent thinking” in second place. Should this be interpreted that “historical overview” serves “independent thinking”? We can at least assume that most teachers do not regard the two as contending objectives.

<sup>12</sup> Web Survey, “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Teacher Internet Survey,” Appendix 1 in this volume.

Is independent, critical thinking a sophisticated phenomenon only fit for older students? In the Nordic survey, teachers thought this was not the case. When those who put independent thinking as their first or second choice are correlated with the school level they mainly refer to, the result was unexpected (Table). Teachers of the student age group from 13 – 15 years old are even more eager to have their teaching materials stimulate independent thinking than their colleagues in the upper secondary schools. It must be good news for critical thinking to see strong support by teachers of all school levels in the Nordic countries. On a different continent, Stanford based history educators Wineburg and Martin have, in an argumentative style, shown how they succeeded in having 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students plunge into questions of evidence and critical reading of history texts using the well-known story of Pocahontas as a base. Their aim was to counter the claims “that the ability to evaluate the trustworthiness of a textbook is beyond the ken of the typical middle school or even high school student.”<sup>13</sup> The Nordic teachers want the textbooks to stimulate independent thinking among young students as well and the two American researchers want young students to evaluate the textbooks – two compatible claims.

Replies to which school levels are primarily in mind with regard to the teaching of history			
Independent thinking as a...	Lower and middle elementary (Grades 1-6)	Lower secondary (Grades 7-9)	Upper secondary (Grades 10+)
1 <sup>st</sup> choice	27.1	37.5	21.9
2 <sup>nd</sup> choice	37.3	28.9	42.8

Table: Correlation between independent thinking as a first or second choice and the school level referred to by the respondents

As the majority of the history teachers want their textbooks to stimulate independent thinking the next logical question would be, how can textbooks possibly fulfill this task? One of the questions in the survey was precisely about this:

How can teaching materials best encourage independent thinking among students?

- By providing a range of viewpoints on controversial issues
- By being as neutral as possible

13 Sam Wineburg and Daisy Martin, “Reading and Rewriting History,” *Educational Leadership* 62, no. 1 (2004): 42 – 45.

- By providing students with as much information as possible
- By encouraging students to seek information independently
- By using scientific concepts and academic theories

The message is quite clear: “Providing a range of viewpoints on controversial issues” was ranked highest, with half of the teachers placing it in first place (Figure 3). The next most frequently chosen response (16%) was “by being as neutral as possible.” When both first and second positions are added together, the difference between the two responses decreases; “providing a range of viewpoints on controversial issues” received 66% and “neutrality” received 42%. Of course, the two alternatives can be conceived of as opposites. Believing that a historical account can be neutral can sound like naïve realism or the “referential illusion” cited by Wineburg (see below) while the added “as possible” may turn this into a wish for fairness.

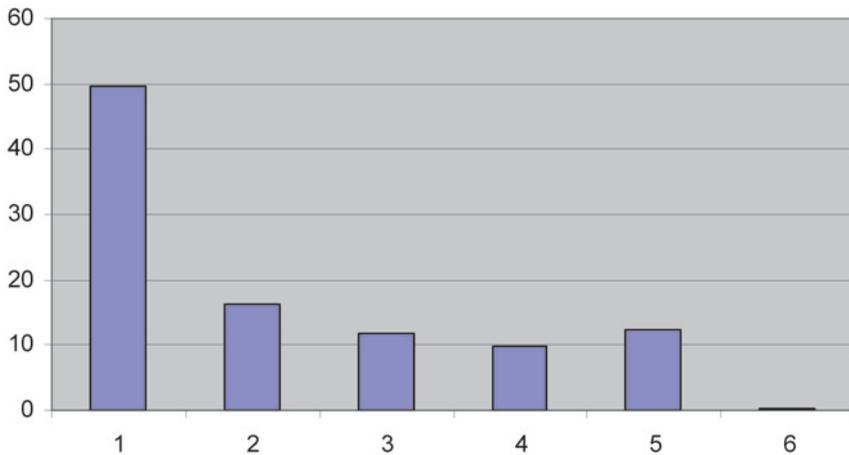
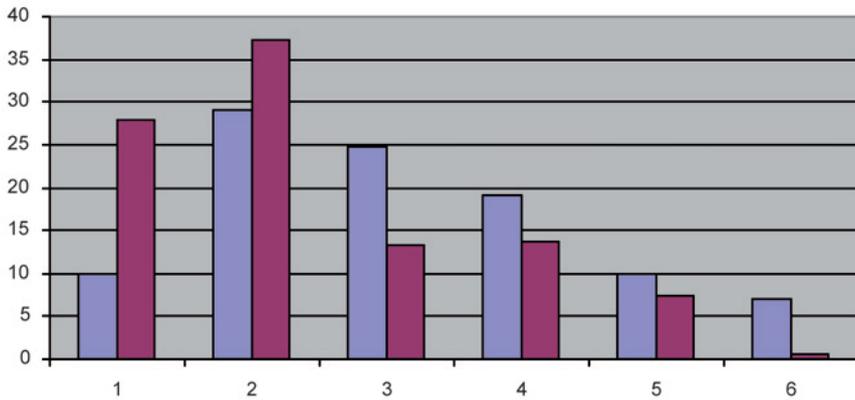


Figure 3: “How can teaching materials best encourage independent thinking among students?” How the respondents rated the answer, “By providing a range of viewpoints on controversial issues” in positions 1–5 (position 6 is “not applicable”) Percentage for each answer from 0–60% shown

In addition, with regards to Nordic history teachers’ views on the role and task of textbooks and other educational materials in general, teachers were asked to pick one specific textbook (or textbook package) and rate it according to the same criteria.

Teachers’ evaluations of their textbooks with regard to encouraging independent thinking show that the textbooks lag behind and do not fulfill their expectations (Figure 4).



Right columns: The textbooks should mainly encourage independent thinking.

Left columns: My textbook stimulated independent thinking to this extent.

Figure 4: Teachers' expectations compared with their evaluation of textbooks in regard to encouraging critical thinking. Positions 1–5 (position 6 is “not applicable”) Percentage for each answer from 0–40% shown

History textbooks place less importance on stimulating independent thinking than the teachers want. On the other hand, textbooks emphasize a “historical overview” more than teachers prefer. Other roles of textbooks (the strengthening of identity, scientific methods, transmission of values) are fulfilled according to the teachers' expectations. The discrepancy between teachers' preferences and what textbooks provide is greatest when it comes to stimulating independent thinking. Some differences were found between the Nordic countries, however. More Danish teachers felt that their textbooks encouraged independent thinking (63% in first and second place) than on average (39%).

What conclusions can be drawn from these results? First of all, it must be stressed that the questionnaire was voluntary and teachers opting to respond to it show an act of engagement. Hence, the respondents are likely not to be average teachers but rather the engaged and “progressive” ones. One might further assume that progressive teachers want textbooks to encourage critical and independent thinking. As to the different views of Danish teachers, one might be tempted to say that Denmark is more “continental” than the other Nordic countries, i.e. closer to a tradition of *doute systématique*. This would be a rather hasty, if not populist, view, even though the Danish profile in the survey also differed from those of other countries in some other respects.

Despite some internal differences, when compared to many other countries, Nordic teachers as a group put independent critical thinking high on the agenda.

At this stage this can only be illustrated by examples for comparison and I will give two of them from countries where democratic rule is not as firmly rooted. In Pakistan the educational system and textbooks in particular have “stultified creativity and promoted an uncritical and simplistic vision” according to one researcher.<sup>14</sup> In India, “ready-made views of the past and collective identity” have been dominant in history textbooks, although since the change of government in 2004, attempts have been made to change this.<sup>15</sup>

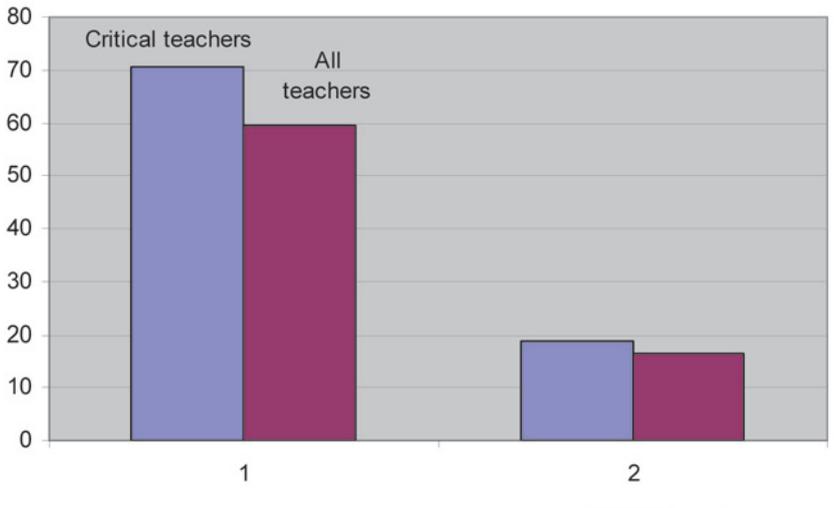
Certainly, national identity is an overwhelming theme in most history textbooks in the world but that does not intrinsically exclude the critical mind. In reality, however, critical thinking is seldom considered appropriate in grand national narratives. Even in the Nordic countries, national identity is the number one value transmitted in the textbooks, according to the history teachers. When asked to choose between the values of internationalism, tolerance, national identity, equality and environmental awareness, most of the teachers in the survey ranked tolerance highest (48.5 % put it in first place) but when evaluating their own textbooks they found very little emphasis on tolerance (15.7 % in the first place). Only 15.5 % put the conveying of national identity in first place for the ideal textbook but double that number (31 %) found that the evaluated textbooks foremost served that purpose.

What do teachers do if they are not content with aspects and issues dealt with in the textbooks? Do they omit them or follow the textbook nonetheless? Teachers who participated in the survey preferred neither method. The response most often ranked in first place was “use other material in place of or along with the textbook” (60 %). The teachers who chose independent thinking as the most important role of textbooks in history were most likely to use other materials rather than follow the textbook (70 %) (Figure 5). The second highest response was “discuss the presentation of the material together with the students” (15 % in first place, 45 % in second place). Taken together, these two most preferred alternatives must be seen as active and critical decisions on behalf of the teachers.

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14 Elisa Giunchi, “Rewriting the Past: Political Imperatives and Curricular Reform in Pakistan,” *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 29, no. 4 (2007): 386.

15 Michael Gottlob, “Changing Concepts of Identity in the Indian Textbook Controversy,” *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 29, no. 4 (2007): 341.



1. Use other material in place of or along with the textbook
2. Discuss the presentation of the material with your students

Those who put independent thinking in the first position (critical teachers, left columns) as compared to the total population (all teachers).

Figure 5: What do you do if you are dissatisfied with how a topic or issue is dealt with in the textbook you are using?

## Are Textbooks Doomed to Stifle Critical Historical Thinking?

Textbooks are not commonly regarded as vessels of critical thinking, but rather to the contrary, as summarized by Sam Wineburg:

Textbooks pivot on what Roland Barthes called the “referential illusion,” the notion that the way things are told is simply the way things were. To achieve this illusion, textbooks exploit various linguistic conventions. First, textbooks eliminate “metadiscourse,” or the existence of places in the text where the author intrudes to indicate positionality and stance. Metadiscourse is common in the writing historians do for one another, but is edited out of the writing they do for schoolchildren. In addition, traces of how the text came to be are hidden and erased. Textbooks rarely cite the documentary record; if primary material appears, it is typically set off in “sidebars” so as not to interfere with the main text. Finally, the textbook speaks in the omniscient third-person. No visible author confronts the reader; instead, a corporate author speaks from a position of transcendence, a position of knowing from on high.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts. Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001), 12–13.

If this is a true description of a regular history textbook, critical thinking is certainly in trouble. However, I will argue, first, that this is not the case with all textbooks, second, that textbooks *can* be written in a critical way, and third, that much depends on the teacher to use textbooks, even uncritical ones, in a critical way. To be certain, textbooks have to shoulder many burdens and one of them is to provide information in an attractive and legible manner. Sources of knowledge cannot be cited so often as to disrupt the reader and multiple perspectives can't be provided on every issue. However, the critical path can either be obstructed or cleared. Now let us investigate some possibilities for the textbook to take a critical stance.

*Citing the documentary record.* Traditionally, textbooks do not use a reference system with footnotes, etc. and introducing this system into textbooks may be too much of a revolution. Nevertheless, authors can refer to sources and at times the documentary record can be a legitimate subject in and of itself. Of course, references to the sources can become tedious. Besides, simply referring to the sources does not make the text "safe for children." Sources have to be selected or omitted. In many cases, the textbook author cannot check many primary sources and has to rely on other accounts. However, the author can show a willingness to indicate where the information comes from.

*Showing different interpretations of controversial issues.* This was the alternative preferred by Nordic history teachers. This looks like a self-evident method but it is no king's road to critical thinking. The author still has to decide which issues are worthy of different interpretations and which are presented as consensual and by this choice a certain message is conveyed. Besides, what is meant by controversial? Sometimes events are thought to be factual but the narration is subjective and potentially controversial:

Since historical events are fractal, their factuality is not necessarily more secure than that of narratives. But equally, it is not clear that the applicability of the concept of truth to facts depends on our viewing them as discrete atomic items, so narratives too may arguably be true.<sup>17</sup>

So, both events (how they are chosen) and narration (including the narration of events) should be the object of critical reading and thinking. This means then that historical items can be controversial not only for their truth-status but also as moral problems. The extermination of Jews in the Second World War, for

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17 Peter Lee, "From National Canon to Historical Literacy," *Beyond the Canon. History for the Twenty-first Century*, ed. Maria Grever and Siep Stuurman (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 50.

example, is hardly a controversial issue in the sense that teacher and textbooks should be neutral on the subject and only offer contradictory arguments for and against it. The education philosopher, Michael Hand, argues that we should “teach as controversial those matters on which contrary views are not contrary to reason, and as settled those matters on which only one view is rationally defensible.”<sup>18</sup> Others would contend that “rationally defensible” could be a controversial issue itself. Still others would say that the boundary for what we can offer students as a controversial issue is determined by the public values that in the end are defined by the liberal democratic state.

*Dethroning textbook authority.* Much has been said of the authority of textbooks and whether it comes from the structure and rhetoric of the written language, the “omniscient voice” as in Wineburg’s words above, or from the relations built in the school situation where the textbook assumes an authoritarian role – or both.<sup>19</sup> If textbooks are meant to further critical thinking, they should dismantle this role, as they are just one source of many and none of which should pose as infallible. The question is whether teachers and students alike want this to happen at all times. Often they want an authority that is in line with an ideology accepted by the majority, something to rely upon and trust, a common model of learning, a practical joint guide and an officially sanctioned store of knowledge.<sup>20</sup> Although this longing for a safe haven is understandable, it often works against critical thinking. A text, which is written with its own fallibility in mind, is more helpful to teachers in furthering the students’ critical aptitude, at the cost of a certain insecurity in the beginning. It may take some time for students, and their teachers alike, to accept a non-authoritative voice in a textbook.

*Letting the author’s voice be heard.*<sup>21</sup> This can be viewed as a part of dethroning the textbook, i. e. openly showing that the textbook is the product of a fallible and mortal author instead of coming from an almighty third person voice. In this method, the author talks to the reader, guides him/her through the text (sometimes called providing a metadiscourse), and gives comments and arguments. The style and tone of the text can be crucial. In *Quest for the Good Textbook* educa-

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18 Michael Hand, “What Should We Teach as Controversial? A Defense of the Epistemic Criterion,” *Educational Theory* 58, no. 2 (2008): 228.

19 Suzanne de Castell, Allan Luke and Carmen Luke eds., *Language, Authority and Criticism. Readings on the School Textbook* (London: The Falmer Press, 1989).

20 Tom Wikman, *På spaning efter den goda läroboken. Om pedagogiska texters lärande potential* (Åbo: Åbo Akademis förlag, 2004), 88 – 89.

21 On enhancing student understanding of textbooks through author’s voice and clear causal connections, see Monica Reichenberg, *Röst och kausalitet i lärobokstexter. En studie av elevers föståelse av olika textversioner* (Göteborg: Institutionen för pedagogik och didaktik, Göteborgs Universitet, 2009).

tionalist Tom Wikman writes “A critical, argumentative grasp can give the student an active attitude towards the information which is presented.”<sup>22</sup> However, warnings have been raised against being too colloquial and concrete in textbook texts because the mastering of abstraction in text is a necessity for students.

If we want students to be able to participate in and benefit from the official texts in a society, textbooks where abstract and technical language systematically is replaced by concrete and colloquial language are not optimal. These kinds of texts leave children unprepared for the texts that they are supposed to deal with as citizens in a society heavily dependent on specialized language.<sup>23</sup>

There is some truth in these claims but the way to abstraction has to be a gradual process if it is not to appear as an impenetrable obstacle.

I have listed some of the problems and possibilities of making the textbook a tool of critical thinking. To discern and analyze the problems is one thing, to learn from and follow the analysis in making a critical textbook is quite another. However, the following is an honest effort to combine theory and practice in a fresh example from a history textbook in the making for grade 6.

Obviously, the author is commenting on the epistemology of Joan of Arc, from the conditions of the primary sources to her reception and interpretation in modern times. Also, the medium of transmission comes into question, with “Is this a movie?” where the answer could be, “No, this is a drawing of a possible movie being made of something which actually happened according to court records preserved from the Middle Ages.” The crucial question of meaning is also invoked since “historical writing is a process of meaning-production.”<sup>24</sup> And finally, a promise of more information to come is given so as not to frustrate the reader.

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22 Tom Wikman, *På spaning efter den goda läroboken*, 89.

23 Agnes Edling, “Abstraction and authority in textbooks. The textual paths towards specialized language,” *Studia Linguistica Upsaliensia* 2 (2006): 185. Also, <http://www.did.uu.se/carolineliberg/documents/060929Edling-DrAvhandling.pdf>

24 Hayden White, “An Old Question Raised Again: Is Historiography Art or Science? Response to Iggers,” *Rethinking History* 4, no. 3 (2000): 397.

Who is this young woman who is racing on a white horse, flag in hand? An entire group of at least several hundred follows. Are they soldiers? Is she their leader? Isn't this just a movie?

Yes, this could be a movie because many films have been made about this woman and these events. All the same, something of this kind happened in the hills of northern France in the year of 1429. This we know from the long and extended interrogations of this young girl. But is there any truth to what an illiterate girl said almost 600 years ago and what a scribe wrote down in his own words?

Wouldn't it be better if we could jump back into the past, climb a tree and watch everything with our own eyes?

Maybe we wouldn't have a clue as to what was happening. And why indeed bother with a French teenage girl from the Middle Ages? Hopefully we will know a bit more after we have proceeded with this chapter.

Hver er þessi unga kona sem þeysir áfram á hvítum hesti og með fána í hendi? Það er heill hópur á eftir henni, örugglega mörg hundruð manns. Eru þetta hermenn? Er hún foringinn? Er þetta ekki bara bíómynd?

Jú, þetta gæti verið bíómynd því margar myndir hafa verið gerðar um þessa konu og þessa atburði. En eitthvað þessu líkt gerðist nú samt á hæðunum í Norður-Frakklandi árið 1429. Það er nefnilega hægt að fá upplýsingar um þetta í löngum og miklum yfirheyrslum sem voru síðar haldnar yfir þessari ungu stúlku. En er eitthvað að marka það sem einhver ritari skrifaði niður eftir ólæsri stelpu fyrir nærri 600 árum og setti í eigin orð? Væri ekki betra ef við gætum stokkið aftur í fortíðina, klifrað upp í tré og séð allt með eigin augum?

Kannski myndum við ekki botna neitt í neinu. Og hvað varðar okkur svo sem um unglingsstelpu í Frakklandi á miðöldum? Kannski verðum við einhverju nær um þetta þegar lengra líður.<sup>25</sup>



Figure 6: Beginning of a chapter of a prospective textbook for grade 6

25 Þorsteinn Helgason, *Miðaldafólk á ferð* (Reykjavík: Námsgagnastofnun, forthcoming).

## With or Without the Textbook

Very often the scenario for critical thinking goes like this: either you are authoritarian and uncritical and you rely on the textbook in your teaching *or* you are democratic and critical and you dismiss the textbook. History educators have long denounced the regular textbook: "...history teaching in schools would be considerably re-vitalized if we could rid ourselves completely of the whole conception of history textbooks,"<sup>26</sup> and "Indeed, denouncing history textbooks has been one of the central features of almost every reform movement in history instruction for over 150 years."<sup>27</sup> This attitude is based on two main beliefs, first, textbooks are by their "intrinsic structural features"<sup>28</sup> enemies of critical thinking; second, students cannot read a textbook critically because they "are not within the appropriate and sanctioned social group to be entitled to criticize the school text."<sup>29</sup>

We can follow an interesting experiment made by the teacher Richard B. Bain who tried to break away from this fatalistic view and set the goal of making his students aware of the textbook as another source and an author's work. This was no easy task, according to the teacher, partly because of the students' "long-standing ritualized interactions" with textbooks, which did not allow criticism partly because of the discrepancy in the content knowledge between author and student.<sup>30</sup> Fortunately, the ninth grade students in Bain's experiment had just plunged themselves into an historical problem, the Plague of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and therefore, were in a position to judge the textbook account of this phenomenon. For them, however, it was quite unnatural to question the textbook and they needed help from the teacher in doing so. He suggested they write a fictitious letter to the author of the textbook. With his encouragement they succeeded in finding biases, e. g. Eurocentrism, in the textbook. Then he turned to his own role as a teacher and asked the students to unveil his opinions and biases. They also needed the teacher's help for this. Finally, they discovered their teacher's Eurocentrism in the selection of primary and secondary documents that he had provided his students with. But they did not blame him too harshly:

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26 Ann Low-Ber, "Books and the Teaching of History in School," *History. The Journal of the Historical Association* 59, no. 197 (1974): 392.

27 Richard Bain, "Rounding Up Unusual Suspects: Facing the Authority Hidden in the History Classroom," *Teachers College Record* 108, no. 10 (2006), 2081.

28 Carmen Luke, Suzanne de Castell and Allan Luke, "Beyond Criticism: The Authority of the School Textbook," in *Language, Authority and Criticism*, ed. Suzanne de Castell, Carmen Luke and Allan Luke (London/Philadelphia: Falmer Press, 1989), 255.

29 Luke et al., "Beyond Criticism," 253.

30 Bain, "Rounding Up Unusual Suspects," 2091.

“We can’t blame him for causing our biased opinions on the Bubonic Plague because Dr. Bain can only give us what is available to him . . .”<sup>31</sup>

Why is it that ninth grade students found it easier to look critically at old primary sources than their new textbook? Bain provides some tentative answers. Because the textbooks and the teachers are familiar and provide “definitive and complete accounts” the students are not as alert as when dealing with fragments of “the old times,” which are often included in textbooks or provided by teachers. In these cases, students pause to think because the fragments “create a place for students to stand outside the normal discourse of the classroom or the textbook.”<sup>32</sup> The conventional belief is that primary sources are meant to be criticized, not the textbooks or the teachers.

In the end, Bain’s conclusion is rather gloomy as he finds the only way for students to become critical of the “authority hidden in the history classroom” is to be as knowledgeable as the author. This is similar to David R. Olson’s statement that the way to critical reading of a text is through “peer relationship,” both in terms of content knowledge (validity) and social authority.<sup>33</sup> Students can hardly obtain this status. Bain acknowledges the merits of methods of critical reading, such as *Questioning the Author*<sup>34</sup> but finds them not effective enough.

One problem with Bain’s illuminating experiment is his definition of history education: “The value of history education rests in helping students engage in a rational investigation of the past.”<sup>35</sup> In my view, history education is about much more. To go back to the textbook excerpt about Joan of Arc, reading this text without focusing on the gender issue is missing the point. Joan of Arc is of value in history lessons because she was a woman who led armies to victory and defeat, who heard the voices of angels who told her what to do, etc. An understanding of her role in the 15<sup>th</sup> century is null and void without taking into account the gender discourse of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Because of this context and meaningfulness, the sources for her existence, beliefs and circumstances – *the rational investigation of the past* – become important, not the other way round. In this broad view of history education, students may become critical even without being as knowledgeable as the authors of textbooks.

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31 Bain, “Rounding Up Unusual Suspects,” 2102.

32 Bain, “Rounding Up Unusual Suspects,” 2104.

33 David R. Olson, “On the Language and Authority of Textbooks,” in *Language, Authority and Criticism*, ed. Suzanne de Castell, Carmen Luke and Allan Luke (London/Philadelphia: Falmer Press, 1989), 240.

34 Isabel L Beck, Margaret G. McKeown, Rebecca L. Hamilton and Linda Kucan, *Questioning the Author, An Approach for Enhancing Student Engagement with Text* (Newark: International Reading Association, 1997). A follow up is Isabel L Beck and Margaret G. McKeown, *Improving Comprehension with Questioning the Author. A Fresh and Expanded View of a Powerful Approach* (New York: Scholastic, 2006).

35 Bain, “Rounding Up Unusual Suspects,” 2107.

Who can help teachers and students become critical readers of history textbooks? Several disciplines have a say in these matters in fact, often without much sharing of wisdom between them. As one *librarian* puts it, “Why are librarians not included in discussions about critical thinking in the curriculum?”<sup>36</sup> If invited, they could provide the best information available to question the textbook and put it in perspective. *Historians* might evoke thought about source criticism even though they are more accustomed to focusing on old documents than current textbooks. *Reading theorists* have a lot to say about the understanding of texts, and, finally, a *philosopher* comes up with the fundamental remark, “Prior to committing oneself to a certain purpose and undertaking a particular task, one does, and should, examine the commitment as such.”<sup>37</sup> Taken together, all these disciplines – and others – can be a valuable resource (Figure 7).

