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Special Issue: Textbooks, Identity Politics and Conflict Lines in South Asia

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Introduction. Textbooks, Identity Politics and Conflict Lines in South Asia

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The concept of identity has evolved from an essentialist notion of a dominant group (which largely disregards the existence of plural identities or "patchwork identities"[1] and their contextuality)[2] into a notion that recognizes the discursive and fluid constitution of identities that are "constantly in the process of change and transformation."[3] Beyond academic debate about definitions, identity remains a relevant category in politics and society. Identity politics mobilize followers and supporters and may foster nation building. They are seldom unchallenged, for different discourses of identity often struggle for supremacy.

Identity politics as understood here generally entail an effort to construct a group consciousness among a set of people on the basis on multiple identity markers. Consequently, they foster group cohesion in opposition to others and mobilize members in favor of corporate activity. Identity politics thus reinforce selective inclusion, a heightened sense of belonging to a "we" group and a sense of unity among individual members, while also excluding non-members via a process of "othering", which effectively defines the boundaries of the "they" group.[4]

Identity politics are employed as "means" by marginalized groups in the context of social movements.[5] At the same time, they are employed by "dominant" groups on national, trans- and supra-national levels.[6] While one side calls for (national) "unity" and integration, other groups demand a right to diversity. Likewise, the "dominant culture" tries to codify its own cultural, political and ideological values in terms that are generally binding for minorities.[7] Techniques of exclusion and inclusion, homogenization, hierarchization and differentiation are used simultaneously, while the focus might shift from the contestation of an external enemy to fighting internal sectarians.[8]

In the South Asian context, identity politics and the contestation of dominant values arise, for example, in the Dalit movement and among social or regional movements, whose members feel dominated and marginalized by the politics of "the center".[9] However, not all movements[10] were initiated by "subalterns". Some movements were initiated by dominant groups, partly to counteract subaltern movements and to maintain and perpetuate their hegemonic status. For example, organizations in India such as *Sangh Parivar*, the *Vishva Hindu Parishad* (World Hindu Council) or the *RSS* (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh – National Volunteer Organization), pursue their own identity politics, and initiate campaigns or "movements". However, these organizations and their identity politics are not always regarded as movements in themselves.[11]

On an institutionalized level, political parties, which are sometimes the descendants of or related to social or political movements, pursue their own identity politics.[12] Here, mobilization, especially in the context of election campaigns, can even result in "riot politics."[13] The parties focus on specific (such as religious) divides, while minimizing the importance of other divides defined in terms of such categories as caste or language, in order to broaden their potential electorate.[14] Identity politics provide the ideological foundation of these divisions in society and in political praxis, and provide arguments with which members justify heinous acts such as arson and killings in the context of "riot politics", "*jihad*" and comparable outbreaks of violence.[15]

On the national and state levels, the dominant, official state discourses reflect the interests of parties that control the state apparatus (which might change frequently). Moreover, they reflect the persistent constitutional basis of the state, as well as central or

regional perspectives, which require negotiation on levels beyond mere party lines. Therefore, they may deviate from a party's political identity discourses.[16]

In the broader context of citizenship, state discourses not only include or exclude people. They also lend society a structure that underlies the struggle of the "dominated". Thus, British colonial administration defined languages and included categories of religion, caste and tribe or race into their census according to the colonial or orientalist understanding of Indian society.[17] This practice of colonial or orientalist census added social, political and legal values and meaning to these categories, while also enforcing assignment, solidifying fluid structures and framing partition which, after independence, provided the foundation for eruptions of violence. In some cases, as in India, this categorization also determines how resources are redistributed in favor of the underprivileged.

In South Asia, as in many parts of the world, governments have the means to pursue identity politics by disseminating values via curricula, syllabi and school textbooks.[18] Those not in power do not have access to these means to contest the identity politics of the dominant group. However, identity politics and contestation in and via education and educational discourses is a complex phenomenon. Dominant groups with governmental power are not in a position to exclude all contestation by other interest groups.

The educationalist Thomas Höhne has identified multiple filters, influences, interferences and controls (applied by politicians, academics, educators, media representatives, parents and others) to which the knowledge that appears in textbooks is subjected. He argues that these filters produce a specific form of knowledge that is "socially accepted and dominant" and represents societal "'common sense'", a "consensual, representative and hegemonic discursive knowledge."[19] This knowledge forms part of the cultural memory of a society. In practice, the application of textbook knowledge in schools has a normalizing effect. Content is objectified, differences are naturalized and ordering principles are legitimized.[20] At the same time, this process also results in textbook representations being contested when groups try to control discourse and to affirm the hegemonic status of their interpretations.[21] The textbook controversy that took place in India in the early 2000s, followed by other controversies, are outstanding examples of this process.[22] In Pakistan, the textbook controversy and ensuing violence in Gilgit-Baltistan in the early 2000s is a prime example of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic contestations over meaning making.[23]

Since schooling is generally a national enterprise, and since various groups of actors tell different "stories" and use textbooks in schools in different ways, practices in schools testify to a large variety of ways in which theoretical models are implemented in reality.[24] Following Höhne's arguments, one should avoid a generalized view of textbooks as instruments of intentional indoctrination by those in power, as "weapons of mass instruction" (Charles Ingrao).[25] Nevertheless, the extent of state control varies from place to place, while there are many examples of direct obligations to pursue specific, officially defined identity politics.[26] In the context of South Asia, the case of Pakistan demonstrates how political demand to promote the "ideology of Pakistan" has often been described and criticized.[27]

In addition to the fact that identity politics are contested and produce conflicts, they also give special meanings to conflicts between states or on the intrasocietal level. Thus, textbooks can become a source of controversy, and they discuss, highlight (or avoid) and interpret conflicts in the light of the policies they pursue. They draw the boundaries between "us" and the "them", support (territorial) claims, and attempt to naturalize specific national worldviews. They also explain historical conflicts and present political constellations – and often interpret history in light of virulent conflicts. Textbooks relay and pass on particular interpretations of past conflicts to the next generation, including narratives of perceived injustice inflicted by an adversary, and may exacerbate specific conflict constellations. But

textbooks also offer strategies for resolving conflict or discussing conflicts in a way which enables pupils to understand and thereby take into account the perception of the other side(s).[28]

This special issue of The Journal of Educational Media, Memory and Society focuses on conflicts and identity politics in school textbooks in the regional context of South Asia. Moving beyond international relations and interstate conflicts, it focuses on internal conflicts. However, it should be kept in mind that, following the colonial past and the exegeses of partition, internal conflict can and often does affect the relations between one or more of the neighbouring countries in South Asia. For example, Indian Tamils support the cause of Sri Lankan Tamils; and Bangladesh and Indian West Bengal are linked by a common language, but also by a long common history, not least in the context of the formation of independent Bangladesh. Similarly, Pakistani support for the Kashmiris in India has also been a bone of contention between India and Pakistan. The central questions may be formulated as follows. How do textbooks reflect specific identity politics when constructing the national "we"? How are societal conflict lines reflected in these textbook discourses? Do the books exacerbate conflicts and, if so, which specific conflicts? Or are they sensitive and reflexive and try to reduce the importance of conflict lines, by relativizing and questioning official identity politics? These are the questions that the articles in this volume try to answer.

Muhammad Ayaz Naseem examines ways in which Pakistan's educational discourse in general, and curricula and textbooks in particular, exacerbate and/or mitigate conflict on the intrasocietal and interstate levels. This article examines the textual constitution of militarism and militaristic subjects in and by Pakistan's educational discourse. His poststructuralist approach focuses on two subjects, namely social studies and Urdu, which are taught in the public school system of Pakistan, in order to critically examine the constitution of militaristic subjectivities in Pakistan that may or do lead to societal conflict. He also traces the nascent (but vibrant) counterdiscourses that have successfully rid the educational discourses of content and values that tend to foster conflict.

Aspects of identity formation via textbooks in Bangladesh after 1971 are presented by *Shreya Ghosh*. She examines the representations of three important events in Bangladesh's pre-independence history during the periods of British rule and when its territory was the eastern part of Pakistan. Being Muslim and Bengali constitute national identity formation in textbook generations since 1973. These components vary in degree and importance over time, following changes from military rule and elected governments with different outlooks.

India is covered by two contributions. *Deepa Nair* focuses on the role of religion in school textbooks published in Kerala and by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), New Delhi. Textbook narratives show how educational policy operates in the context of secular and nationalist identity policies and historiographies. Avoidance of conflicts and the downplaying of religious impetus in history in the context of secular interpretations (driven by the fear of endangering the fabric of India's "composite culture") are countered by Hindu-national, communal narratives in textbooks published during the first years of the new century, which emphasized the Hindu-Muslim divide. Additionally, the author looks into a public controversy that emerged from the presentations of religion in a recent case in Kerala, where conflict arose between attitudes towards understandings of secularism and religion upheld by different religious communities.

Thematically linked to the former article, *Basabi Khan Banerjee* and *Georg Stöber* analyze the presentation of internal conflict lines in Indian textbooks produced by the NCERT, New Delhi, and by the state boards of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. The various ways of treating "communalism", "untouchability" and language-based "regionalism" are linked to distinct identity discourses. These discourses are not only marked by differences between secular and Hindu-national positions, for region-specific identity discourses can also

be detected. The books differ in terms of their interpretations, and also by adopting different ways of handling conflicting issues, ranging from avoiding, addressing and reflecting on them. They also differ by adopting different approaches to teaching.

Anne Gaul analyses identity formation in Sri Lankan textbooks. Textbooks and education in general are officially regarded as a means to foster social cohesion on the basis of multiculturalism in this conflict-ridden country. The author examines the definition of the national "we" and the representations of minorities. Despite the integrative policy, the national "we" is highly Sinhalese (and Buddhist) centered, where minorities are generally unrecognized or negatively connoted. Tamils are portrayed as foreigners. Therefore, the author concludes, the textbooks fail to foster social cohesion and to overcome the societal divides following the violent conflict between Sinhalese and Tamil citizens.

The studies in this special issue illustrate a number of links between identity discourses in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, which draw on a discourse rooted in the colonial past. However, although Pakistani textbooks meet with criticism inside Pakistan on account of mistakes and their gendered and militarized perspectives, the dominant discourse is not matched by a strong counter-discourse. Nonetheless, a minor but emphatic and realistic counter-discourse has emerged among the historians and the civil society. Efforts made by these groups have started to show in the latest curricular revisions, which make amends to the previously militaristic discourses in the education realm. In spite of this, the "ideology of Pakistan", framed in religious overtones, appears to be the guiding principle. In India and Bangladesh, by contrast, counter-discourses are more prevalent. In India, the composite-secular discourse is countered by a Hindu-communalist discourse, and in Bangladesh the Muslim-nationalist discourse meets with a Bengali-nationalist discourse, which affects both internal and external relations.

As Sri Lanka did not belong to the partitioned subcontinent (colonial India), the discourses described above do not affect Sri Lankan textbooks. However, the Sri Lankan conflict between Sinhalese and Tamil is linked to India, especially Tamil Nadu, whose regional parties regard themselves as advocates of the rights of the Tamils. After the military end of the civil war, the textbooks avoid societal conflicts. Their concept of Sri Lankan nationalism focuses on the Buddhist, Sinhala-speaking majority, marginalizing Tamils and other minorities.

Most of the articles in this special issue emerged from panel presentations that took place during the CIES Annual Conference in 2010 in Chicago. The panel on "Exacerbating Conflicts, Promoting Peace? The Role of Social Science Textbooks in South Asia" served as an initial platform for exchanging results of cooperative research activities on the same issue, involving cooperation between the education departments of Concordia University (Ayaz Naseem) and McGill University (Ratna Gosh) in Montreal and the Georg Eckert Institute in Braunschweig (Georg Stöber). Supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and matching funds from individual grants given by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Canada) to Dr Naseem and Dr Ghosh , the participants explored the potential of education, especially as expressed in textbooks in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, to exacerbate or mitigate conflict on internal and inter-state levels. Part of the outcome of this research has found its way into this issue. It is important to note that the contributors to this special issue analyze their topics while referring to a variety of theories and methodologies, and therefore reflect different ways in which research into the dynamics of conflict exacerbation and mitigation may be undertaken. It is to this end that we would like to acknowledge our sponsors for their financial support and the editors of *The Journal of Educational Media, Memory and Society* for having accepted the contributions for publication. We are also particularly indebted to the managing editor for accommodating the articles included in this issue.

Notes

[1] Heiner Keupp, Thomas Ahbe, Wolfgang Gmür et al., *Identitätskonstruktionen. Das Patchwork der Identitäten in der Spätmoderne* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1999).

[2] T. K. Oommen, "Introduction", in *Social Movements I: Issues of Identity*, ed. T. K. Oommen (New Delhi: OUP, 2010), 40.

[3] Stuart Hall, "Introduction: Who Needs Identities?" in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (London: Sage, 1996), 1-17, 4.

[4] Stuart Hall, "Introduction: Who Needs Identities?" 4-5.

[5] Identity politics can be broadly defined as "a mode of political activism - typically though not exclusively initiated by groups excluded from traditional main-stream politics. Such marginalized groups generate a self-designated identity (group consciousness) that is instantiated by the individual identities of its constituents. Identity politics differs from many social movements, such as left-wing or fundamentalist Christian activism, in that the constituents of the former - such as women, Afro-Americans, gays - are politically marked as individuals. Politics and personal being are virtually inseparable. This inseparability owes largely to the natural production of the political categories (Kenneth Gregen, "Social Construction and Transformation of Identity Politics," in *End of Knowing: A New Developmental Way of Learning*, ed. Fred Newman and Lois Holzman, (New York: Routledge, 1999), 1-16, 1)". English language literature emanating from feminist, post-colonial and subaltern studies often focuses on this aspect, sometimes reserving the term for this specific level.

[6] Cf. Wolfgang Kaschuba, "Geschichtspolitik und Identitätspolitik: Nationale und ethnische Diskurse im Kulturvergleich," in *Inszenierung des Nationalen. Geschichte, Kultur und die Politik der Identitäten am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Beate Binder, Wolfgang Kaschuba and Peter Niedermüller (Cologne: Böhlau, 2001), 19-42; Birgit Rommelspacher, "Identitätspolitik in Deutschland zwischen Islamisierung und (Re)Christianisierung," in *Islam und Diaspora*, ed. Rauf Ceylan (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2012), André Zimmermann, "Die Identitätspolitik der Europäischen Union," 2010, accessed 16 April 2014, http://www.gsi.uni-muenchen.de/forschung/forsch_zentr/voegelin/publikationen/studierendensymposium/zimmermann_identit__tspolitik.pdf.

[7] Cf. Birgit Rommelspacher, *Dominanzkultur* (2nd ed., Berlin: Orlanda Frauenverlag, 1998).

[8] For the interrelationships between movements and institutionalized politics, see Jack Goldstone, "Introduction: Bridging Institutionalized and Noninstitutionalized Politics," in *State, Parties, and Social Movements*, ed. Jack Goldstone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[9] Cf. Martin Fuchs, *Kampf um Differenz: Repräsentation, Subjektivität und soziale Bewegungen. Das Beispiel Indien*, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999); Martin Fuchs, "Erkenntnispraxis und die Repräsentation von Differenz," in *Identitäten: Erinnerung, Geschichte, Identität 3*, ed. Aleida Assmann and Heidrun Friese (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998), 105-137; T. K. Oommen, ed., *Social Movements I: Issues of Identity* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010); T. K. Oommen, ed., *Social Movements II: Concerns of Equity and Security* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[10] Some authors, like Oummen, "Introduction," distinguish between movements focusing on identity related issues and on those with "concerns of equity and security" (vol. 1, 34-42; vol. 2, 34-40). To attract supporters, however, these movements also need to distinguish between "us" and "them", that is, to define identities.

[11] Thus, the *Sangh Parivar* is understood as the umbrella organization of the Hindu nationalist movement.

[12] In political praxis, movements and parties interact. The transfer of the demands of movements into practical politics results, however, in their transformation. For an example, see Louise Tillin, "Questioning Borders: Social Movements, Political Parties and the Creation of New States in India", *Pacific Affairs* 84, no. 1 (2011): 67-87. For a diachronic perspective, see Manali Desai, "From Movement to Party to Government: Why Social Policies in Kerala and West Bengal Are so Different," in *State, Parties, and Social Movements*, ed. Jack Goldstone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 170-196.

[13] Ward Berenschot, *Riot Politics: Hindu-Muslim Violence and the Indian State* (London: Hurst, 2011); Paul Brass, *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2003); Christophe Jaffrelot, *Communal Riots in Gujarat* (Heidelberg Papers in South Asian and Comparative Politics, Working Paper No. 17, Heidelberg: South Asia Institute, 2003); Steven Wilkinson, "Communal and Caste Politics in India," in *Routledge Handbook of South Asian Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 262-273, 263. This instrumental aspect should not be regarded as a sufficient explanation for the outburst of violence. Additionally, as Jaffrelot (in *Communal Riots in Gujarat*, 8-9) points out, excessive violence might become contracounterproductive, for party supporters also suffer

from anarchy and curfew. Responsibilities for law and order and coalition requirements may disqualify riot strategies.

14 This strategy is also used to spread (Hindu-national) RSS ideology among the *adivasi* ("tribals"). See Peggy Froerer, *Religious Division and Social Conflict: The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in Rural India* (New Delhi: Social Science Press, 2010).

[15] They also (re)produce the stereotype and phantasmagoric conception of "the other" (based on different concepts of purity), which, together with a lack of self-esteem, Hansen regards as the psychological background of individual rioting behavior. Additionally, they include the memory of previous riots, which seem to confirm the conceptions of individuals involved in riots and thus reinforce communal antagonisms. Reactions and counter-reactions cause this perception of the other as an enemy to be reproduced, as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Thomas Blom Hansen, *The Saffron Wave* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) (reprinted in omnibus *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004), 200-217.

[16] For a discussion of Indian, Pakistani and Sri Lankan politics with respect to national integration, see Swarna Rajagopalan, *State and Nation in South Asia* (New Delhi: Viva Books, 2006).

[17] Ram Bhagat, "Census and Caste Enumeration: British Legacy and Contemporary Practice in India," *GENUS* 62, no. 2 (2006): 119-134.

[18] Where non-governmental schools are allowed to exist, other organizations might pursue their own identity politics also via schooling. See Nandini Sundar, "Teaching to Hate: RSS' Pedagogical Programme," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 17 April 2004, 1605-1612; Bonita Aleaz, "Madrasa Education, State and Community Consciousness: Muslims in West Bengal," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 5 February 2005, 555-564.

[19] Thomas Höhne, *Schulbuchwissen: Umrisse einer Wissens- und Medientheorie des Schulbuches* (Frankfurt am Main: Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, 2003), 78-79 (translation by the authors).

[20] Höhne, *Schulbuchwissen*, 168-169. Also see, Muhammad Ayaz Naseem, *Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan* (New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2010).

[21] For political influence in European cases see Arie H. Wilschut, "History at the Mercy of Politicians and Ideologies: Germany, England, and the Netherlands in the 19th and 20th Centuries," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 42, no. 5 (2010): 693-723.

[22] See the relevant notes in the contribution by Khan Banerjee and Stöber in this issue.

[23] See Georg Stöber, "Religious Identities Provoked: The Gilgit 'Textbook Controversy' and its Conflictual Context," *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 29 (2007): 389–411.

[24] Cf. Stuart Foster and Keith Crawford, eds., *What Shall We Tell the Children? International Perspectives on School History Textbooks* (Greenwich: Information Age Publications, 2006); Jason Nicholls, ed., *School History Textbooks Across Cultures* (Oxford: Symposium Books, 2006).

[25] Cf. Charles Ingrao, "Weapons of Mass Instruction: Schoolbooks and Democratization in Multiethnic Central Europe," JEMMS 1, no. 1 (2009).

[26] Cf. Peter Carrier, "Introduction," in *School & Nation: Identity Politics and Educational Media in an Age of Diversity*, ed. Peter Carrier (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2013), 7-12.

[27] Cf. Jon Dorschner and Thomas Sherlock, "The Role of History Textbooks in Shaping Collective Identities in India and Pakistan," in *Teaching the Violent Past*, ed. Elizabeth Cole (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007, 275-315; Elisa Giunchi, "Rewriting the Past: Political Imperatives and Curricular Reform in Pakistan," *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 29, no. 4 (2007): 375-388; A.H. Nayyar and Ahmad Salim, eds., *The Subtle Subversion: The State of Curricula and Textbooks in Pakistan* (Islamabad: Sustainable Development Policy Institute [2003]); M. Ayaz Naseem, *Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); M. Ayaz Naseem, "Allah, America and the Army: Impact of the US Involvement in South Asia on Pakistan's Educational Policy," in *By the Dawn's Early Light: American Post-conflict Educational Reconstruction from the Spanish-American War to Iraq*, ed. N. Sobe (New York: Palgrave-McMillan, 2009); M. Ayaz Naseem, "The Soldier and the Seductress: A Post-structuralist Analysis of Gendered Citizenship Through Inclusion in and Exclusion from Language and Social Studies Textbooks in Pakistan," *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 10, nos. 4 and 5 (2006): 449-468; Yvette Claire Rosser, *Islamisation of Pakistani Social Studies Textbooks* (New Delhi: Rupa & Observer Research Foundation, 2003); Yvette Claire Rosser, "The Islamization of Pakistani Social Studies Textbooks," in *What Shall We Tell the Children?*, ed. Stuart Foster and Keith Crawford (Greenwich: Information Age Publications, 2006), 179-194; Rubina Saigol, "Enemies Within and Enemies Without: The Besieged Self in Pakistani Textbooks," *Futures. The Journal of Forecasting and Planning* 37 (2005): 1005-1035; Syed Manzar Abbas Zaidi, "Polarisation of Social Studies Textbooks in Pakistan," *The Curriculum Journal* 22, no.1 (2011): 43-59. See also the contribution of M. Ayaz Naseem in this volume.

[28] For example, Sri Lankan textbooks for civics offer materials with which to teach conflict resolution among individuals. One such textbook is *Life Competencies and Citizenship Education, part I, Grade 8* (n. p.): Education Publications Department, [2008] 2011), which contains a unit on "Let us Minimize Conflicts." Other books in this series include comparable units. One Indian textbook series published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) addresses conflicts which take into account different perspectives. See the contribution by Khan Banerjee and Stöber in this issue.

Deconstructing Militarism in Pakistani Textbooks

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Abstract • This article examines the textual constitution of militarism and militaristic subjects in and by educational discourse in Pakistan. The article focuses on two subjects, namely social studies and Urdu, which are taught in the public school system of Pakistan. In order to examine the constitution of militaristic subjectivities, the author draws upon concepts of poststructuralism and critical discourse analysis. The author's main argument is that it is vital to first deconstruct the constructs of war from the minds of people in order for the constructs of peace to be instilled. There are many sites where such deconstruction needs to begin. One of the likely places for such an exercise is in textbooks, for these are sites in which war and violence are or can be constructed and instilled into the minds of future citizens. These are also natural sites for the construction of defences of peace, for these spaces harbour agency to resist war and violence. This article examines textual and discursive data from Pakistan's educational discourse (mainly curricula and textbooks) to illustrate how war and militarism are constructed by these discourses via curricula and textbooks.

Keywords • citizenship, educational discourses, militarization, normalization, subjectivity, textbook analysis

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Peace Education and Textbook Research

While the importance of textbook analysis is well established, it still remains on the margins of mainstream research into peace building, peace education and peace studies. The need to forefront textbook analysis in the overall context of peace research can no longer be ignored. A number of changes (at various levels) in the last five to six decades make it important to take into consideration the importance of the field and to recognize new conceptual and methodological directions in textbook research. Broadly, these changes are located on three levels. One, there has

been a significant shift in both the number and the nature of violent conflicts on inter- and intrasocietal levels since the end of the Second World War. Similarly, the nature of violence has also changed. The change in terms of both the magnitude and the quality of the conflicts has been graphic. The incidents of the use of rape, mutilation and abduction of children with intent to use them as soldiers and human weapons are some examples of this graphic change. There have been more incidents of genocide in the last fifty years than at any other time in history. While not fully responsible, the educational discourses, including textbooks and curricula, have played a major role in initiating, prolonging or exacerbating these conflicts.[1] These developments call for a concerted effort for textbook research to be directed towards peace building and reconciliation via education.

On another level, the advances in social science inquiry, especially qualitative advances, have opened up new perspectives with which one may approach and explore new directions in textbook research. These include, but are not limited to, methods developed by critical ethnography, feminism, post-structuralist theory and critical discourse analysis.

Textbook analysis has always been a hybrid field of inquiry. Now it is even more so as it prepares to cross and bridge methodological and distinctions between different mediums. New frameworks of analysis show ways in which quantitative and qualitative methods can be used in tandem to gain a more meaningful understanding of what is being taught and for what purpose, without sacrificing the depth of qualitative analysis or the accuracy of quantitative analysis.

These new directions in textbook analysis need a research agenda that is deconstructive and exploratory at the same time. In the former sense, research should be geared towards deconstruction and the purging of texts that inculcate violent messages and militaristic values. In the latter sense research should explore new spaces for agency and resistance; spaces from which defences of peace could be built.

Conflict and Violence in South Asia. A Brief Overview

South Asia is one of the most populous and volatile regions in the world. This region is also home to two nuclear powers, India and Pakistan, which have clashed militarily three times during the last six decades and have returned from the brink of armed conflict on a number of occasions. More than a billion people in South Asia have been living under the shadow of war and that of a nuclear conflict since mid-1990s. While the rival states, especially India and Pakistan, spend billions of dollars to remain in a state of war preparedness, a large majority of

the populations of these countries lives below the poverty line. Peace initiatives between the two countries have always been short-lived, and mutual perceptions of hostility, deceit, mistrust and enmity define the relationship between these two countries and their populations. Promises of one thousand years of war and telling defeats have been made by politicians on both sides (by Pakistan's Z. A. Bhutto in 1962[2] and India's L. K. Advani in 2004). Lately, India and Pakistan have made efforts to embark on a path of détente and peace. Yet there is scepticism and even resistance to the peace process among large segments of both countries' populations. There are many causes of mutual distrust among the politicians and the people of India and Pakistan. These causes include the partition of India in 1947 and the resultant violence and loss of life and property, geopolitical and strategic dynamics of the region, the realpolitik and the dynamics of the Cold War have been amply researched. However, one of the major causes of the distrust that has received scant attention from researchers and scholars is the use of education by rival states to first sow and then nurture the seeds of mistrust. The education discourses in India and Pakistan are a major site where the construction of the "other" takes place. The constraints of time and space do not allow for a detailed comparative exploration of this process in this article.[3] In the following discussion I will therefore consider examples from the Pakistani curricular documents and textbooks that pertain to the teaching of Urdu and social studies in order to show how this "othering" evolves and how it contributes to the construction of distrust, enmity, violence and war.

In recent years scholars and members of civil society groups and NGOs turned their attention to examine the potential of educational texts, including textbooks and curricula, to constitute militarized subjects and militaristic subjectivities. Foremost in this respect are the pioneering studies by K. K. Aziz[4], Hoodbhoy and Nayyar,[5] and Hasnain and Nayyar.[6] While Aziz[7] pointed out the flaws and fallacies in Pakistan's history textbooks, Hoodbhoy and Nayyar[8] and Hasnain and Nayyar[9] built upon Aziz' work to show how history textbooks and curriculum documents selectively appropriated history in order to construct nationalist ideology. A second wave of research[10] examined in particular the role of education in creating militaristic tendencies in the subjects of educational discourses.

Two things are conspicuous about this scholarship. First, almost all of these studies take a unitary notion of state as the level of analysis. Such an orientation essentially looks at power as a top down phenomenon and thus obfuscates the fact that subjectivities are primarily a product of power relations in society.[11] As a result, a number of issues remain unexplored or underexplored.

Analyses from this position thus focus more closely on questions of "why", that is, why power was being exercised (to secure the legitimacy of state or regime, the perpetuation of patriarchy or the construction of militarized identities and citizens) rather than on questions of "how", that is, how power is or was exercised (via processes, techniques or strategies) and how subjectivities, especially militaristic nationalist subjectivities, are constituted.

My objective in this paper is not to examine and fill the empirical gaps in this literature or to critique the epistemological stance of existing analyses. Rather, I intend to examine the mechanisms with which educational discourses and texts normalize militarism (as a value system) to the extent that the future citizens do not question it. In other words, this article raises and examines the "how" questions in order to complement the "why" questions raised by erstwhile scholarship.

