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Abstracts

Children's Bibles. The History and Potential of a Forgotten Type of Textbook

Marcel Naas

Although children's textbooks played an important role in families and in schools over several centuries, they have rarely been subject to serious study by experts in the field of the history of education. Nonetheless, this examination of the history of children's textbooks in German-speaking countries and of selected children's textbooks which were in use as school textbooks in Switzerland from 1800 to 1850, shows that the study of children's textbooks as sources of knowledge is useful not only for the fields of theology or religious education, but also for the history of education generally, because they offer insight into developments in the history of schooling, into denominational distinctions and into the understanding of children and childhood more generally.

The Antebellum American Textbook Authors' Populist History of Roman Land Reform and the Gracchi Brothers

Edward McInnis

This essay explores social and political values conveyed by nineteenth-century world and universal history textbooks in relation to the antebellum era. These textbooks focused on the histories of ancient Greece and Rome rather than on histories of the United States. I argue that after 1830 these textbooks reinforced both the US land reform and the antislavery movement by creating favourable depictions of Tiberius and Caius Gracchus. Tiberius and Caius Gracchus (known as the 'Gracchi') were two Roman tribunes who sought to restore Rome's land laws, which granted public land to propertyless citizens despite opposition from other Roman aristocrats. The textbook authors' portrayal of the Gracchan reforms reflects a populist element in antebellum American education because these narratives suggest that there is a connection between social inequality and the decline of republicanism.

Civilization versus Barbarism. The Franco-Prussian War in French History Textbooks, 1875–1895

Jörg Lehmann

In French history textbooks published after France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 to 1871, the presentation of the war and its outcome frequently include the myth of France's *revanche* and depictions of the Prussian enemy as barbarians. Other textbooks presented a narrative of progress in which the French Third Republic is shown as the endpoint of a process of advancing civilisation. While the idea of a French *revanche* can be regarded as a founding myth of the Third Republic, the narrative of progress can be seen as an echo of this myth, cleansed of the concept of the enemy as barbarian, which constitutes a national master narrative.

Religion in the National Historical Narrative of the Early Modern Times in Contemporary Ukrainian Schooling

Tetiana Shevchenko

This article deals with religious discourse in modern history school textbooks in Ukraine that cover early modern times in Ukrainian history. It analyses the place of religious discourse within national discourse, the correlation between local Ukrainian religious and more general discourse, and the representation of the relationships between Christian churches. Further, it defines a methodological approach and assesses the accuracy of facts presented in textbooks as well as the interpretation of religious life, normative language, and denominational labeling. It demonstrates the discrepancy between the achievements of academic historiography and school history, including the isolated and exclusive nature of history discourse in Ukrainian schools today.

The Presentation of Germany in Israeli History Textbooks between 1948 and 2014

Arie Kizel

This article reviews an extensive study of Israeli secondary school general history curricula and textbooks since the establishment of the state in 1948 until the present day. By examining the way in which Germany is presented in various contexts, the findings of the study indicate that, while the textbooks reflect a shift from an early censorious attitude to a factual approach, the curriculum continues to present national Jewish Zionism as the metanarrative. In this context, Germany is framed as a victimiser.

FORUM

History Teaching in Albania following Educational Reform in 2008

Denis Vuka

This article explores history teaching in Albania, with particular emphasis on educational and methodological aspects of new history textbooks published after the liberalisation of the school textbook market in 2008. National history textbooks serve as a basis for the assessment of changing educational principles and methodologies in history teaching in terms of five qualitative factors: educational aims, teaching techniques and methodologies, historical narratives, visual materials, and sources. The article thus assesses the degree to which textbooks fulfil their educational function and help to put learning theories into practice. The author also places the revision and reevaluation of national history textbooks in Albania into context by comparing them to the progress of Kosovo's recently established educational system.