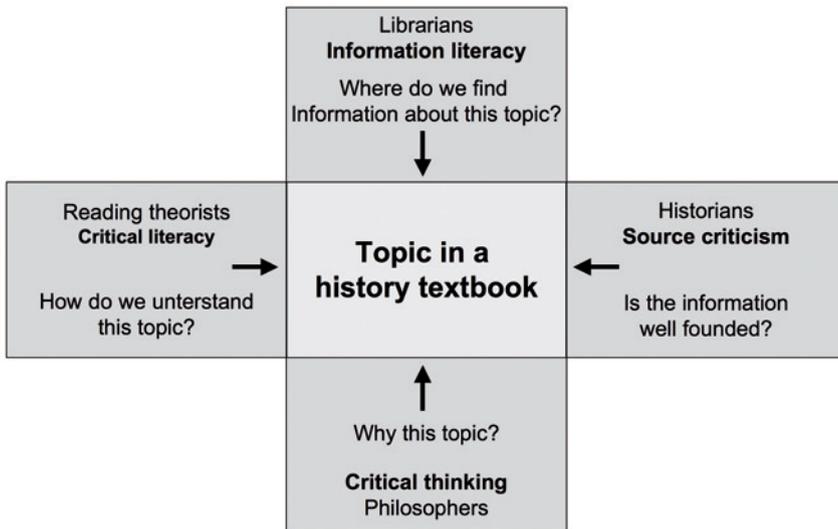


Figure 7: What five disciplines have to say about critical reading

36 Rebecca S. Albitz, “The What and Who of Information Literacy and Critical Thinking in Higher Education,” *Libraries and the Academy* 7, no. 1 (2007): 97.

37 Marianna Papastephanu and Charoula Angeli, “Critical Thinking Beyond Skill,” *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 39, no. 6 (2007): 610–611.

## Is Critical Thinking Possible?

Critical thinking defined as accepting “no opinion or statement unless it has first been investigated regarding implications/content and satisfactory arguments have been found in its favor” may be utopian for school children (or for most people, for that matter). One has to recurrently rely on authorities and textbooks as influential sources. Fortunately, most textbooks meant for public use are carefully written and are not on an evil mission to indoctrinate and dominate. The purpose of critical thinking is not to ignite suspicion and distrust under normal circumstances. We should be able to put trust in the experts. One philosopher, Michael Huemer, has gone so far as to say that “because the experts are highly intelligent and have devoted much time and energy to the issue on which they are experts, [...] the average person has no exceptional cognitive advantages.”<sup>38</sup> The textbook author is both an expert and an average person as he/she must also rely on experts in many matters. All experts have to put trust in other experts on an unforeseeable number of items since knowledge is a web of interlinked facts, statements, opinions, viewpoints and feelings where one is dependent on another.

However, critical reading and thinking is not always about choosing between two statements or between two stands on a controversial issue, such as “the issue of evolution versus creationism”(Huemer’s example).<sup>39</sup> History teaching, which includes critical reading of textbooks, involves much more than choosing between two alternatives or “the rational investigation of the past.” It is about helping students become independent thinkers and yet belong to a community at the same time, fueling them with a critical spirit within the framework of values. According to some theorists, some indoctrination is inevitable in this process, while others see this as a manner of reasoning and thinking, “bound up with habits, emotions, and all the rest.”<sup>40</sup> Finnish educationalist Bettina Stenbock-Hult summarizes the educational situation:

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38 Michael Huemer, “Is Critical Thinking Epistemically Responsible?” *Metaphilosophy* 36, no. 4 (2005): 528.

39 *Ibid.*, 524.

40 Chris Hanks, “Indoctrination and the Space of Reasons,” *Educational Theory* 58, no. 2 (2008): 212.

To enter an activity program thus means to direct your attitudes, choices and preferences to the standards, which define that activity. It does not have to, and should not, however, be a question of an uncritical acceptance but of a balance between acceptance and critical perusal.

Att gå in i en verksamhet betyder således att rikta sina attityder, val och preferenser mot de standarder som definierar verksamheten. Men det behöver inte och borde inte vara frågan om ett okritiskt accepterande utan om en balans mellan accepterande och kristisk granskning.<sup>41</sup>

If critical thinking is not only about choosing between two alternatives (a too limited role) or accepting no statement without investigating it and finding satisfactory arguments in its favor (too demanding a role), how can teachers use textbooks to foster the critical mind? The following list is a beginning:

- Teachers should take the textbook (and other teaching materials) as an object of inquiry. If teachers disregard the textbook students may nonetheless rely upon it and uncritically accept it.
- Understanding a textbook is a prerequisite for making use of it and forming a critical distance to it. Understanding, of course, is an ambiguous term and many see it as including a critical element since reading and understanding a history text involves using your own mental framework, referring to earlier experiences, etc. In textbook work, teachers can guide the students and make them aware of the author's messages by posing questions and by discussion.
- Teaching methods have been developed for the critical use of textbooks with students. The best-known method is *Questioning the Author*, which has been used in Sweden in a modified form by Monica Reichenberg (see Reichenberg and Skjelbred, this volume).
- Teachers can, with their students, analyze the orientation of the teaching materials, discern the messages and plots, and judge how convincing the argumentation is. If enough evidence is provided, they can analyze contexts and seek different ones, reformulate pieces of text and try to find new explanations.
- Occasionally, teachers and students can model Bain's students and do a special study of a certain item to be even more able to analyze the texts of the textbook and other teaching materials.

As has been shown above, the way to critical, historical thinking can be found through textbook use. In addition to "textbook teaching" there are other ways of engaging students in historical and critical thinking and these have been thoroughly discussed in the literature. Students should be allowed to do their own research, for example by using methods of oral history. Several other goals of history education can also be achieved by these methods such as the strength-

41 Bettina Stenbock-Hult, *Kristiskt förhållningsätt. En vetenskaplig, etisk attityd och ett högskolepedagogiskt mål* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2004), 199.

ening of identity, increasing regard for others, bridging the gaps between generations, and creating and disseminating their products to the community.

Critical thinking is not the only goal – though it is an important one – of education. Francisco Goya, whose praise for reason we quoted in the beginning of the article, realized this and a contemporary description of his “Sleep of Reason” (read by some as “Dream of Reason”) added imagination to reason: “Imagination abandoned by reason produces impossible monsters: united with her, she is the mother of the arts and the source of their wonders.”<sup>42</sup> With this, of course, we are in the midst of a critical reading of Goya’s wonderful piece of art with all its ambiguities and layers of different messages, attributes which a textbook and other teaching materials are not expected to have. Or are they?

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42 Nehamas, “The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters” 38.

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## **“Critical Thinking” and Causality in History Teaching Material: an Analysis of how the French Revolution is presented in a Norwegian and a Swedish History Textbook for Junior High School**

### **Introduction**

In the survey carried out among Nordic history teachers in 2006<sup>1</sup> the majority of the teachers who answered the questionnaire responded that the most important function of a textbook is to provide a historical overview, and that this is best done by the textbook highlighting context and cause-effect relationships. The survey offers an interesting profile of what the responding teachers regard as important knowledge about history as a school subject and how they think textbooks can address this. Their points of view correspond, to a large extent, to the curriculum guidelines for history as a school subject in the Nordic countries, as shown by Thorsteinn Helgason in this volume.<sup>2</sup> In this article, we will comment on some aspects of one Norwegian and one Swedish history textbook with the opinions offered by the teachers in the questionnaire as our background information. We are limiting ourselves to studying to what extent cause-effect relationships and historical explanations are brought to the students' attention through an analysis of some aspects of the texts and exercises that the students are offered to work with.

We have selected two history textbooks from grade eight, and we focus on a common subject matter, i. e. the account given about the French Revolution. The rationale is that this is a subject matter on an important event that changed Nordic history as well as European history as a whole. It is a subject matter where national differences do not play a big part, and it is also a subject matter that is given more or less the same amount of space in the two history books. When revolutions are explained, a “cause and consequence model” is commonly used. It is primarily meant to be used in the comparison of revolutions: their causal

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1 See Web Survey in Appendix 1 of this volume.

2 See Thorsteinn Helgason's “Critical Thinking and the History Textbook: an Odd Couple?” in this volume.

patterns, processes and effects.<sup>3</sup> It is thus interesting to see how well the authors of the texts we are investigating have managed to clarify this.

The Norwegian curriculum guidelines state the objective for the work on this period in the following way: The students shall be able to “discuss ideas and forces that led to the American War of Independence and the French Revolution and the consequences this had for the development of democracy in Norway.”<sup>4</sup> The Swedish curriculum guidelines for history are not as detailed. The guidelines only provide a framework for the type of knowledge the teaching is to develop, the purpose being that the choice of content and methods is to be made locally within this framework. At every school and in every classroom, the teacher has to interpret the national curriculum and plan and evaluate the instruction in conjunction with the students’ abilities, experiences, interests, and needs as the point of departure. The teacher’s detailed planning can therefore not be spelled out in the curriculum guidelines. On the other hand, the curriculum guidelines do explicitly state that by the end of grade nine, a student shall, among other things, have met the following objectives:

- have an insight into how major social upheavals have altered Man’s living conditions,
- be able to identify and reflect on some of the different historical events and developments of significance for our own age,
- be aware of and able to give examples of historical events and conditions that can be looked at from different points of view,
- be able to reflect over how information and propaganda have been used before and are used today as means of exerting influence.<sup>5</sup>

## Brief Introduction of the Two Textbooks

The Norwegian book, *Historie*, is a book written for junior high school after the Norwegian school reform of 2006. The book is part of a series, *Matriks*, which consists of shared texts for social studies, geography, and history, which are given the subject designation of the “social sciences” in Norway. It was chosen for this study as it was written recently in connection with the reform. *Matriks* is

3 Bo Andersson, *Understanding Revolutions*. SO-Report No 1994:02. Report from the Department of Didactics Section of Social Science Education, The University of Gothenburg, Sweden, 1994. It should be stated that although this is the common model, this does not mean it is the only valid one. Still, we find it suitable for our purpose in this paper.

4 Ministry of Education and Research, *The National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion, (LK06)* (Oslo: Ministry of Education and Research, 2004), 8.

5 The National Agency for Education <http://www3.skolverket.se/ki03/front.aspx?sprak=EN&-ar=0910&infotypt=24&skolform=11&id=3884&extraId=2087>.

published by Aschehoug forlag, and the authors of the history section of this text are Synnöve Veinan Hellerud and Sigrid Moen. The text comes with a teacher’s guide where objectives and educational perspectives are presented, and where some of the overarching objectives of the curriculum guidelines are dealt with in greater depth. The history section of the text includes A- and a B-parts: the A-part is intended to ensure that the students learn the core content and understand how the content of different chapters relate to each other, while the B-part consists of materials the teacher and students can choose from and where more detailed knowledge about historical events and processes are provided.<sup>6</sup> The teacher’s guide includes a rather thorough discussion of, among other things, working with sources including information to enable the students to learn to read and interpret sources, to assess sources critically, to work with opposing sources, and to search for and select sources.

In Sweden, *SOL (Social Sciences) 3000 Levande historia – Elevbok*, is the most widespread history textbook for the later years of the 9-year comprehensive school. The authors are Lars Hildingson, Kaj Hildingson (his son) and Lennart Husén. A teacher’s handbook (*Lärarpraktikan*) written by Håkan Dahlberg and Bengt Henricsson comes with the book. In the introduction, the authors say that their intention with *Levande Historia- Elevbok* was to write a textbook that is suitable to all students. The texts in *Levande Historia- Elevbok* and in the teacher’s handbook are divided into two levels of difficulty. The first level contains basic knowledge and the content is, according to the authors, intended to be accessible to all students. The texts for level 2 are a bit more difficult. Students who want a challenge can thus choose among more difficult exercises in both *Levande Historia- Elevbok* and *Lärarpraktikan*. In addition, *Lärarpraktikan* contains a *Minikurs* (“mini course”), which is intended for students who find it hard to read and comprehend texts in the regular textbook, *Levande Historia- Elevbok*. According to the authors, this mini course “provides basic knowledge in simple language.” We are not told what is meant by simple language. For our analysis, we have chosen to focus on level 1 in *Levande Historia- Elevbok* and the *Minikurs* in *Lärarpraktikan*.

In the Norwegian book *Matriks, Historie* the French Revolution is dealt with on eight pages<sup>7</sup> in a chapter entitled “Den franske revolusjon” (The French Revolution). The chapter begins with a reference to the French philosophers of the Enlightenment, and the American Revolution, which was dealt with in the previous chapter. The account of the events of the revolution is given chrono-

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6 Håkan Dahlberg and Bengt Henricsson, *Levande historia- Lärarpraktika 8 [Teacher’s guide]* (Stockholm:Natur och kultur, 2002), 1–4.

7 Synnöve Veinan Hellerud and Sigrid Moen, *Matriks, Historie 8 [Matriks. History 8]* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 2006), 27–34.

logically. In the Swedish book, the French Revolution is one of eight themes that are dealt with in the book, and has been given ten pages in all here.<sup>8</sup> The chapter here is also entitled “Franska revolutionen” (The French Revolution) and begins with what is called “the red thread,” which provides an account of revolutions in general, after which the chapter describes the fall of the Bastille before going back in time and dealing with the causes of the revolution and its unfolding, i. e. the period of time from 1789 to 1794. The account continues in the next chapter, which is entitled “Napoleon erövrar Europa” (Napoleon Conquers Europe). Here we will concentrate on the pages that deal with the revolution itself. *Minikursen*, which is, as mentioned above, in the teacher’s handbook that comes with, *Levande Historia- Elevbok* is a text with the title “Franska revolutionen” (The French Revolution). It covers seven pages,<sup>9</sup> and there are questions and exercises at the bottom of each page.

### Why Does Causality Play Such a Big Part?

As mentioned, the intention here is to study to what extent cause-and-effect relationships and historical explanations are brought to the attention of the students. Why, then, is it so important to clarify the causal connections in a text? The answer is simple: if textbook writers do not do this it is difficult for the reader to see the connections between key actions and events, to pick out critical elements in a causal chain. Since many young readers have limited prior knowledge in history, it is hard for them to identify the significant ideas in the text. Hence, the text needs to be presented in a form that directs a reader to recognize the most significant ideas.

Research has shown that a clear connection between ideas and events promote a deeper understanding of the texts.<sup>10</sup> The causal connection is one of the most frequent.<sup>11</sup> There are certain words and expressions that are primarily used

8 Hildingson, Lars, Kaj Hildingson and Lennart Husén, *SOL 3000 Levande historia – Elevbok* (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 2005), 328–337.

9 Synnöve Veinan Hellerud and Sigrid Moen, *Matriks, Historie 8 [Matriks. History 8]* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 2006), 28–34.

10 Isabel Beck, Margaret McKeown, Gale Sinatra and Jane Loxterman, “Revising Social Studies Text from a Text-Processing Perspective: Evidence of Improved Comprehensibility,” *Reading Research Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (1991): 251–276.

11 Monica Reichenberg, *Röst och kausalitet i lärobokstexter. En studie av elevers förståelse av olika textversioner* [Voice and causality in textbooks: A study of students’ comprehension of different versions of Swedish texts] (Göteborg Studies in Educational Sciences, 2000), 149; Monica Reichenberg, *Gymnasieelever samtalar kring facktexter. En studie av textsamtal med goda och svaga läsare* [Students in upper secondary school talk about expository texts: A study of good and poor readers] (Gothenburg Studies in Educational Science, 2005), 232.

to express causality, among them the coordinating conjunctions *for* (cause) or *so* (effect) and the adverbial expressions *thus*, *namely*, *therefore*. Hypotactically (i. e. through subordination) causality can be expressed by using above all causal but also conditional, final, consecutive and concessive conjunctions.<sup>12</sup> It is, however, not so simple that every type of connection has its own set of words and expressions, but rather that overlaps occur. An example of this is *as* which can be used to signal both temporal and causal connections. Lexical expressions of causality are: *the outcome was*, *it depends on*, *it led to*, *it resulted in*, etc.

Studies have also shown that texts with many causal connections and explicit causal clause connectors are read more rapidly by poor readers and make it easier for them to discover logical relationships and to infer (read between the lines).<sup>13</sup> McNamara, Kintsch, Butler Songer and Kintsch<sup>14</sup> found that students who did not have very good background knowledge were better able to answer problem-solving and inference questions when they read a text with a high level of causality. That was, however, not true for students with very good background knowledge. They benefited from reading texts with a low level of causality. McNamara and her colleagues concluded that a text with an increasing degree of coherence does not give highly performing students enough of a linguistic challenge. Therefore, they become passive while reading. If they on the other hand get a text with low coherence, they are forced to become more active in the actual comprehension process.<sup>15</sup> Something that McNamara does not mention, though, but which may still be relevant to point out, is that the readers have to know what the causal expressions mean in order to make use of them, as shown in a study by Cohen et al.<sup>16</sup> Cohen tested students at the Israeli University in Jerusalem on texts about biology, political science, and history. These texts were written in English. The result was that the Israeli students needed six times more

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Monica Reichenberg, “‘But Before You Said You Believed That.’ Teachers and Their Students Discuss Expository Texts,” *The Reading Matrix* 8, no. 1 (2008): 158–185.

12 Bernt Fossetøl, *Bindingsverket i tekster* (Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger, Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget 1983), 67, 124 ff.

13 Isabel L. Beck, Margaret G. McKeown, Gale M. Sinatra, and Jane A. Loxterman, “Revising Social Studies Text from a Text-Processing Perspective: Evidence of Improved Comprehensibility,” *Reading Research Quarterly* 26, no. 3, (1991): 251–276; Elizabeth Pretorius, “A Profile of Causal Development Amongst Ten-Year-Olds: Implications for Reading and Writing,” *Reading and Writing* 8, no. 5 (1996): 385–406, 397 ff.

14 Danielle McNamara, Eileen Kintsch, Nancy Butler Songer and Walter Kintsch, “Are Good Texts Always Better? Interactions of Text Coherence, Background Knowledge, and Levels of Understanding in Learning from Text,” *Cognition and Instruction* 14, no. 1 (1996): 26 ff.

15 McNamara et al., “Are Good Texts Always Better?” 28.

16 Andrew Cohen, Hilary Glasman, Phyllis Rosenbaum-Cohen, Jonathan Ferrara and Jonathan Fine, “Reading English for Specialized Purposes: Discourse Analysis and the Use of Student Information,” in *Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading*, ed. P. Carrell et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 160 ff.

time than did the control group, whose first language was English, to get through the English text. Among other things, the students had difficulty with certain grammatical constructions. Interviews with the students showed that they had not benefited from the clause connectors.<sup>17</sup> The first language of Cohen's students was Hebrew, which is not only distant from English in terms of language typology but also has a different writing system.

Studies have demonstrated that a cleverly designed picture can contribute to the clarification of causal connections in a text, but many books insert pictures and graphics on a page without referring to these in the text. Therefore, it is advantageous that pictures and graphics are integrated with the text, e. g. that some reference to these is actually made in the text itself. To present a large picture without reference to a particular part of a text is of little use to a poor reader.<sup>18</sup>

### **Are the Students Getting Any Answers to Their Why-Questions about the French Revolution?**

To get a quantitative measurement of the degree of causality in the texts we are examining, we chose to, like Fossetøl, use the question method. Its purpose is to examine to what extent each sentence can be an answer to one or two questions that can be posed to it. In accordance with text linguistic reasoning, it can be claimed that a sentence in a text is the answer to a question we can pose to the previous sentence or several preceding sentences. Fossetøl gives the following example:

Verden når aldri hit. Fjellet er højt. Byernes liv blir uten lyd... Hvorfor når aldri verden hit? (Fordi) fjellet er højt (=for højt). Hva fører det til at verden ikke når hit? Jo, byenes liv blir uten lyd.<sup>19</sup>

The world never reaches here. The mountain is high. The life of the towns is without sound... Why does the world never reach here? (Because) the mountain is high (too high). What is the effect of the world not reaching here? The life of the towns is without sound. (Authors' Translation)

17 Cohen et al., "Reading English for Specialized Purposes," 153 ff.

18 Staffan Selander, "Pedagogiska texter- ett sätt att designa lärprocesser," in *Design för lärande*, ed. A-L Rostvall and S. Selander (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2008), 81 – 107; Donna Ogle and Camille Z. Blachowicz, "Beyond Literature Circles. Helping Students Comprehend Informational Texts," in *Comprehension Instruction. Research-Based Best Practices*, ed. C. Collins Block and M. Pressley (New York: Guilford Press, 2002), 259 – 274.

19 Fossetøl, *Bindingsverket i tekster*, 67.

For each sentence we have asked ourselves: Does the young reader see a connection, cause and effect? Can he or she find any answers to his/her “why-questions”? When this has been the case, it has been counted as an expression of causality. Look at the following example: “*In America, the USA had founded a new nation with neither king nor nobility.*”<sup>20</sup> The young reader probably wonders why there is no king or nobility in the USA. In this case, the reader does not get an answer to the why-question. Such a case counts as lacking causality. The same is partly true in the following example as well: “*The nobility did not have to pay taxes. But they could collect taxes for themselves from the peasants. This made the peasants upset.*”<sup>21</sup> Here the reader is likely to ask three why-questions. Why did the nobility not have to pay taxes? Why did the nobility have the right to collect taxes from the peasants? Why were the peasants upset? The reader only gets the answer to one of the three questions, namely the cause of the peasants being upset: this made the peasants upset.

Table 1: Number of questions (N). Percentage of questions answered

Textbook	N	%
<i>Matriks</i>	37	67.6
<i>Levande Historia</i>	68	38.2
<i>Minikurs</i>	24	29.2

Table 1 shows that the most why-questions were answered by the text in *Matriks*<sup>22</sup>. With this way of counting, *Matriks* has a higher degree of causality than *Levande Historia- Elevbok*<sup>23</sup> and *Minikurs*<sup>24</sup>. The latter, intended for poor readers, thus has the lowest number of answered why-questions.<sup>25,26</sup>

Let us take a closer look at how *Levande Historia- Elevbok*, *Minikurs* and *Matriks* highlight cause-and-effect relationships that led to the start of the French Revolution.

20 H. Dahlberg and B. Henricsson, *Lärarpraktiktikan 8 [Teacher’s guide 8]* (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 2002), 2.

21 Ibid.

22 G. Andersen et al. *Matriks 8. Samfunnsfag for ungdomstrinnet. Lærerveiledning* [History 8. Social science for Lower Secondary School. Teacher’s Guide] (Oslo: Aschehoug, 2006), 27 – 29.

23 Hildingson et al. *SOL 3000. Levande historia- Elevbok*, 328 – 331

24 Dahlberg and Henricsson, *Levande Historia- Lärarpraktika 8*, 6:28 – 31.

25 See Appendix 1 at the end of this chapter where the questions are listed.

26 See Appendix 1 at the end of this chapter where the number of answers is listed.

Svaga ledare. Frankrike var ett envælde. "Kungen av Guds nåde" styrde enligt de linjer som kardinal Richelieu arbetat fram på 1600-talet. Systemet fungerade under den starke kung Ludvig XIV då det kungliga enväldet stod som högst. Hans efterträdare var svaga och lättare att motarbeta.<sup>27</sup>

Weak leaders. France was an absolute monarchy. The "king by the grace of God" ruled according to the guidelines that cardinal Richelieu had established in the 17th century. This system worked well during the time of the strong king, Louis the 14<sup>th</sup>, when rule by the absolute monarch was at its peak. His successors were weak and easier to oppose. (Authors' Translation)

The above excerpt from *Levande Historia- Elevbok* places considerable demands on the reader. Explicit causal clause connectors are missing here, and there is a great deal of implicit information. Good background knowledge is necessary for the reader to fill in the missing information. What is an absolute monarchy and what does it have to do with the "king by the grace of God"? Who was Richelieu? And what is a cardinal? What does "the system worked well" mean? What does it mean that rule by the absolute monarch was at its peak? Why were Louis the 14th's successors weak and easier to oppose? If one wishes to encourage a deeper understanding, it is necessary to present the events and ideas in textbooks in such a way that as to facilitate the readers' ability to see relevant connections. Let us look at the next paragraph:

Det tredje ståndet krävde förändring.

Frankrikes invånare var indelade i tre stånd: adel, präster och *tredje ståndet*. I det tredje ståndet fanns allt från rika bankirer och advokater till fattiga bönder och arbetare. Det tredje ståndet hade nästan ingen makt alls, men bestod av 98 % av befolkningen. Från dem hördes starka krav på förändring. En allt större grupp av borgare hade blivit rika och krävde politisk makt.<sup>28</sup>

The Third Estate Demanded Change.

France's inhabitants were divided into three estates: the nobility, the clergy, and the *third estate*. The third estate included everything from rich bankers and lawyers to poor peasants and workers. The third estate barely had any power at all, but consisted of 98 % of the population. They expressed strong demands for change. An increasing group of the bourgeois had become rich and demanded political power.

Explicit causal clause connectors are also missing in this excerpt and there is a great deal of implicit information. Nor does the reader get any answers to the

27 Hildingson, et al., *SOL 3000 Levande historia – Elevbok*, 330.

28 Ibid.

many *why-questions*. Why was France divided into three estates and not four as in Sweden and Norway at this point in time? Why did the third estate not have any power? What is a banker? What does “bourgeois” mean? Why had the bourgeois been able to get rich? Why were so many groups gathered into the third estate? Here the reader must also be able to conclude that bankers and lawyers were probably bourgeois and that the bourgeois belonged to the third estate.

In *Minikurs* the authors write:

Vi ska titta på några av de orsaker som författarna menar ledde fram till den franska revolutionen...