Defining Militarism

While there are a number of discipline dependent ways in which scholars have defined militarism, I understand militarism as uncritical and unquestioning acceptance of the military by the general population. In this sense militarism is a value system in which normalcy of conflict, violence and war, preparedness for war, supremacy of military as an institution and unquestioning loyalty to militaristic articulations of citizenship, nationalism and patriotism are considered normal. There are two important interrelated dynamics of militarism that have to be kept in mind. First, the populace generally believes in the normalcy of violent conflict or war, and thus accepts the need to be in a constant state of preparedness (for conflict). Second, as a consequence of the first, the populace does not question the ways of the military, including the huge defence expenditures. Militarism as a state of mind results from a complex working of and contestation between different discourses (political, media, religious, education) and a host of factors including collective memories and cultural ethos. As mentioned earlier, the educational discourse in Pakistan contests with but also draws upon other discourses such as those of media, law and state in order to constitute subjects and subjectivities. Likewise, the educational discourse constitutes militant subjects and subjectivities by means of what is included and excluded from textbooks. Nationalism, militarism and war are normalized by the texts on the basis of religious notions.[12]

Textbooks and Curricula in Pakistan

Until recently curriculum design and the production of textbooks was undertaken at the level of the Federal Government in Pakistan. Since 2010, education has been removed from the list of concurrent subjects following the eighteenth amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan (these subjects, such as education were previously managed by both federal and provincial governments). The provinces now have authority over curriculum design and textbook production.[13] While restructuring in the wake of the eighteenth amendment eliminated the monopoly of the federal government over the production of textbooks for public sector schools, this monopoly was transferred to the provinces. However, as Rana notes, "for the time being, none of the provinces has deviated from the Curriculum last revised in 2007-08"[14] by the now defunct Federal Ministry of Education.

In some cases, for example in Punjab, there are signs that efforts made by scholars and civil society to render these texts less nationalistic (something that is reflective in the 2006-2007 educational and curricular reform) are being undone by the provincial government. For example, soon after the devolution that resulted from the eighteenth amendment, the chief minister of Punjab once again revived *Nazria-e-Pakistan* (the ideology of Pakistan) by affirming the aim to create awareness about the objectives and sacrifices for the creation of Pakistan and the Pakistan Movement. As Jamil notes, "the Chief Minister announced, that to keep the 'spirit alive of Hazrat Quaid-e-Azam and other leaders of Tehrik-e-Pakistan, their contributions towards an independent homeland, a subject should also be included in the curriculum for this purpose. A strategy is being evolved with the consultation of Nazria-e-Pakistan Trust and Punjab Text Book Board' to accomplish this"[15]. It is reported that the chief minister also ordered the creation of "mobile ideological educational units."[16] Both these developments are reminiscent of the Zia ul Haq period, when the ideological dimensions of Pakistan (which were articulated and distorted by the military regime) became the focal point of both educational and other discourses in Pakistan. Similarly, the mobile ideological educational units are reminiscent of the mobile *Salat* (prayer) committees that used to go door to door to convince or order people to pray.

Textbooks in Pakistan are often badly designed and badly produced by approved publishers. None of the key stakeholders (parents, teachers, school administrators, students and/or publishers) have a say in the content of the textbooks.[17] The quality of research carried out before writing the textbooks leaves much to be desired. Data are inaccurate and editorial

mistakes abound.[18] Of the two subjects examined for this research, Urdu is a compulsory subject taught at all levels starting at the level of class 1, while social studies is also a compulsory subject that starts in class 3. Before 1958 the curricula contained separate subjects, including history, geography and civics. However, the military regime of Ayub Khan abolished history and introduced a new subject called "*Muasharati Uloom*" or social studies (for classes 3 to 8) and a further subject called *Mutala Pakistan* or Pakistan studies, designed for classes 9 to 12.[19] Both subjects are an amalgam of history, economics, civics and social studies. The combination of history, geography and civics in one subject amounts to a fusing of time, space and the relations between citizens and the state into one subject of study through which knowledge is to be imparted to the students.[20] The textbooks used to teach these subjects in the public education sector in Pakistan construct notion of the "other", both domestically and in relation to India. In the following section I will illustrate how language (in this case, Urdu) and the social studies text in Pakistani public schools construct militaristic tendencies and mindsets.

Construction of the "Self" and the "Other" in and by Educational Texts

One of the ways in which educational texts (in Pakistan and elsewhere) construct a militarized subject is in relation to notions of the "other". I draw upon the feminist articulations of the "other" to understand the notion and process of "othering". According to Simone de Beauvoir, in order to have a complete notion of the male self, men construct an "other" which is everything that the male self is not. This other is the woman. Thus, binaries such as rational/emotional and public/private are created where the first element, the self, is considered to be good, better, superior, rational and privileged. The second part of the binary, the "other", is considered to be bad, inferior, and irrational. A similar process can be discerned in nations in a state of conflict. In order to complete the national "self", an "other" is constructed in or by means of texts and discourses.[21] Such construction involves the privileging of certain signs by ascribing superior meanings to them, and the creation of the "other" by combining binary oppositions between male and female or between nation and enemy, for example.

Curricula and textual materials in Pakistan serve to convey educational discourse, which constructs and demonizes India or Hindus as the external "other."[22] The Pakistani self is articulated in and by the textbooks in relation to this "other". According to the master narrative constructed by the educational discourse in Pakistan, the Indian or Hindu "other" is committed to the destruction of Pakistan, primarily by military but also by other means (including economic

measures, cultural imperialism or ideology). Ideological and military conflict between the self and the other thus appears to be inevitable. According to this logic, the "other" cannot be trusted, and peace initiatives must be viewed with scepticism and suspicion, or even countered. This is why Pakistani government sustains a constant state of military preparedness.

Students (or pupil-citizens) are exposed to such messages and meaning making from a very early age. As they grow up and pursue their educational careers, educational discourse exacerbates and intensifies the militaristic meaning making.[23] Consequently, when these pupil-citizens enter their practical lives they have deeply entrenched images of India and Hindus as the "other" (or the enemy). Such images make these pupil-citizens overly distrustful of the intentions of the rival states while also rendering them sceptical towards the confidence building and peace initiatives. Prospects for peace are thus seriously hampered from the beginning.

The Curriculum and the Construction of the "Other"

I will now take some examples from the curriculum documents (CD) from 1995 to 2009 and 2010 in order to briefly illustrate the above argument. It is important to note that there have been many educational and curricular reforms in Pakistan since the time of General Zia ul Haq's educational policy in 1980s. Some of the reforms, for example the 2009 National Educational Policy (NEP), have acknowledged the critiques from academia and civil society concerning representations of women[24] and concerning the representation of militarism, military personnel and narratives.[25] Compared to earlier textbooks, those based on the 2005-2006 curricular reform are marginally better in the above-mentioned aspects. However, there seems to be continuity when it comes to constitution of citizens and citizenship in relation to the state in Pakistan. Commenting on the progression of various educational reforms,[26] Saigol notes that, over the years, "the more the project of national integration and nation building failed, the more ardently was religion invoked as a unifying force. The state's main imperatives of control and domination through centralization did not change, despite changes in governments and regimes. As a result, there does not appear to be a major shift in curricular and textual practices from the period of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto to the time of General Pervez Musharraf."[27] Furthermore, according to Jamil, the orientation of various educational reforms embedded in communalism and majority religion to promote the building of a "nation-state" anchored in religion was embedded in the ethos of the Bhutto, Zia, Nawaz Sharif and Musharraf governments from 1971 to 2008.[28]

The concerted efforts by scholars and civil society groups (such as the Sustainable Policy Development Institute [SDPI]) did manage to partially convince policymakers and curricular experts to reduce emphasis on constructions of the "other", both in the domestic and international contexts. However, as noted above, the renewed emphasis on *Nazaria-e-Pakistan* (ideology of Pakistan) and Islamic education in the curriculum, and in teacher training and classrooms, is a concern, such that a challenge to the curriculum might derail these efforts and take the curricula and textbooks back to the 1979 and 1998 policy positions.[29]

While there have been improvements, the learning objectives prescribed by the curricula still aim to help pupils to understand differences between Hinduism Islam and the need for a separate homeland for the Muslims of India based on these differences. Pupils are made aware of these differences by identifying historical events that demonstrate Hindu-Muslim differences, by identifying India's evil designs against Pakistan during the three wars between India and Pakistan, by identifying India as the aggressor in each of the three wars, and by identifying and understanding the forces working against Pakistan.

The textbooks respond to these learning objectives literally and faithfully. For example, the Urdu (language) textbook for class five states that, "Hindu has always been the enemy."[30] This reinforces the message contained in the Urdu textbook, for the preceding class (class level four),[31] which requires pupils to understand that the Indians or Hindus are scheming and conniving people. In a similar vein, the class four social studies textbook tells pupils that the Hindu religion makes them become scheming, and conniving, as it does not teach them "good things."[32]

For example, various Urdu and social studies textbooks from 2002 onwards also inform pupils that India conspired with the Hindus of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in order to dismember Pakistan in 1971.[33] Similarly, social studies textbooks also try to foster the following learning competencies: an understanding of Hindu-Muslim differences and the legitimacy of Pakistan; an understanding of forces working against Pakistan; awareness of the Kashmir issue; the capacity to evaluate the role of India with reference to aggression; and the ability to discuss the contribution of the present government towards re-establishing the sound position of Pakistan and its freedom fighters in the international community. While the respective curricular documents contain many other examples that attest to the militarizing orientation of educational discourse, the above examples make it clear that educational discourse seeks to normalize the Hindu-Muslim dichotomy, the normalcy of war between India and Pakistan, the notion of *jihad*

and the normalcy of the state as the ultimate protector. In other words, the texts seek to normalize militarism for the pupil-citizens of Pakistan. While these examples from the textbooks of 2002 have changed little, the same messages continued in spirit to constitute the "other" in 2005 and later reforms.[34]

Construction and Normalization of Militaristic Nationalism in and by Textbooks

Normalization refers to the definition or articulation of what is "normal" by textbook authors. It means the establishment of measurements, hierarchies and regulations in relation to the idea of a distributionary statistical norm within a given population– the ideas of judgment based on what is normal.[35] In this sense, it represents all meanings that are fixed by the discourse and made to look as if they are natural, ever present and given. An impression of a broad consensus over their meanings is constructed, such that large segments of society do not question them. These meanings then regulate and govern relations within society. Other meanings or interpretations that fall outside the normalized meaning become an aberration (or deviance). All those who are found to be deviant have to be disciplined. Just as meanings of various signs keep shifting in accordance with shifts in nature and/or the influence of discourses that determine their meanings, the nature and range of signs to be normalized also changes. In Pakistan's case the nationalism, patriotism and what it means to be a citizen is measured in terms of the normalization of militarism, authority and discipline.

Educational discourse in Pakistan constructs nationalism, militarism and war by means of inclusion in and exclusion from textbooks. Subsequently, nationalism, militarism and war are normalized via the use of references and stories from the Islamic past (both the distant past in the Arabian peninsula (in approximately the sixth century CE), the historic past after the advent of Islam in India (in approximately the eighth century CE), and the most recent past in the context of the division of India into Pakistan and India). In terms of inclusion, the textbooks are replete with narratives about military battles from early Islamic history, wars between Pakistan and India, Pakistani military heroes and other related figures.[36] What is included in the text (in terms of people, stories and narratives) defines what should be remembered by pupils, while what is excluded defines aspects of historical memory to be obscured. Ultimately, the consciousness of pupil-citizens is determined by what is included in or excluded from textbooks, and by what is remembered and forgotten.

There are two main ways in which exclusion works. First, prominent Pakistanis, with the exception of military heroes and leaders of the nationalist movement, are excluded from educational discourse. For example, no scientists, artists, social workers, journalists or statesmen are deemed worthy of inclusion in the educational texts (designed, in this case, for language and social studies). The extent of such exclusion can be gauged from the fact that not even the Nobel Laureate Abdus Salam or the acclaimed social worker Abdul Sattar Edhi (considered to be the Mother Theresa of Pakistan) are included in either language or social studies textbooks. Second, all religious, linguistic or ethnic minorities and women are also excluded from the texts. The texts thereby establish who and what is important for the national memory, role models (military heroes) and who and what should be obscured from collective memory and national consciousness.

In addition to the first construction (that of Indians or Hindus as the conniving "other" hell bent on undoing the existence of Pakistan), the second major construction is that of the military as the most important institution in the country. The texts construct military heroes as if they were the only heroes, and *jihad* as if it were the most important religious duty and activity. Since all of them have a religious sanction, none of them can or should be questioned.

Constructions of Militarized Nationalism

Militarism is normalized by the texts in many ways. Sometimes it is conveyed in subtle ways via poems and isolated verses in relation to nationalist literary icons such as Iqbal and Hali, whose nationalist credentials have already been established by the text. At other times, militarism is normalized via epic narratives from the period of early Islamic history known as the *Ghazvat*[37] (literally "battles", but which always refer to battles that were fought either during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBH) or in the years following his death). The battles and wars of early Muslim adventurers in India, such as Muhammad bin Qasim, Mahmood Ghaznavi, Ahmad Shah Abdali, and Sultan Tughlaq are also used to this end. At yet other times, militarism is normalized via stories from the three wars between India and Pakistan (in 1948, 1965 and 1971). The stories of sacrifices made by the valiant "sons" of Pakistan, who were awarded the *Nishan e Haider* (the highest military honour awarded to martyrs of a war posthumously), also work to this end.[38] Essays, poems, and chapters about apparently mundane issues unrelated to war are likewise peppered with articulations that normalize militarism and militancy.

The text seeks to normalize nationalism by normalizing the Hindu-Muslim binary as the self-other binary, in combination with the normalcy of war between India and Pakistan, the notion of *jihad* (with references to Kashmir) and the normalcy of the state as the ultimate protector.[39] At the heart of such constitutions is xenophobia. While xenophobia establishes a degree of national and societal cohesion, the resulting bond is sustained primarily by enmity towards the real or perceived enemy abroad. Bonding among citizens remains weak. One of the ways in which educational discourse and the texts establish such xenophobic nationalism is by conflating historical time. For example, various Urdu and social studies textbooks from 2002 amalgamate early Islamic time (and history) with the period of the advent of Islam in the Indian subcontinent. The texts treat the advent of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula and in the Indian sub-continent as an extension of early Islam. By marking then collating the boundaries of time, this span of one thousand years, from the advent of Islam in Arabia to its advent in India, is totalized as one period. Such a construction of time portrays Muslims as saviours who saved the people of Arabia and India from the dark ages. At the same time, the people of pre-Islamic Arabia and Hindus are also collated as one non-Muslim "other".

The texts present Hindus almost as an extension of the Quraish of Makkah (a tribe opposed to the prophet Muhammad) even though over one thousand years separates them. In the same way, Indian and Pakistani Muslims become an extension of early seventh century Muslims who, after being oppressed by the "infidels", rose up and fought back, and eventually not only won but also saved these civilizations. The Indian Muslims' quest for a homeland becomes an extension of the *Hijra* (prophet Muhammad's migration from Makkah to Madina), while Pakistan is presented as an extension of Madina, the first city-state of Islam.[40] In both cases the texts overtly and latently emphasize the military adventures or struggles of Muslims in Arabia and those in India against the religious "other" in order to establish a normalcy of military action as a means to nationhood (or *Ummah*).

Normalizing War. The Concepts of *Shahadat* (Martyrdom) and *Jihad* (Holy War)

There are five essential preconditions for being a Muslim: faith, prayer, fasting, charity and hajj (the pilgrimage to Mecca). *Jihad* is not one of these preconditions. Second, as laid down in the scriptures, j*ihad* by way of armed combat is only one of over fifty different types of struggle. Yet the curriculum documents, and the textbooks related to the teaching of Urdu and social studies in

Pakistan, construct j*ihad* as one of the essential preconditions for being a Muslim. They also present armed combat as the only form of j*ihad*.

The curriculum documents direct the textbook writers to inculcate a sense of *Ummah* (Muslim nationhood) among pupils. In addition, the textbooks are also required to teach them to follow Islamic traditions, to be honest, patriotic and self-sacrificing warriors of Islam (*mujahids*). The curricular advice further stipulates that stories about martyrs of Pakistan may be used to incite *jihad*, create love and aspiration for j*ihad*, t*ableegh* (prosyletization), *shahadat* (martyrdom), sacrifice and *ghazi* (victory in war), and that the students should be taught to make speeches about the primacy and importance of *jihad*. While such "advice" has now decreased, it still runs through the textbooks and curricular documents. Once again, the dominant impression that is inculcated in pupils' minds is that the *Ummah* is supreme, and that it was achieved in the past militarily. J*ihad* is frequently articulated in exclusively militaristic terms.

Conclusion

The textbooks revised following the 2007 reform show a marked improvement over the 2002 curriculum insofar as the new textbooks deal less extensively with militaristic matters, and in particular contain fewer graphic representations of military battles and personnel. However, as noted above, militaristic constructions still dominate the current textbooks. The collocation of nationalism and religion means that everything that the text articulates has the authority and sanction of religion. Conversely, anyone who questions such articulations is deemed anti-Islam and anti-state. The texts define citizenship by juxtaposing nationalism and religion in a xenophobic manner,[41] the texts thus articulate the ideal Pakistani citizen as someone who is nationalistic, patriotic, religious and who does not question the ways of the military.

The new curriculum purports to make several positive changes to the contents of textbooks, teachers' education programs and pedagogy. There seems to be a conscious move to focus on quality, understanding and respect for difference and diversity domestically and internationally. There also seems to be a realization that religious education must not be a part of subjects such as languages (Urdu and English), social studies, and civics. However, with the renewed insistence on incorporating *Nazaria-e-Pakistan* and religious identity dynamics into the 2009 NEP, the recent efforts of the scholarly community and civil society may be delayed once again. Educational processes may again be implicated in intolerant constructions of identities in favor of the national or religious self and the "other". It is therefore necessary to ensure that the

years of efforts and work done by the scholarly community and civil society in Pakistan do not go to waste.

To conclude, the need to build defences of peace is greater than ever before. Peace building requires an urgent and multi-pronged approach. While bilateral and multilateral diplomatic and confidence building measures play a central role in the reduction of international violence, other avenues for peace and confidence building must be proactively explored. The potential of curricula and textbooks as sites for deconstructing violence and building peace is immense. This potential must be recognized and realized, and dedicated efforts must be made on all levels (including research, policy and action) in order to use textbooks and educational media for peace building purposes.

Notes

N.B. Parts of this paper were presented at the *Ninth International Conference on Textbooks and Educational Media,* and appeared in the conference proceedings. The data for the earlier paper were confined to the 2002 reform. These have been updated to include date from the 2008 curricular reform.

[1] See for example, David Hayes, "Language, Textbooks and Perspectives on Social Harmony in Sri Lanka," in *Development and Language: Global Influences and Local Effects,* ed. J. Lo Bianco, Melbourne: Language Australia Publications, 2002. See also Muhammad A. Naseem, *Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, Muhammad A. Naseem, "Allah, America and the Army: Impact of the US Involvement in South Asia on Pakistan's Educational Policy," in *By the Dawn's Early Light: American Post-conflict Educational Reconstruction from the Spanish-American War to Iraq,* ed. N. Sobe, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009, Muhammad A. Naseem, "The Soldier and the Seductress: A Post-structuralist Analysis of Gendered Citizenship through Inclusion in and Exclusion from Language and Social Studies Textbooks in Pakistan," *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 10, no. 4 and 5 (2006): 449-468.

[2] "We (Pakistan) will eat grass, even go hungry, but we will get one of our own (Atom bomb).... We have no other choice!" Z. A. Bhutto's 1962 speech cited in Feroz Khan, *Eating Grass. Making of the Pakistani Bomb* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, (2012).

[3] For a comparative perspective in this respect, see Muhammad A. Naseem and Ratna Ghosh. "Construction of the 'Other' in History Textbooks in India and Pakistan", in *Interculturalism, Society and Education*, G. Pampanini, ed. F. Adly, D. Napier (Rotterdam, Boston, Taipei: Sense Publishers, 2010).

[4] Khurshid K. Aziz, *The Murder of History: A Critique of History Textbooks Used in Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1993).

[5] Pervez Hoodbhoy and Adam Nayyar, "Rewriting the History of Pakistan," in *Islam, Pakistan and the State: The Pakistan Experience*, ed. Asghar Khan (London: Zed Books, 1985).

[6] K. Hasnainand Abdul Nayyar, "Conflict and Violence in the Educational Process," in *Making Enemies, Creating Conflict: Pakistan's Crises of State and Society,* ed. Zia Mian and I. Ahmad *(*Lahore: Mashal, 1997).

[7] Aziz, *The Murder of History.*

[8] Hoodbhoy and Nayyar, *Rewriting the History of Pakistan.*

[9] Hasnain and Nayyar, *Conflict and Violence in the Educational Process*.

[10] Rubina Saigol, *Knowledge and Identity: Articulation of Gender in Educational Discourse in Pakistan*, (Lahore, Pakistan: ASR Publications, 1995). Rubina Saigol, "Militarization, Nation and Gender," in *Making Enemies, Creating Conflict: Pakistan's Crises of State and Society,* ed. Z. Mian and I. Ahmad (Lahore: Mashal, 1997); Abdul H. Nayyar and Ahmad Salim, *The Subtle Subversion: The State of Curricula and Textbooks in Pakistan; Urdu, English, Social Studies and Civics* (Islamabad: SDPI, no date); Ameena Mohammad-Arif, "Textbooks, Nationalism and History Writing in India and Pakistan," in *Manufacturing Citizenship: Education and Nationalism in Europe, South Asia and China,* ed. V. Benei (London, New York: Routledge, 2005).

[11] Naseem, Allah, *America and the Army*.

[12] Naseem, Allah, *America and the Army*.
[13] Other areas where the provincial government now has control are in standards of education up to the intermediate level (Grade 12) and Islamic education.
[14] Ahsan Rana, "Decentralisation of Education under the 18th Amendment", http://www.economic-review.com.pk/may-2013/decentralisation-of-education-under-the-18th-amendment, 2013.
[15] There is a perception that, following the devolution in the eighteenth amendment, education is now a provincial subject and that the provinces have brought in changes in accordance with local educational and cultural priorities. However, as noted in the main text, most textbooks and curricula are still based on the 2006-2007 curricular reform. However, as Jamil (2009, 2-3) notes, "the National Curriculum 2006/2007… remains the least disseminated document … The entire curriculum is developed in English and its circulation has remained restricted to public sector departments of education, literacy and training across the country and to civil society organizations upon request. There has been little effort to ensure its availability for teachers, the general public and other stakeholders. On account of the National Curricula language being English, its use remains severely limited. Teacher training and interface which ought to have been the backbone of this initiative is yet to be officially launched and textbook development is being conducted by private publishers as part of the deregulation drive of the Ministry of Education (MoE). See Baela Jamil, Curriculum Reforms in Pakistan : A Glass Half Full or Half Empty? (Paper presented at Seminar on School Curriculum Policies and Practices in South Asian Countries, NCERT Delhi, India, 10-12 August 2009).
[16] Jamil, *Curriculum Reforms in Pakistan*.
[17] Although some provinces such as Khyber Pukhtoonkhawa (KPK) has initiated Parent-Teacher-Councils (PTC) that have limited autonomy over finance, and some degree of say in teachers' appointments, they do not have any say in the curricular matters.
[18] Aziz, *The Murder of History*.
[19] Aziz, *The Murder of History*; Rubina Saigol, "Enemies Within and Enemies Without: The Besieged Self in Pakistani Textbooks," *Futures* 37, no. 9 (2005):1005-1035.
[20] Naseem, *Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan*; Saigol, "Enemies Within and Enemies Without."
[21] For a detailed exposition of the media, law and state discourses in relation to the construction of the "other" see Naseem, "Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan."
[22] Internally, women and minorities are constructed as the "other". S ee Naseem, "Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan."
[23] Naseem, "Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan"; Aziz, *The Murder of History*; Nayyar and Salim, *The Subtle Subversion*; Saigol, "Enemies Within and Enemies Without."
[24] Saigol, "Enemies Within and Enemies Without"; Naseem, "Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan,"; Nayyar and Salim, *The Subtle Subversion*.
[25] Nayyar and Salim, *The Subtle Subversion*,; Naseem, "Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan."
[26] Saigol cited in Jamil, "Curriculum Reforms in Pakistan," 9.
[27] Jamil, "Curriculum Reforms in Pakistan," 11.
[28] Jamil, "Curriculum Reforms in Pakistan," 11.
[29] Jamil, Curriculum Reforms in Pakistan p. 11
[30] Punjab Textbook Board, *Meri Kitab* 5 (My book 5) (Lahore: Maktaba Dastan, 2006).
[31] Punjab Textbook Board, *Social Studies* for class four (Lahore: Izhar Sons, 2002).
[32] Punjab Textbook Board, *Urdu* for class four (Lahore: Izhar Sons, 2002).
[33] Punjab Textbook Board, *Social Studies* for class five (Lahore: Izhar Sons, 2002). These are only few of the examples. The textbooks are replete with them. I have dealt with them in detail elsewhere. See for example, Naseem, Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan. Also see Naseem, "The Soldier and the Seductress."
[34] Naseem, "Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan."
[35] Stephan Ball, "Introducing Monsieur Foucault," in *Foucault and Education: Discipline and Knowledge*, ed. Stephan Ball (London and New York: Routeledge, 1990); J. Covaleski, "Power goes to School: Teachers, Students, and Discipline," *Philosophy of Education Society Yearbook*, http://www.Ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/93_docs/COVALESK.HTM (1993).
[36] Captain Mohammad Sarwar: *Urdu* for class 3 (Punjab Board), Lance Naik, Mohammad Mahfooz, *Urdu* for class 3 (GP, 2002); Rashid Minhas, *Urdu* for class 4; Sawar Mohammad Hussain, *Urdu* for class 5; Major Tufail, *Urdu* for class 6; Sarwar Shaheed and Lance Naik Lal Hussain, *Urdu* for class 7. In the textbook for *Urdu* for class 8, all those who received the military award are discussed in one essay. Other than the ones listed above, the list includes Major Raja Aziz Bhatti, Major Mohammad Akram, Major Shabbir Sharif, Hawaldar Lalak Jahan, Captain Colonel Sher Khan. It is interesting to note the name of Khan. The second word in the name

colonel does not designate his rank but is his middle name. A common tradition in some areas of Pakistan, from where men are traditionally recruited for the armed forces, is to name sons after ranks or attributes such as *bahadar* (brave), *shaheed* (martyr), g*hazi* (victorious), *mujahid* (Islamic fighter). This is one example of the normalcy of militarism.

37. Just as the stories of battles between India and Pakistan and those who fought with bravery and sacrificed their lives (and received Nishan e Haider) abound in the text, so do the narratives of Ghazvat. A list of essay narratives of Ghazvat includes Badr, Urdu for classes 5 and 6 (2002 and 2004), Yarmouk and Ohad, Urdu for class 7 (2002), and Karbala, Urdu for class 8 (2002). Other stories include military heroics of Khalid bin Waleed with respect to the Battle for Spain and other battles, *Urdu* for class 7 (2002 and 2004), Ma'az, Mouooz, and Hamza, *Urdu* for class 6 (2002).
38. See note 35.
[39] For details, see Naseem, "Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan."
[40] For a detailed exposition see Naseem, "Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan."
[41] Naseem, "Education and Gendered Citizenship in Pakistan"; Saigol, "Enemies Within and Enemies Without."

Identity, Politics and Nation-building in History Textbooks in Bangladesh

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Abstract • If nations are "imagined communities",[1] as many theorists like to define them, then they need an ideology to create a cohesive imagination. In modern times, the project of writing "history" has been an important instrument in the service of this ideological purpose of justifying and re-producing the modern nation-state as the predestined and legitimate container of collective consciousness. School textbooks, at least in South Asia, have for long been among the most exploited media for the presentation of the history of the national-collective. This essay is a study of school textbooks in Bangladesh. It looks at narrative representations of selected episodes from the past, both pre- and post-independence, in order to reflect on how they construct "history". Through this work I endeavor to relate textual images to issues of community relations and identity by identifying and sharing the ways in which the audience for nationalist discourse is created, nurtured and secured through symbolic means.

Keywords • Bangladesh, community, history, identity, nation-building, politics, textbooks

Introduction

Paul Ricoeur famously made use of the Aristotelean idea of a "plot" to suggest that writing (modern) histories was a matter of emplotting[2] akin to story-telling. Commenting on early forms of historical representations such as chronicles and annals, which were popular forms of writing about the past in the medieval age, Hayden White, in his essay entitled "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality", suggests that these forms are nonetheless not considered "History" in the modern sense[3] because they do not have clear narrative structures, "well-marked beginning, middle, and end phases".[4] For both Ricoeur and White, therefore, the distinctive character about specifically modern histories is that they are narratives similar to those developed in storytelling. Modern histories have beginnings and particular endings. This then further invokes the important question of *selection*. A "history", in modern times,– selects and puts together events from the past in a specific definite (designed) order for the pursuit of the plot, its central subject, with a certain beginning and end. The question of the "end" is most significant to the discussion that follows. The conclusion, or the narrative ending, does not

sequentially come at the end but runs through the entire length of the story.