*Ont om pengar.* Den franska staten hade utkämpat många krig, som kostat mycket pengar. Staten hade därför nästan inga pengar kvar.<sup>29</sup>

We are going to look at some of the reasons that the authors claim led to the French Revolution...

*Lack of money.* The French state had fought many wars, which had cost a lot of money. Therefore, the state had hardly any money left. (Authors' Translation)

In the text excerpt an explanation is given to why there was a lack of money. Here the students do get an answer to their question. Let us take a look at the next paragraph:

*Svaga ledare.* Den franske kungen var enväldig. Med det menas att han hade all makt i sin hand. Men den nuvarande kungen hade ingen egen vilja. Andra kunde lura honom.<sup>30</sup>

*Weak leaders.* The French king was an absolute monarch. That means that he had all the power in his hand. But the present king had no will of his own. Other people could fool him.

In the excerpt above there are three questions to which the students do not get any answers. Why was the king an absolute monarch? Why did the present king have no will of his own? Why could other people fool him?

Let us finally look at an excerpt from *Matriks*:

De amerikanske opprørerne var påvirket av idéer fra de franske opplysningsfilosofene. På samme måte fikk den amerikanske revolusjonen betydning for utvi-

<sup>29</sup> Dahlberg and Henricsson, *Levande historia Lärarpraktikan* 8, 6:29.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

klingen i Frankrike, ikke minst fordi franskmennene hadde kjempet på amerikanernes side mot britene.

...

Franske kong Ludvig 16. hadde lenge vært i pengenød. I 1789 var statskassen nesten bunnskrapt, fordi det hadde kostet så mye å sende skip og soldater til den amerikanske frigjøringskrigen. For å få inn penger ville kongen innføre en ny skatteordning der også første- og andrestanden skulle betale skatt .

...

Misnøyen ble ikke mindre av at streng kulde og haglstormer hadde ødelagt avlingene. Nå ble det mangel på mel og dyrt å kjøpe brød. På toppen av det hele var arbeidsledigheten enorm i Paris.<sup>31</sup>

The American rioters were influenced by ideas from the French philosophers of the Enlightenment. In the same way, the American Revolution became important for the developments in France, not least because the French had fought alongside the Americans against the British.

...

The French king, Louis the 16<sup>th</sup> . had long suffered from lack of money. In 1789 the state coffers were all but empty because sending ships and soldiers to the American war of independence had cost so much. In order to get more money, the king wanted to introduce a new tax regulation, which meant that the first and second estates also had to pay taxes.

...

People were no less upset by the very cold weather and hail storms that had ruined the crops. There was now a shortage of flour and bread became expensive to buy. On top of that, unemployment was very high in Paris.

In the above paragraphs, the sentences are connected to each other and the students more often get an explanation of why one thing led to the other.<sup>32</sup> Even though the students now get answers in the text to their *why-questions*, there may be students who do not realize that they actually do get an answer. This could be due to the fact that the expressions of causality are implied and that makes it not as easy for the reader to see the causal relationships. It is therefore interesting to investigate to what extent there are explicit expressions of causality in the three texts.

Table 2: Percentage of explicit expressions of causality (number of questions)

Text version	%
<i>Matriks</i>	20.5 (8)
<i>Levande Historia</i>	9.6 (9)
<i>Minikurs</i>	16.2 (12)

31 Hellerud and Moen, *Matriks*, *Historie*, 27.

32 See Appendix 1 at the end of this chapter where the number of answers is listed.

The percentage of explicit expressions of causality has been calculated by dividing the number of explicit expressions of causality by the number of sentences. The highest degree of explicit expressions of causality is found in *Matriks*<sup>33</sup> and the lowest degree of explicit expressions of causality is found in *Levande Historia-Elevbok*<sup>34</sup> (Table 2). When we look again at the example below from *Matriks* we see that there are two explicit expressions of causality, *fordi, for å få*

(because, in order to get):

Franske kong Ludvig 16. hadde lenge vært i pengenød. I 1789 var statskassen nesten bunnskrapt, fordi det hade kostet så mye å sende skip og soldater til den amerikanske frigjøringskrigen. For å få inn penger ville kongen innføre en ny skatteordning der også første- og andrestanden skulle betale skatt.<sup>35</sup>

The French king Louis the 16<sup>th</sup> had long suffered from lack of money. In 1789, the state coffers were all but empty because sending ships and soldiers to the American war of independence had cost so much. In order to get more money, the king wanted to introduce a new tax regulation, which meant that the first and second estates also had to pay taxes. (Authors’ Translation. Emphasis added.)

The higher degree of explicit information and explicit expressions of causality have resulted in this text having a longer average sentence length than the others: 13.1 words as opposed to 10.2 words for *Levande Historia*<sup>36</sup> and 7.8 words for *Minikurs*<sup>37</sup> (Table 3). The average sentence length is calculated by dividing the number of words by the number of sentences.

Table 3: Number of sentences (Average sentence length)

<i>Levande Historia</i>	<i>Minikursen</i>	<i>Matriks</i>
94 (10. 2)	74 (7.9)	39 (13.1)

In *Matriks Historie*, however, not all sentences are long, but the authors have made an effort to alternate between long and short sentences, thereby giving the text rhythm. Studies have shown that texts with a rhythm are easier to read.<sup>38</sup> In *Minikurs*, on the other hand, there is no rhythm since short sentences are placed one after the other in almost every paragraph. Adding sentences in this way, with no indication of any other logical relationship other than that the author has one more

33 Hellerud and Moen, *Matriks 8. Historie*, 27 – 29.

34 Hildingsson et al., *Levande historia- Elevbok*, 328 – 331.

35 Hellerud and Moen, *Matriks 8, Historie*, 27.

36 Hildingsson et al., *SOL 3000. Levande Historia- Elevbok*, 328 – 331.

37 Dahlberg and Henricsson, *Levande historia- Lärarpraktika*, 6:28 – 31.

38 Christer Platzack, *Språket och läsbarheten* (Lund: Liber förlag, 1974); Marianne Nordman, *Svenskt fackspråk* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1992).

thing to say, undoubtedly contributes to the abstraction of the text. A long row of facts makes text information dense and this can cause problems for poor readers, as such texts exclude and omit so many steps that the meaning is hidden from the reader. What these readers need instead is texts with a high proportion of logical relationships to help them follow the train of thought in the text. Another negative side effect of short words and short sentences is that they can tempt students to simply learn to recite facts and details at the expense of a deeper understanding. It is actually not that hard to memorize texts with weak connections as independent units and later reproduce these in the same form during a test. The fact that students can recite a lot of details from a text does not necessarily mean that they have understood it.<sup>39</sup>

As mentioned, pictures can also be used to clarify cause-and-effect relationships. To what extent does that happen in our texts? The text in *Minikurs* has no pictures but there is a page reference (page 329) to one of the two pictures in *Levande Historia- Elevbok*. Unfortunately, this page is not explicitly numbered in *Levande Historia- Elevbok* – it says 328 on the preceding page and 330 on the page that comes after the pictures. The authors of the text in *Minikurs* created questions in connection with one of the two pictures. With the other picture, however, it is expected that the poor readers can interpret it by themselves. The questions connected with the picture place different cognitive demands on the students. Some require them to “think in their heads” based on what they see in the picture, e.g. “Why do you think the people are so upset?” while the answer to other questions can be taken directly from the picture, e.g. “What are the people doing?” Answer: They are fighting. “What is the big building you see in the picture?” Answer: The Bastille. The following question, however, “What can it (i. e. the Bastille, author’s comment) be used as?” requires some mental activity on the part of the students. It does say in the text under the picture that it was a fort, but it also says that it was of no military importance. Consequently, the students are then expected to think about what it might be used for. Internal mental activity is also required to answer the question: “What kind of people do you see in the picture?” Here the students have to carefully study how the people in the picture are dressed etc., and based on this draw a conclusion about their social class. Through the picture questions that the students get in the text, they acquire certain prior knowledge that can help them when they

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39 Anne Hvenekilde, Steiner for brød. ”Lett-lest” o-fag for grunnskolen,” *Norsk læreren* 3 (1983): 26–37; Elizabeth Pretorius, “A Profile of Causal Development amongst Ten-Year-Olds: Implications for Reading and Writing,” *Reading and Writing* 8, no. 5 (1996): 385–406; Ingegerd Nyström, “Språket i läroböcker-ett torftigt språk?” *Manus. Läromedelsförfattarnas förening* 3 (1999): 3–5; Monica Reichenberg, “Är lättlästa texter verkligen lättlästa?” in *Språk och lärande. Rapport från ASLA:s höstsymposium Karlstad, 7–8 November 2002*, ed. M. Linnarud and E. Sandlund (Karlstad: Karlstads universitet, 2003), 74–92.

later read the actual text. After posing these initial questions to the reader, the authors are no longer visible in the text.

Students who only read *Levande Historia- Elevboken* are expected to interpret the two pictures by themselves and be able to draw conclusions, such as “The fort was of no military importance but its fall became a significant symbol. It showed ordinary people that the royal power could be defeated.” Here the student must thus think: The king was an absolute monarch and ruled over everything. Consequently, he also ruled over the Bastille. If it was possible to conquer something the absolute monarch ruled over, it may be possible to conquer other things too. It should be added that in the main text it is said that the Bastille is a castle that has been turned into a prison, under the main text it says that the Bastille is a fort. This could confuse students who are poor readers. The second picture shows a speaker who wants to “...make people hostile towards the king.”<sup>40</sup> Nowhere in *Historia* is there any reference in the text to the pictures.

In *Matriks* there is also a picture of the fall of the Bastille. But here it is explicitly stated why the fall of the Bastille had such a symbolic role. The Bastille was a symbol of oppression and by storming it the people began their fight against oppression: “The Bastille had become a symbol of how the king oppressed the people. Many of those opposing the king had been imprisoned here, and many had been tortured and killed. The attack on the old fort on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July 1789 is considered the start of the revolution, and the 14<sup>th</sup> of July has been France’s national holiday ever since.”<sup>41</sup> There are, however, no explicit causal clause connectors in the text.

Another illustration shows the meeting of the assembled estates at Versailles. There is also a long text with the picture (64 words), which describes the placement of the king and queen and how the different estates were placed. This text is very demanding for a poor reader, however, as the 64 words are spread over 23 lines, resulting in three to four words on each line. Such a text becomes difficult to read. Something else that is typical of this picture text, as well as some other picture texts, is that the font is rather small and the lines are single-spaced. Studies have shown that a small font with single-spaced lines becomes more difficult to read.<sup>42</sup> Due to this, the picture text might not fulfill its intended function as an aid to readers in order to make sense of the main text.

In addition, there are three fact frames in *Matriks*. One of them contains a French revolutionary song, which is translated into Norwegian and has an explanatory text underneath. The second one shows a power-meter with an explanatory text, and the third one shows the Tricolore and provides a brief account of how it was created. Nowhere in the main text are there any references to the pictures or the fact frames.

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40 Hildingson et al. *SOL 3000. Levande historia- Elevbok*, 331.

41 Hellerud and Moen, *Matriks, Historie 8*, 29.

42 Åke Hallberg, “Readability From a Graphical Perspective,” <http://www.sprakaloss.se/>.

## Exercises in Textbooks and Other Teaching Materials

We would also like to pay some attention in this article to the exercises that history textbooks offer. In the teaching materials, exercises play a central part. A quick check of Nordic history books shows that they have a big selection of exercises either/both in the students' own books or/and in the teacher's guide as originals that can be photocopied. The publishers are well aware of the fact that teachers want many and varied suggestions for exercises in the textbooks. Classroom studies also show that a lot of schoolwork consists of doing exercises.<sup>43</sup> The students do the exercises and the teachers walk around and help out. A considerable part of the work done in school is to hand out exercises (the teacher) and to complete the exercises (the student). Exercises can vary considerably in size, from short questions that can be answered by a single word to half-year-long projects. They can, to a greater or lesser degree, be controlled by the student, can be more or less self-assigned and they can to a varying degree require that *one* answer is to be given or that the exercise is completed in a particular way.

Initially, we offered some more text theoretical comments on exercises as a textbook subgenre. Here we use the French literature researcher and structuralist Gérard Genette's division of the world of text into texts and paratexts. Paratexts are, according to Genette, understood as text elements that surround and present a text, and he uses metaphors such as threshold, vestibule and border line to describe the text type.<sup>44</sup> The paratexts can, according to Genette, exist both inside and outside the text itself. The first type he calls *peritexts*, and he gives the following examples of such texts: subheadings, footnotes, dedications, and forewords. The other type that exists outside the actual text, Genette calls *epitexts*, and here we find advertising that describes the text, such as announcements, commercials, film trailers, etc. In our context it is interesting to reflect upon exercises as paratexts that create expectations of how the textbook will be read and used. They are found both inside the text (peritexts as exercises in the student's book) and outside the text (epitexts in, for example, teacher's guides and on the textbook's websites). Paratexts are like other

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43 Kari Bachmann, "Læreboken i reformtider – et verktøy for endring?" in *Det ustyrilige klasserommet. Om styring, samarbeid og læringsmiljø i grunnskolen*, ed. Gunn Imsen (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2004); Kirsti Klette, "Lærerstyrt kateterundervisning fremdeles dominerende? Aktivitets- og arbeidsformer i norske klasserom etter Reform 97," in *Fag og arbeidsmåter i endring?: Tidsbilder fra norsk grunnskole*, ed. Kirsti Klette (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2004); Dagrun Skjelbred, Trine Solstad and Bente Aamotsbakken, *Kartlegging av læremidler og læremiddelp praksis Rapport [1/2005]* (Tønsberg: Høgskolen i Vestfold, 2005).

44 Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Genette's book has the French title *Seuils*, which means thresholds. The English translation is the version used here.

text elements conventionally determined, i.e. they are governed by the reader's expectations of how they can be read and interpreted.

The genre specific expectations about the exercises govern the students' reading of the textbook text and contribute to their comprehension of both what is essential knowledge and how the text should be read.<sup>45</sup> The socialization that happens within the exercise culture of the school makes it reasonable to claim that the exercises highlight for the student what is relevant and important knowledge based on a surmised comprehension that is part of the school discourse, namely, that what is asked about in the exercises is important knowledge. Anything else would be unreasonable. It seems irrational to have students work with content that is perceived as of little relevance and importance for the subject. This means that those who hand out the exercises have a lot of power in terms of determining what the students will understand as important and less important knowledge. When something is lifted up and treated as a theme in an exercise, something else is excluded. If the exercises in the history book ask for the year of some event, the student will understand that knowing the year something happens is important.<sup>46</sup> When an exercise in one of the books we studied asks who Robespierre was, and why he was executed, we understand that he is an essential person. The text also has information about the equality champion, Marie Olympe de Gouges, who was also executed in 1793, but there are no exercises about her. Is she perhaps therefore not equally as important?

In the article ”Uppgiftskulturen i svenska. Läromedel och läroprocesser i kritisk belysning” (The exercise culture in Swedish language arts. A critical view on teaching materials and learning processes), the two Swedish researchers Nilsson and Ullström present a research project where they study how exercises in teaching materials govern the writing in the subject and thereby the outcome of the learning process,<sup>47</sup> with reference to classroom research.<sup>48</sup> They point out that it is “the

45 Sigmund Ongstad, *Språk, kommunikasjon og didaktikk: Norsk som flerfaglig og fagdidaktisk ressurs* (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2004).

46 From this perspective, there is reason to reflect on the quiz-type exercises that the teaching material websites present. The exercise below has three alternatives for the student to cross off. There is reason to ask if this kind of exercise leads the student to become focused on reading in order to remember details rather than finding developments and causal relationships: “Da kvinnene fra *Paris/ Bourdeaux/Bretagne* stormet kongens slott i Versailles og drepte livvaktene hans, gikk kongen med på å flytte med dem tilbake og sørge for *fred/kake/mat*” (When the women from *Paris/ Bourdeaux/Bretagne* stormed the king's palace at Versailles and killed the security guards, the king agreed move back and provide *peace/cake/food*. <http://www.mintime.no/indeks> Samfunnsfag. Downloaded 28.06.07). Is it then the case that the Internet's ability to give instant feedback governs what exercises are given and thereby how the students are taught to read?

47 Nils-Erik Nilsson and Sten Olof Ullström, “Uppgiftskulturen i svenska läromedel og läroprocesser i kritisk belysning,” in *Andra Nationella konferensen i svenska med didaktisk inriktning*, ed. Staffan Thorson (Göteborg: Universitetet i Göteborg, 2004), 146.

48 Olga Dyshet, *Det flerstemmige klasserommet: skrivning og samtale for å lære* (Oslo: Ad Notam

student's goal for doing the reading [...] that governs what knowledge they construct."<sup>49</sup> And the student finds the goal for the reading by, among other things, interpreting the expectations found in the exercises that have been created for the reading. Thereby, the textbook exercises become important orientation points for the students when they have to figure out what is relevant knowledge within the subject area. In our context, this means that if we wish students to learn about historical contexts and cause-and-effect explanations, they must have exercises that require them to read in such a way that they focus on precisely this.

## Presentation of the Exercises in the Two Textbooks

Both the Norwegian and the Swedish books have exercises and questions of several types for each of the chapters we have examined. The Norwegian book has 16 exercises and there are 29 in the Swedish one, but if we take into account that several exercises contain different questions, the numbers are 20 and 35 respectively.<sup>50</sup> *Minikurs*, in the teacher's guide to *Levande historia*, contains 28 exercises.

Both books order their exercises into a few subcategories. In the Norwegian *Matriks*, the questions are divided into five groups with the following headings:

- *Finn svaret* (*Find the answer*). These are the exercises that check that the student has learned the content. Example: "Hva var Bastillen?" (What was the Bastille?)
- *Diskuter!* (*Discuss!*) Here the answers are not found in the text, but the students are to discuss a problem orally. Example: "Kjenner du til land som bruker dødsstraff i dag [-] Hva mener du om dette?" (Do you know of any countries that use the death penalty today? [-] What do you think of this?)
- *Oppgaver* (*Tasks*). These are more extensive exercises where the students are to use sources also found outside the book. Example: "*Tenk deg* at du er til stede under angrepet på Bastillen. Lag et førstesideoppslag til avisa du jobber for. Forsøk å få fram om du er positiv eller negativ til angrepet. Illustrer artikkelen." (*Imagine* that you are present during the attack on the Bastille. Make a front-page layout for the newspaper you are working for. Try to make it show if you are for or against the attack. Illustrate the article.)

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Gyldendal, 1995); Martin Nystrand, "Tekst på deling: leseres innvirkning på unge skrivere," in *Skriveteorier og skolepraksis*, ed. Lars Sigfred Evensen and Torlaug Løkensgard Hoel (Oslo: Landslaget for norskundervisning, 1997).

49 Nils-Erik Nilsson and Sten Olof Ullström, "Uppgiftskulturen i svenska läromedel og lærprocesser i kritisk belysning," 145. Author's translation.

50 In addition, the Norwegian book has a thematic exercise where the students are to answer to what extent seven descriptions of causes of the French revolution can be characterized as basic causes or triggering causes. In the Swedish book there are, in addition to the exercises mentioned here, three exercises that are related to illustrations. These four additional exercises will not be commented on here.

- *Tren tanken (Train your thinking)*. Here we find exercises of, for example, the “one does not fit”-type: “En skal ut: enevælde – maktfordelingsprinsippet – folkesuverenitetsprinsippet – yttringsfrihet” (One does not fit: absolute monarchy – the principle of distribution of power – the principle of the sovereignty of the people – freedom of speech). An other type can be “facts or opinion,” where it is to be decided if a statement contains facts or expresses an opinion
- *Til kildene (To the sources)*. Here the students are to use different sources as well as evaluate them. Example: “Sammenlikn den amerikanske uavhengighetserklæringen fra 1776 med den franske erklæringen om menneskerettigheter fra 1789. Hvilke ideer går igjen?” (Compare the American Declaration of Independence from 1776 to the French Declaration of Human Rights from 1789. Which ideas are similar?)

In the Swedish book, there are also several types of exercises. First, we find summarizing exercises for the individual chapters, and we find more suggestions for exercises to each of the eight themes in the book. The summarizing exercises are of two types with the following headings:

- *Minns du? (Do you remember?)* These are factual questions the students can answer by reading in the book, as in the example: “Vilket år och vilket datum stormades Bastiljen?” (In what year and on what date was the Bastille stormed?)
- *Fundera och analysera (Think and analyze)*. This is a more comprehensive task which does not actually have only one correct response: Example: “Beskriv det franska ståndsamhället.” (Describe the French estate system.)

The exercise suggestions for each of the eight themes that the book deals with are found at the end of each main chapter. The exercises are differentiated here by level. The first level “addresses basic knowledge” according to the teacher’s guide,<sup>51</sup> while “the other levels require more abstract thinking and a comprehensive view.”<sup>52</sup> The easiest exercises are intended for all students, and slower learners are perhaps only intended to do these. “For some students it may be enough to do the exercises at the easiest level, while others demand greater challenges at the more difficult levels.”<sup>53</sup>

At Level 1 we thus find relatively simple questions about names, concepts and events, the answers to which the students can find by reading in the book. But we also find examples of questions that ask for explanations of causes and require the students to think of connections. Examples of each of these types are given below:

- Name: “Nämna två revolutionsledare som till slut avrättades.” (Name two revolutionary leaders that were executed.)

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51 Dahlberg and Henricsson, *Lärarpraktiktikan* 8, 2.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid.

- Events: “Vilken händelse inledde den franska revolutionen?”(Which event started the French Revolution?)
- Concepts: “Vilka var de tre stånden?”(What were the three estates?)
- Explanation of causes: “Varför hade franska staten ofta ont om pengar?” (Why was the French state often short of money?)
- Examples of connections: “Ge exempel på hur den franska revolutionen påverkade länder utanför Frankrike.” (Give examples of how the French Revolution affected countries outside of France.)

Level 2 is geared less toward facts than it is toward causes and a grasp of history, as shown in the examples below:

- Causes: “Hur kom det sig att Bastiljen stormades trots att der varken fans särskilt många soldater eller fångar därinne?” (Why was the Bastille stormed even though there were not very many soldiers or prisoners there?)
- Empathy and identification: “Tänk dig att du är en arbetare eller arbeterska i Paris som anslutit sig till revolutionärena. Skriv brev til en vän i landsorten om vad som hänt och vad du hoppas för framtiden.” (Imagine that you are a worker in Paris who has joined the revolutionaries. Write a letter to a friend in the countryside about the recent events and your hopes for the future.)

The same is true for level three, where the students are asked to give explanations and look at connections.

- Explanation: “Förklara varför olika grupper inom tredje ståndet, till exempel bönder, advokater och hantverkare, hade så olika intressen och mål med revolutionen.” (Explain why different groups within the third estate, for example peasants, lawyers and craftsmen, had such different interests and goals for the revolution.)
- Give examples: “Ge några exempel på saker från franska revolutionen som finns kvar i dagens Frankrike.” (Give some examples of what still remains from the French Revolution in France today.)
- Connections: “När de franska arméerna pressades tillbaka ökade antalet avrättningar i Frankrike. Hur kan de båda sakerne hänga i hop?” (When the French armies were pressed back, the number of executions increased in France. How can these two things be connected?)

*Minikurs* is, as mentioned, intended for the poorest learners and contains 28 exercises. Three of them are identical to exercises in the students’ book. Most of the questions in *Minikurs* are factual questions, directly related to the text, such as:

- “I vilken stad startar revolutionen?”(In which city did the revolution start?)
- “Vem var Voltaire?” (Who was Voltaire?)

- “Vad hette kungens slott utanför Paris?” (What was the name of the king’s palace outside of Paris?)

In *Minikurs* the exercises are not divided into different levels, and only five of the 28 are exercises that do not ask for facts. We find two questions about causes: “Why was the voting system a disadvantage for the third estate?” and also a question that requests an explanation: “The nobility had privileges. What does this mean?” Another question is very similar to a question in *Levande historia*, where the students are told to imagine that they are living in Paris in 1789 and are to write an article about what they are unhappy about in society. The only exercise that requires other sources than the textbook is one that asks the students to use a dictionary to find out what the word guillotine means and to find out how this execution machine works as well as who invented it. Since the exercises in *Minikurs* look much the same, in the following we will concentrate on *Levande historia*.

## Categorization of the Exercises

For a description of exercises in a textbook, it can be appropriate to categorize them, and different types of categories can be used to this end. The actual books are likely to differentiate between various types of exercises, and give different instructions relative to what is expected of the students. Some exercises are called practice questions, repetition questions, or control questions. Such exercises are used to make the students practice spelling or multiplication, or to have them look for information in the text and copy it. These exercises often have headings like the ones we have referred to above, such as “Find the Answer” or “Do you Remember?” These questions are easy for the student to answer by reading the book. Many textbooks, however, also have exercises that require the students to reflect and figure something out for themselves by, for instance, involving other sources. In our exercise materials we find those kinds of exercises under headings like “Discuss!” or “Think and Analyze.” Here the students are not only required to find one right answer, but they have to reflect and read critically.

We referred above to how textbook authors have generally, and in the two history books especially, categorized the exercises. In our context, the categorization must be related to the questions we have posed to the materials. Our super-ordinated question is whether the teaching materials improve the understanding of cause-consequence relationships, reflection, and independent thinking in relation to historical contexts. For an overview, the exercises can be categorized into three main groups, based on a definition and categorization related to the PISA –assessment. According to this we can describe “reading literacy” in three categories: To find information, to understand and interpret a text and thirdly to reflect on and evaluate

information.<sup>54</sup> Using this taxonomy, we can divide the exercises into these groups: Exercises asking about facts and requesting examples, exercises asking about causes, and exercises asking about the students' own reasoning. We can find out about this by using the question words or the tasks that are mentioned in the exercises:

- Group 1: Questions about facts: Exercises beginning with *who, what, which, mention, give examples*;  
 Group 2: Questions about causes: Exercises beginning with *why, explain why, explain the connection*;  
 Group 3: Questions requesting students to reason and evaluate: Exercises beginning with *what is your opinion..., why do you think..., discuss, write, compare, imagine that...*

In the table below, the exercises are grouped according to question words or the tasks and activities they invite the students to carry out:<sup>55</sup>

Table 4: Exercises grouped by question words

Group		<i>Matriks</i>	<i>Levande historia</i>	Total
1	Who, what, which, how	4	8	12
1	Mention/Give examples/Do you know? /Describe...	1	7	8
Group 1 total		5 (9%)	15 (27%)	20 (36%)
2	Why/explain why/what was the reason/connections	5	17	22
2	Explain...	3	1	4
Group 2 total		8 (15%)	18 (33%)	26 (47%)
3	Imagine that...	1	2	3
3	What is your opinion?	2	0	2
3	Discuss/write/compare	4	0	4
Group 3 total		7 (13%)	2 (4%)	9 (16%)
Total		20 (36%)	35 (64%)	55 (100%)

The table shows that most exercises are found in Group 1, which addresses factual knowledge (36%), and Group 2, which addresses causes (47%), while relatively few exercises ask for the students' own reasoning and evaluation (16%). Moreover, in both books the exercises are quite evenly distributed between questions about facts and questions about causes. An obvious difference

54 Atle Skaftun, *Å Kunne Lese: Grunnleggende Ferdigheter Og Nasjonale Prøver* (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2006).

55 For an overview of all exercises and the ordering of them, see Appendix 2 at the end of this chapter.

between the two books is that *Levande historia* has a far smaller proportion of exercises in Group 3 than we find in *Matriks*. As can be seen, exercises beginning with *why* far outnumber the others in the material. This corresponds well with both the curriculum guidelines and the wishes expressed by the teachers in the questionnaire, “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Internet Survey,” discussed in this book.

It is, however, interesting to look a bit more carefully at how the students can answer the questions. This can be done by investigating whether the exercises are closed with only one correct answer possible, or more open with no given answer. By studying the book, we can also find out if the student can find the answer by simply copying what is in the text, or if reasoning and critical thinking are required.

As can be expected, there tends to be just one correct answer to the group of exercises that ask about facts. What is striking, though, is that both books do indeed ask for causes, but that there is, by and large, only one right answer to these questions and it is found in the book. We will provide a few examples. One of the questions in *Levande historia* is phrased like this: “Varför hadde franska staten ont om pengar?” (Why was the French state short of money?)<sup>56</sup> On the opposite page there is a subheading, “Ont om pengar” (Short of money), and the passage begins: ”Franska staten hadde alltid ont om pengar. De många krigen tömde statens kassakista.”(The French state was always short of money. The many wars emptied the state coffers.)<sup>57</sup> Here the student does have to use reason to figure out that there is a cause-and-effect relationship between the two sentences and if he or she sees this connection, he can copy the answer straight from the book. Another example is “Varför ville Frankrikes grannländer gärna få stopp på revolutionen?” (Why did France’s neighboring countries really want to put a stop to the revolution?)<sup>58</sup> One page later we find the heading: ”Frankrike angrips”(France is attacked) and here it says that “[Frankrikes fiender] såg en chans att utöka sina egna territorier, men de var också rädda för att revolutionen skulle sprida sig.” ([France’s enemies] saw a chance to enlarge their own territories, but they were also afraid that the revolution might spread).<sup>59</sup> An exercise that initially looks like it requires reasoning about causal explanations and connections is found in this question: “Förklara varför skörden 1788 kan ha haft betydelse för revolutionen år 1789” (Explain why the harvest of 1788 may have been important for the revolution in 1789).<sup>60</sup> Here too, however, the answer can be read straight from the page in the book. First, an account is given of an

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56 Hildingson et al., *SOL 3000. Levande historia, Elevbok*, 331.

57 Hildingson et al., *SOL 3000. Levande historia, Elevbok*, 330.

58 Ibid., 337.

59 Ibid., 335.

60 Ibid., 331.

assembly of the estates in the autumn of 1788, and then the text continues: “Den hösten blev skölden i Frankrike en av de sämsta i hela århundradet. Det betydde att den största delen av Frankrikes befolkning var hungrig och missnöjd vid en avgörande tidpunkt i landets historia.” (That autumn, the harvest in France was one of the worst of the century. This meant that the majority of France’s population was hungry and unhappy at a pivotal point in time in the country’s history.)<sup>61</sup>

Questions about causes that can easily be answered by copying a sentence or two from the text in the book is also true of some of the exercises in *Matriks*. The book asks: “Hvem var Robespierre og hvorfor ble han henrettet?” (Who was Robespierre and why was he executed?)<sup>62</sup> Here the answer can be copied verbatim. Robespierre is mentioned as “the strongest leader of the convention,” and the reason for his fall is found directly in the text: “Til slutt kom turen til Robespierre. Mange fryktet at han ønsket å ta makten alene.” (Finally, it was Robespierre’s turn [to be executed]. Many feared that he wanted all the power for himself.)<sup>63</sup> Another example is the question: “Hvorfor ville første- og andrestanden at kongen skulle innkalle stenderforsamlingen?” (Why did the first and second estates want the king to call the estate assembly?)<sup>64</sup> Under the heading *Stenderforsamlingen møtes* (The Estates General Meeting) we find the following: “De som tilhørte første og andrestanden ble rasende da kongen foreslo at de skulle betale skatt. Det kunne han ikke avgjøre på egen hånd mente de, og forlangte at han skulle innkalle stenderforsamlingen.” (Those who belonged to the first and second estates were furious when the king suggested that they should pay taxes. He could not decide that by himself, they claimed, and they demanded that he call the estate assembly).<sup>65</sup> In the teacher’s guide we find comments/answers to the exercises in the student book, and the answers are given precisely.

The exercises requiring reasoning, empathy and discussion naturally open up to more than one possible answer. There are more of these types of exercises in the Norwegian book than in the Swedish one. One exercise asks about what the students think about the death penalty, another exercise requests a comparison between the American and the French Revolution and asks the students what they think is/are the most important change/s that happened during the two revolutions. We also find an exercise that tells the students to draw a time-line and to place the six most important, in their opinion, events during the two revolutions. They are also requested to reflect on the answer.

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61 Ibid., 331.

62 Hellerud and Moen, *Matriks, Historie 8*, 34.

63 Ibid., 33.

64 Ibid., 34.

65 Ibid., 27.

It is also interesting to ask how the students arrive at the answers, for instance by working together with others. Of the 20 exercises in *Matriks*, perhaps one can be said to require cooperation. The students are to compare excerpts from the Declaration of Human Rights with the Enlightenment philosophers' ideas and are given this instruction: “Diskuter hvilke av artiklene som er inspirert av opplysningsfilosofenes ideer” (Discuss which of the articles are inspired by the Enlightenment philosophers' ideas).<sup>66</sup> The exercise can, however, also be completed individually by writing an argumentative text. None of the 35 exercises in *Levande historia* require cooperation.

To sum up, we can say that the analysis above shows that around 35% of the exercises about the French Revolution in the two books ask about facts, almost 50% ask about causes, and a bit over 15% require reasoning and reflection. The difference between the two books is greatest when it comes to exercises that request reasoning, as this type of exercise dominates in *Matriks* (7 of 20 exercises), while little room is given to it in *Levande historia* (4 of 35 exercises). We have also seen that the vast majority of the exercises have one correct answer, which can often be found by reading in the book, while only a few are open exercises with several possible answers.

As we know, questions about causes are essential within the subject of history, and many exercises do also, as we have seen, pose questions about *why*. They highlight the fact that history is not only concerned with what has happened, but also why something happened. Regardless of whether the why-question is closed and that the student can go back a page in the book and directly copy a sentence for the answer to this *why*, the question itself signals that history deals with causes and effects. At the same time it must be said that cause-and-effect relationships are complex, and it would be unfortunate if the student gets the impression that there is a single explanation for historical events.

## Final Discussion

This investigation has shown that students who read *Matriks* get the most answers to their why-questions. Students who are poor readers should also find it easier to understand the causal connections of the French Revolution when they read the text in *Matriks* as there are more explicit expressions of causality in this text than in the others. Students who read *Matriks* also get more help from the picture captions and in the fact frames because cause-and-effect relationships are explained there. Somewhat surprising is the finding that the lowest numbers of answers to the why-questions are in *Minikurs*, which was intended for the

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 34.

poor readers. Other studies have also shown similar results, i.e. regarding so-called easy-to-read texts.<sup>67</sup> Still, it is precisely texts with a high proportion of logical relationships that poor readers need. Comprehension suffers due to a lack of explanations and connecting reasoning. If textbook writers want to create an understanding of context and not just of isolated details, text connectors are of utmost importance. Readability is not simply improved by a lot of facts, listed one after the other in short sentences with hardly any explicit clause connectors.<sup>68</sup>

When it comes to the exercises dealing with the French Revolution in the two books, we can see that quite a few of them ask about facts. This is in and of itself to be expected. But we can also see that a lot of exercises ask about causes. Something other than that would be very surprising for a subject like history. It is, however, a problem that many of these questions can be answered by copying information from the book. Textbook exercises are, as shown above, paratexts that also signal to the students how texts should and can be read, and they are part of the reading education we give students in school. Therefore, the exercises should also educate the students to read with reflection and a critical eye, and encourage them to use other learning resources. Above all, they should open up to curiosity and new questions, and not only make the students look for “the correct answer.”

From this perspective, it is important that textbooks highlight cause-and-effect relationships and reasoning in the texts that present historical events, that the students are taught to pose why-questions to the texts they are reading, and that the texts provide answers to these questions. It is also important that the exercises in the books are varied, and that the teacher using the book is not always satisfied with the students simply finding “the answer” but rather asks critical follow-up questions. In the end, it is the interaction between teacher, student and textbook that determines whether students will understand cause-and-effect relationships and learn to think critically in the way the answers to our questionnaire showed that teachers want them to.

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67 Anne Hvenekilde, “Nærblikk på o-fagstekster, [An in-depth examination of texts in sciences],” *Norsklæreren* 3 (1986): 20–25; Anne Hvenekilde, “Steiner for brød, ’Lett-lest’ o-fag for grunnskolen,” 26–37; Pretorius, “A Profile of Causal Development amongst Ten-Year-Olds: Implications for Reading and Writing,” 385–406; Monica Reichenberg, “Är lättlästa texter verkligen lättlästa?” 74–92.

68 Lars Melin, “Grafisk pyttipanna. Om text och grafisk form i läroböcker,” in *Läroboksspråk*, ed. Siv Strömquist (Stockholm: Hallgren and Fallgren, 1995), 109.

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## Appendix 1:

### **SOL 300 Levande Historia- Elevbok pages 328 – 331**

The bold text indicates the titles of the text sections.

Questions with “X” before them have answers in the text.

#### **The Bastille Falls**

X Why did rumors flourish in Paris?

Why did the parliament convene?

Why did it take 175 years?

X Why was there a sense of hope and freedom in the atmosphere, but also a sense of anxiety?

Why did people believe that the king would not surrender?

Why did people believe that Paris was surrounded by an army of foreign soldiers?

Why did they believe that the king had foreign soldiers?

#### **What can be found at the Bastille?**

Why was the Bastille re-constructed into a fortress?

X Why was the Commander of the Bastille so nervous?

Why were there only elderly officers at command?

Why did the Commander use Swiss soldiers?

X Why did so many Parisians gather in the streets?

Why did people believe there were political prisoners in the dungeons of the Bastille?

### **The Storming of the Bastille**

- X Why did so many people gather on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July in search of arms?
- Why did the commander of the Bastille decide to open the gates?
- Why did the commander give his word that no soldier would come to harm?
- X How were the people able to enter the Bastille?
- X Why did the commander break his word?
- X Why did some of the commander's soldiers aim their cannons towards the Bastille?
- X Why were the inner gates of the Bastille opened?
- Why didn't the mob keep their end of the bargain?
- Why did some of the people begin to tear down the Bastille?
- X How was it possible to kill such a large amount of people?
- Why was the king's servant upset?
- Why did he wake the king up?

### **Causes of the Revolution**

#### **Money shortage**

- X Why did the French state experience a money shortage?
- X Why were the lords of Europe at war with one another?
- Why did France participate in The Seven Years' War?
- Why were the financial costs of The Seven Years' War so great?
- Why did France aid the colonists in North America?
- Why were the costs of aiding the colonists so great?
- X Why was the French state on the verge of bankruptcy?

#### **Weak Leaders**

- Why was France an absolute monarchy?
- Why did Richelieu put together guidelines for the absolute monarchy?
- Why did the system function during the reign of Ludwig XIV?
- Why were his successors weak?

### **The Third Estate Demands a Change**

- Why were there three estates?
- Why was the nobility more powerful than the clergy?
- Why did the third estate have no power at all?
- Why did such a large number of people belong to the third estate?
- X Why did the third estate demand a change?
- Who were the bourgeois?
- X Why did the bourgeois dare to place demands?

### **Discontent over Taxes**

Why was the nobility not obligated to pay taxes?

Why was the nobility entitled to collect taxes?

Why were harsh methods of tax collecting used?

X Why was there a discontent among the peasants due to the taxes?

X Why was a bad harvest so important to the peasants?

### **The Privileges of the Nobility Cause Serious Discontentment**

Why was the nobility able to seize power over the local assemblies?

Why did the nobility ignore the king during the royal absolutism?

X Why did France not function as a united nation?

Why did the nobility stand in the way of change?

Why were the bourgeois displeased with the privileges of the nobility?

### **New Ideas**

X Why did new ideas begin to emerge?

Why were the estates of the French realm unjust?

### **The American Revolution**

X Why did the American Revolution come to have an effect on many of the French people?

Why did the declaration of the United States become an ideal?

### **The Decline of the State**

Why did the French state begin to decline?

Why was a state of emergency declared at the end of 1780?

X Why did the King want to impose further taxes?

Why did the nobility object?

X Why was the proposition not approved?

X Why did the king dissolve the local assemblies?

Why did the local assemblies refuse to obey the king?

X Why did the king assemble the Estates General?

Why were the expectations of the Estates General so high?

X Why did so many people doubt the potential of the Estates General to resolve the situation?

X Why was the timing bad?

### ***Matriks, Historie* pages 27 – 29**

Why did French thinkers of the Enlightenment influence the American Revolution?

X Why did the American Revolution influence the development in France?

Why did the French join forces with the Americans in order to battle against the British?

### **France in Difficult Times**

X Why did the French king experience financial problems?

X Why was France on the verge of bankruptcy?

X Why did the king want to impose a new tax reform?

Why was the king keen on making the first and second estates pay taxes?

X Why were so many French discontent with how France was governed?

Why was the king so powerful?

X Why didn't the French act earlier against the absolute king?

X How did the discontentment escalate?

X Why was there a shortage of wheat?

X Why did the price of bread increase?

Why was the unemployment at such a high level in Paris?

### **Estates-General Assembled**

X Why were the first and second estates furious over the king's tax proposal?

X Why did they demand that the king assemble the Estates General?

X Why had the king not assembled the Estate General in the past?

Why did the nobility enjoy such a warm reception?

Why did the third estate have to sit in the back?

### **The Uprising of the Third Estate**

X Why did the third estate revolt?

Why did the third estate feel that they were the true representatives of the people?

Why did the third estate want to establish a constitution?

Why did some members of the clergy and the nobility join the third estate?

X Why did the king surrender?

X Why was the king forced to share power with the National Assembly?

### **The Attack on the Bastille**

X Why were the people pleased with the constitution?

X Why were they later upset?

X Why were there bloody uprisings?

X Why did the masses head for the Bastille?

X Why was the revolt successful?

X Why did the Commander of the Bastille surrender?

Why did the mob advance so aggressively?

Why was commander's head put on a stick?

X Why did the king withdraw his forces from Paris?

- X Why was the third estate able to establish a communal self-government?
- X Why did it become more difficult for the king to overthrow the government?
- X Why did Lafayette become the leader of the national guard?

***Levande Historia Lärarpraktikan 8 Minikursen pages 6:28 – 30***

**The Fall of the Bastille**

- X Why did the people arm themselves?
- X Why did the commander open the gates?
- Why did the people decapitate the Commander?
- How was it noticeable that the revolution had begun?

**Causes of the Revolution**

- Why did France fight for so many wars?
- X Why was the French state experiencing a money shortage?
- Why was the king of France an absolute monarch?
- Why did the king have no free will?
- Why were others able to fool the king?
- Why was France divided into three estates?
- Why was the third estate so large?
- Why didn't the third estate enjoy any power at all?
- X Why did they make claims to power?
- Why was the nobility not obligated to pay taxes?
- Why was the nobility able to collect taxes?
- X Why was there discontentment among the peasants?
- Why did the nobility enjoy privileges?
- X Why was the nobility able to rule over their own mansions and peasant villages?
- Why were they able to ignore the absolute king?
- X Why were so many people discontent with the privileges of the nobility?
- Why was there a government, when the monarch was absolute?
- Why was Voltaire critical of the rule of the king?
- Why did so many people start to read texts by Voltaire?
- Why were there no kings and nobility in the USA?

## Appendix 2: Exercises

*M: Matriks, LH: Levande Historia*

### Group 1

**Question words: who, what, where, when, how**

Who was Robespierre? (M)

What was the Bastille? (M)

What is a republic? Imagine you are to explain this to a person younger than yourself. (M)

What was the French king called? (LH)

Where did he live [the French king]? (LH)

How many of the French people belonged to the third estate? (LH)

What methods are used when people are executed today? (M)

What were the three estates?

What did they call the new parliament? (LH)

What year and what date did they storm the Bastille? (LH)

How did France's lack of money affect the people? (LH)

### Group 1

**Describe/give examples/ do you know...**

Describe the French society before the revolution. (LH)

Name two writers that criticized the society. (LH)

Name two leaders of the revolution that were executed. (LH)

Give some examples of problems in France. (LH)

Give examples of the power of the nobility and how it affected society. (LH)

Give example of why the outcome of revolution was not what he [the enthusiastic revolutionary] would have hoped for. (LH)

Give example of things from modern France that can be traced back to the period of the French Revolution. (LH)

Do you know of any countries that use the death penalty today? (M)

### Group 2

**Why questions**

Why were the first and the second estates so keen on the king calling on the Estate General?(M)

Why was Ludwig 16<sup>th</sup> executed? (M)

Why was Robespierre executed? (M)

Why are the events in France during the period of 1789 – 1795 called a revolution? (M)

Why do you think this song [Ca Ira] became so popular during the French Revolution? (M)

Why was it of such importance to the Parisians to storm the Bastille? (LH)

Why did the French state experience a lack of money? (LH)

Why was it most difficult for the king to acquire new money? (LH)

Why did some of the nobility and clergy support the demands of the third estate? (LH)

Why did such a large number of peasants object to some of the laws that were imposed on the church? (LH)

Why did the fairly popular king suddenly become somewhat of a prisoner? (LH)

Why were France’s neighbors eager to stop the revolution? (LH)

Why was the National Assembly eager to impose laws that would abolish almost everything that was associated with the old rule, the Ancien Régime? (LH)

Why did the poor experience a feeling of betrayal after the new constitution was established in 1795? (LH)

Why was the Bastille stormed even though there were not many soldiers or prisoners inside? (LH)

Explain why many of the French peasants were quickly fed up with the revolution? (LH)

Explain why the third estate was most keen on changing the society. (LH)

Explain why the harvest of 1788 may have played a significant role in the revolution of 1789? (LH)

The day of the event [the storming of the Bastille] is now celebrated as a national holiday. Explain why? (LH)

Explain why different groups within the third estate, e.g. peasants, lawyers and craftsmen differed in interests as well as objectives for the revolution. (LH)

Explain why this could happen [that the revolution did not develop as the enthusiastic revolutionary would have hoped for]? (LH)

When the French armies were put under pressure the number of executions in France increased. How do these events correlate to one another? (LH)

## Group 2

### Explain

Explain what the Estate-General was. (M)

Explain in your own words what was written in the Declaration of Human Rights in 1739. (M)

Explain briefly what the song (Ca Ira on page 28) is about. (M)

Explain how the social problems weakened the state. (LH)

**Group 3****What is your opinion?**

What is your opinion on this topic [capital punishment and execution methods in other countries today]? (M)

What, in your opinion, are the most important social changes that took place during the American and French Revolutions? Write at least half a page and think carefully about your answer. (M)

**Group 3****Discuss/write**

Read the extract of the Declaration of Human Rights on page 30 as well as the philosophers of the Enlightenment's theories on pages 15–16. Discuss which articles that are inspired by the theories of the philosophers. (M)

Choose an article from the Declaration of Human Rights on page 30. Write down the article on an A-3 piece of paper. Illustrate the content of the article with your own thoughts, cut out pictures from the paper or use pictures from the Internet. (M)

Create a timeline and add what you consider to be the six most important events during the French and American Revolutions. Reflect upon your choices. (M)

Compare the American Declaration of Independence from 1776 with the French Declaration of Human Rights from 1789. Which ideas do they have in common? (M)

**Group 3****Imagine**

Imagine that you are present during the attack on the Bastille. Make a front-page layout for the newspaper you are working for. Try to make it show if you are for or against the attack. Illustrate the article. (M)

Imagine that you are a nobleman or a noblewoman during the revolution in France 1790. You are writing a letter to your cousin in London in order to tell him or her what has happened. What are you afraid of? What are your hopes for the future? (LH)

Imagine that you are a worker in Paris who has joined the revolutionaries. Write a letter to a friend in the countryside about what has happened and what you expect to come in the future? (LH)

## The Teacher, the History Text and Values

History, like any other subject, will always have its foundation in various “facts” that are bound to be colored by the cultural and societal environment surrounding it. As much the historian aspires to hold an objective stance, however, he or she will always be part of an ever-changing society. He/she will inevitably be of a certain gender, race, nationality and have particular opinions about the world, its inhabitants and the political issues that surround them. The history teacher is equally bound by his or her own values. He/she can never leave these values to teach a form of history that extends beyond the world of values. Our values are all around us whether we like it or not and what matters then is to be conscious of our value preferences.

According to all the curricula followed by the Nordic countries, teachers are expected to convey certain values in the classroom. One example can be found in the first chapter of the Swedish curriculum under the title “Fundamental Values”:

Democracy forms the basis of the national school system. The Education Act (1985: 1100) stipulates that all school activity should be carried out in accordance with fundamental democratic values and that each and everyone working in the school should encourage respect for the intrinsic value of each person as well as for the environment we all share (Chapter I, §2).<sup>1</sup>

This is followed by detailed information on how to express and convey these values. Similar statements of principle can be found in curricula in the other Nordic countries.

Values can be expressed in various ways and have roles that can differ by subject. Discussion on values in school activities tends to be of a general nature, however; less focus has been placed on the values passed on in particular sub-

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<sup>1</sup> Swedish National Agency for Education, *Curriculum for the Compulsory School System, the Pre-School Class and the Leisure-Time Centre Lpo 94* (Stockholm: Skolverket, 2006), 3.

jects. This study addresses that gap in the subject of history. In the past two centuries, history classes have obviously played a big part in strengthening feelings of national identity. But this role has been downplayed recently, as the earlier emphasis on national identity is now being viewed in a more negative light. What values, then, should be conveyed in history teaching? Over the past few years, new values have appeared, such as those involved in citizenship education.<sup>2</sup> One might then ask the question: does history have a role to play in passing on these new values? In this article, the focus will be on the role of values in history teaching and textbooks in the Nordic countries with a special emphasis on Iceland. In the recent survey referred to in this section of book, teachers from the Nordic countries were asked questions about the contribution of textbooks and the expression of values in history classes. They were also asked to put the following values in order of importance: Internationalism, Tolerance, Equality, National Identity and Environmental Issues. The results are discussed in this article.

## Values in the History Class

This title aims to introduce the fundamental views behind the article.<sup>3</sup> These ideas are based on the particular understanding that history neither can, nor should, aspire to be perfectly objective, something that largely follows the theories of Richard J. Praxton. Praxton has argued that both historians and the authors of history books actively pass on their own values, whether consciously or subconsciously.<sup>4</sup> I believe that this, obviously, must also apply to history teachers. When the past is researched, writers have a considerable influence on the account that is written, since they not only choose the themes, but also the raw materials and the means of analyzing the themes in question. It is in this context that writers of history and historians adopt what Praxton calls a “narrative voice.” Some authors do this consciously thus making them actively involved in passing on the information at hand.<sup>5</sup> I would like to add that the

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2 Keith C. Barton and Linda S. Levstik, *Teaching History for the Common Good* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 28–40; Jaap Schuitema, *Talking about Values: A Dialogic Approach to Citizenship Education as an Integral Part of History Classes* (Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2008); and <http://dare.uva.nl>

3 Related views can be found in Ronald W. Evans, “Educational Ideologies and the Teaching of History” in *Teaching and Learning in History*, eds. Gaea Leinhardt, Isabel L. Beck and Catherine Stainton (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1994), 172.

4 Richard J. Praxton, “A Deafening Silence: History Textbooks and the Students Who Read Them,” *Review of Educational Research* 69, no. 3 (1999).

5 Praxton, “A Deafening Silence: History Textbooks and the Students Who Read Them,” 318–319.

**narrative voice** of the storyteller is always going to be present, whether this is the stated intention of the author or not.