Further, modern histories are supposed to be objective and rational. But if "objectivity" and "realism in representation" are the sole criteria in this regard, we can make a compelling case for both annals and chronicles as being "histories". White suggests, "[I]s it possible that their [annals' and chronicles'] supposed want of objectivity, manifested in their failure to narrativize reality adequately, has nothing to do with the modes of perception which they presuppose but with their failure to represent the moral[?]"[5] White therefore poses the question as to whether we can narrativize without moralizing,[6] and wonders: "[H]as any historical narrative ever been written that was not informed not only by moral awareness but specifically by the moral authority of the narrator?"[7] In the following article I am interested in exploring how a certain "moral of the story" is configured through narratives of histories written in school textbooks, which, as I will argue, have a specific "end" that the narratives of individual historical episodes try to anticipate, a particular conclusion that runs through the course of all episodes belonging to different periods and points of history. The "end" is the creation of the nation-state as that which embodies the political consciousness of a particular collective identity. It is in this sense that the project of identity construction and consolidation has been central to nationalist ideologies, at least in much of South Asia, in the past decades. This essay will attempt to de-construct textual narratives in history textbooks to demonstrate how such narratives are directed toward creating certain images of inter-community relations, collective self-interests, and perceptions about security-insecurity configurations. It will interrogate how narratives are constructed to create images of national consciousness among young readers by exploiting collective identities and aim at producing a sense of a national homeland as the spatial expression and realization of such collective consciousness.

Therefore, as a means of discourse analysis, the approach underlying this essay is to look at how the discourse of nationalist ideology acts as the "conceptual grid" within which textual narratives are made to operate. We seek, borrowing the words of Sudipta Kaviraj, to "identify deep structural networks of exclusions, silence, various forms of utter-ability constituting the vital frontiers between what can be said inside a discourse and what cannot."[8] While looking at the narrative content of selected episodes in textbooks, I would therefore like to comment upon the structural bind within which textual narratives operate: what they choose to say, how and to what end. The essay will also demonstrate how the narrative structure evolves over time by looking at changes in the content and narrative emphasis in successive editions of textbooks.

The essay is based on my study of textbooks published in Bangladesh after 1971, which is when independent Bangladesh came into being. I analyzed three sets of history textbooks for secondary level

classes, that is, years nine and ten, in editions published in 1973, 1984 and 1996. The 1996 edition was subsequently reprinted and was in use till 2010.[9] All school textbooks in Bangladesh meant for primary and secondary level classes in public schools, except ones used by schools that subscribe to international examination systems and curriculum, are published by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) of Bangladesh, a state-run organization responsible for curriculum setting and the writing, publication and distribution of textbooks throughout Bangladesh.[10] All the textbooks referred in this essay are originally written in Bengali. The excerpts cited in this essay have been translated into English by me for the purposes of this study.

In comparison to other South Asian countries, the "end" of justifying the present political form of Bangladesh as an independent nation-state through historical narratives, especially those involving the British colonial phase of the sub-continent, is a tricky task. Unlike India and Pakistan, Bangladesh was not created as an independent nation-state immediately after the end of British rule in India in 1947. Between 1947 and 1971 it was a province of Pakistan, called East Bengal until 1953 and East Pakistan until 1971, and only came into being as an independent state in 1971. The discussion that follows will demonstrate that the colonial history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries up to 1947 in what is now Bangladesh has been written with a view to the eventual formation of the nation-state in 1971. What is therefore interesting to note is how the textbooks are structured for the British colonial period, and the representation of episodes from this era, with the objective of justifying the ultimate creation of the independent state in 1971, and how textbooks evolve from edition to edition, each time aiming to better achieve this objective. This, as I will argue, will be especially true of difference between textbooks of 1973 and 1984 on the one hand and 1996 on the other. In some cases the difference between 1973 and 1984 textbooks are also telling with respect to how narratives evolve with changing context and nation-building agendas.

At the very onset of this essay I must add that a commentary on nation and identity building becomes a precarious task because, as an author, one is also very conscious of one's own identity and the vantage point from which the story is being written. As someone who has been educated and socialized in India I am aware of it. But the critique of nationalist historiography made in this analysis can be as true for textbooks from India and other places in South Asia as it is for textbooks of Bangladesh. The discussion on India and other nationalist histories of South Asia would of course merit a separate discussion.

On Narratives and Learning History

The construction of a national "us" necessarily takes place through the construction of a particular "other". The national narrative always unfolds in such dichotomies, which are inevitable in any project of identity construction, and, as we will see, the textual histories I discuss here are no exception. I will examine in this essay exemplary representations of four specific episodes in history school textbooks, both from the British colonial past, that is the period before 1947, and post-1947, when Bangladesh was part of Pakistan. These episodes are, first, the rebellions that took place in various parts of the Indian sub-continent in 1857; second, the partition of Bengal province in 1905; third, the Nehru Report of 1924; and, finally, the language movement in former East Pakistan beginning in 1952 and leading up to the creation of a separate state of Bangladesh in 1971. In discussing representations of these four episodes, I hope to demonstrate how identities and national affiliations are produced and re-produced for a young audience through the medium of textbooks.

The 1857 Revolt and the Beginning of the Anti-colonial Political Movement

In this section I will be discussing textbooks issued in 1973 and 1984. Both sets of textbooks begin the story of the anti-colonial movement with the events of 1857, when a number of organized and sporadic revolts and mutinies took place in many parts of the Indian sub-continent, directed against the growing military and political occupation and expansion of the British East India Company. The rebellions took place in the name of restoring the power of the Mughal empire and asserting the emperorship of the Mughal king Bahadur Shah Zafar. The rebellions were defeated by the British military forces. It was as an effect of the 1857 rebellions that India was brought under the direct rule of the British crown, replacing the authority of the East India Company. The 1857 rebellion is often referred to as the first war of independence.

The description of the 1857 revolt and the continuities and discontinuities in the narrative over successive generations of textbooks are demonstrative of how "history" is interpreted and instrumentally used to serve the nationalist agenda of identity consolidation, that is the process of creating images of the national self and of "others", and how textual narratives change with the evolving nationalist agenda, attesting the sense that the former remains a handmaid of the latter. The national narrative on the revolt of 1857, as reflected in textbooks, revolves around the central assertion that Muslims of the sub-continent were among the first to rise to the occasion of initiating what is considered the first anti-colonial movement in the Indian subcontinent and that they also took the brunt of the consequences. What is noteworthy are the textual descriptions on the role of the other

communities. As we will see in the following excerpts, while the Muslims as a community have been depicted as the righteous and rebellious martyrs of the first anti-colonial movement, other communities are categorically described as being responsible for treacherous behavior and betraying the Muslim martyrs. Thus, from the very beginning, that is from the point when colonial and anti-colonial history began to be written in textbooks, a story of Muslim valor on the one hand and betrayal by significant other communities on the other is made central to the textual narratives.

In the textbooks written in 1973, within three years of Bangladesh's coming into being as an independent nation-state, the narrative describes the rebellion of 1857 not just as a revolt initiated by the Muslims against British rule but also a revolt that failed due to the treacherous behavior of the Punjabi community of the sub-continent. The 1973 textbook for year eight, for instance, begins the section on 1857 with the description of the Muslims of Bengal as the valiant community and concludes with the depiction of the Punjabi community as perfidious and self-seeking. The textbook for years nine and ten written in 1973 emphasizes this characterization of the Muslim community minus the Bengal specificity and adds the Gorkhas, Nepalis and others to the list of unfaithful communities along with the Punjabis–. The characterization of the Punjabis as the self-seeking community, nonetheless, remains significantly central to the 1973 narrative.

In the second generation of textbooks, published in 1984, the narrative undergoes a decisive change; the text continues to assert the Muslim initiation of the rebellion, with increased emphasis, but excludes the Punjabis altogether from the discussion of the 1857 revolt. However, both generation of textbooks speak with one voice on Muslims being singled-out by the British government after suppression of the revolt and about their subjection to massive retaliatory aggression.

The year eight textbook from 1973 begins its narration on the 1857 revolt as follows:

> ...it was in the heart of Bengal in 1835 that, for the first time, under the leadership of the great Titumir, we witnessed an anti-British revolt. In 1857 another great revolution was also to be seen beginning in Bengal itself.[11]

Concluding, it states that,

> Since the movement was initiated first from the soil of Bengal, the British government began to treat the people of Bengal with suspicion ..... as a result, after 1857 the British started recruiting soldiers for the national army only from Punjab. The Punjabis, due to their persistent support to the British, began to acquire places in the army in huge numbers. On the other hand the people of Bengal were exploited.[12]

The textbook written in 1973 for years nine to ten asserts that,

> The supporters of Britain helped them in various ways. The Bengali Hindus, Punjabis, Nepalis, Gorkhas, Nizams of Hyderabad ..... unequivocally helped the British.[13]

A page later, under the heading “Reward for Punjabis”, the narrative concludes the section on 1857 with the following passage:

> By supporting the British rulers, Punjabis became their favorite subjects. The influence of Punjabis kept increasing in the military services and the grateful English government began irrigation and other welfare activities in Punjab.[14]

These were clearly the words of a nation, having fought a fierce battle of independence against Punjab domination within united Pakistan, narrating “history” to its audience soon after its emergence, with Bangladesh having been created in 1971 and this first generation of textbooks published in 1973. By the second decade of the nation’s existence, anti-Punjab sentiment had significantly declined in Bangladesh; accordingly, the change in perception was reflected in the changes made in the nation’s historical narrative. This omission can be explained in light of the evolving nature of post-independence politics in Bangladesh. The memories of two decades of domination by West Pakistan and the war of independence were vivid around 1973. Bangladesh was born claiming and asserting an identity for itself that stood in sharp opposition to (West) Pakistan’s identity and politics, which Bangladeshi educational materials equated with the Punjab. By its second decade, considerable changes and shifts had taken place in Bangladesh's contemporary political landscape and particularly in relation to issues of identity. The 1980s were a critical time for Bangladesh; the period registered the ascendancy to power of political forces such as Jamaat-e-Islami and its proximity to ruling political groups within Bangladesh, characterizing the beginning of a distinctly pro-Islamic moment in Bangladesh’s identity and politics. By the time textbooks were re-written in 1984, there was no need for an anti–Punjab statement to be made during the representation of British colonial history itself; the issue was to be raised only during representation of the post-1947 era.

The Story of the Partition of Bengal (1905)

The British government of India took the decision in 1905 to administratively divide the province of Bengal in the east of the Indian sub-continent into two parts, the east and the west. The partition was revoked in 1911. The eastern part of Bengal had a Muslim majority population and the western part had a Hindu majority. The present-day independent state of Bangladesh that came into being in 1971 consists mainly of parts of the eastern half of Bengal.

In the previous section I discussed narrative representations of the 1857 rebellions and how they evolved from 1973 to 1984. In this section I will be looking at the textual representation of the 1905 partition of Bengal case and how the narrative structure changes between 1973, 1984 and 1996. At the same time, I would like to highlight how all the three sets of textbooks nevertheless retain a narrative

frame that involves setting the story of the past as a battle of interests between different communities and identities and betrayal of one by the other. The presence of the identity-building project in textbooks is most evident in the descriptions of the 1905 partition. What is interesting to note again is how the texts evolve. While the 1973 and 1984 textbooks narrate the story as one of opposition between Hindus and Muslims, the 1996 textbooks tend to emphasize the geographical setting of Bengal in particular.

In the textbooks from 1973 and 1984, the Act of Partition in 1905 is narrated as a story of a self-seeking upper-class Hindu community that thrived on its exploitation of the Muslim community. The textbooks discuss in detail how the 1905 Act could have resulted in the emancipation of the Muslims, but the same was prevented by a Hindu community that championed a political movement against the Act in order to continue its domination over the Bengali Muslims. The narration of the episode therefore prepares the ground for an explanation of how the Muslims in Bengal realized that only a separate political existence would lead to their "freedom". As the extracts show, "freedom" here particularly suggests freedom from Hindu suppression.

The 1973 textbook has the following to say about the 1905 Act:

> Lord Curzon, for the sake of administrative convenience and for the economic and overall advancement of the Muslims of the east of Bengal, in 1905 divided Bengal into two parts ..... the Hindu community and Congress launched a massive agitation against Lord Curzon's decision. Muslim support for the Bengal Partition and strong protests by Hindus against the same brought to the surface Hindu-Muslim differences in the most glaring manner.[15]

The above passage shows how the narrative attempts to create the idea that Hindus opposed the Act in order to ensure their supremacy over the Muslims. The narratives provide vivid accounts of the struggle between the Hindus and the Muslims and the former's suppression of the latter.

The 1984 generation of textbooks continues to describe the 1905 partition in a similarly partisan manner, with the description of the confrontation becoming even more detailed. The 1984 textbook on the episode of the 1905 partition says:

> The inhabitants of east Bengal were exploited by Kolkata-based businessmen, industrialists, zamindars [landowners], bureaucrats and lawyers. Lord Curzon thought creating a new province in east Bengal would help reduce the administrative disparity and other inequalities between the east and west of Bengal. [This way] education, communication and the economy would prosper and this region would become self-sufficient.[16]

It continues,

> … [B]ut severe protest on the Bengal Partition was registered from the Hindus. The upper-caste Hindu community of Bengal built massive agitation against the Bengal Partition.... They had exploited the poor and the neglected lot of Muslims of east Bengal in various ways. Now [with the Bengal Partition] they realized that due to the creation of the

> new province their opportunity to exploit would cease ... The 'All India National' Congress dived into agitations to impede and repeal the Bengal Partition … In this way the Hindu community increasingly made this anti-Bengal Partition movement, antithetical to Muslim interests, strong and dynamic ... But the Hindus, in order to attain their objective and vested interest, at the end turned the anti-Bengal Partition agitation into a terrorist movement.[17]

The above passages from the 1984 textbook not only refer to the state of under-development in east Bengal, where Bengali Muslims resided, but also discuss at length how the policy of partition would have led to the advancement and the return of a certain former glory to the eastern part. It makes the point that Lord Curzon was mindful of such potential and that the Muslims were welcoming of his initiatives, that the Hindu community had made it their political purpose to suppress the interests of the Muslims for their own growth. The framing of the story in the form of a duality of interests is evident in both the 1973 and the 1983 edition.

In the 1996 edition, there is a significant change. While in the textbooks from 1973 and 1984, the story is primarily framed in terms of opposition between Hindus and Muslims, in the 1996 textbooks the geographical aspect of Bengal is particularly highlighted. This is most evident in the fact that unlike the 1973 and 1984 textbooks, where the history of the colonial movement in the sub-continent begins with the 1856 movement, in the 1996 textbooks it begins with the episode of the 1905 partition itself, an episode of history that is exclusively about Bengal, while the 1857 rebellions, though the earlier texts suggest they were started by the Muslims of Bengal, have a more all-Indian historical context. Hence, when the textbooks were rewritten in 1996, it is about the Act of Partition that the readers are taught first. It is therefore noteworthy how, in the case of the 1996 textbooks, the question of Kolkata, the capital of Bengal and of Hindu domination, gains a particular significance. This is evident in the following excerpt, which conveys a sense of Bengal's specific socio-economic particularity:

> There was no progress in trade, the economy and the communication system in the region of east Bengal. On the other hand, Kolkata was the British India government's administrative capital and a center of economic and cultural development. Kolkata always enjoyed preference in the establishment of universities, colleges, schools, etc. As a result, east Bengal remained neglected and under-developed in the sphere of education. Agriculture was most important in east Bengal. Yet there were no steps taken by the government for the development of the farmers until then. Most of the landowners (*zamindars*) of east Bengal were permanent residents of Kolkata. In the face of extreme exploitation by their tax collectors, officers and wholesalers, the state of the farmers became miserable. Due to a lack of communication and transportation facilities, the pitiable state of the economy became endemic. The British were aware of the inequality in fields of education, communication and the economy between the east and west of Bengal, and through the partition they voiced their support for east Bengal's development.[18]

Hence what is continuously being emphasized is a sense of disparity between the east and west of

Bengal. In the following excerpt, the issue of Hindu exploitation of the Muslims receives a vivid depiction:

> [T]he issue of the mutually conflicting reaction of the Hindus and the Muslims towards the Bengal Partition is extremely significant. The participation of Muslims was very limited in Congress' all-India nationalist role. Kolkata-based educated Bengali (Hindu) intellectuals did not happily accept the prospect of the advancement of the underdeveloped and neglected Muslims. If the partition of Bengal were enacted the capital of the new province would be Dhaka. Dhaka would then be equivalent to Kolkata as a center for institutions such as the High Court, newspapers, periodicals and trade and commerce. Such a situation was considered to be against the interests of Kolkata-based businessmen, lawyers and the educated class and [therefore] the educated intellectuals opposed the Bengal Partition. Similarly, the interests of the landowners and the middle class were linked to Kolkata and [in that case] providing east Bengal with the status of a new province was against their interests. On the other hand, the Bengal partition triggered a desire for development among the neglected Muslims. Naturally Muslims considered that their interests would be more safeguarded in the newly formed province of East Bengal and Assam created by the Bengal partition. The prospect of greater opportunities for education and economic development created new hope amongst the Muslims. As a result, newspapers edited by Muslims supported the partition of Bengal.[19]

Thus all the passages cited above, across textbooks from 1973, 1984 and 1996, in their description of a British colonial Act, mostly outline a tale of Hindu and Muslim relations in which one community betrays and suppresses the interests and advancement of the other. Evidently such textual passages have the potential to shape a certain image of a “Hindu” in the mind of any young reader of the textbooks, and further helps in consolidating the (self-)image of a Muslim. The textbooks are therefore illustrations of how an inter-subjective understanding of identities is created.

Further, in the passages that follow the 1905 Act of Partition, the textbooks elucidate how the Indian National Congress Party, which was at the forefront of the anti-colonial movement in India, was a Hindu-dominated party and hence the Muslims and particularly the Bengali Muslims of east Bengal could not find any representation within the Congress. These passages are vivid in their account of how the Congress party was instrumental in suppressing the Muslims and hence how it became necessary for the latter to create a political organization of their own.

A passage from the 1973 textbook reads as follows.

> [T]he attitude that Congress demonstrated towards the Muslims led the Muslims to call for independent elections ... On witnessing Congress’ Bengal partition protests, Muslim leaders started feeling that Congress was formed for the satisfaction of Hindu interests and aspirations; as a result Muslims felt the need for the establishment of a [distinct] political organization of their own even more urgently.[20]

Similarly the authors of the 1996 textbook write that,

> Among the intellectuals, educated and political class of Bengal those who [ultimately] protested against the Bengal Partition were all Congress supporters and from the high-caste Hindu community.[21]

For much of its narrative thereafter, the textbooks use the terms "Congress" and "Hindus" interchangeably. Through the passages that I have discussed so far it is evident how they create a story of a separate Bengali/Muslim political consciousness and collective identity which is necessarily predicated upon in the alleged fact of Hindu exploitation and the mutual antagonism of the two identities.

The Nehru Report and Lahore Proposal

After the 1905 Act of Partition, the events concerning the Nehru Report of 1928 are the next most central episode of British colonial history in textbook narratives. In 1928 the British India Government decided to appoint a new commission made up of Indian representatives to put together a draft constitution for a dominion status for India. This commission was led by Motilal Nehru, who was then a prominent lawyer and also a member of the Indian National Congress. The description of the Nehru Commission is another illustration of how particular imaginations of identities are created. In these descriptions we can again see the creation of a narrative surrounding Hindu and Congress betrayal of Muslims. An excerpt from the 1973 textbook states that,

> .... it was proposed that a structure for self-rule accepted by all the parties would be presented to the British government. To this end, under the chairmanship of Motilal Nehru, a committee was formed. In due time the Nehru Committee report was published. In the Nehru report separate representation was canceled and [parliamentary] seats reserved for Muslims of Bangladesh and Punjab were revoked ... The integrationist Muslim leaders were dumb-struck at this injustice. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, in order to make the Nehru Report acceptable to Muslims, presented some remedial proposals at the all-party convention. His remedial proposals were rejected by Hindu majority votes. In this way, the Nehru Report laid initiatives toward Hindu-Muslim unity to rest ... Many Muslim leaders thought accepting the Nehru Report and agreeing to [a] death sentence for the Muslims would be the same thing.[22]

The 1984 textbook says that,

> On the publication of the Nehru Report it was discovered that the [new] constitution proposed by the commission did not leave any room for ensuring Muslims' rights and reservation [of parliamentary seats] for appropriate representation. The Muslim League opposed this. As an amendment to this report came the celebrated Fourteen Points of Mohammad Ali Jinnah.[23]

The question of selective mentions is also worth noting, especially in the 1984 textbooks. While the Nehru Report and the subsequent deterioration in relations between the Hindus and Muslims find

specific mention, other important episodes happening around the same time are omitted. For instance, two very significant events of early twentieth century colonial India, the enactment of the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 1919, are not mentioned in the 1984 edition. The Rowlatt Act was a law passed in 1919 according to which the British India police could imprison anybody suspected of terrorism and conspiring against British rule without trial for as long as two years. To protest against arrests made under this law, there was a public gathering in Jallianwala Bagh, a walled garden in the city of Amritsar in Punjab. The large non-violent crowd was indiscriminately shot at by the police without warning, which led to one of the most brutal incidences of violence in the British colonial period on the Indian sub-continent. The Jallianwala Bagh massacres were responded to by protests in the sub-continent, for which both Hindus and Muslims are known to have organized themselves in large numbers. The 1984 textbooks do not mention such instances of unity and public cooperation. This reflects the selectivity in which these textbooks frequently indulge.

The 1996 textbook says the following about the Nehru Report:

> [It] failed to recommend policies in tune with the then state of Indian politics. It failed to maintain communal unity. As a result differences between Hindus and Muslims increased.[24]

The critical part of the narrative comes when it thereafter suggests that,

> Congress, the Muslim League or the revolutionary groups, all held an attitude of disregard to the [Bengali] peasants. This was because most of the members of all these parties belonged to the families of zamindars, talukdars and government officials. Until the first decade of the twentieth century, there was no party or leader that spoke about the infinite misery, dire state of affairs and problems of the Bengali peasants.[25]

This above narrative is particularly interesting from the point of understanding processes of identity production because here the text is not merely attempting to distinguish a Bengali identity from Congress-Hindu affiliations, but also trying to create a distinction within the category of Muslims and the overarching politics of the Muslim League in order to construct a certain particularly Bengali Muslim category, a category separate not only from Hindus but also from non-Bengali Muslims. This becomes an especially important project for the textbook narratives in their representations of post-1947 history, yet is also, as we see in the earlier passage, reflected in some descriptions of pre-1947 history, especially in the 1996 textbooks. The distinction of a particularly Bengali Muslim identity emerges through the textbooks' specific characterization of a distinct socio-economic and cultural identity along with a separate regional identity. The textbooks, especially the 1996 edition cited in the above passage, label the peasants of Bengal as residing in the east of Bengal. Hence the struggle between the two communities, Hindus and Muslims, is also mapped regionally as a tale of exploitation

and violence by an upper-class identity group based in the west committed upon a socio-economically and culturally deprived community living in the east of Bengal.

It was only in 1971 that Bangladesh as an independent state was created, territorially spanning much of eastern Bengal. But the textual representations found in all the historical episodes discussed so far seem to anticipate and seek to justify the eventual formation of the independent state in 1971. This therefore indicates how retrospective cultural and territorial mapping takes place when histories are written with nationalist agendas. Textbooks in South Asia are among the most illustrative examples of this process.

The Post-1947 History and Language Movement in East Bengal

Attempts to create a socio-cultural and geographical identity through co-option of history becomes most apparent in the representation of the post-1947 past in all textbooks of Bangladesh we have studied. There are two general themes that run through the entire post-1947 narrative in all textbooks published in 1973, 1984 and 1996. The first is that of how the absorption of the eastern part of Bengal into Pakistan was a historical mistake; the second revolves around the alleged brutal suppression and atrocities executed by the West Pakistan regime on what became East Bengal/East Pakistan in 1947 after the Partition of India and the creation of an united Pakistan consisting of West Pakistan and East Bengal as its two territorial components. It is interesting that the narrative structure remains almost the same if one replaces what were considered as Hindu/Congress crimes in the representation of pre-1947 history with a story of oppression committed by West Pakistan and its political leadership in post-1947 history.

The post-1947 texts are entirely a history of West Pakistan's brutality toward the “Bengalis” of east Bengal. For instance, one of the pieces of text in the 1973 textbook refers to how the leadership of West Pakistan did not support the inclusion of Kolkata in East Bengal at the time of the Partition because that would have led to the predominance of East Bengal within the new union over the West. The comparison drawn between the division of Berlin and a possible partition of Kolkata is especially instructive. A part of the narrative from the history textbook of 1973 runs as follows:

> Following the directive of the [Muslim] League high command, the regional representatives of the League did not even present their claim over Kolkata in their submission to the Radcliffe Commission. If the city of Berlin could be divided between the two parts of Germany than why cannot Kolkata be divided between Pakistan and India? ... The mystery behind this is not hard to understand. If Kolkata was divided and a part of it was acquired by Pakistan, the demand for instituting the capital of Pakistan in Kolkata might have come up ... Bangladesh did not get a share of the many governmental assets that were located in Kolkata. The movable asserts that were allocated for East Bengal,

> even those were left behind by the new provincial government. Through their attitude, they [the Muslim League's central leadership] convinced the British government that they did not have any claims over world's one of the foremost cities. It was promised to the East Bengali members of the League that thirty-three crore [i.e. thirty-three times ten million] rupees would be received by sacrificing Kolkata. Yet the central leaders of the League did not find it morally questionable to give away Kolkata to India free of cost in exchange of Lahore in West Punjab.[26]

The state of Bangladesh, as is known, was born out of Pakistan, which consisted of two parts, the east and the west. In 1952, there began a resistance movement within the eastern part on the issue of adoption of Urdu as the national language for the union of Pakistan. Urdu was not a language that most people spoke in East Bengal, meaning that most in East Bengal resisted the imposition of Urdu as the national language for entirety of Pakistan. It is this movement of resistance, known as the *bhasha andolan* (language movement), that eventually became the national movement within East Bengal. In the descriptions of the language movement we can observe how history is narrated in a particularly "us" and "them" sequence.

The following excerpt is from the 1973 textbook.

> In an independent state the mother tongue of the majority of its citizens is always the national language. In Pakistan, the mother tongue of 56% of the population was Bengali, the mother tongue of 37% was Punjabi and that of the rest 7% were Sindhi, Pashtu, Baluchi and Urdu. Hence, the mother tongue of the majority population of Pakistan was Bengali. ... Urdu was not a language of any of the regions in Pakistan; Urdu was the language of the migrants from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Yet through completely undemocratic means Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan and many non-Bengali bureaucrats tried to impose Urdu on Pakistan as the sole national language. The great protest movement that was initiated in Bangladesh, as a reaction to this, is known as the bhasha andolan. It was the bhasha andolan which was forerunner to the independence movement of the Bengali nation.[27]

The text further states that,

> [here] one has to understand the conspiracy that was revealed in front of the people of East Bengal. The glorious dream that the League crafted before the creation of Pakistan was converted into a story of exploitation and false claims and Bengalis started feeling alienated in their own country.[28]

In the above passages, the text seeks to depict the then West Pakistan leadership as extremely oppressive in nature. It gives a detailed explanation of how the leadership in West Pakistan conspired to impose an alien language on the people of Bengal for the sake of their own interests. Hence, in a continuation of the narrative style adopted for pre-1947 history, the history of the post-1947 period is similarly made to unfold as a story of suppression and exploitation of one community by another, thus always in terms of a narrative of duality. The 1984 textbook, for instance, introduces the language movement to students with the following passage:

> Within a year they [the leaders of West Pakistan] attacked the language and culture of the people of East Bengal. Bhasha andolan is an enthralling event of our nationalist history.... Bhasha andolan took East Bengal's nationalist movement a step ahead. A new feeling of nationalism was born. This feeling gradually weakened the basis of Pakistani nationalism and gave birth to Bengali nationalism. That is why February 21 of 1952 was the first united expression of Bangladesh's collective consciousness and a first bold step toward the independence movement.[29]

Here the textbook most explicitly becomes the voice of the nation and interprets history as the story of a particular collective identity gaining political consciousness and its ultimate realization in the form of a nation. The descriptions of the language movement and the emphasis on the episode of 21 February 1952, when a large political procession in Dhaka agitating against the imposition of the Urdu language and was attacked by the Pakistan police, an event which came to be commemorated as a national day of martyrs, are therefore significant for our interpretation of textual narratives.