By this I do not mean to imply that historians have a tendency to claim personal views on history randomly. Historical knowledge will certainly always be bound by the paradigms of the field, based on a consensus of what constitutes good scientific practice. The use of resources, the analysis of results and logical discussion are bound to be subject to scrutiny by the scientific society. Even though historians are guided by the rules and procedures of their profession, the concept of objectivity may cause some problems since it suggests that there may be some true objective reality that does not involve the researcher, which historians should aim to describe as accurately and in as much detail as possible. Such a view could be called “naive realism.” In this context, it may be more appropriate to use other criteria, like the interpretation of resources, criticism, fairness, open-mindedness, historical understanding and the importance of the subject area.<sup>6</sup> Without delving too deeply into historical theory, this view entails the idea that historical truth is neither denied nor expected.<sup>7</sup> I believe that all of this also applies to the history teacher. He or she cannot help having a view on the subject that is to be taught and the material that is to be interpreted and used to convey the subject to the class (including original resources, pictures, films, documentaries, literature, projects and other raw material). Beside this history teachers are *expected* to pass on certain values in history lessons, something that is not normally considered to be one of the roles of history as an academic discipline.

One common misunderstanding is that history lessons should center only on the conveying of historical facts to children or adolescents in a way that is suited to their level of maturity. On closer inspection, it appears that the role of history classes is in fact quite different. From its inception, school history has been expected to play an important role in social integration, something that has long been one of the key educational goals for many nations. Central to this is the passing on of common values, values that are defined by a cultural and historical past. The role and nature of history education has been debated alongside the discussion of the role and nature of academic history over the course of time.

In recent years, discussions about the concept of historical awareness have been given more weight, in line with the increasing emphasis on the identity and

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6 Klas-Göran Karlsson, “Historiedidaktikens teori,” in *Historien är nu: En introduktion till historiedidaktiken*, ed. Klas-Göran Karlsson and Ulf Zander (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2004), 41–43.

7 See the discussion on the influence of Foucault on knowledge sciences in history in Jason Nicholls, “Beyond the National and the Transnational,” *What Shall We Tell the Children*, eds. Stuart J. Foster and Keith A. Crawford (Connecticut: Information Age Publishing, 2006), 92–93.

self-image of both individuals and groups. Questions such as “Who am I and who are we?”, divisions into “us and them,” and questions along the lines of “Where do I come from and where am I going?” are all discussed within the field of history. Such discussions are expected to aid students when they are faced with the fundamental questions of existence that give meaning to life, as well as to help them with deciding what to remember and what to forget. The ultimate aim seems to be to help students find direction within existence.<sup>8</sup>

## Values: Agreement, Diversity and Constant Change

Over the past few years, a great deal has been written about values with regard to upbringing and education in the Nordic countries and particularly in Iceland. Sigrún Aðalbjarnardóttir has pointed out how important it is to decide what the life values of our society are, which values are universal and which are relative.<sup>9</sup> In the article, “The Land Should be Built on Values – The Basic Values of the School,” Gunnar E. Finnbogason discusses how important it is to describe how values, goals and school activities are connected. According to him, these connections are far from obvious. The article goes on to examine the Icelandic primary school curriculum, and traces the discussion that has been going on in Sweden during the past two decades. Curricula can be expected to reflect the social ideologies of the time at which they are composed. They are expected to set the course in such matters, and one would expect them to outline the basic values that should be passed on to students. Finnbogason states that the connection between basic values, goals and school activities is not so clear in the curricula, but feels that many different values are mentioned.<sup>10</sup> In another article, “Gildi og skynsemi” (Values and Reason), Ólafur Páll Jónsson poses the questions, “Which values are the most basic values?” and “Which values are the most obvious in school activities today?”<sup>11</sup> He believes there is no single correct answer to either of these questions. Gunnar J. Gunnarsson nonetheless argues that humanity is the most basic value of all,<sup>12</sup> and Hanna Ragnarsdóttir states that the key values are human rights, respect and diversity.<sup>13</sup> One feature that all

8 Karlsson, “Historiedidaktikens teori,” 47–52.

9 Sigrún Aðalbjarnardóttir, “Lífsgildi,” in *Rannsóknir í félagsvísindum VII*, ed. Úlfar Hauksson (Reykjavík: Félagsvísindastofun Háskóla Íslands, 2006), 779–787.

10 Gunnar E. Finnbogason, “Með gildum skal land byggja – gildagrúnnur skólans,” *Uppeldi og menntun* 13, no. 2 (2004).

11 Ólafur Páll Jónsson, “Gildi og skynsemi,” *Uppeldi og menntun* 16, no. 1 (2007).

12 Gunnar J. Gunnarsson, “Hver eru grunngildin í skólastarfi í dag?” *Uppeldi og menntun* 16, no. 1 (2007).

13 Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, “Grunngildi skólastarfs í fjölmenningsfélagi,” *Uppeldi og menntun* 16, no. 1 (2007).

of these authors have in common is a response to increased globalization, increased cultural diversity, cultural conflict, and relativism, which many claim is a symptom of post-modernity. It seems to be hard to come to any agreement about exactly which values lie at the heart of society.

Besides this lack of consensus in the academic world, curricula cannot ensure that the values they specify will actually be passed on in the classroom. Curricula are not always organized in a way that enables teachers and textbook writers to use them as a detailed guide. Furthermore, values are conveyed in particular situations and it is largely up to the teachers themselves to decide which values they wish to emphasize in their classes. Ólafur Páll Jónsson claims that in order to find out which values are being conveyed it is necessary to ask the teachers themselves.<sup>14</sup> In the survey presented in this section of the book we did ask the teachers.

Most people will agree that each generation needs to write its own version of history as the times in which the historian lives will affect his view of the past. The same can be said of educational material and the focus of history education. The same moments in time and the same unfolding of events will be viewed differently at different times, based on the ideas and values that are held in esteem at any given time. It is unlikely that internationalism was given much weight during the time of patriotism and imperialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries or in Nazi Germany. The same could probably be said of tolerance and equality. On the other hand, in our part of the world these values are precisely those that are emphasized when imperialism or Nazi Germany are being discussed.

When the curricula for history teaching are examined with regard to values, it becomes evident that they too are diverse and ambiguous. In history textbooks, we sometimes find opposing values being emphasized in different chapters of the same book. One example of such is the discussion of the Reformation in Icelandic textbooks. On one hand, the main focus is on the conflict between the Danish Crown and the Icelandic people, in which the last Catholic bishop is remembered as a national hero who stands up to the Danish monarchy. On the other hand, when discussing the Reformation in Europe, the corruption of the Catholic Church seems to be given more weight. Although more recent textbooks do not do this as obviously as those that preceded them, the same pattern can still be found to some degree.<sup>15</sup>

Complete agreement on values is seldom found but the degree of diversity

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14 Ólafur Páll Jónsson, "Gildi og skynsemi," 95–102.

15 Gunnar Karlsson et al., *Uppruni nútímans* (Reykjavík: Edda, 2004), 179–191, and Árni Hermannsson et al., *Íslands- og mannkynssaga NB 1* (Reykjavík: Nýja bókafélagið, 2000), 173–180.

varies by situation. The United States is an example of a country where complex ethnic situations are evident within different groups such as the Native Americans and Americans of African and European origin.<sup>16</sup> Another example is the conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, which leads to difficulties for the Northern Irish to agree on which basic values to convey in history classes. Further examples include Spaniards who have to deal with the heritage of the Spanish Civil War, the Germans facing the Second World War, and the Chileans who are currently coming to terms with the rule of Pinochet, and so forth. Compared with the aforementioned countries, the Nordic countries, including Iceland, have quite similar values. Nevertheless, there are several controversial issues in Icelandic history. For example, one may speculate on how the question of the presence of the American army in Iceland is reported in textbooks and history classes. This was a very heated issue that divided the country and caused disputes that continued for half a century. It is still a heated matter for many. The values that crystallize within this argument are diverse: patriotism versus internationality, leftist radicalism and pacifism versus western cooperation with NATO, and finally, those who believed that they were bound to stand guard over the policy of neutrality that was written into the constitution of the republic at the start. This is interesting, considering that one of the more recently defined roles of history teaching in the past few hundred years has been the emphasis on the common cultural heritage of the nation and its inhabitants.

In light of what has been stated above, it is clear that values are being conveyed to students in history classes whether consciously or unconsciously. Although the same situations, same individuals and same ideological phenomena are discussed, they are made to represent different values at different times. An event that is considered negative at one time may be considered in a neutral or a positive light at another. In older Icelandic textbooks, the Danish rule was described in terms of brutal colonial oppression and exploitation. The fight for independence in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries colored this view. More recent textbooks are more likely to describe Denmark as a friendly sister-nation sharing a cultural background with Iceland.

Sometimes educational authorities, institutions and teachers' associations have actively participated in the formation of values in history education. A good example of this is seen in the contributions by the League of Nations in the wake of the peace agreement at Versailles. Educational institutions and teachers' associations were encouraged to cleanse textbooks of prejudice. The aim was to

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16 Yet another example can be found in the article by Derrick P. Alridge, "The Dilemmas, Challenges, and Duality of an African-American Educational Historian," in *Educational Researcher* 32, no. 9 (2003): 25–34. Alridge effectively describes the complicated ethical situations that historians and history teachers have to deal with.

work towards the peaceful cooperation between the nations in Europe, especially among Poland, Germany and France.<sup>17</sup> After the Second World War, UNESCO and The European Council continued this work through a thorough examination of history textbooks. Instructions were put together for writers of textbooks and teachers on how to best report on subjects like war and peace in Europe, colonialism, religion and gender equality. Since 1990, this development has been strengthened and become more institutionalized; the aim is to recreate a European cultural heritage by emphasizing the positive shared past rather than war and conflict. One sign of this is seen in the emphasis placed by the European History Teachers' association (EUROCLIO) on building up what they call a "European historical consciousness." Workshops have been organized by EUROCLIO in order to discuss how controversial issues and figures can be dealt with in teaching European history. Teachers from Spain, Holland, Portugal, Scotland and England met in order to redefine Philip II, and his role in this "positive past of Europe." A decision was made to emphasize his role in art and literature and to downplay the part he played in trying to rebuild Catholicism in Europe.<sup>18</sup>

Several other events have been redefined in similar ways, stressing key values and how they are shaped and reshaped at different moments in time. In the aftermath of the Second World War, patriotism was an obvious problem not only in history classes but in historical research as well. As Stuurman and Grever state in the prologue of their book, *Beyond the Canon: History for the Twenty-First Century*: "Over the past decades many politicians and pundits have blamed new trends in historical research and teaching for the weakening of national identity in the Western world."<sup>19</sup> This statement is somewhat typical of the present discussion. It has been answered by reference to the fact that the key concepts at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> have been globalization, migration and cultural diversity.<sup>20</sup> Historical subjects related to these concepts are seen as more relevant and more urgent in the present day than those connected to the strengthening of national identity. In our part of the world the growth of the European Union is in opposition to the concept of nationalism. Greater emphasis on gender equality, the roles of different minority groups and increasing diversity mean there is even less room for nationalistic views which

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17 Yasemin Soysal, "The Construction of European Identity 1945-Present," in *What Shall We Tell the Children*, eds. Stuart J. Foster and Keith A. Crawford (Conneticut: Information Age Publishing, 2006), 118.

18 Yasemin Soysal, "The Construction of European Identity 1945-Present," 118.

19 Sieb Stuurman and Maria Grever, "Introduction: Old Canons and New Histories," in *Beyond the Canon: History for the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Sieb Stuurman and Maria Grever (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2007), 1.

20 *Ibid.*, 2.

might be seen as being opposed to such phenomena. Teachers work in the present, and wrestle with the modern-day reality. Their textbooks, however, are usually older, and therefore it is likely that the ideal teaching material will not always be readily available for them.

Teachers play a key role in terms of passing on values to students and that is why the survey, which is widely referred to in this volume, was undertaken. Teachers were asked to rate particular values in history educational materials in general, they were then to evaluate material used in their own history classes in the light of these same values.

## A Survey of Values in History Teaching

In the survey described here, the emphasis is placed on values in history teaching. A decision was taken to ask teachers about their positions on five key values in history teaching, i. e. internationalism, tolerance, equality, national identity and environmental awareness. These values were chosen because they are at the forefront of social discussion. They are not necessarily related, nor are they in opposition to each other. Teachers were asked to place them in order of importance. They therefore did not have to choose between them, only place them in order.

*Internationalism* was chosen because issues related to this value have been at the forefront of discussions in the past decades. Globalization may also be mentioned in this context, and both the positive and negative effects that it has had on the economic systems in the world, as with the movement of various kinds of production to the Third World, where producers find cheap workers. The growth and development of the European Union has also opened questions about the sovereignty of nations. Also under discussion here is the role of global institutions in the world politics of today, as with America's invasion of Iraq.

*Tolerance* has been highly discussed in recent years in relation to migration and the increased diversity of modern society. Growing numbers of immigrants, and conflict between religious groups calls for discussion about the importance of respecting the customs and traditions of other cultural groups.

*Equality* is a concept that touches on many different areas of discussion, not only with regard to gender equality, but also economic equality, equality between nations and diverse ethnic groups, equality between "natives" and immigrants and so forth. The concept of equality was not explained any further in this survey (nor were the other terms) and could thus apply to equality in its different roles.

is a concept that can be related to phenomena such as nationalism, racism, patriotism, cultural heritage and self-image. Most people want to support national heritage and this is something that national educational curricula also stress should be passed on. On the other hand, nationalism has a negative feeling about it. It is interesting to see what Nordic teachers feel about national consciousness. How have the changing emphases in history teaching from nationalism to multiculturalism affected the transmission of values?

Last but not least, teachers were asked about *environmental awareness*, which is obviously a central topic of discussion in society at present due to the discussion about global warming and the greenhouse effect. This discussion has grown steadily over the past decades. To what extent do teachers and others who pass on history to students believe that it is important to bear environmental issues in mind?

Those values that have been asked about are certainly not the only ones available, but they are all values that have been under discussion recently, and are thus inevitably bound to be referred to, directly or indirectly, as part of any discussion of the past.

## Methodology and Materials

The original questionnaire was comprised of 21 questions but the present article will concentrate on only four of these (questions 7, 12, 13 and 20). Participants were asked to put the answers in order of importance on a scale of 1–5, where 1 means most important and 5 means least important. It was also possible to give the answer “Not Applicable”. When the values are discussed, the two top values will often be discussed together. There are certain disadvantages with putting forward results in this fashion, but it is done here as a means of simplifying the presentation of the data and of emphasizing patterns and trends for further discussion. The results will be analyzed with regard to intrinsic connections and points of comparison, an effort being made to identify trends and differences between countries, genders and age groups.

## Results from the Survey: Values in Textbooks

Question 7 is an introductory question to the issue. There the teachers were asked to put five predefined roles of history teaching in order of importance: Providing historical overview; Encouraging independent thinking; Defining

and strengthening student identity; Offering insight into the theory and principles of history; and Conveying values)

The results show that values are seen as being least important on the basis of these five answer possibilities. Only 7.4% of the participants considered conveying values of top importance and 10% put them in second place, which means that 17.4% chose to place the values in the top two seats. This would suggest that when considered on the whole they are believed to be less important than other aspects of history teaching, but that does not mean that they are not seen as being important. When all options are considered, and the top two seats are counted, the two factors that are seen as having most importance are historical overview (67.1%) and independent thinking (65.2%). The following three options were given much less weight: strengthening student identity (24.2%); offering insight into the theory and principles of history (24.1%); and finally, conveying values (17.4%). It appears that the final three options are considered as having similar value, that is, conveying values is only a little lower than the other ones. One may, of course, also ask whether the strengthening of student identity and the encouragement of independent thinking do not also involve the conveyance of values.

Question 12, where teachers were asked to analyze what values, addresses this explicitly based on five options for what they believe to be the most important to pass on by means of educational material. In question 20, teachers were asked to rate specific educational material in order of importance, using the same five options. In question 13, teachers were asked what they did if they were unhappy with the presentation of certain material in the textbooks they were using. The hypothesis underlying this discussion is that teachers are active parties and more functional in their attitude to certain values than it might appear at the start, and even more so when the values are precisely defined in this way. I will try to approach the question of values in two ways, first by noting the inner correspondences that can be seen when questions are asked about values in general and then with regard to particular values; and second, by noting correspondences with regard to answers to different questions.

The answers to questions 12 and 20 will be examined next. Here teachers were asked to rate values in order of importance. When the values are broken up into specifically defined values, very few participants actually choose the possible answer “not applicable” (from 1 – 4%; which was generally fewer than the 4.4% who thought that values in general were not applicable).

When age is considered, it appears that older teachers place more emphasis on values than younger teachers, except for the very youngest group. Of the oldest teachers (born before 1953) 11% put values in the first place, but only 4% of the next to youngest group of teachers (born 1963 – 1972). As noted above, this alters again when the youngest teachers' scores are examined. Of them, a total of

8% put values in first place. If we combine those who rated values in the first and second places, the same trend emerges: the biggest difference is found between the oldest and the next to youngest group of teachers. It would be interesting to delve deeper into the question of what explains this difference, but this is another research question altogether.

It is also possible to see a slight gender difference with regard to the importance of values. It is more common for male teachers to place the values in first place (8.9%), in comparison to women (5.8%). This difference remains when the first and second positions are combined: 19% of men and 16.8% of women put values in the first two places. This gender difference is nonetheless not significant and not as large as the difference between age groups.

It is also interesting to consider how teachers answered question 12: "What values should be most important when conveying material in textbooks?" The following options were given: "internationalism," "tolerance," "equality," "national identity" and finally, "environmental awareness." Tolerance comes in at the top with 47.4% of participants putting it in first place, and 65.2% putting it in the first or second place. Next is internationalism, which 19.6% of respondents put in first place, and with 39.2% putting it in first or second place. In third position was national identity, 14.5% put it in first place, and 26.1% in first or second place. In fourth place was equality, which was put in first place by 9.3% and 40.8% put it in either the first or second spot. It is notable that many people put equality in second place (31.5%), meaning that it is on the same level as tolerance when first and second places were considered together. Environmental awareness came in at the bottom, which only 5.9% of the participants put in first place, and 22.5% in first or second place.

Table: Question 12. Percentage of values placed in first place and either first or second place

	First place	First or second place
Tolerance	47.4%	65.2%
Internationalism	19.6%	39.2%
National identity	14.5%	26.1%
Equality	9.3%	40.8%
Environmental awareness	5.9%	22.5%

The figure below (Figure 1) compares question 12 ("What values are most important for teaching materials to convey?") to question 20 ("What values does the textbook emphasize?"). The former question asks what values teachers would like to see in their textbooks, whereas the second question asks about which values are actually found in the textbooks they are currently using or have experience in using. The table shows the order in which the teachers placed these

values in the first or second place in both questions. In some regards, the teaching material fulfills the wishes of the teachers, but in some cases there is a clear discrepancy between the desires of the teachers and the reality of the textbooks.

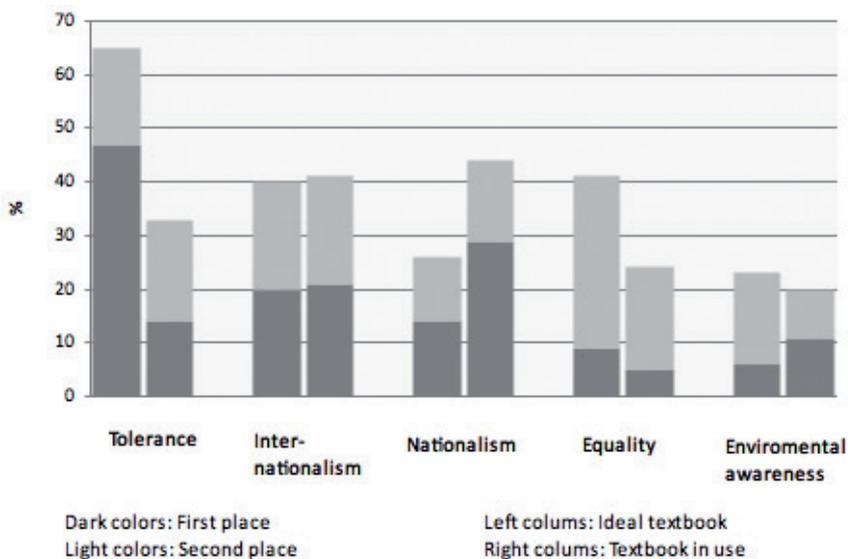


Figure 1: Percentage of values placed in first or second place. A comparison of answers for question 12 and question 20.

Certain trends are visible in this table. Tolerance is clearly the value that is rated highest, coming out much higher than all the other factors. It is here that we see the biggest difference between what teachers believe should be found in textbooks (left column), and what is actually found (right column). There is also a large discrepancy regarding the value of equality, with 40% placing it in either first or second place (most mark it as second place) in terms of the importance they feel it should have, while much fewer say it is actually found in textbooks. There is also a discrepancy with regard to the value of national identity, but here the trend is in the other direction – 26% of participants put it in first or second place. Many more, however, feel that it is given special importance in textbooks. The importance placed on internationalism and environmental awareness in textbooks seems to meet the demands that teachers place on these values. It is interesting to note, though, how low in importance environmental awareness seems to be, both from the viewpoint of the teachers and in the textbooks.

In the introduction of this article, it was argued that the history teacher and the historian are always placed in time and space, in other words, that he or she is always a part of a society that is in a state of constant change. Bearing this in mind, it is of interest to examine whether there is any national difference bet-

ween the figures. It is certainly interesting that Danish teachers score differently on a number of factors (see Figure 2). Firstly, they place more emphasis on internationalism, 59 % putting internationalism in first place, and 76 % in either first or second place. By comparison only 42 – 45 % of Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish teachers put internationalism in the first or second place. Only 32 % of Finnish Swedes put it in either first or second place. The Icelanders were completely different, with only 8 % of Icelandic teachers putting internationalism in first place and 23 % putting it either in first or second place. This issue will now be considered in more detail.

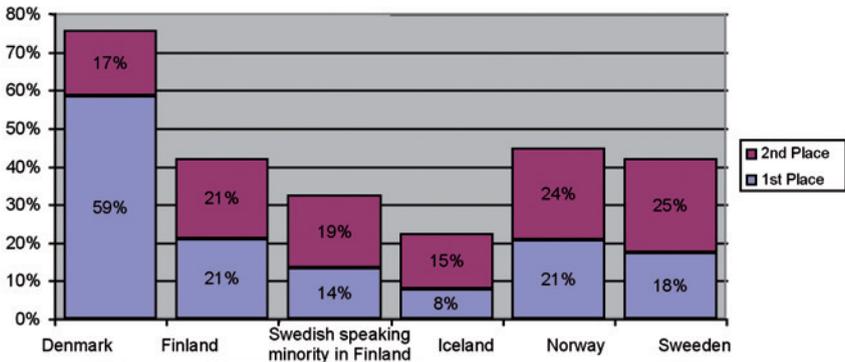


Figure 2: The value of internationalism by nationality

The Danes are also different when it comes to views on tolerance, which was ranked in the top two positions by all the other Nordic countries (see Figure 3). Between 47% and 58% of participants from the other Nordic countries put tolerance in first place, but only 22% of Danes. However, if both the first and second seats are considered together, the Danes come in second place.

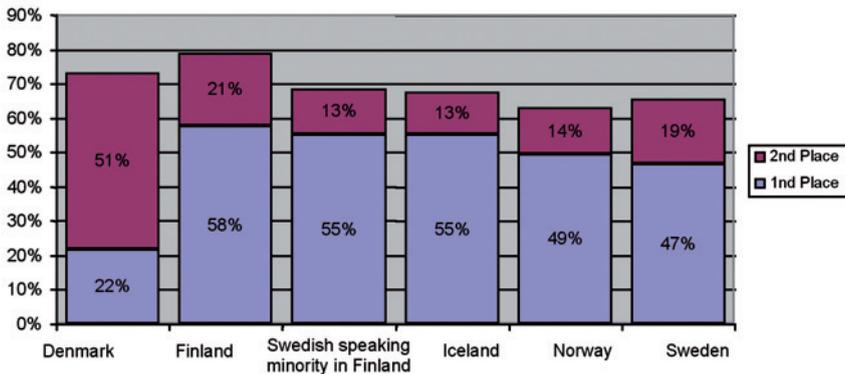


Figure 3: The value of tolerance by nationality

The Danes also seem to be different when it comes to their valuation of equality (see Figure 4). All the other Nordic countries put equality second to tolerance when the figures for first and second places are put together, yet no Dane put equality in first place and only 10 % put it in second place. Even though few of the other countries put equality in first place, the percentage reaches 34 – 58 % when first and second places are considered together except for the Norwegians place it in the middle. This suggests that the other Nordic nations believe that equality is important, even though it is not given top priority. Why Danes are so different compared to the other Nordic countries is a question of its own that would make an interesting research project. As regards *gender* equality, researchers have noted that the situation in Denmark is colored by a certain skepticism; people seem very wary about the discussion of gender equality, which is thought to challenge the democratic liberal traditions of the country.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, in the European values study Denmark scored lowest when they were asked about the importance of leveling out the income differences.<sup>22</sup>

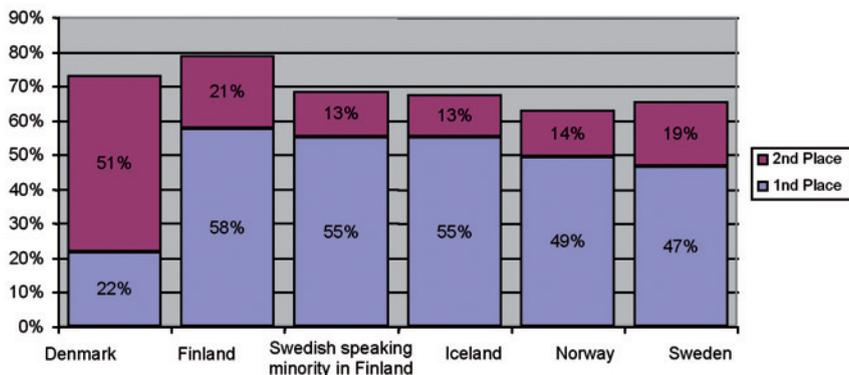


Figure 4: The value of equality by nationality

When national identity is considered (Figure 5), it appears that Icelanders place more importance on this than their Nordic counterparts, 33 % of them putting it in first or second place. As mentioned earlier, the Icelanders place the least emphasis on internationalism. However, in general terms, the Icelanders are not really much different from the other countries. The Finnish teachers rated national identity lowest, only 17 % of them placing it in first and second places. The

21 N. Lykke, "Intersektionalitet—ett Användbart Begrepp för Genusforskningen," *Kvinnvetenskaplig Tidskrift* 1 (2003): 47–55.