The entire language movement was centered around upholding a particular Bengali identity. The language movement became a symbol of Bengali nationalism, and the textbooks' illustration of the movement as the first nationalist movement of Bangladesh is particularly telling. This claim makes the narrative identify "Bengali" as the primary marker of Bangladesh's national identity; in this context we observe how the passage cited above equates the nationalism of Bangladesh with Bengali nationalism.

Since 1971, groups other than Bengali Muslims, such as Bihari Muslims, Bengali Hindus, Buddhist tribal populations living in hill country, have resided within the geographical extent of post-1971 Bangladesh. The overwhelming association of Bengali Muslims with the nation and the representation of Bangladeshi history as the pre-history of this particular community, coming to self-realization with the creation of the nation-state, reveals textbooks as a site of the politics and violence of nationalism and identity projects.

Conclusion

Eric Hobsbawn has observed that "the history which became part of the fund of knowledge or the ideology of nation, state or movement is not what has actually been preserved in popular memory, but what has been selected, written, pictured, popularized and institutionalized by those whose function it is to do so.... And just because so much of what subjectively makes up the modern 'nation' consists of such constructs and is associated with appropriate and, in general, fairly recent symbols or suitably tailored discourses [such as 'national history'], the national phenomenon cannot be adequately investigated without careful attention to the 'invention of tradition'."[30]

The attempt to write a history that suits the national imagination of a dominant group and also grants "genealogical legitimacy" to a particular community is at the core of most textbook projects in

South Asia. For a long time in India, it was of no surprise that a child would immediately feel hostile when he or she heard about a "Pakistani". Many historians and scholars of textbooks in Pakistan have likewise written about how textbooks in Pakistan were particularly crafted to paint a certain imaginary of a Hindu India which sat comfortably with the overall hegemonic state-nationalist discourse on India. As I argued at the end of the previous section, these identity-building projects have ramifications that go beyond for inter-state relations; the project of nationalization has deeper effects on intra-community relations within the same state space. In our readings of the successive editions of textbooks that have been written and read in Bangladesh for over four decades since its inception, it became evident that a certain community has been constructed as the natural constituency of the nation-state; the history of this community's collective consciousness has taken on the status of the history of the nation. References to other communities living within the nation's territorial space were marginal in textbooks from Bangladesh until around a decade ago, especially in the history that was written about the nationalist struggle for freedom. We might conclude by observing that writing "history" as a representation of the past is a political project, a project pursued by nationalist elites in South Asia through means often including textbooks.

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13 BSTB, *Bangladesh –o- Bharater Itihas* [*History of Bangladesh and India*] Dhaka: BSTB, 1973, 333

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Living in Harmony? “Casteism”, Communalism and Regionalism in Indian Social Science Textbooks

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Abstract · Three societal lines of conflict, “casteism”, communalism and regionalism, are regarded as severe challenges in present-day India. This article discusses and compares differences between presentations of these lines of conflict in six textbook series for social sciences prepared by the Indian states of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, and by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in New Delhi. The variations in perspective, scope and approach are related to specific discourses of identity politics, which may be explained in terms of the impact of different positions adopted by states and the union towards the issues, the discursive dominance of specific socio-political viewpoints, and by changing educational approaches.

Keywords · social science, conflict, history, identity politics, India, political science, textbooks

Introduction

In India, as in many societies, living in harmony and peace is seen as a guiding principle and a prerequisite for social and economic development. However, the reality is far from being harmonious. Indian mass media cover daily a broad range of issues that are related to different lines of conflict within society or between India and its neighbors. How do textbooks address these conflicts, and what factors shape textbook discourses?

In general, the ways in which textbooks refer to conflicts are related to the ways in which a society conceives itself and imagines “the nation” and the “external other”. The Indian national movement conceptualized “the nation” differently from that of the European nation states, which assumed linguistic and cultural unity. Indian politicians accepted

linguistic and cultural diversity[1] during the "last wave" of national movements.[2] As Subrata Mitra argues, in postcolonial India, the "nation" is opposed by "sub-national" movements based on language, ethnicity or culture.[3] In a later stage of development, when these movements are "banalized" (Michael Billig),[4] they might become official political players, for example, in the context of linguistic states (like Maharashtra or Tamil Nadu) or autonomous regions.[5] Both the central national state and the "sub-national" federal states, however, are contested by "sub-national" movements in a stage of agitation. These pursue identity politics by making use of "cultural" markers in order to demarcate space and mobilize supporters. The central state and the "sub-national" states try to oppose references to divergent cultural identities by pursuing their own identity politics and threreby legitimizing the status quo. The discourses on these two levels overlap only partly. Moreover, they are (possibly) countered by discourses that propagate different identity formations.

Indian discourses on national identity are still deeply rooted in colonial times and in the political controversies in the aftermath of partition and independence. To this day, these discourses are, according to Pingle and Varshney, internally driven, barely influenced by globalization.[6]

Bipan Chandra draws attention to the development of national consciousness in India, which during the second half of the nineteenth century was seen as an ongoing process in confrontation with colonialism.[7] Only the twentieth century developed a composite "cultural nationalism" or the perception of a perennial Indian nation going back at least to the Vedic age.[8] Further, Chandra points to the "extremely uneven development... of national and anti-imperialist consciousness" among the people,[9] where other group identities based on such identifiers as region, language, religion, and caste dominated as points of reference. In this context, such identities, which are restricted in scope, can become an issue as "casteism", regionalism or communalism, especially from the perspective of the nationalism which encompasses them, which makes them absolute and renders other aspects of unity and division irrelevant.[10]

As Chandra *et al.* have indicated, communalism, and, it might be added, the other "isms", developed as means of mobilization. They did not precede nationalism, even when they refered to long established though not absolute identities. They began emerging in the later decades of the nineteenth century in competition with nationalism as a means of making use of economic and political opportunities offered by the colonial system. Communalism became extreme and acquired a mass base only after 1937, yet led to partition within a

decade. Textbooks naturalized communalist perspectives both prior to and after independence.[11]

After partition, the direction of Indian politics was negotiated largely among secularists, Hindu traditionalists and Hindu nationalists. Nehruvian secularism, with its focus on "unity in diversity", dominated Indian politics for most of the time, despite a strong Hindu traditionalist wing within the party. In the forty-second amendment of the Indian constitution in 1976, secularism was added to the preamble as a state goal. Hindu nationalist tendencies, which became strong in several states, especially those of the "Hindi belt,"[12] became a leading force in the union government from 1977 to 1979 and from 1999 to 2004, and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won a landslide victory in the elections in May 2014. As a main issue of present-day mass politics,[13] Indian identity politics between composite and Hindu nationalism led to public controversies over textbook discourses during the two periods referred to above.[14]

For several reasons, identity politics are perceived differently from India's federal states than from the center. Political and social developments or issues which receive prime importance in national discourse do not arouse similar interest in some states. Geographical distance and remoteness from the events in the center play a crucial role here. This is especially true for the issue of partition, which had affected northern India and had the greatest effect in the provinces of Punjab and Bengal. Similarly, the freedom struggle was understood differently in the south and the north. Moreover, the states situated outside the Hindi belt developed their identity politics partly in opposition to the center and the north. Here, the discourses are not, or not only, marked by secular versus communalist positions, but appear to be anti-domination discourses pitted against central or dominant impertinences. Thus in Tamil Nadu, the leading regional parties, such as the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), grew out of the anti-Brahmin and Dravidian (lower caste) movement, which took up an anti-Hindi stand against the language policies of the center and against Congress party positions.[15] Despite erstwhile separatist tendencies, these parties ended up as spearheads for the reinforcement of the power of the federal states against the center.[16] In Maharashtra the situation is more complex. Apart from during the second half of the 1990s, Congress and breakaway parties (Progressive Congress, Nationalist Congress Party) formed the state governments. But these parties have a strong regional focus. On the other hand, the dominant regional force, Shiv Sena, added a communalist outlook to the regionalist one and became a strong ally of the BJP.[17]

These identity discourses exhibit oppositions along two main dimensions or coordinates: a secular versus Communal or Hindu nationalist dimension[18] and a national or center versus a "sub-national", state, or regionally based one. Both of these find their way into schools and textbooks as the official versions of identity politics, used as tools to promote the official reading of the desired shape of Indian identity.

Beside the involvement of union and state governments in education and their respective interests, political influences pass through the prism of educational considerations. Thus, educational concerns, alongside political ones, urged a focus on unity and societal harmony and called for conflicts within India, especially the violent ones, to be dealt with mostly by silence so as not to disturb young minds.[19] An opposite standpoint emerged from the 1990s, arguing that conflict-related questions must also be addressed in schools. Partition with its consequences, and India's relationship to Pakistan, are the most striking cases, but current internal rifts, for example, should also be addressed.[20]

Beside educational intentions, what does the handling of societal conflicts in Indian textbooks reveal? Where textbooks are used as tools for the development of national consciousness among future citizens, conflicts with neighbors portray metaphorical borderlines against the "external other" which tend to unify and homogenize the nation, especially where it perceives itself as under threat from a foreign enemy. The discussion of internal conflicts, however, qualifies notions of national unity and homogeneity. From the point of view of identity politics, such discussion might seem counterproductive, and is only of use if directed against an "internal other". In this case, the presentation of conflict in textbooks reflects political fronts between groups struggling for discursive power to decide on the content of textbooks, and aiming for political power in a general sense.

The two coordinates of identity politics mentioned above (secular versus communal and center versus state) are visible in part when we compare subsequent textbook discourses under governments of different political orientations. A synchronic comparison can examine the second dimension, differences in the discourses between center and states. Thus we ask which messages the discourses reveal with changes of government, and whether textbooks produced by the center and those in use in the states reflect concurrent positions, seeing as education is on the "Concurrent List", which determines that Union and state governments jointly develop policies and decide upon matters related to those issues on it. Moreover, we address which educational means are used to bring topics to pupils and whether the means of implementation support the political message in this content.

This article will look into shifts in textbook discourses along societal conflict lines in India. The focal points are textbook revisions in line with political changes and central as opposed to regional perspectives. When analyzing textbooks in use over the last fifteen years, from the end of the 1990s to 2013, we shall combine a diachronic and synchronic comparison of six textbook series, including three from the center (NCERT, the National Council of Educational Research and Training), two from the state of Tamil Nadu, and one from Maharashtra (both of these states emerged out of "sub-national" movements). The current books, in use during the time of the study, are part of the sample. Older series could not be acquired for Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.[21] With the focus on three major interrelated issues, which are held responsible for destroying "harmony" and hampering "national integration", we will analyze positions in textbooks which view events from different political angles. With reference to the treatment of societal conflicts, the article argues that, beside the effects of different identity politics, there are other factors, in this case educational ones, which influence textbook discourses, and which might clash with the purpose of identity formation pursued in the textbooks.[22]

After giving background information about the textbooks, we will reconstruct the various textbook narratives on caste and "untouchability", communalism, linguistic diversity and regionalism and related concepts, and look into the educational treatment of the issues. A conclusion will sum up our findings.

Social Science Textbooks in India

In federal India, education's inclusion on the Concurrent List means that policy in this arena is a matter jointly for the Union and state governments. At the Union level, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in New Delhi develops curriculum frameworks and model textbooks which are used all over India in schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). CBSE is responsible for examination matters. At state level, each state has its own education boards. Schools affiliated to them use textbooks prescribed by these boards.

Apart from the state-run schools in India, there are private and community-run schools, which often use books by private textbook publishers. These will not be discussed here. Tamil Nadu textbooks for schools affiliated to the State Education and Examination Boards are published by the (state-owned) Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation (TNTBC) in Tamil and in English. As English has become very prominent as a language of instruction, many, if not most, pupils study using the English books. We analyze editions published in

2005, which were also in circulation and use some years later, and in 2011 (cited as TN 1/school year and TN 2/school year respectively). Alongside books from Tamil Nadu, English-medium textbooks published by the Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, Pune, are taken into account. For the higher secondary stage, besides state bureau publications, publications by private publishers are available, which have to be licensed by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Education. We analyzed editions published between 2010 and 2012, which were the books in use during the period of writing (cited as M/school year).[23]

The NCERT books are used in around 9000 "central schools" and also serve as model textbooks, meaning they have a wider influence. A first generation of books (cited as NCERT 1/school year), published in the 1990s but going back to earlier editions, was denounced as "Marxist" and replaced by new books between 2002 and 2004 under the NDA government, which in their turn were regarded as "Hindu-nationalistic" (NCERT 2/school year).[24] After a passionate controversy on the "saffronization" of history textbooks in particular[25] and a change of government in 2004, new curricula and a third generation of textbooks were developed, which appeared between 2006 and 2008 and are currently still in use in schools (NCERT 3/school year). These three generations of books on social science subjects, particularly civics, are the bases of this study. To denote the school year, the books and syllabi use the terms "class" or "standard". In this article, apart from direct references to the book titles, we generally apply the term "year".

Social studies are taught as an umbrella subject combining history, geography, civics/political science and, in part, economics, as separate units in one textbook per school year in Tamil Nadu (years VI to X) and in the second NCERT series (years VI to X). In Maharashtra, history and civics is combined, as well as geography and economics (years III to V and IX to X). The other years, like the NCERT textbooks of the first and third series, issue books for each subject, including sociology for the upper secondary stage (years XI and XII). As the subjects are treated separately, they frame the conflict-related discourses specifically. In geography, the discussion of resources, especially water, is one of the contexts, demography, particularly the gender aspect of the Indian population's sex ratio, another one. Disasters and regional geography also present opportunities to mention specific conflict lines. However, such discussions or mentions are comparably rare, and geography, along with economics, is the social science subject which refers to conflicts least. History is, of course, full of descriptions of past wars and conflicts. The lines of conflict discussed in this article are more specific and find their mention predominantly in the context of pre- and post-

independence history, the developments towards partition and the making of independent India. The subjects of civics or political studies are central to the discussion of conflict in the books. Here, the constitution, the organization of government or the workings of Indian democracy are the contexts in which our topics are mentioned or discussed. Themes related to social life in primary school years, or framed as "Indian society" in more advanced stages of education, adopt a perspective that is more sociological than political. It is notable that the same frames and issues are repeated in several different school years.

In all textbook series, India is presented as a country of physical and cultural diversity, which strengthen the motto "unity in diversity", a mantra we find repeated several times.

Caste and "Untouchability"

The specific structure of Indian society, which European discourse has objectified as the "caste system", produces one of the gravest issues for Indian development, and its presentation in textbooks appears to be in agreement with this assessment. Caste and "untouchability" is a topic not only in civics or political science, but also in some series of history textbooks.

> Caste creates social gradation and social grouping, which leads to social distinction, discrimination and disintegration. All men are born equal. Casteism is against this principle. ... This hinders the smooth functioning of a democracy and the growth of national [i]ntegration. (TN 2/VIII)[26]

Besides these and similar characterizations of the caste system, most textbook series, whether concerned with history or civics/politics, look back into the past in a few lines or, especially in the first and third series of NCERT books, on several occasions. The first series covers the development of caste inequality throughout history in all of the history textbooks, pointing towards changes and growing rigidity, as here: "Caste was a major divisive force and element of disintegration in 18th century India. It often split Hindus living in the same village or region into many social atoms."[27] The consumption of beef by Brahmins during the Vedic age[28] served as one of the arguments for deleting passages and replacing the whole series under the BJP-led government during the early years of this century.[29] In line with its affirmative policy toward Hindu traditions, the second NCERT series omits most historical references to caste inequalities. The third series of NCERT covers the caste issue in history again, taking a broader approach.[30]

One aspect all series take into account is that of the reform movements during the nineteenth century. The first NCERT series discusses the religiously inspired movements of the nineteenth century which criticized caste divisions,[31] and describes how, in the second

half of the century, “the lower castes themselves” “became conscious of their basic human rights and began to rise in defence of these rights” against the higher castes, also questioning Brahman authority in the field of religion. “The struggle against the evils of the cast system, however, still remains an urgent task before the Indian people, especially in the rural areas.” [32]

Likewise, the year VIII book of the second NCERT series discusses the “social and cultural awakening” in the nineteenth century, presenting ideas and activities of individual reformers. The chapter centers on revivalist tendencies within Hinduism and “religious awakening among the Muslims” and does not touch on the social movements. Still, the “zealous social reformer” Jyotiba Phule is mentioned, “who took up earnestly the cause of women and the cause of downtrodden people in Maharashtra. … However, his campaign for the economic regeneration of the depressed classes and the removal of untouchability soon acquired the character of an anti-Brahmin movement. Nonetheless, his endeavours went a long way in creating a consciousness about the plight of the depressed classes among the people.”[33] It sounds here as if the anti-Brahmin orientation is disapproved of by the textbook author, and the euphemistic phraseology diminishes the issue to some extent.

With a different approach, the relevant chapter of the third NCERT series, “Women, Caste and Reform”, concentrates on the social aspects of reform movements, not only those led by high-caste protagonists, but also low-caste temple entry, self-respect and non-Brahmin movements with protagonists like Phule, Ambedkar and Periyar.

> But orthodox Hindu society also reacted by founding Sanatan Dharma Sabhas and the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal in the north, and associations like the Brahman Sabha in Bengal. The object of these associations was to uphold caste distinctions as a cornerstone of Hinduism, and show how this was sanctified by scriptures. Debates and struggles over caste continued beyond the colonial period and are still going on in our own times. (NCERT 3/VIII)[34]

The same aspects are also highlighted in books from Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. In Maharashtra, a chapter on “The Struggle for Social Equality” covers peasants, workers and women’s movements as well as the Dalit movement.[35] In the new edition of Tamil Nadu books, reform movements against “untouchability” are referred to in a chapter on “Contemporary Social Issues of Tamil Nadu”, mentioning activities conducted by several reformers. The issues are quite clearly described here.

> Large sections of the society, mostly doing manual work, had been termed as Sudras and Panchamas. These people were deprived of education, government jobs, right to temple entry, property and usage of public paths and water sheds; such a system resulted in exploitation of [the] majority of people by the people of higher castes.... Thus the masses of Tamil Nadu were deprived of rights, property, education,

> office and social status for thousands of years leading to their deplorable backward conditions in the modern times. (TN 2/IX)[36]

The book shows a strong anti-Brahmin slant and links the fight against "untouchability" closely to the anti-Brahmin movement. Whereas formerly "the Brahmins … [had] captured the priesthood in the rich temples", already under British rule the "monopolistic exploitation of rich temples was restrained by [the] 'Hindu [R]eligious Endowment Act'."[37] Among others, the Congressman E. V. Ramasamy intended "to liberate the Dravidians from Brahmin order and to expose its tyranny and deceptive methods by which they controlled all spheres of Hindu life."[38] These wordings expose an anti-northern line of conflict which refers to "the masses of Tamil Nadu" while linking Brahmins strongly to northern Indian Hinduism. This is specific to the Tamil Nadu series, which in this regard hold an opposite position to that of the second NCERT series.

Interestingly, the assessment of the role of the colonial power differs between the series. The second NCERT series states: "The British exploited casteism to keep Indians divided and to perpetuate their rule over India"[39], suggesting that they are to blame for strengthening it. Others are at least ambivalent. Maharashtra mentions that "[t]he British introduced the concept of social equality. They enrolled Dalits in the army. This increased confidence among them. They protested against injustice. In British rule they got opportunities for education and employment. They became aware of their downtrodden condition. This led to social tension".[40] Likewise, the first NCERT series pointed to the British introduction of the rule of law and equality before the law and the "humanitarian measures" the colonial power implemented.[41] On the other hand, later, reforms were described as having to be in line with administrative prerequisites where, for example, "The foreign government was afraid of arousing the hostility of the orthodox sections of society."[42] In a more pronounced tone, "[a]s usual, orthodox Hindu sections gave stiff opposition to these developments."[43]

Though arguing along the same lines, the third NCERT series uses other wordings which do not reference today's lines of conflict: "There was a feeling that any strong attack on local customs, practices, beliefs and religious ideas might enrage 'native' opinion."[44]

After independence, the Indian constitution granted equality to all citizens and abolished "untouchability". Reservation politics and other Union and State laws were introduced to "protect the interests of certain weaker sections of the society".[45] These aspects are referred to by all textbook series in the context of history (the drafting of the constitution) or civics (the content of the constitution). However, the second NCERT series puts less emphasis on the

topic and mentions the abolition of "untouchability" in the constitution only briefly, in year VII.[46] Further, "[t]he great legal luminary and depressed classes' leader Dr B. R. Ambedkar" is only shortly mentioned as president of the institutional drafting committee,[47] reflecting the ambivalent position of Hindu nationalists towards Ambedkar.[48] The other series name him in the context of the constitution and social movements with more emphasis, for example in Maharashtra:

> Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar [Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar; "Babasaheb" is a title of reverence] aimed at establishing a society based on the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity. He was convinced that the injustice to the Dalits and inequality would not end unless the caste system was entirely rooted out. Social equality, according to him, is a right of the Dalits. (M/VIII)[49]

Instead of highlighting the achievements of Ambedkar, the political science books in the third NCERT series cite his experiences as a (Dalit) child in the general context of diversity, stereotypes, and discrimination, to make caste discrimination approachable in a pupil-oriented way.[50]

Beside Ambedkar, the position of Gandhi in relation to the "Harijans" ("God's folk", the term used by Gandhi to refer to Dalits, traditionally considered "untouchable") is mentioned in nearly all the books covering this period. But only the third series points to differences between the positions of Gandhi and Ambedkar; a closer look at the role of Dalits in the independence movement reveals that they were not content and began to organize themselves,[51] also opposing Gandhi's stand.[52] These books are the first to supply sources for pupils to experience the proceeding of these controversies during the development of the constitution.[53]

The specific veneration of Ambedkar led to one of the most recent controversies about Indian textbooks. A historical cartoon in a NCERT book, which showed Ambedkar, a Dalit, and the high-caste Nehru framing the constitution and which was wrongly interpreted as disrespectful, gave rise to a violent dispute in 2012, which served to demonstrate how important the inclusion of such cartoons in textbooks is for the training of interpretative capabilities.[54]

The second NCERT series adopts a restrained approach to the importance of castes in today's India. It is accepted that "[c]aste creates social gradation and social groupings, which leads to social distinction, discrimination and disintegration." A person belonging to a low caste "is subjected to many inhuman and discriminatory treatments [sic]. His or her caste becomes a curse for life without any fault of his or her [own]." Today, it continues, "caste discrimination has drastically declined but conversely the [political] importance of caste

consideration has increased."[55] Thus, we might read, the real problem is not discrimination but the politicization of caste differences, an argument that seems mainly to be directed against the low caste movements.[56]

In the year XII sociology book from the series, the caste structure is described as an obstacle to the unity of the country; its opposition to "national consciousness by imposing social restrictions and ideas of purity and pollution," and the hindrances it presents to social mobility are pointed at. "Untouchability is the cancer of the society."[57] Later, in a chapter on "Deprived Groups", the author states: "Moreover, caste violence has witnessed a dramatic increase over the last couple of years."[58] Despite its clearer stance, the book joins with the rest of the series in minimizing the negative role of caste, stating that "[The c]aste system is making adequate adjustments with the changing times. It has retained its relevance by becoming more resilient and accommodative", among others by the process of Sanskritization.[59]

In contrast to the second series, the first NCERT series discusses caste and "untouchability" broadly, stating that neither are problems of the past.

> In spite of all these measures, narrow casteism is still followed at different places. Specially in small towns and villages the evils of [the] caste system can be found on a large scale. There are instances of caste-riots with tragic loss of life and property. ... In these days of technological advancement, our country can never progress unless casteism is uprooted totally. (NCERT 1/VIII)[60]

> It is a matter of shame that untouchability is still practised in our country in one form or the other. Still let us hope that in the years to come people will be successful in erasing the blot of untouchability from the face of India. To achieve this much depends on the children who are the future citizens of this country. (NCERT 1/VIII)[61]

Implicitly, the books link the topic to counter-discourses such as those revolving around the "glorious" Hindu past, which claim that, "It is good to be proud of one's heritage. But one must not do it blindly. It is equally important to be critical about it. … Many things in our traditional society are bad, and these must be changed, if we are to progress and have a democratic society."[62] One such criticism is directed towards the caste system:

> Now there is nothing good of such a system. And this kind of inequality is entirely unjustifiable. … Worst of all was the system called untouchability. … It was a shameful and inhuman aspect of our old society. … But to abolish a system that has gone on for hundreds of years is not easy. Those who benefit from the system – the upper castes … would not sometimes like the system to go.[63]

The moral qualifications and appeals in these texts appear helpless in view of the fact that all governmental efforts and constitutional provisions have not yet been able to achieve the goal of equality. Additionally, the opponent, as defined in quotations, is the upper-caste

Hindu sticking to his or her positions, not the member of lower castes who is politicizing the distinction.

One book in the series defines "casteism", a term often used in the books, but not frequently explained: "Casteism is the exploitation of caste consciousness for narrow political gains. A casteist conceives India basically as a federation of *jatis* [professional group caste] and not of states or free and equal citizens." [64] We again see a moral qualification at work here.

In the year XII sociology book, the author points to the links between caste and class: "Harijans may not be doing today what they were forced to do a couple of decades ago, but they remain under the economic and social hegemony of the upper castes and the landed interests."[65] Caste and class are also defined in relation to violence when authors claim that, "As such, it is a class war behind the apparent caste riots. … Those people were killed not only because they were Harijans, but also because they were working as agricultural labourers and share-croppers for the rich and dominant landlords."[66]

Political science books from the third series handle the topic differently. They discuss caste and class discrimination in the general context of diversity, stereotypes, and discrimination and in the context of equality and dignity. They mention the Dalit movement, constitutional provisions and governmental programs such as midday meals at schools, prepared by Dalit women but eaten by all children regardless of caste.[67] And they hint that governmental and legal action is often a reaction to pressure from below.[68]

> As we can see, the existence of a right or a law or even a policy on paper does not mean that it exists in reality. People have had to constantly work on or to make efforts to translate these into principles that guide the action of their fellow citizens or even their leaders. … even in a democratic society, similar processes of struggle, writing, negotiation and organising need to continue. (NCERT 3/VIII)[69]

The books of the third NCERT series do not deplore today's caste discrimination in general terms, but exemplify, contextualize and explain.[70] Further, they question the issues. For example, the reservation policy, a policy of affirmative action for disadvantaged groups, which otherwise is just presented as a governmental strategy, is discussed with arguments for and against.[71] The books focus on the role of social movements[72] as agents of change and present societal developments as political processes, not as processes of moral reorientation of the individual.[73]

According to the state board and first NCERT series books, caste and "untouchability" are evils that have to be wiped out. In this context, the books from Tamil Nadu and

Maharashtra focus strongly on the Dalit aspect. The second NCERT series does not take an overtly contrary position, but dilutes the seriousness of the problem by scope and semantics, thus reflecting the Hindu-nationalist background without contravening the standards of the Indian constitution. The third NCERT series links the topic to the broader social issues of discrimination and the struggle for equality.

Communalism

The religious heterogeneity of India, whose population includes Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Zoroastrians, is mentioned by all textbook series. To accommodate this diversity, the Indian constitution defines the country as a secular state, where all denominations are free to express their faith openly and have the right to their own educational institutions. The books regard participation in the festivals of the other communities mutually as a basis for communal harmony and Indian unity.[74]

Yet the relationship between Hindus and Muslims in particular is not without antagonism, and its treatment differs among the textbook series. Three historical protagonists demonstrate this: Mahmud of Ghazni, who invaded India in the eleventh century, the Moghul emperors Akbar, who applied a tolerant and syncretistic religious policy, and Aurangzeb, who returned to an orthodox Islamic position (see also the contribution by Deepa Nair in this volume). Mahmud is (in)famous for raiding and destroying temples.[75] Whereas the Maharashtrian textbook simply states the event,[76] the book from Tamil Nadu refers to the religious background of the adversaries.[77] The far more detailed first series of NCERT books sees the raids in an economic light and marginalizes religious motives.[78] The act of plundering temples for the attainment of religious merits, which was felt as blasphemy by the Hindus, play a role in the second series, which uses quite strong words.[79] But the third series points to the policy of destroying temples as carried out by Hindu or Buddhist rulers.[80] In this way, the Hindu-Muslim antagonism is resolved by treating the issue as a political demonstration of power.