22 Torben Fridberg, "Velfærdsstaten," in *Danskernes særpræg*, ed. Peter Gundelach (Köbenhavn: Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2004), 120–121.

other countries came somewhere in between, with a near equal distribution between first and second places.

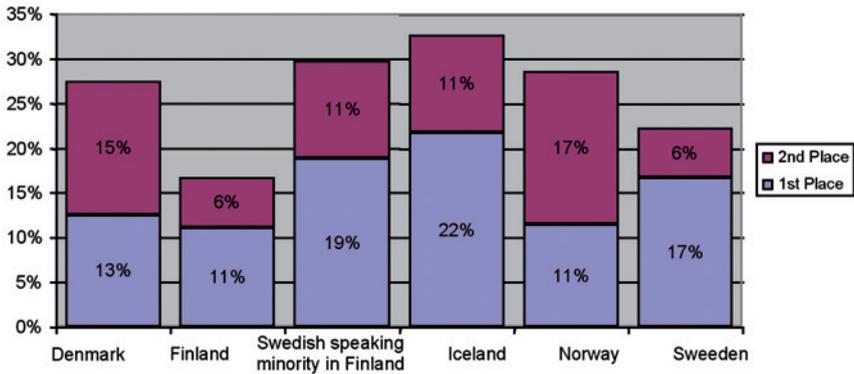


Figure 5: The value of national identity by nationality

When it comes to environmental issues (see Figure 6), the Icelanders are almost equal to the Norwegian teachers, placing this value higher than the other nationalities do: 29 – 30% put environmental awareness in either first or second place. None of the Finns put environmental issues at the top of the list and only 11% putting it in second place. The other countries come somewhere between, the main difference lying in how many put environmental issues in second place. This trend is similar to that concerning equality. Something that might explain the Icelandic emphasis on environmental issues is the high degree of discussion that has been taking place in Iceland in the past 8–10 years about the construction of a large dam in the eastern part of the country. So the results may not necessarily show an overall higher degree of environmental awareness.

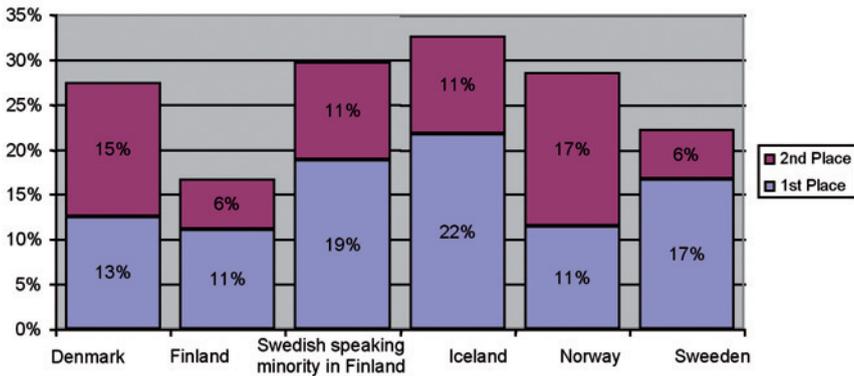


Figure 6: The value of environmental issues by nationality

Question 13 is as follows: “What do you do if you are dissatisfied with how a topic or issue is dealt with in the textbook you are using?” The possible answers were: “Follow the textbook nevertheless;” “Omit the topic;” “Use other material in place of or along with the textbook;” “Openly criticize the material;” and finally, “Discuss the presentation of the material with your students.”

The results (see Figure 7) show that the majority of participants (76%) use different teaching materials when they are not satisfied with the way in which a particular subject is dealt with in the regular textbook. Certainly, most participants also discuss how the regular textbook deals with the subject, but a majority put “Use other material in place of or along with the textbook” in first place. A minority of the teachers questioned (only 22%) follows the textbook even though they do not like the way in which the subject is approached in the book. If the options are drawn together to form two groups (active and passive responses), one might classify the first two options (“Follow the textbook nevertheless” and “Omit the topic”) as passive responses, and classify the last three options (“Use other material in place of or along with the textbook;” “Openly criticize the material;” and “Discuss the presentation of the material with your students”) as active responses. From this viewpoint, most participants would be classified as actively participating in shaping the material used to teach history lessons.

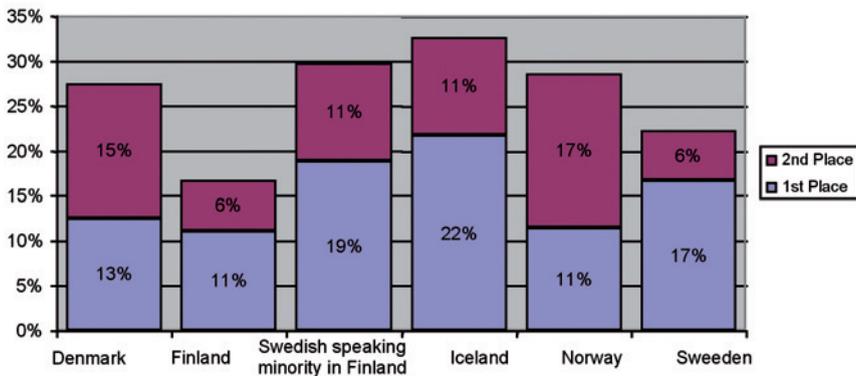


Figure 7: What do you do if you are not happy with a subject in the current textbook?

## Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to show that values are necessarily involved in the teaching and research of history. History instruction deals with the meaningful world of humankind and is, in essence, an existential battle with the questions: Who am I and who are we; who are “the others,” where do we come from and where are we going? Usually, academic history has no declared political goal, but

rather is bound by the views of contemporary scholars about what makes good history. Nonetheless, every historian is situated in his or her own existence, and values inevitably accompany him or her. History lessons are somewhat different in that history teachers are actually *expected* to pass on certain values and guide students through questions of existence, something that will make it more likely that they take up certain values rather than others, in accordance with the educational curriculum. The teaching material and method of teaching chosen by the teacher is therefore key to how well this will be carried out. This is why it is so important to find out how teachers feel about the issue.

When the teachers were asked about the general importance of values compared to other aspects of teaching, they placed values relatively low in importance in comparison to the other named options that could be expected to be found in the ideal textbook. When the question on values is phrased in more detail, however, it becomes clear that teachers differentiate between the importance of different values. They are also both aware of and active with regard to their attitudes on values. The above discussion aimed at shedding light on these issues. The discrepancy between the ideal situation and reality also provides us with important information about how actively aware teachers are of the teaching materials they use for their job (questions 12 and 20).

The national differences between the answers given by teachers emphasize further still how the situational context seems to influence views with regard to different values. As has been shown, Danish teachers seem to differ from the other participants when it comes to the importance placed on the value of equality. Here they score lower than the participants from the other Nordic countries. As for tolerance, they also score lowest with placing it as a first choice, although a good number place it as a second choice. Also noteworthy was that the Icelanders and Norwegians scored higher with regard to the importance they placed on environmental issues than teachers in the other Nordic countries. Furthermore, the Icelanders scored highest with regard to national identity, but lowest when it came to internationalism.

The answers to question 13 show that teachers are both aware and active when working with teaching material that they feel is not adequate. The results suggest that teachers themselves consciously review the teaching material, making the final decision with regard to what values are actually taught in the classroom, as Ólafur Páll Jónsson has suggested. It is obvious that more research needs to be carried out with regard to what values are being passed on and how. Questions are also raised here about whether there is a need for the discussion of values to be brought into the open, not only for the purpose of discussion, but also to improve the awareness of both history teachers and textbook authors with regard to this field.

Finally, one might also raise questions about the group of teachers who

answered the questionnaire. Were they simply the most aware and active teachers (cf. the discussion above regarding teaching methods)? One might raise methodological questions concerning the value of the source materials (which are discussed elsewhere), and the degree to which it is possible to make generalized statements about Nordic teachers as a whole on the basis of such materials. Nevertheless, the data does suggest that history teachers are very active in light of their views about the transmission of values and the content of the teaching materials that they use. In this discussion, I have presented certain trends about the passing on of values in history instruction. It is my hope that this discussion has created a firm foundation for further analysis and research within this field.

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Tom Gullberg

## **Facts, Functions and Narratives in History Teaching in Finland: Attitudes Towards History as Reflected in the Use of Textbooks**

The purpose of this article is to mirror attitudes towards history in Finland with regard to the use of textbooks in history teaching. The perspective of the study is didactical, focusing mainly on history teaching in schools. The focus is on history teachers' attitudes towards history, or more accurately, towards history as a school subject. This could be seen as a quite narrow field of research, but we must remember that almost everyone's understanding of history is influenced by a single history teacher. This, at least, is the case in Finland, where history as a subject holds a very strong position in the educational system.

The attitudes towards history among teachers are certainly influenced by several different factors. One of these factors is related to the formal education of teachers. It seems obvious as well that their attitudes towards history are expressed in their lessons. It is, after all, the teacher who does all the necessary planning for his or her teaching strategy during the lesson.

One way of looking into the teachers' attitudes towards history is to focus on their use of textbooks and other types of teaching aids. What kind of historical knowledge seems to be important for the teachers to teach? My basic presumption is that the teachers' attitudes toward history is mirrored in their use of textbooks, as well as in the assortment of books and other teaching materials that they use.

In this article we will look at not only the general attitude towards history among history teachers in Finland, but also whether a "grand narrative" characterizes Finnish history teaching.<sup>1</sup> History teaching in Europe has traditionally been characterized by the national (or nationalistic) narrative, and the nation state still tends to be a central context both in history teaching and

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1 My understanding of historical narratives is based primarily on Jörn Rüsen, "Historische Sinnbildung durch Erzählen – Ideen zum narrativistischen Paradigma der Geschichtswissenschaft und der Geschichtsdidaktik (Im Blick auf nicht-narrative Faktoren)," *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 18 (1996): 501 – 544.

research.<sup>2</sup> One interesting turning point in Finnish history teaching was in 1994, when the compulsory teaching of the historical era before 1809 – the period when Finland was a part of Sweden – was abolished in the upper secondary schools. It was then decided that the history of Finland should be understood from the perspective of dramatic events during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Representatives for the Swedish-speaking minority – Swedish is the second national language according to the Finnish constitution – asked if the new direction of school history was a sign of a more Finnish-national perspective of the national history. Since 2006, Finnish history before 1809 has a better position again in Finnish curricula, but the question of the national Finnish narrative is still currently of interest in the debate about Finnish history and Finnish history teaching.

My goal for this article is to interpret teachers' attitudes with regards to history in relation to the terms "fact", "function" and "narrative." These three terms are very well suited for a historical, didactical interpretation of textbook usage in schools:

- 1) The concept of "historical fact" is related to the dimension of historical subject competence. When the mediation of facts is emphasized in the use of textbooks, or when historical overview is said to be the primary goal for using textbooks, it is reasonable to presume that teachers mean that teaching historical details is the best way to achieve historical understanding. In this article I use the term "subject competence" to describe this fact-oriented category of historical knowledge.<sup>3</sup>
- 2) The concept of "historical function" is related to the skills dimension of historical knowledge. With the use of textbooks and other teaching aids, the teacher is emphasizing skills such as "critical thinking," "empathetic thinking" and "causality thinking." The basic aspect of functional thinking in terms of historical skills is that the form of historical knowledge could contribute towards important competencies for everyday skills.
- 3) The concept of "narrative" has several dimensions, but in this article the primary meaning is the concept that history can be explained as narratives (stories), i. e. as a linear story of progress.<sup>4</sup> Marko van den Berg has recently shown that younger Finnish student teachers actually seem to interpret hi-

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2 Marc Ferro, *The Use and Abuse of History* (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2003 (1984)), x and 356 ff.

3 This use of concepts was inspired by Andreas Körber, Waltraud Schreiber & Alexander Schöner, eds., *Kompetenzen Historisches Denken. Ein Strukturmodell als Beitrag zur Kompetenz-Orientierung in der Geschichtsdidaktik* (Neuried: Ars Una, 2006).

4 Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (Free Press: London, 1992), is a classical example of a western narrative of a progress. Also see the articles in Jörn Rüsen, ed., *Westliches Geschichtsdenken. Eine interkulturelle Debatte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999).

story as a modern story of progress, a meta-story of modernity.<sup>5</sup> The concept of progressive stories of the nation is another perspective, which is often connected to history teaching. This means that the teaching is focused on the mythical and heroic genesis of the “own” nation, and that the main part of teaching focuses on the liberation process, and potentially, on achieved sovereignty. In her study of the historical consciousness of young people in Finland, Sirkka Ahonen shows that youth mostly seem to interpret Finland as the “fighting nation,” an oppressed nation that throughout history has had to stand up against several oppressors.<sup>6</sup> Narrativity tends to be closely connected with the identity dimension of history teaching, but narrativity could also be seen as a methodological choice, with the purpose of achieving historical skills like empathy and historical experience.

The purpose of this article is to interpret the history teachers’ attitudes towards history, as reflected in their use of textbooks in history. The use of textbooks is researched in part through a Nordic web inquiry, and in part by classroom observations. I have drawn some conclusions about attitudes among history among history teachers in Finland from the answers to the web inquiry as well as from observations done by history teaching students. Due to the Nordic web inquiry, the survey even has a comparative dimension within a Nordic context.

## Methods, Sources and Strategies for the Survey

The purpose of this article is, as mentioned, to interpret history teachers’ attitudes towards history, as reflected in their use of history textbooks. The use of textbooks is partly researched by a web survey, “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Internet Survey” and partly through classroom observations.

The web survey was carried out as part of a Nordic cooperation, and the results were preliminarily presented at the Nordic Historical Conference in Reykjavik in August 2007. This Nordic cooperation offered the chance to com-

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5 Marko van den Berg, *Yksi historia monimutkistuvassa maailmassa. Historian olemus ja historian suuret kertomukset luokanopettajaopiskelioiden historiatietoisuudessa* [One History in a Pluralistic World. The Essence of History and the Big Meta-Narratives of History in the Historical Consciousness Among Student Teachers] (Helsinki: Helsingin yliopisto (Historiallis-yhteiskuntatiedollisen kasvatuksen tutkimus- ja kehittämiskeskuksen tutkimuksia 9), 2007).

6 Sirkka Ahonen, *Historiaton sukupolvi? Historian vastaanotto ja historiallisen identiteetin rakentuminen 1990-luvun nuorison keskuudessa* (Helsinki: Suomen Historiallinen Seura, 1998), 19.

pare the attitudes towards history among Finnish teachers to those of teachers in the other Nordic countries. Furthermore, the web survey notes the difference between Finnish teachers teaching in Finnish and in Swedish, i. e. both national languages, which offers the possibility to analyze the attitudes of history for the both language groups separately.<sup>7</sup>

I have limited my analyses of the results of the quite extensive web survey to five separate themes:

- 1) What do teachers say about the purpose of their textbook usage?
- 2) What is, according to the teachers, the most important content in a textbook?
- 3) Is it, according to the teachers, possible to develop the students' sense of identity by using textbooks?
- 4) Is it, according to the teachers, important to give the students insight into the science of history by using textbooks?
- 5) How important is it, according to the teachers, to convey values in textbooks?

The results of the web survey are completed with field observations, which were executed by history teacher trainees during the spring term of 2007. The purpose of the field observation was to get a picture of how textbooks and other teaching material are used in real situations in schools. A standardized observation sheet was constructed for the project.<sup>8</sup> The observations were carried out by Swedish-speaking history teacher trainees at Åbo Akademi University in Vasa – which is a university that teaches only in Swedish – and by Finnish-speaking history student-teachers at Turku University and Helsinki University. All the observations were executed in the training schools of the three universities. The students reported different kinds of difficulties during their field observation period – it was not an easy task for the students – but they did return 36 sheets: 9 for Åbo, 7 for Helsinki, and 20 for Turku.

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7 Since the first constitution in 1919 of the newborn Finnish sovereign nation-state, the state has had two official national languages, Finnish and Swedish. Swedish is spoken as mother tongue by approximately 6 percent of the population (about 300,000 people). Both language groups have their own distinct independent school systems, at least when it comes to school cultures, although the curricula and school laws are shared by both language groups. It is compulsory for every student to study the other national language in school, which should guarantee some kind of functional bilingualism. Fluency in both languages is required for work in state service, and also in officially bilingual municipalities (official bilingualism is reached when the minority language is spoken by 8% of the population, or has reached a number of 3000 persons). For a contemporary overview, see Kaj Sjöholm, "Swedish, Finnish, English? Finland's Swedes in a Changing World," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 36, no. 6 (2004): 637–644; and Sven-Erik Hansén, "The Swedish 'People's School' in Finland and the Language Question: Homogenization and Differentiation," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 36, no. 6 (2004): 645–655.

8 The inquiry "Classroom Observation of the Use of History Textbooks" was developed on the basis of a Norwegian model by Dagrun Skjelbred, University College of Tönsberg.

The observation sheet focused on teachers' choices of material and methods, i. e., how the teachers form their strategies for using textbooks and other teaching aids.

Teachers, for example, who read aloud from the textbook with the students and mark important terms and facts, are expected to have a very strong focus on subject competence, while teachers, who use different kinds of complementary material (i. e. pictures, documents, maps), or who use the textbooks by asking questions and by discussing the pictures and maps in the textbook, have a stronger focus on skills-competencies. Those teachers who often integrate drama and role-playing, or story writing, in their use of textbooks, seem to have a more narrative consciousness of history teaching.

## Didactical Perspectives and History Teaching in Finland

The goal of separating facts and skills in history teaching is a very common trend in history didactics. A formal turning point for this approach was the progress of the British "New History" school of thought, which concentrated on functional thinking more than earlier theories of history teaching did.

The didactical aspects of "New History" were related to the long debate on the abstract character of history as a subject. Those who claimed that history was too abstract, and "difficult" to be taught to younger people, referred to Jean Piaget's theories of abstract thinking. According to Piaget's theory, historical abstract thinking was not sufficiently developed until the age of 16–17. Those who criticized the Piagetian standpoint claimed that historical thinking was possible to train among younger pupils by introducing more concrete skills-training activities.<sup>9</sup>

The anti-Piagetian didactical argument was suitable in the debate of education policy.

Spokesmen for the subject of history raised arguments for history education that was more relevant from an "ordinary life" perspective. They toned down fact-oriented history teaching, and pointed out methods and perspectives that could prepare younger pupils for skills that they would need in their everyday-life (i. e. critical thinking). These arguments were successful, and after twenty years of New History-thinking, the field of historical didactics has developed many skills-oriented methods.<sup>10</sup>

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9 See Sirkka Ahonen, *The Form of Historical Knowledge and the Adolescent Conceptions of It* (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino, 1990).

10 On "New History," see for example Chris Husbands, Alison Kitson & Anna Pendry, *Understanding History Teaching. Teaching and Learning about the Past in Secondary Schools* (New York: Open University Press, 2003).

The development of functional methods has also spread to didactical and curricular thinking in Finland. Since 1994 the curriculum for upper secondary schools has been more thematic and skills-oriented, and the traditional fact-oriented history of events has been toned down (though certainly not removed). Historical thinking related to skills, has been stressed even more in the new 2003-curriculum. The tasks in the national tests have also been developed in a more functional direction, with a lot of documents and pictures to be analyzed.

The newest curriculum gives quite detailed instructions about how history should be taught.<sup>11</sup> It says that the vision of knowledge should be based on constructivism, which demands a student-active and skills-training approach to teaching. The teacher-centered approach, which has been – or probably still is – the most normal history teaching approach in Finnish schools, should give way to more functionally oriented, and student-centered teaching.<sup>12</sup> In my discussion I assume that student-activating methods are considered to be more functional, while teacher-centered approaches are more oriented to the subject competence dimension of teaching.<sup>13</sup>

## The Web Survey – With Special Focus on Finland

The focus in this article is on history teaching in Finland, but the conclusions are based on an analysis of the results of the entire Nordic web survey. The inquiry resulted in 57 respondents from Finland, 39 of which were teachers who teach in Swedish. The fact that the representatives for the language minority represented a majority of the answers might be considered as a representation problem. On the other hand, the teachers of both language groups are bound to the same curriculum and are in a sense – though not when it comes to school cultures and cultural heritage – related to the same tradition of history teaching and to the same culture of history.

When the Finnish answers are considered as a unit, Finland had the same answer frequency as the other Nordic countries. The Finnish answers constituted 14% of all the respondents to the web survey, the Danish 10.8%, and the

11 The Finnish curricula can be found on the National Board of Education website: <http://www.oph.fi/english/SubPage.asp?path=447,27598>

12 Klas-Göran Karlsson, "Historiedidaktik mellan historievetenskap och skola" [History Didactics Between Science of History and School], in *Historia i nuet* [Present history], ed. Gun Oker-Blom & Mia Sandvik (Helsinki: Utbildningsstyrelsen Helsingfors, 2006), 19.

13 Tom Gullberg, "Historia är intressant – men hur skall historia undervisas?" [History is Interesting – but how Should We Teach it?], *Historia i nuet* [Present History], ed. Gun Oker-Blom & Mia Sandvik (Helsinki: Utbildningsstyrelsen Helsingfors, 2006), 29.

Swedish made up 14.6 % of the total amount of respondents. The most answers came from Norway and Iceland, with slightly over 20 % of the answers each.

The web survey has a structure that made it easy to collect information about methods of using textbooks and other teaching materials. The questions are asked in a way that facilitates an interpretation of the factual, functional, and narrative dimensions of history teaching. The first question of the survey clearly illustrates that the answers could be analyzed by the key concepts of this investigation. The question: "What are the most important roles of teaching materials in your opinion?" had the following possible responses:

- 1) Encouraging independent thinking among students
- 2) Providing a historical overview
- 3) Defining and strengthening student identity
- 4) Offering insight into the theory and principles of history
- 5) Conveying values<sup>14</sup>

The teachers, who preferred the first alternative, seem to stress the functional aspects of historical thinking. The fifth alternative – conveying values – also has a typical functional dimension, as well as the fourth, as far as theories regarding the science of history are concerned. The third alternative, the identity dimension, could be considered a functional approach, but could also be related to the narrative tradition of history teaching, i. e. a national meta-narrative as an important tool for the construction of national identity. On the other hand, teachers, who hold the opinion that the primary function of the textbook is to provide historical overview, could be said to put more weight on historical subject competence, i. e. facts.

When analyzing the information that was gathered by the web survey, I have in general taken note of the teachers' top priority. The most interesting aspect is to note similarities and differences between the Nordic countries and for this purpose the top priority in most cases offers sufficient information. I do, of course, also take the other priorities into consideration, and those priorities are mentioned when they facilitate the drawing of conclusions. In each case I present all of the different priorities in tables.

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14 Web Survey, "History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Internet Survey," Question 7, Appendix 1, this volume.

## A Qualitative Analysis of the Results of the Web Inquiry: the Roles of Textbook Use

### *Textbooks and Independent Thinking*

Teachers who want textbooks with content that provide the opportunity to train students' independent thinking are presumed to have a functional attitude towards history teaching. Based on the answers from the web survey it is difficult to draw an absolute conclusion about the real use of the textbooks in the classrooms, but quite a lot of teachers at least marked a wish to strive for independent thinking.<sup>15</sup>

Table 1: Teachers' opinions on how much textbooks should encourage independent thinking

	Denmark	Finland-Finnish	Finland-Swedish	Norway	Sweden	Iceland	Total
1 <sup>st</sup> Priority	40.9 % (18)	26.3 % (5)	26.3 % (10)	21.9 % (33)	25.4 % (15)	34 % (33)	27.9 (114)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Priority	25.8 % (11)	52.6 % (10)	47.4 % (18)	37.1 % (56)	37.3 % (22)	36.1 (35)	37.3 (152)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Priority	18.2 % (8)	15.8 % (3)	15.8 % (6)	13.9 % (21)	10.2 % (6)	10.3 % (10)	13.2 (54)
4 <sup>th</sup> Priority	9.1 % (4)	0	7.9 % (3)	19.2 % (29)	13.6 % (8)	12.4 % (12)	13.7 (56)
5 <sup>th</sup> Priority	6.8 % (3)	5.3 % (1)	2.6 % (1)	7.9 % (12)	11.9 % (7)	6.2 % (6)	7.4 (30)
Not relevant.	0	0	0	0	1.7 % (1)	1 % (1)	0.5 (2)
Total	100 (44)	100 (19)	100 (38)	100 (151)	100 (59)	100 (97)	100 (408)

Results from the Nordic Web Survey, Question 7, both in relative and absolute numbers

Among the Danish teachers, almost 41 % marked the alternative "encouraging independent thinking" as their first priority. In Finland, 26 % of both the Finnish- as the Swedish-speaking teachers prioritized this alternative. Only the Norwegian teachers had a lower percentage for this as a top priority. From these results one could draw the conclusion that Danish teachers emphasize the functional skills dimension of teaching much more than their Finnish colleagues. On the other hand, the Finnish-speaking teachers in particular put a lot of weight on it as second place priority. It would be too far-reaching to draw a

15 Web Survey, "History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Internet Survey," Questions 7 and 8.

definite conclusion about history teachers' attitudes towards skills-oriented teaching only from these results, but one could perhaps nevertheless presume that many of the teachers stress the need for subject competence, or facts, in their teaching.