The treatment of the religious policies of the Moghuls, especially by Akbar and Aurangzeb, gives further insight into historical interpretations. The tolerant attitude of Akbar towards all religions is highlighted in all the books covering the period. The treatment of his foundation of a new syncretic religion, *din-i-Illahi*, illustrates the difference between the books; whereas the Maharashtrian book emphasizes tolerance,[81] the Tamil Nadu book points out that "Akbar made an attempt to bring Unity in Diversity through his own religion,"[82] linking history to present-day slogans.

The books of the first NCERT series had, however, urged caution against the acceptance of this narrative, pointing out that the "tauhid-i-Ilahi" was not intended to be a religion but "really an order of the Sufistic type."[83] One book adds that, "Akbar's great dream was that India should be united as one country. People should forget their differences of region and religion and think of themselves only as the people of India."[84] In this way, history as mediated through these textbooks directly supports the message of today's Indian national policy.

The second series NCERT book backtracks to the religious and philosophical focus. In a somewhat denigrating tone, it stresses that *din-i-illahi* "had no well-defined theology or philosophy. The basic purpose behind the formulation of Din-i-Ilahi was... universal harmony," as Akbar, after long philosophical discussions with exponents of the different faiths, had come to the conclusion that "no single religion could claim the monopoly of truth."[85]

Not mentioning *din-i-Illahi*, but instead the idea of "universal peace", the third NCERT series again links theology and religious policy.[86] If it is depicted as not claiming to be a religion of its own, Akbar's concept is less likely to be opposed by today's religious communities and the message of harmony more easily acceptable to believers. In an exercise, the book also relates history to the present, but without mixing them up: "Like the Mughal Empire, India today is also made up of many social and cultural units. Does this pose a challenge to national integration?"[87]

The space allotted to the topic varies, with a few lines in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and the second NCERT series, several pages in the first NCERT series, and one and a half in the third; likewise, there are variations in the degree to which history is linked to present-day issues, a point which is left aside in Maharashtra and the NCERT book of the second series.

On the other hand, the policies of Aurangzeb, who reversed the tolerant religious politics of his predecessors, are negatively characterized, where they are referred to,[88] and partly made responsible for the subsequent decline of Mughal power, as he infuriated the other groups.

One book in the first NCERT series for the higher secondary stage argues not on a personal level blaming Aurangzeb, but instead cites two different trends at the Mughal court, an orthodox and a more liberal one, and the power plays in the court.[89] In the texts from the second generation of NCERT books, however, Aurangzeb personally is the villain. Additionally, the book refers only to the Hindu-Muslim relationship, describing Aurangzeb as anti-Hindu,[90] whereas elsewhere[91] it is made clear that the other non-Islamic denominations

were also affected. Whereas the first-series book introduces arguments of social history and power, trying to avoid communalist interpretations, the cited second-generation NCERT book seems to reflect a communalist position. Thus aspects of medieval history are quite sensitive in the context of present-day discourse on communalism and are used as arguments by all parties.[92]

Present-day communalism is mentioned or made the topic of discussion in all social science textbook series, though with differences in scope. In the state board books it is covered only briefly; most space is given to the issue in the first NCERT series. "Communalism" is described in moral terms, as in Tamil Nadu.

> In our country communities are formed on the basis of religions. Communalism refers to [a] selfish aggressive attitude of one community towards another. This feeling sometimes lead[s] to communal riots. (TN 1/VIII)[93]

A Maharashtrian book, which also makes very brief reference to the issue, relates it to politics:

> Communalism means abusing religion for political gains. Communalism creates enmity among people living together in harmony. In order to maintain our unity, our Constitution has upheld secularism. (M/VII)[94]

NCERT addresses the nation as an argument:

> There is no harm of having so many religions. But to think of the interest of one's religious community first and the nation afterwards, will definitely harm the country's unity and integrity. (NCERT 1/VIII)[95]

Or, as a year XII book phrases it, "communalism is a political strategy opposed to nationalism as a process of integration of multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual communities."[96]

In the first series, Communalism is not only attributed to Muslims, but also to Hindu positions.[97] It is not only mentioned that Gandhi was killed by a religious (Hindu) communalist, but also that "some people want India to be a Hindu state, because they are in a majority. But this is obviously and terribly wrong."[98] The book cites as an argument the composite Indian culture to which all communities have contributed. A year XII book claims with Nehru that "while all communalism is bad, we must remember that minority communalism is born out of fear, while majority communalism takes the form of political reaction".[99]

The rise of communalism is seen in relation to socioeconomic developments under the British, in the course of which "Muslims had lagged behind the Hindus," in addition to the British policy of "divide and rule". Hindu and Muslim organizations (the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League are named) "indulged in spreading communal hatred in their

respective communities against each other," resulting in communal clashes.[100] Explanations are mostly socioeconomic and on a highly general level.

The second generation of NCERT books holds the British directly responsible for the emergence of communal attitudes because of their divide-and-rule policy. The freedom struggle is depicted as having united all Indians, which might lead us to ask how partition then came about. According to the books, after independence, communalism combined with terrorism (which they relate especially to Muslims and Sikhs)[101] and endangers Indian unity, as "aggressive communalism, if unchecked, at a certain stage leads to a separatist tendency" (Pakistan, Kashmir).[102] Thus the Hindu majority is implicitly excluded from allegations related to communalism.[103]

The third series of NCERT widens the scope once again. While it criticizes the view that today's communalism is part of the long, direct line of Hindu-Muslim conflict stretching back into medieval times,[104] it acknowledges that "religious, cultural, regional or ethnic conflict ... can be found in almost every phase of our history" and that "colonialism did not invent inter-community conflicts" and cannot be blamed for today's strife. But, the book adds, "We should not forget that we also have a long tradition of religious pluralism, ranging from peaceful co-existence to actual inter-mixing or syncretism."[105]

The most disturbing feature of communalism is the violence connected with it. The textbooks treat communal riots in a variety of ways. Tamil Nadu books simply mention their occurrence in a general, abstract way. "Thousands of innocent people die during these Communal riots."[106] The riots in connection with partition, omitted in the older series, are mentioned in one sentence in the newer books: "The announcement about the partition led to riots in many places."[107] Maharashtra mentions the riots of 1922 and 1946;[108] in 1947, "The people of India were grieved because of partition of the country and the terrible violence."[109] In civics books or sections of books, more recent outbreaks of violence are not mentioned.

The first NCERT series discusses riots in a broader way in history than in civics or political studies books. "Many innocent people die in communal riots".[110] After partition, "[g]hastly communal riots broke out. Lakhs [hundreds of thousands] of people were killed or injured and millions lost their homes and jobs.... Even after independence there have been communal riots at different places. There have been riots between the Hindus and the Muslims, between the Shia and the Sunni sects of the Muslims. Such riots create an atmosphere of distrust, lead to loss of life and property. They disrupt social life, affect the production of the country and bring the democratic machinery of the country to a standstill."[111]

In 1946, “The Hindu and Muslim communalists blamed each other for starting the heinous killings and competed with each other in cruelty.”[112] The broader discussion of the riots and their background in the year XII history book remains on a general level, full of emotionally charged adjectives such as “nasty”, “senseless”, and “barbaric”, and depicted as ultimately incomprehensible: “even at the very moment of freedom a communal orgy, accompanied by indescribable brutalities, was consuming thousands of lives in both India and Pakistan.” [113]

The books from the second NCERT series keep the discussion on a low level. Referring to the “terrible communal riots” in the pre-independence era, the partition riots are either not mentioned,[114] or losses are deplored. “Thousands of innocent lives were lost. Families displaced from their homes became refugees. This communal carnage made children orphans and women widows.”[115] Modern communal violence is linked to terrorism[116] carried out by minority groups, otherwise discussed only in a very abstract way[117] or masked through euphemistic phrases like “the communal problem raises its head from time to time.”[118]

Only the third series of NCERT books addresses historical and recent riots in a more accessible way. Whereas the year VIII history book exemplifies “Life in the time of Partition” using the example of Delhi and refers rather briefly but pointedly to the 1946 and post-independence riots,[119] the year XII book assigns a chapter to “Understanding Partition”, starting with and focusing largely on the experience of violence, not only in general terms, but also on a personal level. Difficult topics are included, such as the role of gender during the riots. “Dishonouring women of a community was seen as dishonouring the community itself, and a mode of taking revenge.”[120] Also the role of the security service personnel is qualified, as in the quotation, “In many places did the policemen help their co-religionists but they also attacked members of other communities”[121] Here, unlike in other books, not only the British are blamed for the lack of security in the months leading up to independence.

Political science includes the issue of the riots in the form of a story as part of its very first lesson about “understanding diversity”. Even if “unity in diversity” is the main focus of this unit, prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination are the issues that follow.[122] Later, in a general discussion about communalism, “large scale communal violence” during partition and post-independence is referred to.[123] The books for higher secondary education are more specific.[124]In the book for year XII, the Sikh and the Gujarat riots are set into context and broadly discussed: The “Gujarat riots show that the governmental machinery becomes susceptible to sectarian passions. Instances, like in Gujarat, alert us to the dangers involved in using religious sentiments for political purposes. This poses a threat to democratic

politics."[125] Even if the topic is highly emotional, the language of the new textbooks keeps a reflective tone, trying to make a very sensitive issue discussable.

Discussing communalism, the textbooks reflect two types of conflict lines, those between different communalist groups and another one between a communalist and a "national", integrative or "secular" outlook. The second NCERT series refers to secularism as a feature of the constitution only *en passant*.[126] Tamil Nadu and Maharashtrian books describe it briefly among the other objectives of the constitution.[127]

The first and third NCERT series strongly reflect secular positions and highlight secularism as a fundamental principle and remedy to communalism. There are appeals "to keep religious matters separate from politics" and that "people of different religions should learn to live together and keep religion away from politics."[128] There is also the somewhat defensive assertion that secularism is not against religion,[129] and the assertion that "[o]ur culture and our secular state would be destroyed if all people belonging to different religions are not treated equally."[130] This is obviously directed against the claims of a Hindu majority culture. Describing communalism and other issues as threats to secular polity, secularism is on the other hand presented as "one of the major instruments for building a modern polity". Distinguishing between a polity which keeps "multiple religious communalism... in balance by state power" to achieve "national reconciliation", but which does not diminish communalism, and a strategy promoting "civic-secular rational ideology", the author regards both approaches as necessary in the Indian case.[131]

The third NCERT series supplies ample discussion of the question "why is it important to separate religion from [the] state?"[132] It refers not only to the protection of the minority from the majority, but also of the individual from the community. "Indian secularism" as laid down in the constitution does not mean laicism placing religion in the private sphere, but instead means the maintenance of equal distance from all religions, accompanied by the power to intervene in religiously sanctioned social issues such as "untouchability", for example.[133] One book cites Nehru, who regarded secularism as "complete opposition to communalism of all kinds" and "the only guarantee of the unity and integrity of India."[134]

The state board books and the second NCERT series mention secularism as a directive principle of the constitution and condemn communalism in a general way.[135] The second series takes up a Hindu majority position and sees the fault as lying mostly with the minorities, without arguing openly against a secular framework, while the first and the third NCERT series advocate a secular position, the first series mostly through appeals and in a

partisan tone, the third in an argumentative and factual way. Here it is necessary to mention that lively debates about "real" and "pseudo-secularism" have taken place outside textbooks, especially via the media.[136] The third NCERT series reflects these arguments.

Linguistic Diversity and Regionalism

All the series analyzed mention or cover the linguistic diversity of India, often presented as a rich cultural heritage. In several cases, this diversity is, however, problematized. A year XII NCERT sociology book from the first series refers to the controversies about the language policy around the use of Hindi, English and the regional languages as "national" or "official languages" as being "hurdles for national integration": "When the Hindi protagonists agitate against the use of English and other languages or when the Tamilians demonstrate against the use of Hindi, we certainly are witnessing the passions of communalism and a threat to the nation."[137]

A book for younger pupils warns that,

> But love of one's mother-tongue should not breed narrow-mindedness and hatred for the language of others. There should be no conflict between people of different states and regions on the grounds of language and culture. One should not forget that the variety and richness of different languages make our country great. (NCERT 1/VIII)[138]

In this context, the formation of Indian states becomes an issue.[139] Statehood is sometimes depicted as a practical matter, "for administrative convenience and efficiency, India is divided into different states and the states are further divided into districts."[140] But statehood is not only regarded as a matter of convenience, as, for example, a Tamil Nadu textbook describes:

> In 1956 India was divided into many states on the basis of languages, these states are called Linguistic States. In general people of India have great love for their mother tongue. Sometimes they develop [a] narrow-minded approach towards other languages and hate them. Therefore we must show respect to other languages which helps to unite the people who speak different languages. (TN 1/VIII)[141]

An extensive discussion of the issue is presented in the recent (third) series of NCERT textbooks, now as a chapter of history:

> The Kannada speakers, Malayalam speakers, the Marathi speakers, had all looked forward to having their own state. The strongest protests, however, came from the Telugu-speaking districts of what was the Madras Presidency. ... The protests were so widespread and intense that the central government was forced to give in to the demand. (NCERT 3/VIII)[142]

Despite, or because of, the high conflict potential around language that is alive in Indian politics and may also be observed in the neighboring states of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, the book concludes that,

> India has managed to survive as a single nation, in part because the many regional languages were given freedom to flourish. ... Once the fear of one's language being suppressed has gone, the different linguistic groups have been content to live as part of the larger nation called India. (NCERT 3/VIII)[143]

Threats and solutions are sometimes differently defined from a central perspective than from a regional one. This is exemplified by the Maharashtrian textbooks, where we find a warning:

> In India, States have been organized on the basis of language and our State are [sic!] close to our heart, we should not forget that we are Indian first. We should overcome our narrow-mindedness and accept a broader Indian identity. (M/VII)[144]

Nonetheless, the books celebrate the formation of Maharashtra according to linguistic criteria. The *History of Maharashtra* (year XI) portrays the movement for separate statehood in independent India as a struggle for independence of its own, adding a list of "Martyrs of [the] Sanyukta Maharashtra Movement" (Movement for Unified Maharashtra).[145] Additionally, the "Marathwada Freedom Struggle" is traced back long into history[146] and the history section of the year IV book is completely dedicated to "Shivachhatrapati", the Maharaja who established the independent Marathi rule against the Mughals.[147] He is a leading figure in the memory politics of the Shiv Sena party, but also venerated by a much broader part of the population. As "A Living Source of Inspiration", he stands for the desire that the

> Marathi language, and the Hindu religion would acquire their due place of honour. He toiled all his life for the prosperity of his language, his religion and his country and succeeded in the end. He was proud of the Marathi language. (M/IV)[148]

The double strategy of pushing language-based identity formation at state level by fostering a sense of being "proud" on the one hand and warning against the dangers of linguistic pride on the other, appears contradictory and difficult to reconcile. In the case of Maharashtra, the notion that "India comes first" becomes lost in all the pages with a Marathi focus.

Tamil Nadu has a comparable outlook; the history chapters for years VI to VIII cover solely Tamil Nadu. Only the books for years IX and X relate to India as a whole, and these express a strong self-esteem on several occasions, such as here: "The state of Tamil Nadu is one of the best states of the Indian Union."[149]

The language issue is a major, but not the only, aspect of the more general issue of regionalism, which is described in Maharashtra, for example, as "the narrow-minded attitude of thinking only in terms of one's own region,"[150] but discussed only in linguistic terms. Nevertheless, regionalism is mostly a discussion pursued by the center, that is,. the NCERT books, especially for secondary level. Neither the existence of regions and sub-regions, nor

people's love for their own region is regarded as the problem,[151] but rather regionalism as "a feeling of hatred against others simply because they do not belong to that region."[152]

> To say that a region must have development, and the central or the state government should not neglect its growth is quite all right. But if this leads people to say that a particular region is only for its own inhabitants, then this becomes a seriously wrong approach. (NCERT 1/IX-X)[153]

Taking up the issue in the context of "citizenship", a third NCERT series book specifies that, "Resistance could even take the form of organized violence against 'outsiders'. Almost every region of India has experienced such movements." It asks: "Are such movements ever justified?" (NCERT 3/ XI)[154]

These statements contain references to various issues, such as relationships between states in the federal framework and between the state and the center, also in the context of new state formation; the unequal development of states and regions;[155] and the immigration of outsiders in some areas, which is opposed by parties like Shiv Sena in Maharashtra or movements in tribal areas in north-eastern India. The quotations above refer particularly to this last aspect, the only attitudinal one which education might be able to influence.

How much regionalism endangers national integration and consolidation?[156] Specific developments which are regarded as threats, especially separatist movements, are discussed under the headings of "violence" and "terrorism."[157] Alongside "caste wars" and "inter-communal riots", or "ultra-left insurrectionary" (*Naxalites*), the first NCERT series discusses "political violence" and that of "terrorist gangs", which term is used to cover separatist movements such as that in the Punjab during the 1980s:

> No communal politics in India ... had reached such levels of self-righteous bigotry and open invitations to murder, loot[ing] and arson, and call[s] to violent separatism and demands for secession, in the name of religion, as the Punjab terrorists have been indulging in. It is shocking that rank criminals have been proclaimed as martyrs, and traitors to the nation as heroes of the faith. (NCERT 1/XII)[158]

Instead of arguments or analysis, the series condemns the acts with emotions.

Likewise, the second series of the NCERT books discusses ethnic insurgency and separatist movements as in the Punjab, here branded "communal terrorism":[159]

> For their various demands including secession, the insurgents have resorted to blasts, killings, kidnappings and other violent means. It has disturbed the law and order and shattered the economy of the concerned states. In this way, insurgency in the North East has advanced on the path of terrorism. (NCERT 2/VIII)[160]

Books from the third NCERT series frame the issue differently. Under the title "Regional Aspirations", they place violence in a broader context.[161] The Punjab and the north east are presented as case studies, including the history of the conflicts and their "negotiated

settlement". Power sharing, economic development, and the flexibility of the constitution for different solutions are described as helping to reach agreements. "Thus, politics in India has succeeded in accepting regionalism as part and parcel of democratic politics."[162]

Thus the books of the center (less so the third NCERT series) assess regional movements as threats to national integration,[163] partly interlinking regional with communal frontlines. The State Board books do not contradict this rhetoric explicitly, but try to foster a strong regional consciousness.

Educational Aspects of the Books

Textbooks are often analyzed as representations of social discourses. But they are developed primarily as educational media, related to educational discourses and employing specific transfer methods by which they try to transmit socially approved knowledge to the next generation. These aims are reflected in the teaching methods and basic educational concepts underlying them, and also in the ways the specific topics have been related to attitudinal and behavioral teaching objectives which define the place of the individual (pupil) in society. Here, educational considerations or their implications may thwart the intentions of identity politics.

Apart from the third NCERT series, all series analyzed are similar insofar as they try to impart knowledge and to some extent attitudes and behavioral patterns by presenting texts written by the textbook authors which has to be memorized by the pupil. Exercises mainly ask pupils to reproduce content. Yet the books differ in their presentations. The books from Tamil Nadu in particular restrict themselves to the simple, mostly unrelated events. On earlier versions, Swarna Rajagopalan remarked, "Given how poor the books are, it is hard to imagine that even if they should have an integrative or disintegrative agenda, pupils would be able to grasp that clearly and live by it,"[164] and "The textbooks discussed here are so bad that they do not seem capable of inciting conflict or integration."[165] This observation might also be applied to the series analyzed, although the second Tamil Nadu series improved by adding text which made the topics more understandable. The books from Maharashtra follow comparable didactics, but the text is somewhat more concise.

Unlike the State Board books, the first NCERT series, fully in line with its "model textbook" character, argues and contextualizes, establishing links between events and presenting "correct" interpretations. The second series attempts to reduce the curriculum load, implementing the suggestions of the Yashpal committee of 1993.[166] To that effect history, geography, civics, sociology and economics were brought under the umbrella of "integrated

social science" up until the secondary stage.[167] An attempt was made to make textbooks attractive by using more and multi-colored illustrations and adding a glossary. Exercises were geared more towards activities or projects, although the transfer of knowledge remained at the center of the books' purpose.

The State Boards are required to remain within the National Curriculum frameworks, with scope for adding regional topics.[168] Thus the books from Maharashtra refer in their preface to the NCERT National Curriculum Framework as a basis for their own curricula. Here, with changing frameworks in the center, asynchronies can occur, with new books based on frameworks which are no longer valid.[169] Proving such an influence of up-to-date or outdated central positions in the state board books is nonetheless difficult. The process of transfer from the framework into state curricula and from there into textbooks, if it takes place, provides many points at which such influences can take hold. Innovative approaches at NCERT level that could give evidence for such an impact were not found in the books from the State Boards of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

Beside the "knowledge" aspect, attitudes and behavior are also addressed by the books, especially when they refer to solutions to the issues of communalism, casteism or regionalism which had been our concerns in this article. For example, all textbooks of the first series from Tamil Nadu write on their title page that, "Untouchability is a sin, untouchability is a crime, untouchability is inhuman."[170] Here, the issue is put as a moral one: "So, the Indian citizens should develop the spirit of religious tolerance and feeling of oneness."[171] "Should" and "must" become the most-read words in these contexts. The onus is on the individual to change his or her behavior in the appropriate way.[172] "United we live, divided we fall is the spirit with which the Indians live and safeguard National Integration."[173] Educational intervention of this kind in and outside school is regarded as the appropriate means to fight societal evils:

> Education is the best way to eradicate communalism. Education creates a feeling of brotherhood among the people and fosters nationalism.... The government is trying to spread national integration through television and other mass media. (TN 1/X)[174]

Governmental as well as individual changes are referenced in the books; for example, Tamil Nadu books list laws to improve the status of women, to eradicate child labor and poverty, and refer to provisions of the constitution such as the abolition of "untouchability", freedom of religion, the protection of the languages and cultures of minorities, and the reservation policy.[175] In the other books, too, the role of government and the provisions of the constitution are always mentioned. The books of the second NCERT series follow the course, listing legal provisions.[176]

The first NCERT series paints a more complex picture. “State action alone cannot ensure social change.”[177] Thus “arenas” and measures “to combat communalism” are listed in a chapter on “Secular Polity: The Challenges of Casteism, Communalism, Separatism and Violence”. Arenas include state and government, administration, political parties, media, educational institutions, but also individual citizens; measures mentioned are “de-recognition of parties promoting communalism, punishment of police personnel and local officers acting against their duty.”

> A major factor in fighting casteism and communalism is the need to give a committed secular and rational orientation to our textbooks, reading material, teaching methods and national media. This has to be supported by active work in community centres, work-places, schools, colleges, universities and other centres of learning for projecting the values of national fraternity, of composite culture, of equality of men, women and groups, of mutual appreciation of cultures, traditions and customs, and a firm recognition and affirmation of humanist principles of co-existence of all segments – religious, caste, linguistic, cultural, regional, etc. as a hallmark of India’s plural society and variegated civilization. (NCERT1/XII)[178]

A better proof in a textbook itself can barely be expected that textbooks are regarded as instruments of identity politics which transmit specific versions of identity.

In many aspects, the third NCERT series is different from the aforementioned ones. Following the Curriculum Framework of 2005,[179] the books of this series are not intended to be used for rote learning but rather to structure a thinking process and discussions.[180] More than before, they include visual sources and for the first time also cartoons and written sources which the pupils themselves are asked to interpret. The authors are not afraid to tackle controversial issues, and make them debatable topics without pointing the moral finger as the first series appears to do. In this kind of treatment, whose aim is not to impart a specific political and attitudinal position but to stimulate thinking and debate, the third series is outstanding. That this approach is not understood by all is exemplified by the cartoon controversy mentioned above.

Even when these books refer to attitudes, they do not specify the ways the pupils should think and behave, but instead ask for their ideas on the topic, their reflections, arguments and for discussion and also for empathy, although from a Western perspective some of these requests might look like leading questions: “In your opinion is it a fair situation that some children get to go to school and others not?”; “How do you think a person who is discriminated against might feel?”; “Discuss the ways in which persons with special needs might be subject to discrimination”;[181] “Recall some stories of Partition you may have heard.

Think of the way these have shaped your conception about different communities. Try and imagine how the same stories would be narrated by different communities."[182]

Though social movements are sometimes referred to in the other series,[183] mostly in a pre-independence context,[184] the third NCERT series puts a stronger focus on their role than before,[185] especially in chapters on "Popular Struggles and Movements" and the "Rise of Popular Movements".[186]

> Three decades after Independence, the people were beginning to get impatient.... In the 1970s, diverse social groups like women, students, Dalits and farmers felt that democratic politics did not address their needs and demands. Therefore, they came together under the banner of various social organisations to voice their demands. (NCERT 3/XII)[187]

Each of the rights now enjoyed by citizens has been won after struggle.[188]

The books advocate the position that despite all talk about "unity in diversity", conflicting interests occur. "A basic principle of democracy is that such disputes should be settled by negotiation and discussion rather than force."[189] Conflict is regarded as an inherent aspect of social change. Agency is seen to lie with all the different levels involved, including the deprived:

> In any case, no social group howsoever weak or oppressed is only a victim. Human beings are always capable of organizing and acting on their own – often against very heavy odds – to struggle for justice and dignity. (NCERT 3/XII)[190]

Reflection and deconstruction do not spare even national icons and symbols like *Bharat Mata* (Mother India).[191] This touches the center of identity politics and challenges the role of textbooks as means of their promotion, at least as far as essentialist group identities are concerned. The argumentative, democratic Indian is the model these books foster.

Conclusion

This article has discussed three areas of societal conflict in India as presented in Indian textbooks, casteism, communalism and regionalism, which are not independent spheres of conflict, but interwoven. The various positions on these issues and how they are framed vary according to the dimensions mentioned above: secular versus communal and central versus regional. Communalism is an issue especially from the secular point of view. But from a communal viewpoint, it is only the communalism of the others, where it affects the community in question, which is regarded as problematic (often as "terrorism"). Language-based regionalism, especially in the context of agitating movements, is a main issue for the center, as it is able to undermine its legitimacy and governmental powers.[192] But here, too, different regionalisms find themselves competing for territorial control and domination.[193]

Developments have shown that regionalism sometimes takes on communalist arguments where they serve their cause.[194] "Casteism" and "untouchability" are primarily related to Hinduism, their critics thus especially to secular, reformist or non-Hindu positions. But as both are also associated with regional disparities and regionally-based movements, they are additionally linked to the central-regional dimension (or north-south opposition). These linkages and also these differentiations find their ways into the representations of these issues in textbooks.

For identity politics, these issues are relevant topics as they touch the center of Indian social fabric. In the analysis, the position between the secular and the Hindu national dimension is especially represented by the various series of NCERT books. The broad scope the topics, especially communalism, find in the first series reflects this relevance. From the secular point of view, the communalist has to be regarded as the "internal other" who endangers the structure and prospects of the country. "Combating communalism" is therefore a crucial issue. Keeping the peace on the religious front by not evoking religious emotions serves to reduce any negative perception of communalities, especially those of minorities, and normalizes peaceful coexistence on the base of the Indian definition of secularism. "Casteism" and "untouchability" are socioeconomic issues, but they also have their roots in specific Hindu practices and thus can serve as arguments against those claiming to build on a glorious Hindu past. Reflecting as it does the opposite discourse, a Hindu-national position, it is no surprise that the second NCERT series plays down Hindu communalism as well as "casteism". Minority communalism is linked to terrorism and the books remain silent on the secular standpoint. The third series takes up a secular stand again. But its reflective attitude is a profound difference from the first series, and all other books analyzed. This difference includes the framing of the issues, which focuses less on national integration than on differences, stereotypes, and social injustice.

The second dimension discussed, the center versus the region, is marked by two different aspects. On one hand, communalism and "untouchability" play a somewhat different role in state board books from Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu than in those of the center; on the other hand regionalism itself becomes a topic. Communalism and "casteism", as the whole issue of factors hampering national integration, play a more limited role in the state board books than in the NCERT ones. From the perspective of the center, this is a major aspect; for the states there remains some ambivalence, for "national integration" (as understood by the center) might be perceived as a threat. Additionally, "untouchability" seems gradually to take up a larger role than communalism, which appears to be in line with their respective weight as

social issues in these states. In Tamil Nadu in particular, state politics has for decades been dominated by regional (Dravidian) parties for which the battle against "untouchability" has played a major role. The opposition between the secular and the communal is here of secondary importance only.