In the web survey's question about independent thinking, the teachers were also asked to specify in what way the teaching materials could best encourage their students' independent thinking. The inquiry asked the teachers to rank five different methods:

- 1) By providing a range of viewpoints on controversial issues
- 2) By being as neutral as possible
- 3) By providing as much information as possible
- 4) By encouraging students to seek information independently
- 5) By using scientific concepts and academic theories.

It is interesting to note that the teachers in Finland had the overwhelmingly highest percentage of first place answers for the alternative "providing a range of viewpoints on controversial issues" (Finnish-speakers: 84 %, Swedish-speakers: 63 %). It is reasonable to presume that several controversial issues in the modern history of Finland have formed the Finnish teachers' attitudes about teaching controversial topics (i. e., the Civil War in 1918). Being a history teacher in a country with an active history debate, which has been the case in the post cold war period in Finland, seems to have led to the conclusion that history should be thought of in a critical and pluralistic way. From this point of view, it seems that Finnish history teachers have a remarkably high consciousness with regard to functional history thinking.

As a logical consequence of the Finnish teachers' attitude towards controversial issues, they also have the lowest percentage that claims that independent thinking could best be trained by teaching materials that are as neutral as possible. The highest percentages for neutrality were held by Iceland and Sweden (27 % and 16 %, respectively, as the top priority), which means that very few of the Nordic teachers sees neutrality as a way of teaching independent thinking. The method of providing as much information as possible is also not seen as reliable by the teachers. Not one of the Finnish-speaking teachers chose this method as a top priority, and only 3 % of the Swedish-speaking teachers stressed the importance of providing information. This seems to imply that Finnish teachers do not treat the textbook as a source that only gives an oversight of historical facts, but also as a teaching material that includes analytically structured texts.

The majority of Finnish history teachers do not seem to prefer textbooks that only provide facts and information. In the Nordic comparison, the Swedes in particular preferred that textbooks be sources of information (13 % responded

with this alternative as the top priority). This could be interpreted that the teachers in Sweden give priority to a higher extent to textbooks with facts-oriented content, while Finnish teachers prefer textbooks that treat the information more analytically, in order to form well-prepared interpretations for the students.

On the other hand, only about 5% of the Finnish teachers want textbooks to encourage students to search for information on their own. Finnish teachers seem to prefer textbooks that are fact-oriented, but with the facts presented in a well-prepared and analytical way. In comparison, the Danish and Icelandic teachers – who responded with percentages between 20% and 25% for top priority – stress the importance of textbooks that encourage students own research activities. This comparison indicates that the Finnish teachers prefer “ready-made solutions,” while Danish and Icelandic teachers more eagerly stress the importance of students dealing with the information on their own and making or finding their own solutions.

From the conclusions above it is possible to sketch a picture where Finnish teachers seem to hold the opinion that independent thinking among students is stimulated by teaching controversial issues, not in an open way, but rather through a well-prepared and analytical interpretation. Teachers in some of the other Nordic countries, most obviously in Denmark and Iceland, prefer to give their students broader opportunities to draw their own conclusions based on more open information in the books. The question about the importance of training students in academic concepts and theories, actually confirms this overall picture.

Almost none of the Finnish teachers, regardless of language group, stressed an academic dimension in their history teaching. The Nordic average for academic training as top priority is 10%, with the highest percentage in Norway (15%). Academic training would no doubt encourage independent thinking, but the Finnish teachers seem to be prone to dissociate themselves from history as an academic discipline. This confirms the impression that Finnish teachers are very devoted to a certain historical subject competence, possibly with a meta-narrative as an unconscious aim.

### *What is the most Important Content of the Textbooks?*

One of the questions in the web survey implicitly focused on the content of the history textbooks.<sup>16</sup> The Nordic teachers were asked, whether they see historical overview as an important element in textbooks, and as a logical extension of this

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<sup>16</sup> Web Survey, “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Internet Survey,” Questions 7 and 9.

question, whether they see history teaching foremost as a process of achieving a certain historical subject competence.

Table 2: Teachers' opinions on whether historical overview is an important element in textbooks

	Denmark	Finland – Finnish	Finland – Swedish	Norway	Sweden	Iceland	Total
1 <sup>st</sup> Priority	31.8 % (14)	63.2 % (12)	60.5 % (23)	46.4 % (70)	50.8 % (30)	45.8 % (44)	47.4 (193)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Priority	34.1 % (15)	21.1 % (4)	23.7 % (9)	14.6 % (22)	16.9 % (10)	20.8 % (20)	19.7 (80)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Priority	20.5 % (9)	5.3 % (1)	5.3 % (2)	9.9 % (15)	11.9 % (7)	10.4 % (10)	10.8 (44)
4 <sup>th</sup> Priority	9.1 % (4)	5.3 % (1)	5.3 % (2)	10.6 % (16)	11.9 % (7)	9.4 % (9)	9.6 (39)
5 <sup>th</sup> Priority	2.3 % (1)	5.3 % (1)	5.3 % (2)	18.5 % (28)	8.5 % (5)	13.5 % (13)	12.3 (50)
Not relevant	2.3 % (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0.2 (1)
Total	100 (44)	100 (19)	100 (38)	100 (151)	100 (59)	100 (96)	100 (407)

This is the result from the Nordic Web Survey, Question 7, both in relative and absolute numbers

Mirrored with the conclusions above about teachers' attitudes towards history teaching that develops independent thinking, it is interesting to note that Finnish teachers, both language groups included, have the highest response rate for top priority – about 60 percent – regarding the question of whether the most important purpose of textbooks is to provide a historical overview. The Nordic average in general is quite high – about 47 percent – which could indicate that Nordic teachers emphasize historical subject competence as a very important aim of history teaching.

The web survey also requested the teachers specify what kind of content they consider the most important in teaching materials. The survey offered five different response options for what is most important in order to provide a historical overview:

- 1) Influential and important individuals,
- 2) Major and dramatic events,
- 3) A sense of time and chronological order
- 4) Context and cause-effect relationships
- 5) A vivid account

Great personalities seems to be most important in Norway – about 16 % of the Norwegians considered “influential and important individuals” as top priority –

while great personalities are not given any notice at all by the Finnish teachers, which is quite surprising when the Finnish historical tradition is taken into consideration. What is even more surprising is that very few of the Nordic teachers consider great and dramatic events to be the key to historical overview. The Icelandic and Danish teachers have the highest share (about 12% for top priority), whereas not a single Finnish-speaking teacher stressed dramatic events. Among Swedish-speaking teachers, this came in as top priority for about 10 percent. In this case, however, there is a very interesting difference between the two language groups.

When it comes to a sense of time and chronology, the teachers in Sweden have the highest response rate at top priority (about 22%). Among Finnish teachers chronology was most important at 10%, but if second place opinions are considered, the teachers in Finland most actively stress the importance of chronological teaching. This is especially interesting when taking into consideration that the Finnish curriculum places a strong emphasis on context-bound analytical and thematic teaching. Yet many teachers in Finland still seem to prefer a chronological overview, apparently with a strong focus on subject competence.

On the other hand, the teachers in Finland have also shown a very strong interest in teaching with a stress on context and causality. The Nordic average for first place for this is 47%, but the share in Finland is much higher (79% of Finnish-speakers and 63% of Swedish-speakers). This tendency among Finnish teachers fits nicely with their opinion about how to encourage independent thinking: they prefer presentations that are context-bound and analytical, but with a well-prepared and marked interpretation.

It is also interesting to note that the Finnish teachers seem to tone down the narrative dimension (“a vivid account”). The highest response rates for top placement for this were given in Iceland (33%), Sweden (22%) and Denmark (18%). Nevertheless, both language groups in Finland, especially the Swedish-speakers, tend to place narrative in second and third place. This could be interpreted that the narratives – and perhaps also the meta-narrative – hold a very strong position in the Finnish history classrooms.

Regarding the question of content and overview in history textbooks, the Finnish teachers actually took a standpoint that corresponds well with the position they took in relation to the question of developing independent thinking. It is important for the teachers that textbooks give a fact-based and chronological overview, but it should be analytical in the sense that the text should be based on causality and put within a historical context – and most likely according to a certain meta-narrative.

*How can History Textbooks Define and Strengthen the Students' Sense of Identity?*

A remarkably low number of Nordic teachers identify strengthening students' identity as an important quality for history textbooks.<sup>17</sup> The highest numbers are noticed in Denmark and Norway (14%), while the percentage in Finland, both language groups included, is only 5%. The result is also the same, if one takes the second and third place alternatives into consideration. It is noteworthy that not even the teachers who represent the only cultural minority group in this study, i.e. the Swedish-speaking teachers in Finland, pay any attention to an identity-building aspect in history education.

Table 3: Teachers' opinions on whether history textbooks should define and strengthen students' sense of identity

	Denmark	Finland – Finnish	Finland – Swedish	Norway	Sweden	Iceland	Total
1 <sup>st</sup> Priority	13.6 % (6)	5.3 % (1)	5.3 % (2)	12.2 % (18)	5.2 % (3)	7.4 % (7)	9.2 (37)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Priority	18.2 % (8)	5.3 % (1)	5.3 % (2)	11.5 % (17)	17.2 % (10)	23.4 % (22)	15.0 (60)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Priority	38.6 % (17)	42.1 % (8)	28.9 % (11)	25 % (37)	27.6 % (16)	31.9 % (30)	29.7 (119)
4 <sup>th</sup> Priority	27.3 % (12)	36.8 % (7)	31.6 % (12)	15.5 % (23)	24.1 % (14)	18.1 % (17)	21.2 (85)
5 <sup>th</sup> Priority	2.3 % (1)	10.5 % (2)	21.1 % (8)	31.8 % (47)	19 % (11)	16 % (15)	20.9 (84)
Not relevant	0	0	7.9 % (3)	4.1 % (6)	6.9 % (4)	3.2 % (3)	4.0 (16)
Total	100 (44)	100 (19)	100 (38)	100 (148)	100 (58)	100 (94)	100 (401)

This is the result from the Web Survey, "History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials," Question 7, both in relative and absolute numbers

It seems that the Nordic teachers, at least in this study, are typical members of the post-modern society, and therefore foremost stress pluralistic elements in their history teaching, and consequently tone down the traditional identity-building element. This becomes quite obvious when the five options for the specified question about identity-teaching are analyzed. Student identity can best be defined and strengthened by:

- 1) By referring to the student's own world of experience
- 2) By dealing with national history

<sup>17</sup> Web Survey, "History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Internet Survey," Question 10.

- 3) By including a gender perspective of history
- 4) By placing emphasis on a human rights perspective
- 5) By being aware of the multicultural perspective<sup>18</sup>

The idea of defining and strengthening student's identity by referring to their own experiences is based on empathy training: Do you have emigrants in the family?; Did some of your relatives take part in the war?; and similar questions. A useful method is also local history, by visiting historical sites, and so on. The Nordic average for this option was nearly 50 %, with the Danish teachers having the highest percentage of placing it as the top priority.

The Finnish teachers seem to have extremely divergent views on the possibilities for using the students' own experiences in history instruction: over 60 % of the Swedish-speaking teachers marked this approach as the top priority, while only 21 % of the Finnish-speakers believed in using student experiences as a method. This remarkable difference certainly needs more research and we must also remain aware of the fact that the number of Finnish-speaking teachers in this survey was very low. Yet one possible explanation might be that the minority position has caused the Swedish-speaking teachers themselves to reflect more on their own experiences.

On the basis of the survey responses, it also becomes clear that the Finnish-speaking teachers mostly interpret "identity" as "national identity," which might lead to the point of view that students' own experiences are not enough for building a national identity. The Nordic average for stressing national identity was 18 %, but the Finnish-speaking teachers' percentage was 63 %. It is also noteworthy that the Swedish-speaking teachers percentage was only 17 % for the top position. It seems that while teachers in other Nordic countries at least aim to develop history teaching in a more pluralistic direction, the Finnish-speaking teachers still seem to aim at strengthening their students' national identity through history teaching.<sup>19</sup>

A surprisingly low number of the teachers supported the gender perspective as a top priority. This might be because of the use of concepts in the survey: if "gender" had been changed to "equality," the result might have been different. It might have still been difficult for some teachers to identify the importance of the concept of emancipation for identity building.

In the internationally famous gender-oriented Nordic societies, the overall

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> This conclusion could be said to be a confirmation of the way that Finnish young people described Finland in Sirkka Ahonen, *Historiaton sukupolvi? Historian vastaanotto ja historiallisen identiteetin rakentuminen 1990-luvun nuorison keskuudessa*. In her study Finland was described for example as a "fighting nation," and it seems in general that the Finnish historical consciousness is based on the experiences from World War II.

average is only 7 %. The highest percentage noted is in Norway, with 10 % placing it as top priority, while the Swedish-speaking teachers in Finland only had 3 %. Not even placement of the second place alternative helps this situation. It seems quite clear that the Nordic teachers have not seen the possibility of strengthening gender identity through history instruction.

Human rights education is most important in Sweden, where 30 % of the respondents see human rights education as the best way to strengthen student identity. Not a single Finnish-speaking teacher placed human rights as top priority and among the Swedish-speakers this was the case for only 5 %. The Nordic average is 12 %. If the second place priority is taken into consideration, all teachers, aside from the Finnish-speakers, would raise the share to over 25 %.

On the other hand, a significant number of the teachers marked the multicultural aspect as their top priority. It is quite understandable, that if a teacher stresses the multicultural aspect, he or she does not stress the human rights aspect, and vice versa, because these alternatives could be considered as very similar. The opinion that identity development is strengthened by multicultural education was given top ranking for 20 % of Norwegian teachers. The Nordic average is 12 %; the Swedish-speaking teachers came in at 13 %; and the Finnish-speakers at 10 %. The most surprising result is that only 3 % of the teachers in Sweden emphasized this alternative – though on the other hand they stressed human rights education. When taking second place responses into consideration, the Norwegian, the Swedish and the Swedish-speaking teachers in Finland actually had a percentage of over 35 % for this. Teachers working in multicultural societies seem to emphasize multicultural education more – and the Swedish-speaking teachers' opinions may be affected by their own minority position.

The survey answers for the question about how history textbooks could define and strengthen the student identity showed an interesting difference between the Finnish-speaking teachers and other teachers in the Nordic countries, including the Swedish-speaking teachers in Finland. Namely, the Finnish-speaking teachers are the only teacher category in this survey that openly stresses the importance of teaching national history; while the other teacher groups stress the students own experiences, a plurality of explanations, and a more multicultural picture of a society and its historical roots. Finland is, of course, still a very homogenous country, but internationalization has also been an everyday phenomenon in Finland during the last two decades, a fact that makes the Finnish-speaking teachers conclusions quite surprising.

*Should History Textbooks give Students Insight into History as a Science?*

How important is it that historical teaching material foremost give insight into the methodology of history?

Only a few teachers hold the position that history textbooks should focus on history as a science. The Norwegian teachers have the highest percentage, with 11 % placing it in the top position, while the Nordic average is 7 %. Not a single Swedish-speaking teacher from Finland emphasized this alternative. A remarkably high number of the Swedish-speaking teachers – much higher than their Finnish colleagues – nonetheless marked this as their second place priority.

Table 4: Teachers' opinions on how important it is for textbooks to give insight into the academic discipline of history

	Denmark	Finland – Finnish	Finland – Swedish	Norway	Sweden	Iceland	Total
1 <sup>st</sup> Priority	6.8 % (3)	5.3 % (1)	0	10.7 % (16)	10.2 % (6)	4.2 % (4)	7.4 (30)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Priority	11.4 % (5)	10.5 % (2)	21.1 % (8)	19.3 % (29)	15.3 % (9)	15.6 % (15)	16.7 (68)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Priority	11.4 % (5)	21.1 % (4)	21.1 % (8)	28 % (42)	23.7 % (14)	29.2 % (28)	24.9 (101)
4 <sup>th</sup> Priority	27.3 % (12)	26.3 % (5)	31.6 % (12)	22.7 % (34)	22 % (13)	31.3 % (30)	26.1 (106)
5 <sup>th</sup> Priority	43.2 % (19)	36.8 % (7)	26.3 % (10)	18 % (27)	27.1 % (16)	16.7 % (16)	23.4 (95)
Not relevant	0	0	0	1.3 % (2)	1.7 % (1)	3.1 % (3)	1.5 (6)
Total	100 (44)	100 (19)	100 (38)	100 (150)	100 (59)	100 (96)	100 (406)

Based on the result from the Nordic Web Survey, "History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials," Question 7, both in relative and absolute numbers

I presume that an interest in focusing on theories and methods of science could also be an indication of the ambition to train the students in more skills-oriented, functional competencies. The interest in different kinds of historical skills appears quite clearly in the answers to the survey's specific questions about how teaching materials could best give the students insight into the theories and principles of history:

- 1) By teaching students methods of source criticism
- 2) By encouraging an independent search for knowledge among students
- 3) By allowing students to access and use primary sources
- 4) By showing how knowledge and interpretation of history are in a constant state of review

### 5) By giving examples of historical research

It is not surprising that the Nordic teachers in general emphasize source criticism and critical methods as a way of introducing the academic discipline of history to the students.

The Nordic average for placing this as the best way is 29 %, with the highest share in Sweden at 47 %. The Finnish-speakers come in at 37 %, and the Swedish-speakers are on the same level at 34 %. A practical conclusion on the basis of these results is that the textbooks should include exercises in critical skills, which is seldom the case.

Encouraging students to independently search for information is also considered to be very relevant. The Nordic average is as high as 26 % for top place, with the Icelandic teachers at 48 %. The Finnish-speakers have a share of 32 %, and the Swedish-speakers 21 %. The interest in using primary sources in classroom teaching is, on the other hand, surprisingly weak. The Nordic average is 12 % for top priority, but it is interesting to note that the percentage of Finnish-speaking teachers is as high as 21 %. It is even more noteworthy in comparison with the Swedish-speaking teachers, who only come in at 8 %. Academic, functional skills seem to be more actively trained in schools teaching in Finnish, than in schools teaching in Swedish. A tendency in this survey so far seems to be that the Finnish-speaking teachers are slightly more skills-oriented than their Swedish-speaking colleagues.

On the other hand, when it comes to more historiographic and history-theoretical aspects of reconstructing and reconsidering history, it is mostly the Swedish-speaking teachers – with a share of 26 % placing it as top priority – who wish to introduce these aspects of history to their students. Only 5 % of the Finnish-speaking teachers place it as top priority but a remarkably high number of them chose it for second place (32 %). The Nordic average for first place is 17 %. The difference between the two language groups in Finland could be explained in part by the Swedish-speakers minority perspective, which leads to a greater desire to reconstruct and critically discuss historical “truths,” while the Finnish-speakers have a need to put forward a more standardized and “final” meta-narrative. But even if this is an interesting preliminary theory, it is important to take note of the high second place priority for the Finnish-speakers. The history of Finland needs a lot of reconstructive exercises, independent of which language is spoken in school and at home.

It is foremost the Norwegian teachers – at 23 % – who want to include examples of historical research in the history textbooks. The Swedish-speaking teachers came in at 11 %, the Finnish-speakers at 5 %, and the Nordic average is 16 % for top priority.

On the basis of these results, it would be interesting to study the teachers’ own

relationship to the academic discipline of history. How actively do the teachers in the different Nordic countries follow the academic research? What is the relationship between schoolteachers and the scientific community? And are there any differences that might be explained from the formal educational point of view? It might be, for example, quite difficult to use primary sources in teaching, if the teacher does not have any training in the academic skills of history.

### *How Important is Values-Education in History Teaching?*

Should history textbooks convey values?

Values education through history teaching was not emphasized in any of the Nordic countries. The Nordic average for first place is 7%, which is slightly exceeded by Norwegian and Icelandic teachers. None of the Finnish-speaking teachers prioritized values-education, and the Swedish-speakers came in only at 5%. A general conclusion might be that Nordic teachers do not see the subject of history as an important subject for values education.

Table 5: Teachers' opinions on whether history textbooks should convey values

	Denmark	Finland – Finnish	Finland – Swedish	Norway	Sweden	Iceland	Total
1 <sup>st</sup> Priority	6.8 % (3)	0	5.3 % (2)	8.6 % (13)	6.8 % (4)	8.3 % (8)	7.4 (30)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Priority	11.4 % (5)	5.6 % (1)	2.6 % (1)	17.2 % (26)	11.9 % (7)	4.2 % (4)	10.8 (44)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Priority	9.1 % (4)	16.7 % (3)	28.9 % (11)	21.9 % (33)	27.1 % (16)	17.7 % (17)	20.7 (84)
4 <sup>th</sup> Priority	27.3 (12)	33.3 % (6)	23.7 % (9)	29.1 % (44)	28.8 % (17)	26 % (25)	27.8 (113)
5 <sup>th</sup> Priority	40.9 (18)	44.4 % (8)	31.6 % (12)	18.5 % (28)	23.7 % (14)	38.5 (37)	28.8 (117)
Not relevant	4.5 % (2)	0	7.9 % (3)	4.6 % (7)	1.7 % (1)	5.2 % (5)	4.4 (18)
Total	100 (44)	100 (18)	100 (38)	100 (151)	100 (59)	100 (96)	100 (406)

This is the result from the Nordic Web Survey, "History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials," Question 7, both in relative and absolute numbers

But, on the other hand, it is possible to give a broader picture of the teachers' attitudes towards history by analyzing the answers to the survey's five specified

questions about which values should be conveyed through the teaching materials:

- 1) Internationalism
- 2) Tolerance
- 3) Equality
- 4) National identity
- 5) Environmental awareness

On the question of internationalism, it is interesting to note that 58% of the Danes placed this alternative as the top priority. It seems that the attitude of Danish teachers reflects the debate on Denmark's international relations and the Danish attitudes towards immigrants and foreign cultures.<sup>20</sup> The Nordic average is 20%, and the share of the Finnish-speaking teachers is 21%. The Swedish-speaking teachers seem to be less interested in internationalism, with a share of 14%. For this question, it could be interesting to speculate on the differences between the concepts "internationalism" and "globalism".

On the other hand, it seems that the concept of "tolerance" is rather important in every Nordic country. The Nordic average for this as top priority is 48%, and it is remarkable that the Finnish teachers from both language groups have an even higher percentage of about 55%. These results could, to certain extent, be related to difficulties with interpreting the survey – those teachers who placed high priority on internationalism, could not emphasize tolerance, and vice versa. The teachers' understanding of these concepts were unfortunately not measured in this survey, but should be focused on in the future.

The question about equality clearly corresponds with the gender question in the identity section. The Nordic averages were almost the same for both alternatives. This correspondence may very well mean that the concepts "gender" and "equality" seem to have the same content for the teachers after all. On the equality question the Nordic average is 9% for placement as the top priority, with the highest rate in Sweden at 16%. The Finnish-speaking teachers come in at 11%, while the Swedish-speakers come in only at 5%. A very high percentage of the Swedish-speaking teachers, on the other hand, have placed this as the second place priority, almost 53%, which means that the Swedish-speaking teachers in Finland have an extremely strong awareness of equality in history teaching.

On the question of defining and strengthening identity, the Finnish-speaking

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20 The domestic debate about Denmark's relationship to immigrants and non-Danish cultures escalated over the last few years since 2005, with the debate of the Muhammad Caricatures in the newspaper *Jyllands-posten* in September 2005. My point here is that the multicultural debate in Denmark has probably made the Danish history teachers more aware of internationalism as a value in history teaching.

teachers very clearly stressed the importance of national identity. From this point of view it is interesting to note that they do not seem to recognize national identity as a value in and of itself. The Nordic average for the value of national identity as a top priority is 16 %, but the Finnish-speakers share is only 11 %. For the Swedish-speaking teachers in Finland the share is 19 %. It is not surprising that a minority group sees the national identity as a value, in and of itself, to a higher extent. For the Swedish-speaking teachers “national identity” is more defined as the mother tongue itself, the Swedish culture and organizations in Finland, as well as Swedish schools, which more than any other institution actually forms the Swedish-speaking identity in Finland. For a minority group, the personal national identity has a very strong existential dimension, which may not be as strong for the Finnish-speaking majority, for whom national identity seems to be more in connection with the political institution of the sovereign nation-state.

Environmental awareness does not seem to hold weight as a value with regard to history instruction. The Nordic average is as low as 6 % as top priority, with the highest share from the Danish teachers at almost 8 %. Both the Norwegian and Icelandic teachers have a remarkably high rate of environmental awareness as second priority, which indicates that there is a demand for environmental issues in textbooks in at least Denmark, Norway and Iceland.

#### *Finnish Attitudes Towards History in Comparison to Nordic Attitudes – with Textbooks as the Focus*

Based on analysis of the answers in the web survey, the Finnish-speaking teachers especially strive to use their textbooks in a way that stimulates functional awareness. The Finnish-speaking teachers, and to a lesser extent their Swedish-speaking colleagues, seem to be willing to initiate discussions on controversial historical questions, and want textbooks that encourage causality training and critical contextual interpretation. In comparison to their other Nordic colleagues, the Finnish-speaking teachers seem to have a stronger desire to plan student-oriented instruction, where the students are trained to interpret, analyze and explain historical events. On the other hand, while their Nordic colleagues often seem to ask questions about history with quite open-ended answers, teachers in Finland tend to strive for well-prepared answers and interpretations.