Regionalism, disapproved of theoretically by the state board books, represents a key contrast between books from the center and those from the states. Whereas the center concentrates on national identity, the state boards promote regional ("sub-national") identities to an extent that might be seen as contradicting the "India first" slogan. Yet the state board books do not argue against the national discourse; they simply overwhelm it by state-centered ones, "re-using", in Mitra's phraseology, the former "sub-national" movement before it had reached its stage of "banalization."[195] In this process, identity politics as "subaltern" counter-discourses in the battle against dominating official politics is transformed into an official discourse. The history of movements with their "martyrs", depicted as a pre-history of the (more or less) harmonious present, is canonized and used as a means against monopolizing national aspirations as well as against new "subaltern" impertinences. The fact that the different regional narratives might also contradict the narratives in existence in other states will generally become obvious only to children who move to another region.[196] This conflict potential is the result of the instrumental use of history or social sciences for identity politics, which ignores modern, self-reflective approaches to the subject.

Coming to pedagogical discourses and their influences on textbooks, we found NCERT books reflect such a reasoning with a dramatic change in the pedagogical approach in the diachronic perspective. Thus, the decision of the first series, not to disturb young learners by referring to conflictual content was (also) pedagogically motivated as was the reduction of the "load of school bags", the National Curriculum Framework of 2000 attempted. The new curriculum of 2005 put forward a new strategy for addressing conflicts and new teaching approaches.[197] Thus, along with a political shift, the third NCERT series reflects a shift in educational theory, approaches and in epistemology: the series follows a discursive, constructivist approach toward the topics it engages with, and deconstructs, for example, national icons and symbols. This approach, put into practice, acts as checks and balances to attempts to implement essentialist identity politics of all shades, leftist, secular or Hindu nationalist, as well as "sub-national" discourses. Counteracting the usual identity patterns, it argues for an inclusive, pluralistic democratic understanding of "Indianness".

In this article, we focused on the influence of various identity discourses and educational considerations. But is the outcome a relatively stable, socially accepted and

dominant body of knowledge as Höhne implies?[198] The changes in discourses we have witnessed in our diachronic analysis and the differences between the states and the center point to the ephemerality and exchangeability of knowledge. What does this mean for the "cultural memory" of Indian society? All the discourses we have detailed, even where they are contradictory, are interrelated and are part of one discursive field with a decades-long history. Exchanges or replacements occur only within this field and among the same set of possibilities, "cultural memory" is encompassing.

Despite apparent differences, all textbooks we analyzed transmit basic patterns that underlie these divisions. In their political practice and in their identity politics, none of the parties is able to refrain from dividing society. Nevertheless, textbooks are called upon to promote "harmony" and "unity", which are sometimes presented as a real, albeit endangered state of affairs, but mostly as an aim to be achieved. "Harmony" is disturbed by "the other", not by one's own actions; thus this notion helps to deepen the divide between the opponents. The "other" is an enemy endangering the state, not a democratic competitor for power. Only the last generation of NCERT books, when addressing the democratic process, puts the quest for harmony in perspective.

After analyzing textbooks issued by NCERT, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, we conclude that, although there is a uniform effort on the center and state levels to inculcate "peace and harmony" among pupils through educational frameworks, textbooks and teaching, these attempts are problematized by a stronger undercurrent of divergent identity politics, vote bank politics and other priorities, notwithstanding the educational issues related to these tendencies.

Given the instrumentality of social divisions to securing power positions, an appeal for "harmony" and "tolerance" will not help to overcome the disastrous effects of these divides; neither will ideological combat.[199] The exploitation of these divisions will cease only when they no longer "sell."[200] The question remains whether education in India will contribute to preventing political polarization by fostering reflective attitudes, avoiding dichotomization and questioning basic assumptions made by conventional bodies of "knowledge."[201]

List of textbooks quoted

Maharashtra

III Suresh Ramchandra Jog et al., *Geography Standard III, Pune district* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research 2010 [1st ed. 2008])

Raja Dixit, *The Story of Man (History and Civics), Standard Three* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2011 [1st ed. 2008])

IV Suresh Ramchandra Jog et al., *Geography Standard IV* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2012 [1st ed. 2009])

Jayasingrao Pawar et al., *Shivachhatrapati (History and Civics), Standard Four* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2010 [1st ed. 2009])

V Suresh Ramchandra Jog et al., *Geography Standard V* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research 2012 [1st ed. 2006])

Dattatray Wagh and Sadhana Kulkarni, *Our Freedom Struggle (History and Civics), Standard Five* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2010 [1st ed. 2006])

VI Suresh Ramchandra Jog et al., *Geography Standard VI* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research 2012 [1st ed. 2007])

Bharati Joshi, *History of Ancient India, Standard Six* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2009 [1st ed. 2007])

Sadhana Kulkarni, *Our Local Government Bodies (Civics and Administration), Standard Six* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2010 [1st ed. 2007])

VII Suresh Ramchandra Jog et al., *Geography Standard VII* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research 2012 [1st ed. 2008])

Lahu Gaikwad and Dilavarkhan Pathan, *History of Medieval India, Standard Seven* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2011 [1st ed. 2008])

Chaitra Redkar, *Our Constitution (Civics and Administration), Standard Seven* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2010 [1st ed. 2008])

VIII Suresh Ramchandra Jog et al., *Geography Standard VIII* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research 2012 [1st ed. 2009])

Jaswandi Bamburkar-Utgikar and Dattotray Wagh, *History of Modern India, Standard Eight* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2011 [1st ed. 2009])

Sanjyot Apte, *India and the World (Civics and Administration), Standard Eight*, (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2010 [1st ed. 2009])

IX Anna Dnyandev Garad et al., *Social Science Part 2, Geography and Economics, Standard IX* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research 2012)

Amol Shankarrao Vidyasagar et al., *Social Science Part I: History and Political Science, Standard IX* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2012)

X Jaykumar Magar et al., *India: Human Environment, Geography Standard X* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research 2011 [1st ed. 2007])

XI Hanamant Yashwant Karande et al., *Geography, World Geography Physical, Standard XI* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2012)

Kavita Gagarani et al., *History of Maharashtra, Standard XI* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2012)

XII P.N. Padey and M.R. Fernandes, *Principles of Human Geography, Standard XII* (8th ed. Pune: Nirali Prakashan, 2012)

M.B. Purandare et al., *History Standard XII*, (6th ed. Pune: Nirali Prakashan; 2011)

Tamil Nadu

1st series

VI Thiru D.S. Rajaram et al., *Social Science 6* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, 2005 [1st ed. 2003])

VII K. Murugesan et al., *Social Science (History – Civics – Geography), Standard VII* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, 2005 [1st ed. 2004])

VIII P. C. Bhanumathi et al., *Social Science Standard VIII* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, 2007 [1st ed. 2005])

IX Tmt. S. Vasantha et al., *Social Science (History-Civics-Geography), Standard IX* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, 2005 [1st ed. 2003])

X Tmt. S. Vasantha et al., *Social Science (History-Civics-Geography), Standard X* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, 2005 [1st ed. 2004])

Tmt. V. Meenakshi et al., *Geography and Economics, Matriculation 10* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, 2008 [1st ed. 2006]);

Smt. Uma Maheswari and Smt. Saly Verghese, *History and Civics, Matriculation 10,* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, 2008 [1st ed. 2006])

2nd series

III T. Murugavel et al., *Social Science III-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2011)

IV Sujatha Arun et al., *Social Science IV-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2011)

V Tmt. Kannammal et al., *Social Science V-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2011)

VI N.N., *Social Science VI-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2010)

VII Thiru J. Arul George Peter et al., *Social Science VII-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2011)

VIII Glorina Ravindrakumar et al., *Social Science VIII-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2011)

IX Tmt. Baby et al., *Social Science IX-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2011)

X A. Subramanian et al., *Social Science X-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2011)

XI M. Murali et al., *Political Science Higher Secondary First Year* (Chennai: Tamilnadu Textbook Corporation, 2005 [1st ed. 2004])

XII K. Palanisamy et al., Political Science Higher Secondary – Second Year (Chennai: Tamilnadu Textbook Corporation, 2005

NCERT

1st series

VI Romila Thapar, *Ancient India, History Textbook for Class VI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed. 1987])

VII Romila Thapar, *Medieval India, History Textbook for Class VII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed. 1988])

D. S. Muley, A. C. Sharma and Supta Das, *How We Govern Ourselves, A Textbook of Civics for Class VII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed. 1988])

VIII D. P. Gupta and S. Sinha, *Lands and Peoples part III, A Geography Textbook for Class VIII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed. 1989])

G. L. Adhya and Arjun Dev, *Modern India, A Textbook of History for Middle Schools* [VIII] (New Delhi: NCERT 1976 [1st ed. 1973])

D. S. Muley, Supta Das, Ramesh Chandra and Manju Rani, *Our Country Today, Problems and Challenges, A Textbook in Civics for Class VIII*. (New Delhi: NCERT, 1989, 8th reprint ed. 1996)

IX/X Sudipto Kaviraj, *Our Government – How It Functions, A Textbook in Civics for Class IX-X* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996)

X B. S. Parakh, *India Ecomomic Geography, A Textbook for Class X* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed. 1990])

XI Ram Sharan Sharma, *Ancient India, A History Textbook for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1995 [1st ed. 1990])

Satish Chandra, *Medieval India, A History Textbook for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1994 [1st ed. 1990])

S. N. Jha, *Society, State and Government, A Textbook for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed. 1993])

Iqbal Narain, *Organs of Government, A Textbook for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed 1989])

K. S. Gill, *Evolution of the Indian Economy, A Textbook in Economics for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed. 1993])

XII Moonis Raza and Abazuddin Ahmad, *India General Geography, A Textbook for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed. 1990])

M. H. Qureshi, India, *Resources and Regional Development, A Textbook in Geography for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed. 1990])

Bipan Chandra, *Modern India, A History Textbook for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed. 1990])

Rasheeduddin Khan, *Democracy in India, A Textbook in Political Science for Class XII (*New Delhi: NCERT, 1995)

V. R. Mehta, *Major Concepts of Political Science, A Textbook for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1995 [1st ed. 1990])

K. L. Sharma, *Indian Society, A Textbook of Sociology for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996 [1st ed. 1987])

2nd series

VI Makkhan Lal et al., *India and the World*: *Social Sciences Textbook for Class VI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2002)

VII Sima Yadav et al., *India and the World: A Social Science Textbook for Class VII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2003)

VIII Savita Sinha et al., *India and the World*: *Textbook in Social Science for Class VIII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2004)

IX Hari Om, Supta Das, Savita Sinha and Neera Rashmi, *Contemporary India, Textbook in Social Sciences for Class IX* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2002)

X Pande, B.M. et al., *Contemporary India, A Social Science Textbook for Class X* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2003)

XI Noor Mohammad, *India Physical Environment, Textbook of Geography for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2002)

Bhupendra K. Nagla and Sheo Bahal Singh, *Introducing Sociology, Textbook for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2002)

XII Hira Lal Yadav and Savita Sinha, *Fundamentals of Human Geography, A Textbook for Class XII (Semester III)* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2003)

A. K. Sharma, *Structure of Indian Society, A Sociology Textbook for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2003)

3rd series

VI *Social Science, The Earth: Our Habitat, Textbook in Geography for Class VI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2006)

Social Science, Our Pasts – I, Textbook in History for Class VI (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007, 1st ed. 2006)

Social Science, Social and Political Life – I, Textbook for Class VI (New Delhi: NCERT, 2006)

VII *Social Science, Our Environment, Textbook in Geography for Class VII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2010 [1st ed. 2007])

Social Science, Our Pasts – II, Textbook in History for Class VII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2012, 1st ed. 2007)

Social Science, Social and Political Life – II, Textbook for Class VII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007)

VIII *Social Science, Resources and Development, Textbook in Geography for Class VIII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2010 [1st ed. 2008])

Social Science, Our Pasts – III, Part 1, Textbook in History for Class VIII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2008)

Social Science, Our Pasts – III, Part 2, Textbook in History for Class VIII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2008)

Social Science, Social and Political Life – III, Textbook for Class VIII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2008)

IX *Social Science, Contemporary India – I, Textbook in Geography for Class IX* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2012 [1st ed. 2006])

Social Science, India and the Contemporary World – I, Textbook in History for Class IX (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007, 1st ed. 2006)

Social Science, Democratic Politics - I, Textbook in Political Science for Class IX (New Delhi: NCERT, 2012, 1st ed. 2006)

X *Social Science, Contemporary India – II, Textbook in Geography for Class X* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2012 [1st ed. 2006])

Social Science, India and the Contemporary World – II, Textbook in History for Class X (New Delhi: NCERT, 2008, [1st ed. 2007])

Social Science, Democratic Politics - II, Textbook in Political Science for Class X (New Delhi: NCERT, 2008 [1st ed. 2007])

XI *India, Physical Environment, Textbook in Geography for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2006)

Indian Constitution at Work, Textbook in Political Science for Class XI (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007, [1st ed. 2006])

Political Theory, Textbook for Class XI (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007 [1st ed. 2006])

Introducing Sociology, Textbook for Class XI (New Delhi: NCERT, 2012 [1st ed. 2006])

Understanding Society, Textbook for Class XI (New Delhi: NCERT, 2011 [1st ed. 2006])

XII *Fundamentals of Human Geography, Textbook for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007)

India, People and Economy, Textbook in Geography for Class XII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007)

Themes in Indian History Part I, Textbook in History for Class XII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007)

Themes in Indian History Part II, Textbook in History for Class XII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007)

Themes in Indian History Part III, Textbook in History for Class XII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2009 [1st ed. 2007])

*Politics in India Since Independence, Textbook in Political Science for Class XII (*New Delhi: NCERT, 2007)

Contemporary World Politics, Textbook in Political Science for Class XII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007)

Indian Society, Textbook in Sociology for Class XII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2010 [1st ed. 2007])

Social Change and Development in India, Textbook in Sociology for Class XII (New Delhi: NCERT, 2011 [1st ed. 2007])

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Notes

[1] Cf. E. Annamalai, "Politics of Language in India," in *Routledge Handbook of South Asian Politics*, ed. Paul Brass (London-New York: Routledge, 2010), 213-246, 213,214.

[2] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (new ed., London/New York: Verso, 2006), 135-140.

[3] Subrata Mitra, "Sub-national Movements, Cultural Flow, the Modern State and the Malleability of Political Space: From Rational Choice to Transcultural Perspective and Back Again," *Transcultural Studies*, no. 2 (2012): 8-47.

[4] Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995).

[5] Mitra, "Sub-national Movements". Mitra argues that as secessionist movements, such groupings might rise from a "sub-national" to a "national" level when they achieve independent statehood.

[6] Vibha Pingle and Ashutosh Varshney, "India's Identity Politics: Then and Now," in *Managing Globalization, Lessons From China and India*, ed. David A. Kelley, Ramkishen S. Rajan and Gillian H.L. Goh (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2006), 353-385, 367, 380.

[7] Bipan Chandra, "The Making of the Indian Nation", in *The Writings of Bipan Chandra, The Making of Modern India, From Marx to Gandhi* (New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2012, 214-252) [1st publ. 2004], 235.

[8] Chandra, "The Making of the Indian Nation," 239.

[9] Chandra, "The Making of the Indian Nation," 242.

[10] For the context of communalism, see Bipan Chandra et al., *India's Struggle for Independence* (New Delhi: Penguin, 1989), 398-401.

[11] Chandra et al., *India's Struggle for Independence*, 398-442; for the role of textbooks especially ibid, 411-412. Paul R. Brass, *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India* (Seattle/London: University of Washington Press, 2003), follows a comparable interpretation, even if he points to other positions, citing a longer tradition of Hindu-Muslim conflict (especially 25-26).

[12] The area in Northern India where vernaculars are spoken as major languages that were subsumed under the label "Hindi" during the colonial period; the means of communication in the bazaar and the army (*khari boli*) had been differentiated into Hindi and Urdu, associated with Hindus and Muslims respectively, and related vernacular languages of Northern India subsumed under the "Hindi" label; cf. E. Annamalai, "Politics of Language in India," 213-215.

[13] Cf. Pingle and Varshney, "India's Identity Politics: Then and Now."

[14] Lloyd Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, "Cultural Policy, the Textbook Controversy and Indian Identity," in *The States of South Asia: Problems of National Integration*, ed. A. Wilson and D. Dalton (London: C. Hurst & Co, 1982 [1989]; Michael Gottlob, "Changing Concepts of Identity in the Indian Textbook Controversy," *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 29 (2007): 341-354; Michael Gottlob, *History and Politics in Post-colonial India* (New Delhi: Oxford, 2011); Sylvie Guichard, *The Construction of History and Nationalism in India: Textbooks, Controversies and Politics* (London/New York: Routledge, 2010); Basabi Khan Banerjee, "West Bengal History Textbooks and the Indian Textbook Controversy," *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 29 (2007): 355-374; Deepa Nair, "Contending 'Historical' Identities in India," *JEMMS* 1 (2009): 145-164.

[15] Cf. Steven J. Wilkinson, "Communal and Caste Politics and Conflicts in India," in *Routledge Handbook of South Asian Politics* (London-New York: Routledge, 2010), 262-273, here 264; E. Annamalai, "Politics of Language in India," 221-224. It might be added that such opposition was not restricted to the southern states. Likewise, in West Bengal, profoundly affected by partition, there was strong resistance to the language policy of the center, even if the state had already matched the criteria of language based delimitation; cf. Sunil Kumar Guha, *Freedom and After*, trans. from Bengali by Rabindra Nath Khan (Calcutta: Sahitya Kendra, 1962); the book was proscribed in the sensitive political climate of the 1960s because of its strongly critical tone.

[16] Swarna Rajagopalan, *State and Nation in South Asia* (New Delhi: Viva Books, 2006), 136-141, 151-157, 164-167. Cf. Paul R. Brass, *The Politics of India since Independence* (2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 89-91, 131-132.

[17] Thomas Blom Hansen, "BJP and the Politics of Hindutva in Maharashtra," in *The BJP and the Compulsions of Politics in India*, ed. Christophe Jaffrelot and Thomas Blom Hansen (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998) [reprinted in omnibus *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004], 121-162. cf. Paul R. Brass, *The Politics of India since Independence*, 94, 126-127

[18] A counter-discourse from a Muslim perspective that finds its way into textbooks can be found in Pakistan; cf. Martin Sökefeld, "Nation and Islam in Pakistan," *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 18, no. 3 (1996): 289-306; Elisa Giunchi, "Rewriting the Past: Political Imperatives and Curricular Reform in Pakistan". See also the article by M. Ayaz Naseem in this volume. This said, books for use in Indian *madrasas* also reproduce(d) a Muslim communalist perspective; cf. National Steering Committee on Textbook Evaluation, *Recommendations and Report*, I (NCERT 1993), 71-87.

[19] Cf. Kothari Commission, *Education and National Development: Report of the Education Commission 1964-66* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1966 [reprinted 1971]); MHRD (Ministry of Human Resource Development), *National Policy on Education – 1986* (New Delhi: Govt of India, 1986 [modified 1992]); *National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education: A Framework* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1988); NCERT, *National Curriculum Framework for School Education* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2000).

[20] Krishna Kumar, *Learning from Conflict* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1996).

[21] Earlier versions of the State Board books were not available for analysis. Earlier books from Tamil Nadu were analyzed by Swarna Rajagopalan, *State and Nation in South Asia* (New Delhi etc.: Viva Books, 2006), which offers additional opportunities for comparison, despite the different focus of the analysis.

[22] The findings will relate to the books analyzed and to the patterns they reveal. They should not be taken to stand for India in general. Further research is needed to broaden the spectrum.

[23] Cf. Nikita Desai and Neha Singhania, "Curriculum, Examinations and Textbooks in Maharashtra. Who Decides What?," Centre for Civil Society, 2005, accessed 25 February 2014, ccs.in/internship_papers/2005/11. CET Policy in Maharashtra.pdf.

[24] For the development of NCERT history textbooks see Guichard, *The Construction of History and Nationalism in India*, 44-52.

[25] See, for example, *The Saffron Agenda in Education, An Exposé* (New Delhi: SAHMAT, 2001); *Against Communalisation of Education* (New Delhi: SAHMAT, 2002); *Communalisation of Education, The Assault on History* (New Delhi: SAHMAT 2002) *Saffronised and Substandard. A Critique of the New NCERT Textbooks* (New Delhi: SAHMAT, 2002); *Plagiarised and Communalised, More on the NCERT Textbooks* (New Delhi: SAHMAT, 2003); Irfan Habib, Suvira Jaiswal and Aditya Mukherjee, *History in the New NCERT Text Books … A Report and an Index of Errors* (Kolkata: Indian History Congress, 2003); and the answers: Meenakshi Jain, *Flawed Narratives. History in the Old NCERT Textbooks. A Random Survey of Satish Chandra's Medieval India* (New Delhi: Delhi Historians Forum, 2003); Makkhan Lal, *History, an Unending Debate* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2004); Makkhan Lal, Meenakshi Jain, Hari Om, *History in the New NCERT Textbooks. Fallacies in the IHC Report* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2003).

[26] Glorina Ravindrakumar et al., *Social Science VIII-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2011), 137.

[27] Bipan Chandra, *Modern India. A History Textbook for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, [1990] 1996), 29.

[28] Romila Thapar, *Ancient India. History Textbook for Class VI* (New Delhi: NCERT, [1987] 1996), 41.

[29] The then Minister for Human Resource Development, Joshi, argued in an interview, "If a normal Hindu family believes that eating beef is wrong and you teach that this was done (many centuries ago) when actually this is a matter of debate, this will create a conflict in the mind of a small child. If there are some unpalatable historical facts, let children learn them when they are mature. Anything that creates a bias, hatred or suspicion should not be there." Sultan Shahin, "India sanitizing its past," *Asia Times*, 8 December 2001, accessed 14 February 2014, http://atimes.com/ind-pak/CL08Df01.html.

[30] *Social Science, Our Pasts – I, Textbook in History for Class VI* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2006] 2007), 55-56, describes the Varna system in the later Vedic age and (ibid, 118-119) during the Gupta age, including the "untouchables". *Social Science, Our Pasts – II, Textbook in History for Class VII* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2007] 2012), 8, 91-101, discusses system changes (*jatis*) and tribes in a dedicated chapter; the impact of colonization on tribes is a topic in *Social Science, Our Pasts – III, Part 1, Textbook in History for Class VIII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2008), 38-50. *Social Science, India and the Contemporary World – I, Textbook in History for Class IX* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2006] 2007), 168, describes caste-related dress codes. *Themes in Indian History Part I, Textbook in History for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007), 61-71, discusses "Social differences within and beyond the framework of caste" during the period 600 BCE to 600 CE; *Themes in Indian History Part II. Textbook in History for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007), 124-125, 145, deals with castes from an Arab point of view and Bhakti positions.

[31] G.L. Adhya and Arjun Dev, *Modern India, A Textbook of History for Middle Schools* [VIII] (New Delhi: NCERT [1973] 1976), 122-130, 225-242.

[32] Chandra, *Modern India XII*, 186, 187.

[33] Savita Sinha et al., *India and the World*: *Textbook in Social Science for Class VIII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2004), 65.

[34] *Social Science, Our Pasts – III, Part 2, Textbook in History for Class VIII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2008), 119. "Despite constitutional guarantees, the Untouchables or, as they are now referred to, the Dalits, face violence and

discrimination. In many parts of rural India they are not allowed access to water sources, temples, parks and other public places" (ibid, 171).

[35] Jaswandi Bamburkar-Utgikar and Dattotray Wagh, *History of Modern India Standard Eight* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, [2009] 2011), 115-118.

[36] Tmt. Baby et al., *Social Science IX-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2011), 204. Also: "Untouchability in India is worse than slavery and 'Apartheid'. [… Untouchables] were not only untouchables but also unsee[a]bles, unapproachables, and they had no right to education, to residence in general villages and towns, to use public path[s] and watersheds, to enter into temples, to own land, to do official work or to seek justice in the court of laws. Their women were not even allowed to cover their upper parts of the bodies, they should not wear sandals, use umbrellas, and [were] not [allowed] to have civilised names." (ibid, 208). The formulations are based especially on South Indian experiences.

[37] Baby et al., *Social Science IX*, 204-205

[38] Baby et al., *Social Science IX*, 206-207.

[39] B.M. Pande et al., *Contemporary India, A Social Science Textbook for Class X* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2003), 147.

[40] Kavita Gagarani et al., *History of Maharashtra Standard XI* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2012), 76.

[41] Chandra, *Modern India XII*, 85, 89: "All these official reforms touched no more than the fringes of the Indian social system and did not affect the life of the vast majority of the people. It was perhaps not possible for a foreign government to do more."

[42] Chandra, *Modern India XII*, 187.

[43] Adhya and Dev, *Modern India VIII*, 128.

[44] *Our Pasts III*, *VIII*, 100, 110.

[45] Tmt. S. Vasantha et al., *Social Science (History-Civics-Geography) Standard IX* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, [2003] 2005), 178; Tmt. S. Vasantha et al., *Social Science (History-Civics-Geography) Standard X* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, [2004] 2005), 102. Likewise in Maharashtra: Chaitra Redkar, *Our Constitution (Civics and Administration) Standard Seven* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, [2008] 2010), 11.

[46] Sima Yadav et al., *India and the World: A Social Science Textbook for Class VII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2003), 191, 194.

[47] Sinha et al., *India and the World VIII*, 118. Hari Om, Supta Das, Savita Sinha and Neera Rashmi, *Contemporary India, Textbook in Social Sciences for Class IX* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2002), 71, mentions Ambedkar, and also that "30 members from scheduled castes" were members of the Constituent Assembly.

[48] Guichard, *The Construction of History and Nationalism in India*, 134-137; in order to become acceptable to lower castes and to get rid of upper-caste, anti-Dalit undertones, the Hindu nationalist discourse conveyed positive connotations upon Ambedkar. On the other hand, his Buddhism, did not conform to the image of a model Hindu.

[49] Bamburkar-Utgikar and Wagh, *History of Modern India VIII*, 116.

[50] *Social Science, Social and Political Life – I, Textbook for Class VI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2006), 18-23.

[51] *Social Science, India and the Contemporary World – II, Textbook in History for Class X* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2007] 2008), 68.

[52] For sources, statements by Gandhi and Ambedkar regarding separate electorates for Dalits, see *Themes in Indian History Part III, Textbook in History for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2007] 2009), 360-361. The different positions of both protagonists are also discussed in the context of the drafting of the constitution in *Social Science, Democratic Politics – I, Textbook in Political Science for Class IX* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2006] 2012), 47-49.

[53] *Social Science, Our Pasts - III, VIII*, 163; *Themes in Indian History-III, XII*, 421-422.

[54] *Indian Constitution at Work, Textbook in Political Science for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2006] 2007), 18, which shows the slow process of constitution drafting: Ambedkar riding a snail and Nehru with a whip trying to speed up the process. Critics interpreted the image as being of Nehru whipping Ambedkar; cf. Georg Stöber and Basabi Khan Banerjee, "New Textbook Controversy in India," edumeres.net, 8 June 2012, accessed 14 February 2014, http://www.edumeres.net/en/information/home/post/article/neuer-schulbuchstreit-in-indien.html; Alex M. George, "Illustrating Social Studies in School Textbooks," *Contemporary Education Dialogue* 10, no. 1 (2013): 147-153.

[55] Pande et al., *Contemporary India X*, 147. One third of a page covers the description of the challenge of casteism. Here, Dalits are not mentioned, only the four *varnas*. Om et al., *Contemporary India IX*, 91, however, acknowledge on a very general level, which one might read as obscuring the specific issue, that "In our society, various kinds of inequalities still exist. You must have noticed how people become victims of unequal treatment."

[56] Cf. Pingle and Varshney, "India's Identity Politics: Then and Now," 366-367. We find a similar distinction, albeit with different connotations, in books of the first and the third series, which state that the ritual importance of

caste (not discrimination!) declined, but "at political and economic levels" "it emerged". K. L. Sharma, *Indian Society, A Textbook of Sociology for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, [1987] 1996), 99. *Social Change and Development in India, Textbook in Sociology for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2007] 2011), 32, points to a "secularization" of caste: "Belief systems of purity and pollution were central to its practice. Today it functions as political pressure groups."

[57] A. K. Sharma, *Structure of Indian Society, A Sociology Textbook for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2003), 35-45, 119-133, 37.

[58] Sharma, *Structure of Indian Society XII*, 121.

[59] Sharma, *Structure of Indian Society XII*, 38.

[60] D. S. Muley, Supta Das, Ramesh Chandra and Manju Rani, *Our Country Today, Problems and Challenges, A Textbook in Civics for Class VIII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1989, 8th reprint ed. 1996), 25. The paragraph contains an exercise asking pupils to write a short piece on cases of caste discrimination in their locality. In this book, two chapters cover "the caste system" and "untouchability".

[61] Muley et al., *Our Country Today VIII*, 30.