Can this tendency be explained? A preliminary explanation could be found in the form of the national test in Finland. The tasks in the examination have become more functional in character in past decades, due to the renewed political aims for the Finnish educational system, as well as due to general didactical development at the academic level. Teachers strive to prepare their stu-

dents for the national test, which means that instruction has taken on a more functional direction. Yet the questions in the national exams are focused annually on the same eras and events that could be said to be a part of the Finnish meta-narrative of history.

It is also interesting to notice that Finnish teachers in general find that textbooks play a remarkably weak role in the identity development of students. In Nordic comparison, it seems that the Finnish teachers are less aware of possibilities for developing students' identity through history education. There is only one way that Finnish teachers, and almost exclusively the Finnish-speaking ones, emphasize the role of identity building in history instruction textbooks, and that is in regard to national identity. The Finnish-speaking teachers in Finland were the only Nordic teachers that stressed national identity building's role in history teaching.

It could be considered paradoxical that Finnish teachers actively strive to train the students in skills that are reflected in the nature of historical knowledge, but at the same time seem to be unaware of – or uninterested in – the possibilities of developing values-education within the context of history teaching.

## **Classroom observations and the use of teaching materials**

The web survey reflects teachers' opinions with regard to history instruction and textbook usage. From the results of the survey it is possible to draw some conclusions on teachers' attitudes about history and about their history-related didactical thinking. It is not possible, however, to say anything about the realities in the classrooms, i. e. how the ambitions of the teachers are reflected in an instructional situation based on the survey.

By supplementing the survey with some field observations from classrooms, we might get a better and more realistic picture of the use of textbooks in history instruction. The field observation that is used in this study has not been systematically done in Nordic countries other than Finland, which means that it is not possible to compare the field results to similar observations in other Nordic countries. The field observation in this case is, therefore, used primarily as a control instrument, i. e. for comparing the Finnish results in the survey to the results from the field observation. One could argue, as is done more strongly at the end of this article, that this comparison reflects the tensions between didactical idealism and classroom realism and/or pragmatism.

*Teaching Strategies with Regard to the use of Textbooks and other Teaching Materials*

It was quite remarkable to find that the students in all of the 36 observed lessons had the same textbooks.<sup>21</sup> The desire to form pluralistic perspectives, as is stated in the curriculum, was certainly not realized by the selection of textbooks – provided that the textbooks in use do not guarantee a pluralistic content. This striving towards standardization is not surprising. The nine-year Finnish compulsory school distributes the same book – mostly in the form of a loan – to every student, and in upper secondary school the teachers recommend the same book to every student. The market for Swedish textbooks is quite small, which also means that the selection of textbooks is meager.

The selection of teaching materials in addition to the textbook of course also reflects the attitudes toward the subject. It is quite surprising, and perhaps not a fully realistic picture of the situation in schools, that almost all the observed lessons used only one standardized textbook and no supplementary materials. (Question 1, What kind of teaching materials was used during the observed lesson?). The teachers observed by students from Helsinki University more frequently used supplementary materials, such as copies from other books, compendiums, reference literature and the analysis of documents. The observations indicate that the Finnish-speaking training schools, at least in Helsinki and Turku, might have a more functionally oriented history teaching, a conclusion that is also confirmed by the Nordic web survey.<sup>22</sup>

The tendency of Finnish-speaking teachers to strive to use more student-centered and functional didactical methods than their Swedish-speaking colleagues is in general terms confirmed by a comparison between the results from the web survey and the field observations. In comparison with the other Nordic teachers, it seems however, that the Finnish teachers, both language groups included, have a more functional ambition. This trend is quite visible when analyzing the Nordic teachers' responses about the concrete use of materials in the survey, and in comparison with what is reported from the field observations.

One example is the use and interpretation of photographs. In the survey (Question 21) 32 % of the Finnish teachers marked these as being used “very

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21 The discussion on supplementary teaching materials in addition to the textbook is based on the results of “History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials. A Nordic Internet Survey,” Question 21 (“In this last question please evaluate how much you generally use the following types of teaching materials in your teaching.”) and on the results of the “The Use of Materials in History Teaching. Classroom Observation Form,” as found in Appendix 2 of this volume.

22 As the Finnish teacher training institutes have their own training schools owned by the University, the Finnish-speaking student-teachers at Helsinki University observed lessons in Helsinki, the Finnish-speaking students at Turku University observed lessons in Turku, and the Swedish-speaking students at Åbo Akademi University in Vasa observed lessons in Vasa.

often”, whereas only 18 % of the Swedish-speakers did the same. The Nordic average is 15 %. If the premise is that pictures are used for more functional purposes, it might be reasonable to state that the Finnish-speaking teachers have a more functional way of handling their subject.

This conclusion is confirmed by the survey results for the question about the usage of primary sources in classes. Primary sources are used very often by 21 % of the Finnish-speaking teachers, while only 8 % of their Swedish-speaking colleagues claimed the same, which is a bit lower than the Nordic average of 9 %. On the question of using statistical material, the trend is the same, but the Swedish-speaking teachers in Finland also came in high at 34 % – when the second place priority is included – whereas the Swedish teachers came in at only 10 %.

The trend is also the same when looking at the use of maps in the classroom. Maps could of course have an important facts-oriented role, but they also support all forms of functionally oriented teaching in a very visible and illustrative way. The Finnish-speaking teachers came in at 58 % and the Swedish-speaking teachers at 47 %, while the Nordic average was 32 %. Keeping these results in mind, it is interesting to note that only 2 of 36 lessons in the field observations where maps played a didactical role were reported.

If we compare only the Finnish-and Swedish-speaking teachers with each other as regards their use of teaching material, we end up with very interesting results in support of the trend that was described above. The Swedish-speaking teachers seem to use documentary movies much more frequently than the Finnish-speaking teachers, 37 % and 26 % respectively – the Nordic average is about 17 %. Provided that documentary movies tend to stress subject competence, this could indicate that the Swedish-speaking teachers are more focused on facts, whereas the Finnish-speakers are slightly more interested in training skills. When it comes to the use of fiction movies, the Finnish-speaking teachers have the highest percentage of usage among all Nordic countries, though the Swedish-speaking teachers have an only slightly weaker interest in using fictional movies.

The Finnish-speaking teachers also have a slightly higher tendency for using methods that explicitly practice historical empathy than their Swedish-speaking colleagues. Didactical methods such as role-play seem to be more commonplace in Finnish-speaking lessons. In many respects, however there are also signs that the Swedish-speaking teachers are striving for more student-engaging and functional teaching strategies. For example, when it comes to the use of teacher narratives and lectures, 58 % of the Swedish-speaking teachers stated that they use these methods very often. The problem with this question in the survey, however, is that teacher narratives could be typically functional in character and could contain very systematic and facts-oriented content.

As a general trend one could say that the Swedish-speaking teachers display less interest in functional methods in comparison to their Finnish-speaking colleagues, but that they show more interest in comparison to the other Nordic teachers. In general, the Finnish teachers do not look at facts- and skills-oriented methods in a contradictory way, but rather seem to quite consciously combine both ways of thinking – skills cannot be developed without facts, and vice versa. Whether this remarkable difference between Finnish and other Nordic didactical cultures could be explained by differences in teacher training, school cultures or educational policies, or by a combination of all of this, must be explored in further studies.

### *Preparing Students for the Use of Teaching Materials*

The teachers' attitudes toward history instruction are strongly reflected in their instructions for using textbooks. In the field observations, the observant was therefore urged to study how the teacher in the class prepared their student for textbook use (Question 3: If the theme of the day was introduced by using the textbook or by using some other text, what kind of preparatory work was done beforehand?). A teacher, who had the students begin reading the textbook without instruction, could be said to have a strong confidence in the students' capacity to work independently with the book – or could be said, in a worst-case scenario, to lack any didactical strategy for textbook usage.

What kind of preparation strategy individual teachers have is reflected in the kind of follow-up to the reading that the teacher prepared. If the follow-up of the reading includes a student-engaging discussion of the text, the textbook usage could be said to be functionally oriented. Yet if the follow-up is restricted to facts-oriented questions about the content of the text, the attitude towards history could be considered to be quite cognitive. The textbook usage follow-up could also have a narrative perspective, if it includes a drama of the textbook's content or narrative writing based on the textbook.

Teachers who prepare the student for the reading by explaining different words and concepts, could be said to have a lesser degree of confidence in student competency and could, therefore, be said to have a more cognitive attitude toward history instruction. The same could be said about teachers who instruct their students on how to read a text beforehand. Teachers, who prepare the students by discussing the title of the text or by analyzing the pictures, could be said to have a more functional way of thinking. This could also be said about teachers who begin the treatment of a new chapter by relating it to themes that have been dealt with in previous lessons or who urge the students to ask questions about the text.

Of the 36 observed lessons, there were 16 observations of the teacher urging the students to start reading without further instruction and of when the theme of the text was related to themes that had been discussed earlier. In 8 cases the teachers gave very concrete instructions on how to deal with the textbook and in 7 cases the teachers began by explaining words and concepts. Only in two of the 36 lessons did the teacher start with discussing the title and the pictures, and in none of the observed lessons did the teacher encourage the students to formulate questions of their own, based on the text they read in the course book.

The general impression was that most of the lessons observed were very teacher-centered. Goals for training the students' analytical skills were not exhibited in the work with the textbook. On the other hand, it seemed that the teachers were eager to prepare the subject competence of the students before reading the book. The preparatory phase of the textbook use was much more fact-oriented than skills-oriented.

The results from the Nordic web survey showed that teachers in Finland prefer functionally oriented methods to a greater extent than their Nordic colleagues. The school observations do not confirm this picture. It could be that it is easier to give an answer based on an ideal model in a survey, whereas field observations show the naked truth. Still, it is interesting to note that even in the field observations the reports from the Swedish-speaking students are less functionally oriented than the observations by the Finnish-speaking students.

#### *Teacher Follow-up of the Theme/Chapter of the Day*

The way in which the theme dealt with in the textbook is handled and followed-up also mirrors the teachers' attitudes towards history (Question 4: "How was the theme of the lesson dealt with?").

In 27 of 36 observations, the teacher spoke about the theme. Whether this strategy should be interpreted as a cognitive or narrative orientation will be discussed later, but the general picture – based on the field observations – is that the themes in the textbook are handled by teacher-centered instruction.

The student teachers, who carried out the field observations, could choose between 18 different method alternatives when observing how the theme was handled. The different student-centered methods, such as individual reading, group work, discussions, and other engaging methods, are interpreted as functional in character. Teacher-centered methods – such as asking fact-oriented questions about the text – are interpreted as cognitive in character.

In a majority of the observed lessons, the teacher chose to talk about the theme. A more careful analysis shows that such talking has a more cognitive than narrative goal – it is more to relay facts, than it is to train the students' historical

empathy, or to mediate the large narratives of history. In most of the observations it was noted that the teacher asked facts-oriented questions about the text. In the cases where the teacher let the students read the text without instruction beforehand, the teachers chose to handle the text through cognitively oriented exercises. Only in two lessons did the teachers urge the students to sum up the text that was read in a more analytical way.

In several cases the teachers chose more functional and narrative teaching strategies. In 12 lessons the students first quietly read the text, after which the teacher urged the students to sum up the text by creating individual questions about the theme. In 10 cases the students worked with the theme by using materials other than the textbook, which is a clear sign of the desire to broaden perspectives. So, even if the general impression is that the textbook is used with a focus on subject competence, there are many examples that show that the teachers also strive to plan their instruction from functional and narrative directions. This was most clearly reported by Finnish-speaking students who observed lessons at Helsinki University's own teacher training school, where the texts were utilized for both role-play and other engaging methods.

#### *Teacher and Student Interaction and Activities*

There was a focus in the field observations on the interaction between teachers and students with regard to working with the textbooks. What relationship is there between the way the teachers ask questions about topics in the textbook and the answers and responses that students give? It is also possible to draw conclusions about the teachers' attitudes towards history instruction from these observations (Question 5: "Teacher Questions and Student Answers").

The field observations seem to confirm the web survey results, in that the teachers in Finland clearly strive to develop their history teaching in a more functional way. In 27 of 36 lessons the teachers asked questions that encouraged the students to form their own opinion about what was being covered in the textbook. On the other hand, there are also many observations of lessons where the teacher preferred to control the words and concepts being covered – in 24 of 36 cases. Also remarkably frequent – in 19 of 36 cases – was the teacher asking fact-oriented questions that could easily be answered by reading the text.

The most interesting part of the field observations is that it seems that the students often had stronger functional goals than the teachers. In 27 of 36 cases the teachers' fact-oriented questions were answered by spontaneous interpretations and opinions by the students. In 26 of the 36 lessons, the students answered fact-oriented questions in their own words and with their own interpretations, and only in 12 cases did the students answer the questions with the

vocabulary and interpretations that were presented in the textbook. The more passive cognitive attitude was quite rare among the observed students. The trend here is also the same: more engaging teaching is reported from both of the Finnish-speaking teacher training institutions.

### *Conclusions for the Field Observations*

The connection between the results of the web survey and the field observations are not particularly obvious. It may very well be that the survey better reflects the ideology of the teachers, and that this ideology is not fully carried out, as shown in the classroom observations.

The most obvious correlation between the survey and field observations is that the Finnish-speaking teachers seem to have a more conscious strategy for developing functionally oriented teaching than the Swedish-speaking teachers. When it comes to textbook usage, though, it seems quite common in both language groups that the books are mostly used for cognitive purposes. This conclusion certainly has also to do with the design of the textbooks – as they often have cognitively oriented content. The results from the survey also show, however, that teachers want a textbook with a strong emphasis on facts and a strong historical overview.

A visible difference between the language groups, when it comes to using teaching materials, is that the Finnish-speaking teachers use many more supplementary teaching materials. This is at least partly a question of “market economy”: the selection of materials in the majority language is much broader than the selection of materials in the minority language. It seems to be this complementary material that makes the Finnish-speaking instruction more functional – the use of textbooks seems to be very similar in both Finnish- and Swedish-speaking schools.

## **Attitudes toward history in Finnish classrooms: A diagnosis**

This survey shows that a change of paradigm is occurring in Finnish history instruction.

The facts-oriented focus on subject competence has shifted to a more student-centered functional perspective. The baby is not thrown away with the bath water, however: Finnish history teachers seem to be very aware of the risk of giving up “traditional” subject competence and historical oversight and they strongly emphasize textbooks with a facts-oriented content.

This shift in perspectives – which in this article has been referred to as

“attitudes toward history” – has already been carried out on certain levels: in the curricula, the national tests, and in some teacher training institutions. In the web survey most of the Finnish teachers, representing both language groups (but with a majority among the Finnish-speaking teachers), show a strong awareness of skills-oriented instruction. Based on the field observations, however, this awareness is often more ideological than a picture of everyday practices in the schools, where it often seems to be easier to follow the more facts-oriented design of the textbooks. Critical multi-perspective ways of teaching also seem to be set aside when reality meets theoretical idealism and when existing teaching materials do not give simple answers on how to develop teaching in a more functional way. In this clash between didactical idealism and reality, it seems that the national meta-narrative is more important, especially for the Finnish-speaking teachers, than creating more functional and critical teaching. This tendency is, of course, also related to the development, or in many cases non-existent development, of teaching material. Based on this survey, it is clear that textbooks and teaching materials with more functional goals are needed in Finland.

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## Appendix

### History in Textbooks and Teaching Materials A Nordic Internet Survey

Survey Authors:

Þorsteinn Helgason, Iceland University of Education  
Pálmi Magnússon, Hamrahlid Secondary School  
Monika Vinterek, Umeå universitet  
KG Hammarlund, Högskolan Halmstad  
Dagrun Skjeldbred, Høgskolen i Vestfold  
Guðmundur Arnlaugsson, Hamrahlid Secondary School  
Þóroddur Bjarnason, University of Akureyri  
Helgi Skúli Kjartansson, Iceland University of Education

The first four questions dealt with gender, education and teaching experience.

#### 5. At what school levels have you taught?

*Mark every box that is appropriate.*

- Lower elementary school level
- Middle elementary school level
- Lower secondary school level
- Upper secondary school/Comprehensive school level
- Adult education
- University level

#### 6. Your replies concerning history instruction are made mainly with what school level/s in mind ?

*Mark every box that is appropriate*

- Lower elementary school level
- Middle elementary school level
- Lower secondary school level
- Upper secondary school/Comprehensive school level
- Adult education
- University level

In the following questions please rank the 5 options from 1-5, where 1 = “most important” and 5 = “least important”.

**No two options can be ranked in the same position.**

If a choice (statement) does not apply, then simply click the box *N/A* (*Not Applicable*).

The term *teaching materials* refers to published materials intended for teaching, including school textbooks, teaching instructions and other accompanying material.

**7. What are the most important roles of teaching materials in your opinion?** *Arrange in order of importance* 1 2 3 4 5 *N/A*

- Encouraging independent thinking among students
- Providing a historical overview
- Defining and strengthening student identity
- Offering insight into the theory and principles of history
- Conveying values

**8. How can teaching materials best encourage independent thinking among students?** *Arrange in order of importance* 1 2 3 4 5 *N/A*

- By providing a range of viewpoints on controversial issues
- By being as neutral as possible
- By providing students with as much information as possible
- By encouraging students to seek information independently
- By using scientific concepts and academic theories

**9. What is most important when providing a historical overview in teaching materials?** *Arrange in order of importance* 1 2 3 4 5 *N/A*

- Influential and important individuals
- Major and dramatic events
- A sense of time and chronological order
- Context and cause-effect relationships
- A vivid account

**10. How can teaching materials best help define and strengthen student identity?** *Arrange in order of importance* 1 2 3 4 5 *N/A*

- By referring to the student’s own world of experience
- By dealing with national history

- By including a gender perspective of history
- By placing emphasis on a human rights perspective
- By being aware of the multi-cultural perspective

**11. In what way can teaching materials give students insight into the theory and principles of history?** *Arrange in order of importance 1 2 3 4 5 N/A*

- By teaching students methods of source criticism
- By encouraging an independent search for knowledge among students
- By allowing students to access and use primary sources
- By showing how knowledge and interpretation of history are in a constant state of review
- By giving examples of historical research

**12. What values are most important for teaching materials to convey?**

*Arrange in order of importance 1 2 3 4 5 N/A*

- Internationalism
- Tolerance
- Equality
- National identity
- Environmental awareness

**13. What do you do if you are dissatisfied with a how a topic or issue is dealt with in the textbook you are using?** *Arrange in order of importance 1 2 3 4 5 N/A*

- Follow the textbook nevertheless
- Omit the topic
- Use other material in place of or along with the textbook
- Openly criticize the material
- Discuss the presentation of the material with your students

Evaluate a history textbook and other published materials accompanying the textbook including the Teacher's Guide.

**14. Enter a textbook that you use:**

**15. Which roles does this textbook best fulfill?**

*Arrange in order of importance* 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

- Encourages independent thinking among students
- Provides a historical overview
- Defines and strengthens student identity
- Offers students insight into the theory and principles of history
- Conveys values

**16. Independent thinking: What methods are used in the textbook?**

*Arrange in order of importance* 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

- A range of viewpoints are provided on controversial issues
- The discussion is as neutral as possible
- The students are provided with as much information as possible
- Students are encouraged to seek information for themselves
- Scientific concepts and academic theories are applied

**17. Historical overview: What are the main emphases in the textbook?**

*Arrange in order of importance* 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

- Influential and important individuals
- Major and dramatic events
- A sense of time and chronological order
- Context and cause-effect relationships
- Vivid accounts

**18. Student identity: What methods/perspectives are most common in the textbook?**

*Arrange in order of importance* 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

- Referring to the student's own world of experience
- Dealing with national history
- Including a gender perspective of history
- Placing emphasis on the human rights perspective
- Providing a multi-cultural perspective

**19. How does the textbook provide insight into the theory and principles of history?**

*Arrange in order of importance* 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

- By teaching students methods of source criticism
- By encouraging students to independently search for knowledge

- By using primary sources
- By showing how knowledge and interpretation of history are constantly under review
- By providing examples of historical research

**20. What values does the textbook emphasize?**

*Arrange in order of importance 1 2 3 4 5 N/A*

- Internationalism
- Tolerance
- Equality
- National identity
- Environmental awareness

**21. In this last question please evaluate how much you generally use the following types of teaching materials in your teaching:**

<i>Click one column in every line</i>					
	<i>Very often</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Little</i>	<i>None</i>
Textbook (student textbook)					
Workbook					
Teacher's guide					
Academic publications					
Fiction literature					
Documentary films					
Feature films					
Photographs					
Maps					
Primary sources (texts)					
Artefacts					
Educational games (role playing, simulation games, etc)					
Field trips					
Statistical material					
Museum visits					
Student project work					
Teacher narratives and lectures					
The Internet					
Other materials: _____					

## The Use of Materials in History Teaching. Classroom Observation Form.

Observation Form Author: Dagrún Skjelbred,  
with additions from KG Hammarlund, Monika Vinterek and Tom Gullberg

Date and Time of Observation .....

Lesson Theme: .....

Level and Age ..... Number of Students in the class/group.....

### 1. What kind of teaching materials were used during the observed lesson?

*Mark 1 for the description that describes the lesson best, then 2 for the second best description, and then 3 for the next in line, and so on!*

a. All the students used the same textbook  .....  
When this is the case, give the title of the textbook: .....

b. The students used several different textbooks  .....  
When this is the case: give the exact number of textbooks

c. The students used the exercise book that corresponds to the textbook

d. The students used photocopies

e. The students were also using printed material of one or several of following examples:

Newspapers  Encyclopedias  Other kinds of books  Literature (fiction)   
When this is the case, describe the material: .....

f. The students used the following ICT- or internet resources:

cd-roms  internet  games   
others

Describe what happened during the lesson: .....  
.....

g. Other teaching aids used  .....  
When this is the case, what kind of teaching aids? .....

Additional comments:

**2. In which context did the students use the texts of the lesson?**

*Mark 1 for the description that describes the lesson best, 2 for the second best description, then 3 for the next in line, and so on!*

- a. The students were working with a project in which the theme of the text was integrated
- b. The students were preparing for a test by using the textbook
- c. The whole class was working with the same theme
- d. The students were working with individual plans/projects
- e. Another context

Briefly describe what happened during the lesson:

.....

**3. If the theme of the day was introduced by using the textbook or by using another text, what kind of preparatory work was done beforehand?**

*Mark 1 for the description that describes the lesson best, 2 for the second best description, then 3 for the next in line, and so on!*

- a. The teacher explained unknown words and concepts before the students read the text on their own
- b. The teacher and the students discussed the pictures and titles before the students read the text on their own
- c. The theme of the text was directly related to earlier discussions in the class
- e. The teacher instructed the students on how to read the text
- f. The students were encouraged to ask questions when they read the text
- g. The students started to read without any preparations:
- h. Other forms of preparatory work

*In this case, give a short description:*

.....

How much time was used for the preparatory work, give an estimate of minutes

**4. How was the theme of the lesson dealt with?**

*Mark 1 for the description that describes the lesson best, 2 for the second best description, then 3 for the next in line, and so on!*

- a. The students read the textbook on their own
- b. The students read a different book on their own
- c. The students first read the text, and then the teacher asked some questions about it
- d. The students first read the text, and then they were asked to sum up what they had read
- e. Every student read a short piece of the text aloud, one after another
- f. The students worked with the theme, from a starting-point with different teaching resources
- g. The teacher read the text aloud to the students
- h. The teacher talked about the theme using the textbook/other texts as a starting-point
- i. The students worked individually on exercises in the textbook
- j. The students worked together on the exercises in the textbook
- k. The students discussed the theme in the textbook together
- l. The teacher asked questions based on the text in the book
- m. The students created a dramatic piece with reference to the text in their textbook or other texts
- n. The text in the book was used as a starting-point for students to write their own texts
- o. Other variations on using the text took place. In this case, give a short description:

### 5. Teacher Questions and Student Answers

*Mark 1 for the description that describes the lesson best, 2 for the second best description, then 3 for the next in line, and so on!*

#### Teacher's Questions

- a. The teacher asked questions whose answers could be easily found in the textbook
- b. The teacher asked questions to see if the students had understood difficult words and concepts
- c. The teacher asked questions in order to encourage students to make their own interpretations
- d. The teacher asked questions in order to encourage students to form their own viewpoints and evaluations
- e. Other types of questions:

In this case, give a short description:

#### *Student Answers:*

- a. The students answered with words/expressions that they found directly in the text
- b. The students answered in their own words
- c. The students based their answers on their own evaluations and interpretations
- d. Other types of answers

In this case, give a short description:

**6. Adapted teaching:**

Mark 1 for the description that describes the lesson best, 2 for the second best description, then 3 for the next in line, and so on!

- a. Students were given the opportunity to choose textbooks on their own
- b. Students worked with different textbooks based on the principle of adapted teaching
- c. Students worked with different textbooks, depending on what kind of theme/project they were working on at the time
- d. All students used the same textbook, but each of them were given supplementary texts based on the principle of adapted teaching
- e. All students used the same textbook during the entire observed lesson
- f. Other observations? In this case, give a short description:

**7. Textbook Access for Students**

Mark the most appropriate alternative with an "X"

- a. The students had their own textbooks: Yes:  No
- b. The students borrowed the textbooks from the school and were not allowed to write notes in them: Yes  No
- c. The students borrowed the books from school and were allowed to bring them home:  
Yes  No
- d. There were used sponsored textbooks in the school: Yes  No   
In that case, mention the name/activity of the sponsor:
- e. The students were allowed to decide which textbook the class should use:  
Yes  No   
Where there any restrictions?

Other comments related to the students access to textbooks:

**COMMENTS ON THE OBSERVATIONS****1. From the teacher in the observed school:****How well does this description fit the general picture of your lessons?**

Mark the alternative that you find most descriptive:

*a. The observed lesson was typical of how history is taught in this class:*

It is very descriptive  very close  a little bit  not at all

Other comments:

From the student(s):