[62] Sudipto Kaviraj, *Our Government – How It Functions, A Textbook in Civics for Class IX-X* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996), 104.

[63] Kaviraj, *Our Government IX/X*, 104, 105.

[64] Rasheeduddin Khan, *Democracy in India, A Textbook in Political Science for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1995), 142.

[65] Sharma, *Indian Society XII*, 104.

[66] Sharma, *Indian Society XII*, 105, 106.

[67] *Social Science, Social and Political Life – I, VI*, 18-23; *Social Science. Social and Political Life - II. Textbook for Class VII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2007), 7-12.

[68] *Social Science, Social and Political Life - III. Textbook for Class VIII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2008), 94-103.

[69] *Social Science, Social and Political Life – III, VIII*, 99, 102.

[70] *Social Science, Social and Political Life - I, VI*, 18-21; *Social Science, Democratic Politics – I, IX*, 103.

[71] *Social Science, Democratic Politics – I, IX*, 80-82, 102. See also *Political Theory, Textbook for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2006] 2007), 47-49. Reservations in elections for local bodies are mentioned in *Indian Constitution at Work XI*, 184, 190.

[72] *Social Change and Development in India XII*, 152-155; *Indian Society, Textbook in Sociology for Class XII* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2007] 2010), 93-97; *Politics in India Since Independence, Textbook in Political Science for Class XII (*New Delhi: NCERT, 2007), 132-134.

[73] Class distinction, for instance, now presents itself as educational distinction, as higher classes are now the educated ones. *Social Science, Democratic Politics – II, Textbook in Political Science for Class X* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2007] 2008), 51.

[74] In Tamil Nadu, for instance, "[p]upils may be asked to debate on Unity promoted by Religions and Religious Festivals"; Vasantha et al., *Social Science IX*, 152.

[75] One outstanding example is the temple of Somnath. For a detailed discussion of the Somnath raid and the sources see Romila Thapar, *Somnatha. The Many Voices of a History* (London-New York: Verso, 2005). The destruction figures prominently especially in Hindu nationalist discourses of history; cf. Khan Banerjee, "West Bengal History Textbooks and the Indian Textbook Controversy," 358, 362.

[76] Lahu Gaikwad and Dilavarkhan Pathan, *History of Medieval India Standard Seven* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, [2008] 2011), 20.

[77] Attesting to Mahmud "a great love for his religion," the book suggests religious causes for the raid; Vasantha et al., *Social Science IX*, 87.

[78] Romila Thapar, *Medieval India, History Textbook for Class VII* (New Delhi: NCERT, [1988] 1996), 25-26, stresses Mahmud's desire for booty, reinvested in the beautification of his capital Ghazna and in patronizing arts, and regards his religious motivation as a "destroyer of images" as desirable, because legitimating side-effect. Satish Chandra, *Medieval India, A History Textbook for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, [1990] 1994), 36-37, points to the wars he waged against Muslim rulers in India before he focused on looting temples.

[79] Yadav et al., *India and the World VII*, 97-98: "In each of his campaigns he plundered the wealth of temples, destroyed them and broke the idols of the deities to claim religious merits" (ibid, 98).

[80] "In the political culture of the Middle Ages most rulers displayed their political might and military success by attacking and looting the places of worship of defeated rulers." *Social Science, Our Past – II, VII*, 65-66.

[81] For example, by stating that "Akbar did not compel anyone to adopt Din-i-Ilahi", which was "based on humanism, monotheism and universal brotherhood", Gaikwad and Pathan, *History of Medieval India VII*, 41.

[82] Vasantha et al., *Social Science IX*, 130.

[83] Chandra, *Medieval India XI*, 170-171.

[84] Thapar, *Medieval India VII*, 94.

[85] Yadav et al., *India and the World VII*, 142.

[86] "Akbar's interaction with people of different faiths made him realise that religious scholars who emphasised ritual and dogma were often bigots. Their teaching created divisions and disharmony amongst his subjects. This eventually led Akbar to the idea of sulh-i-kul or 'universal peace'. This idea of tolerance did not discriminate between people of different religions in his realm. Instead it focused on a system of ethics – honesty, justice, peace – that is universally applicable." *Social Science, Our Past – II, VII*, 54-55.
[87] *Social Science, Our Past – II, VII*, 59.
[88] Thus, with their different structures focused on specific themes, the third NCERT series textbooks do not cover the religious politics of Aurangzeb.
[89] Chandra, *Medieval India XI*, 224; see also Thapar, *Medieval India VII*, 108-109.
[90] Yadav et al., *India and the World VII*, 142-143.
[91] Vasantha et al., *Social Science IX*, 133.
[92] A year XII NCERT book from the first series argues: "Communalism is also an attempt to generate inter-communal enmity by ranking up events and episodes of the medieval past. The communalists seek to use the past as a continuum of the present, for promoting inter-communal discord" (Khan, *Democracy in India XII*, 146).
[93] P. C. Bhanumathi et al., *Social Science Standard VIII* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, [2005] 2007), 102.
[94] Redkar, *Our Constitution VII*, 25.
[95] Muley et al., *Our Country Today VIII*, 75.
[96] Khan, *Democracy in India XII*, 144.
[97] Chandra, *Modern India XII*, 203. See also *Social Science, Democratic Politics - II, X*, 47. Chandra distinguishes between different grades of communalism: the belief that the followers of a religion have as a consequence also common secular interests, that the interests of one group are dissimilar from the interests of the other groups and that those interests are antagonistic and mutually incompatible. We also find Chandra's distinction in his academic publications: Bipan Chandra et al., *India's Struggle for Independence* (New Delhi: Penguin, 1988), 398-401.
[98] Kaviraj, *Our Government IX-X*, 101.
[99] Khan, *Democracy in India XII*, 145.
[100] Sharma, *Indian Society XII*, 49. Likewise, the class XII history textbook discusses the rise of communalism in more detail, following a comparable line, yet adding a perspective on Indian history, which was classified into a Hindu, Muslim and British period, naturalizing the communal outlook, and the uses of Hindu and Muslim history and symbolism made by the various (nationalist) protagonists herein (Chandra, *Modern India XII*, 203-212).
[101] "Communal terrorism", discussed in the second NCERT series, is only related to Sikhs (Punjab) and Muslims (Jammu and Kashmir): Sinha et al., *India and the World VIII*, 248-249. Pande et al., *Contemporary India X*, 155, does not refer to both together in one category, but labels them "Terrorism in Punjab" and "Terrorism in Kashmir".
[102] Pande et al., *Contemporary India X*, 147.
[103] A book from Tamil Nadu highlights in bold letters that "Hinduism is catholic in spirit and cultivated the capacity of toleration. It had never encouraged bloody religious wars, excepting minor persecutions"; Vasantha et al., *Social Science IX*, 152.
[104] *Themes in Indian History Part III, XII*, 383.
[105] *Indian Society XII*, 134-135.
[106] An example is Bhanumathi et al., *Social Science VIII*, 102-103; Ravindrakumar et al., *Social Science VIII*, 137.
[107] A. Subramanian et al., *Social Science X-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2011), 81. Here, a few lines were added compared with the first series.
[108] M.B. Purandare et al., *History Standard XII*, (6th ed., Pune: Nirali Prakashan; 2011), 8, 27, 28. Bamburkar-Utgikar and Wagh, *History of Modern India VIII*, 122, name Muslims as responsible for violence that occurred during the Direct Action Day of 1946: "The followers of the Muslim League resorted to violent ways. There were Hindu-Muslim riots all over the country. There were massacres in the Noakhali region in the province of Bengal. In order to put a stop to this violence, Gandhiji went there without giving a thought to his own life. He strove hard to establish peace there."
[109] Bamburkar-Utgikar and Wagh, *History of Modern India VIII*, 126. Here, too, Gandhi "strove to maintain peace and communal harmony in Bengal. [… He] strove day and night to preserve Hindu-Muslim unity and laid down his life in the same cause."
[110] Muley et al., *Our Country Today VIII*, 7.
[111] Muley et al., *Our Country Today VIII*, 38.
[112] Chandra, *Modern India XII*, 268.
[113] Chandra, *Modern India XII*, 271.
[114] Sinha et al., *India and the World VIII*, 119.
[115] Pande et al., *Contemporary India* X, 147.

[116] Pratab Bhanu Mehta, "Identity Politics in an Era of Globalization," in *Managing Globalization, Lessons From China and India*, ed. David Kelley, Ramkishen S. Rajan and Gillian H. L. Goh (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2006), 387-411, 403-404, emphasizes that *Hindutva* builds its politics on anxiety and on events that create fear, such as terrorism. The focus in the textbooks of the second NCERT series is therefore in line with this outlook. See also Christophe Jaffrelot, *Communal Riots in Gujarat: The State at Risk?* (Heidelberg Papers in South Asian and Comparative Politics, Working Paper no. 17, Heidelberg: South Asia Institute, 2003), 11-14.

[117] Pande et al., *Contemporary India* X, 147. See also Sinha et al., *India and the World VIII*, 248-249; Bhupendra K. Nagla and Sheo Bahal Singh, *Introducing Sociology, Textbook for Class XI* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2002), 97.

[118] Sharma, *Structure of Indian Society XII*, 4.

[119] *Social Science, Our Pasts-III, VIII*, 72, see also 158.

[120] *Themes in Indian History III, XII*, 397.

[121] *Themes in Indian History III, XII*, 392-393.

[122] *Social Science, Social and Political Life – I, VI*, 5.

[123] *Social Science, Democratic Politics-II, X*, 48.

[124] "Nearly four thousand Sikhs were massacred in Delhi and many other parts of the country in 1984. The families of the victims feel that the guilty were not punished", *Political Theory XI*, 112. In addition, the book refers to the Gujarat riots of 2002 and the eviction of Kashmiri *pandits*.

[125] *Politics in India Since Independence XII*, 158-161, 184-189, 189.

[126] Om et al., *Contemporary India IX*, 75.

[127] However, the texts define secularism differently, with such definitions including "All religions in our country have the same status and support from the state" (Thiru J. Arul George Peter et al., *Social Science VII-Standard* (Chennai: Department of School Education, 2011), 132-133); "[secularism means] that no religion or sect should interfere in the affairs of our country" (Redkar, *Our Constitution VII*, 8), and "Government treats all religious beliefs and practices with equal respect" (Amol Shankarrao Vidyasagar et al., *Social Science Part I: History and Political Science Standard IX* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, 2012), 72). A very similar statement is also to be found in D. S. Muley, A. C. Sharma and Supta Das, *How We Govern Ourselves, A Textbook for Class VII* (New Delhi: NCERT, 1996), 9, from the first NCERT series.

[128] Muley et al., *Our Country Today VIII*, 7, 38.

[129] Kaviraj, *Our Government IX-X*, 36.

[130] Kaviraj, *Our Government IX-X*, 101-102.

[131] Khan, *Democracy in India XII*, 141, 149-151.

[132] *Social Science, Social and Political Life – III, VIII*, 20-27; when discussing the constitution, *Social Science, Democratic Politics-I, IX*, 106, and *Indian Constitution at Work XI*, 229-231, also refer to and explain secularism. There is a broad discussion of counter-arguments in *Political Theory XI*, 111-126.

[133] *Indian Constitution at Work XI*, 229-231; also with reference to "inter-communal strife."

[134] *Political Theory XI*, 117.

[135] The argument of violation of the principle of secularism has served as an argument in the struggle for the prerogative of interpretation in school education between "leftist" and "Hindu nationalist" protagonists. An appeal against the National Curriculum Framework 2000 was rejected by the Supreme Court; cf. *Supreme Court of India Judgement (12 September, 2002) In the matter of The National Curriculum Framework For School Education, 2000* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2002]).

[136] Cf. Mehta, "Identity Politics in an Era of Globalization," 400, 404-405.

[137] Sharma, *Indian Society XII*, 190, 193. The term "communalism" here has a wider meaning than in most textbook contexts and refers not only to religious communities.

[138] Muley et al., *Our Country Today VIII*, 76.

[139] Thus, under the heading "Federal-Nation Building: The Problem of Regionalism and National Integration", in Khan, *Democracy in India XII*, 153-156.

[140] Yadav et al., *India and the World VII*, 206.

[141] Bhanumati et al., *Social Science VIII*, 103.

[142] *Social Science, Our Pasts III*, 165-166.

[143] *Social Science, Our Pasts III*, 171.

[144] Redkar, *Our Constitution VII*, 25, 26.

[145] Gagarani et al., *History of Maharashtra XI*, 89-100.

[146] Gagarani et al., *History of Maharashtra XI*, 103-117.

[147] It might be added that this aspect can be interpreted not only in a regionalist but also in a communalist sense. As Hansen pointed out, "The Shiv Sena's rhetoric [...] transformed the Sangh Parivar's rhetoric of 'Ram versus Babar' into a direct communal and historic metaphor of the battles between Shivaji and the Moghul emperor Aurangzeb." Hansen, "BJP and the Politics of Hindutva in Maharashtra," 132.

[148] Jayasingrao Pawar et al., *Shivachhatrapati (History and Civics), Standard Four* (Pune: Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, [2009] 2010), 104, 106.
[149] Vasantha et al., *Social Studies IX*, 234.
[150] Redkar, *Our Constitution VII*, 25.
[151] "Expression of regional issues is not an aberration or an abnormal phenomenon" (*Politics in India Since Independence XII*, 167); also Khan, *Democracy in India XII*, 154.
[152] Kaviraj, *Our Government IX-X*, 104.
[153] Kaviraj, *Our Government IX-X*, 103.
[154] *Political Theory XI*, 84.
[155] "Economic disparity" and "[r]egional imbalances" "due to the lack of the natural and cultural resources", Ravindrarkumar et al., *Social Science VIII*, 137.
[156] An example is Sharma, *Indian Society XII*, 190-192.
[157] A book from Maharashtra refers in a general way to "terrorism": "When violence is used to obtain political objectives, it gives rise to terrorism. Terrorist activities result in the loss of innocent lives. They lead to the destruction of public property and financial losses. Normal life is disrupted. People feel threatened. Effectively checking this kind of terrorism is a major challenge before Indian democracy." A text box on the "role of the citizens" calls upon them to "inform the police", "be alert and vigilant all the time", and "not resort to violence while making their demands", but instead to "always use peaceful and parliamentary means" (Redkar, *Our Constitution VII*, 25, 28).
[158] Khan, *Democracy in India XII*, 148.
[159] Sinha et al., *India and the World III*, 247-248; Pande et al., *Contemporary India X*, 154-155.
[160] Sinha et al., *India and the World III*, 248.
[161] *Politics in India Since Independence* XII, 149-169.
[162] *Politics in India Since Independence* XII, 168.
[163] This quest for integration is questioned by Benedict Anderson, "The New World Disorder", *New Left Review* 193, (1992): 3-13, especially 5; Anderson points to the violence often connected with it and the viability of smaller states. In Anderson's view, it is mainly the interest of central power groups which makes "integration" an objective and prerequisite of national prosperity.
[164] Rajagopalan, *State and Nation in South Asia*, 120.
[165] Ibid, 131. National Steering Committee on Textbook Evaluation, *Recommendations and Report*, II, [NCERT 1994], 4-5, summarizes: "The Committee is appalled at the extremely poor quality of almost every aspect of these textbooks [issued by the Tamil Nadu Textbook Society] ... There is nothing in these books in terms of historical accuracy, language and style, editing and proof reading, and production which can justify their use as educational material. The only variation in their quality is that some are worse than others and some abound in incomprehensible statements. ... The Committee recommends that all these books should be replaced at the earliest [opportunity]."
[166] *Learning Without Burden: Report of the National Advisory Committee, Appointed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development*, (New Delhi: Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, 1993).
[167] Cf. NCERT, *National Curriculum Framework for School Education* (New Delhi: NCERT, 2000). Whether the scopes of one or the other topic discussed in this article were reduced with the sole intention of "reducing the burden" is debatable.
[168] Rajagopalan, *State and Nation in South Asia*, 117, 129, refers to the adaptation of the NCERT syllabi's content by Tamil Nadu. The books, which contain no prefaces, do not give any further hint for such an influence.
[169] Thus, the preface to Joshi, *History of Ancient India, VI*, (1 ed. 2007) refers only to the National Curriculum Framework 2000. In Gaikwad and Pathan, *History of Medieval India, VII* (1 ed. 2008), a mention of the 2005 framework was added to the 2000 one.
[170] The second series writes "Untouchability, Inhuman – Crime", omitting "sin" with its religious connotations.
[171] Bhanumathi et al., *Social Science VIII*, 103.
[172] "... all these require a change in the mindset of the people. Fraternal feelings should replace cast[e] consciousness", Baby, *Social Science IX*, 207. This book refers also to the role of NGOs, which are viewed as important because "[their] workers do not belong to the government department, they are more acceptable to the people as these people had an aversion towards government officials" (ibid, 210).
[173] Subramanian et al., *Social Science X*, 226. Tmt. V. Meenakshi et al., *Geography and Economics Matriculation 10* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, [2006] 2008), 7, remark, "People forget their religious and linguistic differences and stand together when there is a crisis. The best examples are [the] Kargil invasion and occurrence of floods and Tsunami, etc."
[174] Smt. Uma Maheswari and Smt. Saly Verghese, *History and Civics Matriculation 10* (Chennai: Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation, [2006] 2008), 189-190.
[175] Examples are Bhanumathi et al., *Social Science VIII*, 113-121; Baby et al., *Social Science IX*, 204-213.

[176] An example is in Pande et al., *Contemporary India X*, 148-150, in the chapter on "Challenges of communalism and casteism"; also Yadav et al., *India and the World VII*, 210, in the context of "Administration and development in India"; Sharma, *Structure of Indian Society XII*, 119-131, in the chapter on "Deprived groups".

[177] *Indian Society XII*, 95.

[178] Khan, *Democracy in India XII*, 141-152; here 147, 149.

[179] NCERT, *National Curriculum Framework 2005* (New Delhi: NCERT. 2005).

[180] Cf. Alex M. George and Amman Madan, *Teaching Social Science in Schools: NCERT's New Textbook Initiative* (New Delhi/Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications, 2009). The booklet is intended as a manual for parents, teachers, pupils and educationists to help them to understand and apply the new concepts. This was held necessary because of the break with long-established practices.

[181] *Social Science, Social and Political Life - I, VI*, 6, 19, 21.

[182] *Themes in Indian History – III, XII*, 382.

[183] An example is the reference in Maheswari and Verghese, *History and Civics X*, 191.

[184] Thus the accounts are rarely linked to more recent developments or present-day life. At the end of a chapter on "The Struggle for Social Equality," a Maharashtrian book summarizes: "The contribution of all these movements to the Indian freedom struggle is valuable" (Bamburkar-Utgikar and Wagh, *History of Modern India VIII*, 118).

[185] "Equality is a value that we have to keep striving for and not something which will happen automatically. People's struggle and positive actions by the government are necessary to make this a reality for all Indians." *Social Science, Social and Political Life - I, VI*, 23.

[186] *Social Science, Democratic Politics-II*, X, 57-70; *Politics in India Since Independence XII*, 128-147. Geography textbooks, which are otherwise without mention of conflicts, now refer to them to some extent, in the context of dams and water sharing; an example is *Social Science, Contemporary India – II, Textbook in Geography for Class X* (New Delhi: NCERT, [2006] 2012), 27.

[187] *Politics in India Since Independence XII*, 128.

[188] *Political Theory XI*, 81.

[189] *Political Theory XI*, 86.

[190] *Indian Society XII*, 95.

[191] Under the topic "The Sense of Collective Belonging," *India and the Contemporary World-II, X*, 70-73.

[192] However, relativizing the integration discourse of the center, Mitra argues, "Far from being its antithesis, region has actually emerged as the nursery of the nation" (Mitra, "Sub-National Movement": 31).

[193] There are several examples of this situation, one of which is the movement for the formation of a new state of Telangana and the process of this formation (cf. Mitra, "Sub-National Movements," 8-47; V. Janardhan and P. Raghavendra, "Telangana: History and Political Sociology of a Movement," *Social Change* 43, no. 4 (2013): 551-564). The activities of movements or parties such as Shiv Sena, whose aims clash with the aspirations of other, especially immigrant groups, can serve as another instance (for a vivid account see Suketu Mehta, *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found* (3rd ed., New Delhi: Penguin, 2012, 46-121).

[194] The anti-Muslim direction taken by Shiv Sena from 1984 onward is just one example; cf. Thomas Blom Hansen, "BJP and the Politics of Hindutva in Maharashtra," in *The BJP and the Compulsions of Politics in India*, ed. Christophe Jaffrelot and Thomas Blom Hansen (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998) [reprinted in omnibus *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004], 127.

[195] Mitra, "Sub-National Movements", 9-12.

[196] One example: Maharashtra celebrates the conquests of Marathi kings against the Mughals and other Indian territories. In opposition, a Bengali narrative describes this as Bengal's loss of its independence and connotes the Marathi conquest negatively. Even if this reading stems from a Bangladeshi book (Mamtazuddin Patwari et al., *Bangladesh and Global Studies For Class VIII* (Dhaka: National Curriculum and Textbook Board, 2012), 3), it demonstrates the possibility of contradicting assessments in different regional contexts where an event is seen from a purely regional perspective and used for subnational identity politics.

[197] NCERT, National Curriculum Framework 2005 (New Delhi: NCERT, 2005).

[198] Thomas Höhne, *Schulbuchwissen: Umrisse einer Wissens- und Medientheorie des Schulbuches* (Frankfurt am Main: Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, 2003).

[199] As Hansen remarked, "As the Hindu nationalist mobilization in India has demonstrated, education was historically never the road to eradication of communal stereotypes and promotion of secular values, as the Nehruvian creed went, but rather the site if their production and perpetuation." Hansen, *The Saffron Wave*, 216.

[200] An increase in the number of players and the necessity to form coalition governments have been mentioned as factors decreasing the incidence of riots (Wilkinson, "Communal and Caste Politics in India," 269-270). In this context we must also take into account, the effects of reservation politics, seen as "positive discrimination", in perpetuating boundaries. These divisions "sell" not only in party politics, but often also economically to the individual.

[201] As an attempt at public enlightenment, see Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (London: Allen Lane, 2006).

Where are the Minorities? The Elusiveness of Multiculturalism and Positive Recognition in Sri Lankan History Textbooks

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Abstract • This article analyzes the representation of Sri Lanka's communities in history textbooks which are currently in use. Even before the end of the war in 2009, the education system was recognized as an instrument with which the country's divided society may be rebuilt. The issues addressed in this article concern a period in which ambitious educational reforms are being implemented that envision textbooks as a tool for the creation of a new generation of citizens in a postwar society. It reveals that the general lack of recognition of minority communities, and the negative representations of the Tamil community in particular, which appear in these textbooks are not compatible with the proclaimed vision of a multicultural yet integrated society. Instead of fostering social cohesion, these textbooks may deepen ethnic divides and stereotypes, and therefore thwart reconciliation and long-term peace.

Keywords • educational reforms, multiculturalism, national identity, recognition, Sri Lanka, textbooks

Introduction

Education plays an important role in nation-building around the world, but in divided societies like Sri Lanka it faces the challenge of ethnic lines of conflict, prejudices and stereotypes hardened through long periods of strife or war. Education in societies affected by conflict can bring people together and foster social cohesion and peace; conversely, it may contribute to the conflict situation in complex ways, for instance by teaching about those deemed to be "other".[1] Textbooks in particular have been identified as powerful tools with which the hearts and minds of young generations may be shaped.[2] Their presentations of the history of a country and its people can detail cultural diversity and promote mutual respect, and thus provide an integrative historical narrative that may cross societal divides and contribute to peace.

After decades of conflict and civil war between its two largest ethnic communities, Sri Lanka has increasingly come to recognize this potential inherent in education. As a result, it has initiated a number of reforms with the purpose of educating a new generation of citizens who will work towards harmony and peace. This article analyzes a set of current history textbooks in light of the declared aim of the country's policy makers to create a multicultural yet nationally integrated society. It examines whether the textbooks support the proposed vision of intercultural harmony, social cohesion and peace in their portrayal of the country, its history and communities. Further, we question the extent to which the representation, or lack thereof, of different communities in these textbooks can support the aims of establishing mutual positive recognition between these communities, as well as national integration and multiculturalism.

The article begins with a brief introduction to the Sri Lankan education system and an overview of the major reforms which have taken place in this arena in the last two decades, their objectives and the strategies employed. It then analyzes representations of Sri Lanka's communities in the history textbooks. I will proceed in two stages. First, I discuss the historical narrative constructed by the language and storylines of the textbooks, focusing on the semantic association made between the Sinhalese and "the nation," the selection of events and personalities, and the predominant role of Buddhism, and their effect on the textbook's contribution to positive recognition of cultural diversity and mutual respect. Second, we examine how negative portrayals of the Tamil community within these textbooks may act to thwart national integration and cohesion. I identify both explicit and implicit depictions of the Tamils in the textbooks and ask how representations of the minority community fit in with the intended purpose, as expressed by Sri Lankan policymakers, of education as an instrument of national integration, recognition and social cohesion.

Education, Reforms and Textbooks in Sri Lanka

Since gaining independence in 1948, Sri Lanka has suffered from internal divisions and nearly thirty years of civil war. The country is home to three major communities: The Sinhalese make up 74.9 percent of the population, while Tamils and Muslims comprise 15.4 percent and 9.2 percent respectively.[3] The main parties to the conflict are the majority community, the Sinhalese, and the largest minority community, the Tamils. Among the grievances and contentious issues between the two groups, the most important is the question of how political power should be divided in the country. On the one hand the Sinhalese, who as the majority are in control of most of the state apparatus,[4] want to maintain the territorial

integrity of Sri Lanka. Tamil demands, on the other hand, have ranged from increased political representation or a federal solution to outright secession. In 2009, government troops defeated the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the most militant force of the Tamils. This victory brought an end to the civil war, yet many issues and grievances remain to be resolved.

Sri Lanka now faces the difficult task of reconstructing and reconciling both its physical and social infrastructure. Creating a country that can be called home equally by all its communities is an important challenge in the context of those processes. The country, its leaders and people are confronted with the reality of a culturally diverse population that groups itself into distinct ethnic categories along linguistic and religious lines. Sri Lanka faces the challenge of developing a form of multiculturalism that equally respects and protects all communities and is able to transform a military victory into lasting peace. While the education system is only one of the tool which might be used to reshape the hearts and minds of the Sri Lankan people, its importance to national integration has been recognized by successive governments since the 1990s. The result of this awareness has been a number of reforms of the education sector which aimed to modernize the education system and address criticisms and grievances raised throughout the 1980s and during the early 1990s.

The deep divisions characterizing Sri Lankan politics and society are also reflected in its textbooks and the education system at large. After independence, the colonial system dominated by missionary schools was reorganized and the education system became predominantly state owned and managed. Education is free to all from kindergarten to university level and Sri Lanka has a comparatively high literacy rate of about 93 percent.[5] The introduction of *swabhasha*, that is, schools teaching in either Sinhala or Tamil, in the 1960s reinforced segregation by language at all levels[6] from primary to higher education, including teacher training. This is also reflected in the country's textbooks, which are provided by the government to all schools free of charge. Since 1980, a standard textbook for each subject from grades one to thirteen has been published by the Educational Publications Department in Sinhala and then translated into Tamil and English.

Textbooks have been a particularly contentious issue between the communities. Schoolbooks have been described as consensus documents because they need to appeal to a large number of people.[7] In Sri Lanka the state has long held a monopoly over the production and distribution of textbooks without any competition from private publishers. This leads us to ask whose consensus it is that can be found in Sri Lankan textbooks. Since the 1980s, minority communities[8] in particular have criticized textbooks for their culturally exclusive content and historical bias towards the majority population.[9] The production process has been

denounced as being dominated by the Sinhalese and not including Tamils as authors or members of evaluation boards.[10] The content of textbooks has also been subject to criticism, with the charges leveled including slowness to incorporate curriculum changes, large numbers of grammatical and spelling errors, monoethnic and monoreligious bias, and a multiplicity of factual and contextual errors.[11] It is therefore of no surprise that textbooks have become a potent symbol of divisions and grievances for the minority communities.

With the intent of addressing these issues, a national educational reform was enacted in 1997, followed by the *National Curriculum Policy and Process* document in 2000. Steps taken to alleviate the problems included a new system for textbook evaluation boards, a multiple-book option program and a new curriculum, issued in 2007. A major objective of these changes was to utilize education to increase social cohesion. The vision for the curriculum was for it to "serve the needs of a multicultural, pluralistic, but nationally integrated society."[12] In this context, it was stipulated that curricular content in particular be free from any bias against ethnicity or religion and include balanced representations of the different cultural heritages present in Sri Lanka. In 2008 the Ministry of Education published the *National Policy and a Comprehensive Framework of Actions on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace* (ESCP) with the aim of strengthening the key role of education in creating national cohesion and integration. The overall aim of the policies and reforms enacted since the late 1990s was summarized thus by the Ministry of Education:

> Nation building and the establishment of a Sri Lankan identity through the promotion of national cohesion, national integrity, national unity, harmony and peace, and recognizing cultural diversity in Sri Lanka's plural society within a concept of respect for human dignity.[13]

Education in Sri Lanka, according to this vision, has the purpose of shaping a society that is nationally integrated as a single community of Sri Lankans, while respecting the cultural diversity of its population. Although these policies aim to reform many aspects of the education sector, including teacher education, curricula, school cultures and research, this article focuses on textbooks and investigates the extent to which they support this ambition of fostering multiculturalism and national integration.

This study will focus on a set of six history textbooks spanning grades seven to eleven. They are based on the newest curriculum, issued in 2007, and were published between 2007 and 2008 by the Educational Publications Department. I will apply a storyline analysis which has been used successfully by other studies to investigate the construction of group identities and relationships within textbooks.[14] By asking which group is active and resolving problems,

whose story is told, and about whom we learn most in the textbooks, we may identify the principal agents in the textbooks. The analysis reveals with whom the reader is intended to sympathize, but also provides us with insights into this group's beliefs, how it should ideally act and what holds it together. Storyline analysis enables us to identify who is constructed as "we" and who is excluded as the "other"; how other groups appear and are characterized, their relationship to the main group; and to what extent they are seen as a source of problems. The narratives contained within history textbooks tell readers "how we got to be who we are […] and how 'we' have related to 'others' of many kinds throughout history."[15] They therefore provide insight into the way in which representations of diverse communities, their cultures and relationships in the past in history textbooks might foster mutual respect and recognition in the present.

Developing a society which is both multicultural and nationally integrated is a challenging task, especially for a country in which ethnic differences have played their part in a long and destructive conflict. The Sri Lankan policy papers on this subject call for national integration and cohesion in order to achieve harmony and peace. On their own, these concepts may give us the idea the policy papers call for assimilation as the path to achieving their objectives, or, in other words, that they require minorities to lose their distinctive customs in order to fit into the dominant culture in society.[16] Yet the policy papers also frequently highlight the need for multiculturalism and pluralism and implicitly call for the recognition of difference. They paint a picture of a desired citizen who respects diversity and values other cultures in a democratic setting.[17] They imply the need for recognition of, that is, equal respect for, marginalized groups and cultural differences.[18] In such a vision, the different cultures, religions and values of majority and minority communities are acknowledged as of equal value and the various cultural groups within a society are able to preserve their unique identities while simultaneously belonging to an overarching nation. Charles Taylor has highlighted the fact that recognition is essential to individuals and groups and that the lack of or misrecognition of a group, its values and beliefs can cause it harm and may lead to conflict within a society.[19] This analysis therefore focuses in particular on the recognition of diversity within history textbooks as a basis for multiculturalism, pluralism and national integration.

These aims of multiculturalism, integration and recognition are ambitious but if successfully implemented they can create fertile ground for harmony and peace in the future. The end of the civil war in Sri Lanka opened up the opportunity to build a nation based on mutual recognition and respect. Textbooks can be an excellent tool for the combination of a

pluralist ethos of acknowledging, respecting and protecting diversity and an integrative vision of "us". They can depict a country, its people and history, and communicate shared values while also presenting the diversity of the existing cultures and religions.

The textbooks I analyzed are the standard Sri Lankan history textbooks, published in English, addressing all schoolchildren and not one specific community. They cross the language divide and thus have the potential to cross the ethnic divide as well. They can play a role in constructing an integrated history for an inclusive Sri Lankan society. At first glance they indeed look promising. They all begin with the words of the country's anthem in Sinhala, Tamil and Sinhala transcribed into Latin script (but without an English translation) that can be understood by children from all communities. The anthem is followed by prefaces including an address from the Commissioner General of Educational Publications, an extract from a speech by the President addressing his "beloved sons and daughters,"[20] and a message from the Minister of Education. They encourage the young readers to use the books as guidelines and highlight their importance. "This is a gift to you from the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, produced specially for you so that you may be a worthy citizen of the country."[21] They are tools for the construction of a desired citizen who will be able to both "live in a multicultural society" and "protect Sri Lankan traditions, culture and values,"[22] a citizen who will respect diversity and value or accept other cultures within and beyond the borders of Sri Lanka.[23] These aspirations held by the country's policymakers are ambitious and we need to ask to what extent the content of the textbooks can uphold them.

The Search for Minorities in the History of Sri Lanka

The goal of a nationally integrated society, of creating a truly "Sri Lankan" nation, requires a set of shared values that can be identified with by all communities in Sri Lanka. Such values need to cross ethnic divides while respecting and tolerating distinct ethnic identities. Integration allows different cultural groups to retain their customs while still belonging to one nation.[24] This is the declared aspiration of Sri Lankan policymakers, yet our analysis of the country's history textbooks reveals that these works construct a concept of nationhood that does not support this vision. Instead, the nation depicted in the textbooks is appropriated by the majority community, with the terms "Sri Lankan" and "Sinhalese" being virtually indistinguishable. This is evident throughout the textbooks, both in the strong semantic associations between "Sri Lankan", "Sinhalese" and "nation", and the storylines the books feature, which amount to a selective, Sinhalese-dominated historical narrative that largely excludes minorities, their stories and heroes. To become "Sri Lankan" against this backdrop,

the members of the minority communities would have to accept the national identity as prescribed by the majority. This may be extremely difficult if, as the textbooks imply, being Sri Lankan means being Sinhalese and for many "to be a Sinhalese is to be automatically a Buddhist and an Aryan" by race and language.[25] Religion and language are the most pronounced markers of ethnic identity and differences between communities in Sri Lanka. The use (in the textbooks) of the labels "Aryan" and "Dravidian" with racial connotations[26] further heightens the exclusive nature of the historical narrative they present. I will now go on to illuminate the ways in which the language, the "myth of descent" and the predominant role of Buddhism throughout these textbooks support a Sinhalese-centric ideal of "Sri Lankan" identity that is far from integration or positive recognition of diverse social or ethnic groups.

A first indication of the textbooks' failure to construe the concept "Sri Lankan" as integrative and inclusive emerges in the language they use to depict the nation. Throughout the textbooks, rulers, people or the nation in general are at times labeled "Sri Lankan". In many of these instances, the reader is directly included in this construct. The textbooks use "us" or "we" to evoke the image of an integrated nation that includes all readers and communities: "we as Sri Lankans,"[27] "the culture of our nation,"[28] "safeguard your nation,"[29] "we, including school children, the youth, the learned, the elders, the politicians and all the others."[30] Crucially, the textbooks do not consistently distinguish between "Sri Lankan", a national category, and "Sinhalese", an ethnic or cultural category. Indeed, they often equate them with one another, for instance in chapter three of *History Grade 7* when the subjects of the text are in turn labeled "Sinhala kings", "Sri Lankan rulers" or "Sinhalese". Similarly, the following poem establishes a natural link between the Sinhalese, the nation and Sri Lanka.

> As long as I remember the brave Sinhala nation,
>
> As long as I have my great royal blood,
>
> I'll never shed tears
>
> So, Goodbye my honoured Mother Lanka.[31]

The textbooks presuppose the existence of "Sri Lankans" throughout history, thus offering an image of national identity, a "we as Sri Lankans"[32] for the pupils to identify with. Yet the use of language also demonstrates that in the worldview offered by the textbooks, the "Sri Lankan" nation is dominated by the Sinhalese, who are posited as virtually inseparable from this nation it is a concept that fails to actively include other communities within Sri Lanka. It is difficult to build a truly integrated nation on a Sinhalese-centric idea of "Sri Lankans" that

is more likely to alienate minorities than to make them feel like fully fledged members of the nation.

While these history textbooks are not completely neglectful of the different communities existing within the nation and their shared past on the island, they fall short of providing a version of history that could foster mutual understanding and respect. The textbooks instead select heroes and events with a focus on the majority, providing little space for the minority communities. Nearly all the outstanding individuals through which the textbooks narrate history are identified as Sinhalese, such as the great kings Vijayabahu I and Parakramabahu or politicians like D. Jayatillake and S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. The absence of Tamil or Muslim heroes throughout the textbooks makes it difficult for pupils from the minority communities to find suitable role models to identify with and, furthermore, perpetuates the dominance of the Sinhalese community at the expense of these minorities. Including more historical figures from minority communities could highlight their achievements throughout history, encouraging positive recognition and mutual respect between communities.

Teaching pupils to protect Sri Lankan traditions and values is a central aspect of the long-term objective of social cohesion which education in the country is intended to pursue.[33] For teaching in this area to be compatible with multiculturalism and the integration of diverse communities, education needs to reflect national culture carefully to include and appeal to all communities. The textbooks, however, feature two tendencies that are detrimental to pluralism and national integration: They highlight an exclusive "myth of descent" and prioritize Buddhism and its allegedly inseparable link to the Sri Lankan state. These two elements are of particular note, as the question of who was on the island first has long been one of the most controversial issues in the conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamils. Religion is also an important aspect of the communities' respective identities, one that cannot easily be compromised on and thus needs to be recognized and respected.[34]

The myth of descent appears in the account of the legend of Vijaya in *History Grade 10*, which claims that, "The history of Sri Lanka begins after the arrival of Prince Vijaya with 700 followers. They were the first Aryans to come to Sri Lanka."[35] The textbooks use "Aryan" as a racial category that refers to the Sinhalese community, establishing it as the first to arrive in Sri Lanka. The textbook reiterates this claim a few pages later, again highlighting that the Sinhalese arrived first on the island while other communities entered later, often as invaders:

> The Aryans were the first to arrive in Sri Lanka to establish their settlements. … In later years Sri Lanka experienced a number of South Indian invasions. These invasions resulted in many Indian races settling in the country increasing its population.[36]

These "invaders" include the Tamils, who originated from South India; this narrative thus establishes them as foreigners who have no part in the myth of Sri Lankan origin. The textbooks explicitly construct the arrival of Vijaya and his fellow Sinhalese as the starting point of history in Sri Lanka, marking the birth of the Sri Lankan nation; this perspective actively excludes other communities from this decisive moment in history.

In a brief chapter of *History Grade 10*, one of the major controversies between the Sinhalese and the Tamils is "resolved", establishing the Sinhalese version as seemingly undisputable historical fact. This is problematic, especially as the events surrounding the arrival of the "Aryans" are established "according to legends"[37] and the Mahavamsa, whose interpretations and translations are themselves highly controversial.[38] According to the textbooks' own aspiration, history should provide "a critical analysis of the past of a nation."[39] Yet in this chapter, history is mixed with stories about how "God Upulvan blessed the prince" Vijaya and how his soldiers were imprisoned by the "magic power" of a princess.[40] The textbooks embrace the Vijayan myth from the Mahavamsa to present a collective memory that excludes any non-Sinhalese figures and therefore obstructs the construction of a pluralist and inclusive ethos around Sri Lankan history. It is the beginning of a narrative that glosses over the role of minority communities, largely excluding them and their stories from the history of Sri Lanka. We can also perceive this phenomenon in the textbooks' coverage of other key events in the country's history. The independence struggle of 1848, for instance, is framed as a fight for "the independence of the Sinhalese nation,"[41] not for the independence of Sri Lankans as a whole. It was the "brave Sinhalese leader[s]"[42] of the independence movements who "worked closely with the Sinhalese population to gain independence."[43] Recognition of minorities and their contributions to the national story is an important factor in processes of their inclusion.[44] The Sinhalese-centric historical narrative presented by these history textbooks largely excludes minorities instead of presenting them as full-fledged members of the nation.

A third major element of the textbooks which is detrimental to pluralism and integration is the dominant role they accord to Buddhism. Throughout the textbooks, religion emerges as an essential aspect of Sri Lankan culture. The books include several overviews of the three main religions represented in the country, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam, and omnipresent references to the role of religion in the lives of both the rulers and the ordinary

people of Sri Lanka. Religion and the nation are constructed as inseparable and religion is presented as a core value that must be protected. A poem in *History 9* highlights the centrality of religion and its intertwinement with the concept of the nation.

> Nation is like a golden palace,
>
> Religion brings light,
>
> If you can protect both,
>
> You will be a great one, my son![45]

The key role of religion also becomes evident when we look again at the role models depicted in the history textbooks. These heroes, their actions, beliefs and achievements provide an insight into the traditions and values the textbooks consider essential for the pupils to learn about and uphold in their personal lives. Role models in textbooks serve to "define attitudes, social mores and expectations, values, and behavior patterns that are appropriate to the 'ideal citizen'."[46] Thus a truly multicultural curriculum should reflect the country's cultural and religious diversity in the presentation of the heroes of its history. However, as discussed above, the history textbooks present role models that are almost exclusively Sinhalese, offering little with whom pupils from minority communities would struggle to identify. This issue becomes more pronounced when we observe that the religion most role models uphold is Buddhism. The textbooks establish the promotion of Buddhism as a core principle for the rulers and ordinary people of Sri Lanka:

> The king vowed to protect Buddhism and the Buddha Sasana. … It was the duty of the king to help and provide the necessary facilities to construct temples and other Buddhist institutions. Following these principles, king Devanampiyatissa, king Dutugemunu, king Vijayabahu and King Parakramabahu did an excellent service towards Buddhism.[47]

Most of the biographies of the great kings and politicians similarly highlight their services to the Buddhist religion; King Nissankamalla, for instance, is said to have "done a great service to develop Buddhism in Sri Lanka,"[48] and D. S. Jayatillake "will forever be remembered in Sri Lankan history for his service to the Buddhist revival,"[49] Even some of the Tamil kings are pointed out to have rendered service to Buddhism. "Though King Kirthi Sri Rajasinhga was a Hindu, he did a great service to uplift Buddhism."[50] The textbooks do not limit the responsibility of upholding the Buddhist faith to the rulers; every Sri Lankan, including the books' users, is encouraged to do likewise by the presentation of role models and direct prompts to readers:

> Try to do something great every day with love and respect for your religion and the country. Give up greed for false vision. Always try to uphold the Sinhalese nation and Buddhism.[51]

The textbooks do acknowledge the existence of other religions, but they receive very little attention and are presented as geographically limited to the North and possessing limited influence.[52] Buddhism, by contrast, is depicted as the basis of "Buddhist civilization"[53] and as "the state religion of [the] Sinhala people" since the third century BCE; it is viewed as a logical consequence of this that "the majority of the Sri Lankans became Buddhist."[54]

Establishing religion, especially a particular faith, as a core value and tradition of all "Sri Lankans" is highly problematic for the vision of an integrated and pluralistic society. The textbooks do not attempt to foster religious tolerance or mutual respect by providing space for the equal recognition of all religions practiced in Sri Lanka, but instead prioritize Buddhism. One should ask how such a depiction can support the goal of national integration, as minority communities who are not Buddhist may find it difficult to participate in the national community without giving up their religious identities. The position of religion in the textbooks, added to the Sinhalese-centric selection of historical events and heroes, creates a narrative that is far from pluralistic. The lack of recognition of minorities is further exacerbated by the few but largely negative representations of Tamils in the history textbooks.

Traitors and Foreigners. Portraying Tamils throughout History

The creation of a "Sri Lankan" identity depends upon the construction of a sense of "we-ness", an idea of which people are part of this concept and what beliefs, values and traditions unite them. National integration that is based on multiculturalism can bring together culturally diverse people as "we" by emphasizing values and traditions that can be shared by all communities despite their different backgrounds. Democratic values, for instance, may serve to unite people of different religions and can offer a "we" that is tolerant and respectful of differences. The preceding discussion has revealed that Sri Lanka's history textbooks instead construct national identity by referring to exclusive values such as Buddhism and a Sinhalese-centric history. They present a "we" that addresses mainly the Sinhalese and, instead of fostering positive recognition and national integration, requires other communities to assimilate to the dominant culture. This alienation and exclusion of minorities is perpetuated by their representations in the textbooks, in particular that of the Tamil community. Analysis of the depictions of Tamils in these textbooks demonstrates that they are not only excluded from the constructed "we", but are implicitly portrayed as "them", as outsiders.

Previous studies on textbooks have found that negative portrayals of ethnic "others" are almost inescapable in the context of ethnic conflicts.[55] Yet despite our findings thus far and the fact that the textbooks were written and published against the backdrop of nearly thirty years of civil war, they do not include strong, explicit negative stereotyping of the Tamil community. Instead, the history textbooks largely brush over the ethnic "other", the Tamils. Their story, culture and religion are excluded from the storylines of the textbooks and so is the country's most recent history, as the textbooks gloss over the civil war and its protagonists entirely. The absence of explicit negative stereotyping may well be a consequence of the more stringent control mechanisms for the avoidance of bias in textbooks which have been introduced in recent years. The lack of a coherent history of Sri Lankan minorities and their relationship to the Sinhalese majority means that the textbooks only contain limited material by which we can analyze explicit portrayals of the Tamil community. Yet images of the Tamils are also concealed in depictions of South Indians and their relationship with Sri Lanka and the Sinhalese. The close relationship between the Tamils and South Indians is not stated explicitly in the textbooks, but Tamil Nadu in South India is widely accepted as the origin of the Sri Lankan Tamils. The kinship of Sri Lankan Tamils and South Indians is usually taken as read, and is constantly perpetuated by scholars, journalists, politicians and other opinion formers to the extent that it has attained the status of "common knowledge" among the people of India and Sri Lanka. Therefore, even though only a few passages in these textbooks directly link South Indians to the Tamils, it is likely that readers will associate negative portrayals of South Indians with the Sri Lankan Tamil community, which makes these passages suitable for analysis in this context.

I will now investigate the ways in which both explicit and the more frequently found implicit negative portrayals of the Tamil community in these textbooks work against the aspirations of national cohesion and multiculturalism. Two aspects stand out, on which the subsequent analysis focused. First, the narratives of the textbooks construct the Tamils as foreigners associated with invaders from South India. Second, most implicit depictions of Tamils portray them in a negative light by presenting them as having a destructive and cruel nature. Overall, the representation of Tamils in these textbooks implicitly calls into question whether, in the view of the narrative, Tamils should be included as "Sri Lankans" at all.

Throughout the textbooks, it becomes evident that minority communities have a place in the history of the country which is separate from that of the majority. They are not part of the Sinhalese-centric historical narrative and usually appear as foreigners, outsiders or even invaders. As discussed above, the textbooks establish the beginning of Sri Lankan history as

the arrival of the Sinhalese in the Vijayan myth. In this view, they were the first community to arrive in Sri Lanka, giving them a special status as "natives". The textbooks also briefly discuss settlements of other communities, yet these are depicted as following much later and for different reasons. Some arrived with invading forces. "These [South Indian] invasions resulted in many Indian races settling in the country [and] increasing its population."[56] Others were brought to Sri Lanka. The textbook references "Tamil soldiers who had settled down in Sri Lanka when they were got down by Sinhala kings"[57] and people brought by the British "bringing in South Indian labourers."[58] Another wave of "Tamil and Muslim communities settled in different parts of the island," seeking refuge from the "Muslim invasions of South India."[59]

All these depictions share a tendency to establish Tamils and Muslims as strangers who arrived in Sri Lanka after it had been populated by the Sinhalese. They are portrayed as foreign elements that changed the country and its population. These waves of immigrants had mixed effects on the country; overall, however, in the textbooks' narrative, "the culture of the country became complex" in consequence of the immigration of non-Sinhalese communities.[60] While the influx of Tamils and Muslims is described as "unwelcome external influences"[61] in *History Grade 10*, the grade eight book points out that "Sri Lanka's culture was enriched through [the] South Indian influence."[62] Not all arrivals of foreigners are depicted in a negative light; nevertheless, and importantly, the textbooks do not report the integration of these communities into the existing Sri Lankan nation. They remain different and are largely not recognized as part of the nation or history of the country. Instead, negative stories about South Indians and Tamils are added to reiterate their foreignness and to establish them as threats to the "natives".

Most negative depictions of Tamils are found in stories relating to South Indians. The relationship between South India and Sri Lanka is again not presented as universally negative, as both countries "maintained cordial relationships from ancient times."[63] Yet it is the depictions of frequent invasions from South Indians and their role in some of the most traumatic periods of history for the Sinhalese that prevail and lead to an overall negative connotation of the relationship between not only Sri Lanka and South India but also the Sinhalese and the Tamils. The textbooks perpetuate ethnic divisions throughout their account of history, thus thwarting social cohesion in the present. This gains further emphasis in their implicit negative characterizations of the Tamils as dangerous and brutal "others".

In *History Grade 7*, Tamils are explicitly linked to treacherous and violent behavior on two occasions. The first instance establishes Tamils as unreliable and with shifting loyalties, speaking of,

> The assistance given to the South Indian invaders against the Sinhala kings, by the Tamil soldiers who had settled down in Sri Lanka when they were got down by Sinhala kings to establish their authority.[64]

The account implies that while the Tamils to which it refers were originally brought to Sri Lanka by Sinhalese rulers to support them, they later betrayed the Sinhalese and supported the Indian invaders. Only a few pages later they are again linked to the South Indian invasions and are explicitly depicted as violent. "[S]even Tamils including Pulahattha invaded the Anuradhapura Kingdom. Two of them returned to India … the remaining leaders … exercised power in Sri Lanka for fourteen years and seven months [with] each one killing his predecessor." [65] The image of treacherous Tamils is strengthened by their characterization as invaders and by their depiction as cruel killers of their fellow men. Those sections that explicitly link the Tamils to negative traits are rare, but their effect is strengthened by depictions of South Indians as cruel and harmful to Sri Lanka and her people.

One outstanding example is the presentation of Kalinga Magha, a South Indian invader who is depicted as especially cruel.

> Magha blinded king Parakrama Pandya …. He plundered the wealth of the leading persons of the country and distributed that wealth among his soldiers. He also demolished Chaityas, Temples and Pirivenas and burnt their books and valuables. He set fire to homes and farms of the ordinary people and also destroyed tanks and anicuts. … His invasion destroyed human resources including the leaders, ordinary people and the Bhikkhus as well as physical resources such as Chaityas, temples, tanks, anicuts and books.[66]

This account of Magha's invasion of Sri Lanka is an illustration of extreme violence and cruelty. The textbooks describe the invasion as a display of "the nature of a terrible war"[67] and vividly depict its disastrous consequences for the Sinhalese. Such radical depictions are exceptional; often, negative images are much more subtle, one example being the portrayal of King Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe. He was a member of the Nayakkar dynasty from South India, a Hindu[68] and Tamil, who turned from "a calm and quiet person" into "a brutal ruler" due to his alcohol addiction.[69] He is presented as a tragic yet weak ruler who lost the support of the people as a consequence of his change in behavior.

> This addiction to alcohol made the king's behaviour erratic and harsh. He became more vicious and gave severe punishments to the people. The nobles and the people became disheartened with him.[70]

The portrayal of King Wickrama Rajasinghe is important as it is not only the most detailed presentation of a non-Sinhalese ruler which occurs in any of the textbooks, but its subject was also the last king of an independent Sinhalese kingdom. Thus the blame for the loss of the nation's independence lies, in this narrative, with a weak and more importantly non-Sinhalese ruler.

The textbooks use adjectives such as "cruel" or "brutal" as well as implicit negative depictions to describe the Tamils in several of the rare instances in which they feature at all. Those images are strengthened by the depiction of the Tamils as a threat to the Sinhalese, not only through their association with "aggressive" South Indians, but also in stories of the Jaffna kingdom within Sri Lanka. Compared to the lengthy depictions of Sinhalese kingdoms, for instance those of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Kandy, the reader learns very little about the Jaffna kingdom and its people. Its emergence in the North is mentioned only to simultaneously establish it as a threat to the Sinhalese in the South.

> By this time [1302] a Tamil kingdom had emerged in Jaffna. According to the "Naranbedda" rock inscription King Parakramabahu IV had to face several invasions from Jaffna. But he had faced all of them successfully. … His greatest political achievement was the conquest of Jaffna around 1450 A.D.[71]

While King Parakramabahu IV was able to successfully avert all aggression from Jaffna and even managed to conquer it, this triumph was short-lived and his successors again "had to be prepared for any possible attack from the North."[72] Apart from these sections on the emergence of Jaffna and its contentious relation to the South of the island, the reader only learns about the fall of the kingdom with its capture by the Portuguese. Even in this brief depiction, the "internal conflicts" within the Tamil kingdom and the negative portrayal of its ruler's "treacherous activities" stand out,[73] again subtly evoking a negative image of the Tamils.

We need to take care not to overinterpret such sporadically occurring depictions of individuals or border conflicts, which were not uncommon in the past. Yet it is not these depictions in themselves which are noteworthy, but the manner in which they are placed throughout the textbooks and provide a one-sided image to the reader. The absence of a balanced representation of minority communities is a major obstacle to the vision of educating citizens who will respect and protect the cultural diversity of the island. Overall, a lack of recognition of Tamils and other communities is dominant, but the few, usually implicit, portrayals of them that occur generally go to construct an image of aggressive and cruel outsiders; such an image runs counter to the stated aim of promoting multiculturalism

and indeed may alienate minorities and perpetuate suspicions and prejudices on the part of the majority community. These history textbooks perpetuate the ideas behind long-standing animosities and conflicts between the communities instead of constructing a new, integrative vision for the future.

Conclusion

Their widespread dissemination and the opportunity they afford to select and present desirable knowledge make textbooks a unique tool for the development of future citizens of any country. Policymakers in postwar Sri Lanka have declared their hopes for education to become a means of creating harmony, social cohesion and peace. The vision and aim by which they are led is to overcome ethnic conflict and mistrust by constructing a plural, multicultural and yet nationally integrated society in which recognition of and respect for cultural diversity exist alongside the protection of the Sri Lankan nation. The role of the education system in this endeavor is to instil into citizens the multicultural and democratic values necessary for cooperation and trust between the communities of the island.

The history textbooks analyzed here do not support such ambitious goals. Instead of promoting positive recognition of difference and diversity, they largely pass over minorities and prioritize Sinhalese values and traditions as *the* national culture. They do acknowledge differences between the communities to a limited extent, especially religious diversity, but they do not actively engage with them. They provide a Sinhalese-centric history of the country that largely ignores the contributions of minority communities and presents both explicit and implicit negative portrayals of the largest minority group, the Tamils. The textbooks do not offer a critical historiography that recognizes multiple interpretations of historical events[74] and encourages readers to critically engage with the past. At the same time, the historical narrative produced by the textbooks glosses over the commonalities that exist between the communities and the long and peaceful pre-civil war history of Sri Lanka as a multicultural country.

Further, the textbooks do not engage with the most recent history of the country, a history of ethnic conflict and civil war. This is not an unexpected finding; in societies in the aftermath of war and conflict, the history of recent events is often too sensitive to be directly tackled in the classroom.[75] In order to achieve the goal of national integration and peace, however, this crucial part of history cannot be left out. The challenge for Sri Lanka's textbook authors remains the creation of a truly inclusive history of the country and all its

people and the willingness to address the conflict and war in ways that will be acceptable to all communities.

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Notes

[1] Lynn Davies, "Teaching About Conflict Through Citizenship Education," *International Journal of Citizenship and Teacher Education* 1, no. 2 (2005): 21.

[2] Many studies have explored how textbooks play an important role in the socialisation process in general and the construction of national identities in particular; for instance, Mustafa Cikar, "'Presentations' of Political Communities in the Turkish School Textbooks of the Democratic Period," 271-287, and Efthalia Konstantinidou, "Changes in the Greek History Schoolbooks: How Effective are they in 'Improving' the Image of the National Other?," 315-332, in *The Image of the "Other"/Neighbour in School Textbooks of the Balkan Countries*, Panos Xochellis and Fotini Toloudi, eds. (Athens: Typothito – George Dardanos, 2001). Jan Germen Janmaat, "The Ethnic 'Other' in Ukrainian History Textbooks: The Case of Russia and the Russians," *Compare* 37, no. 3 (2007): 307-324. Alija Abens, "'The Self' and 'The Other' in Latvian Textbooks," in *Auf der Suche nach der wahren Art von Textbüchern*, ed. Angelo van Gorp and Marc Depaepe (Bad Heilbrunn: Klinkhardt, 2009), 185-191. Nils Andersson, "Intercultural Education and the Representation of the Other in History Textbooks," 33-59, and Kristin Loftsdottir, "Deconstructing the Eurocentric Perspective: Studying 'Us' and the 'Other' in History Books," 21-32, in *Opening the Mind or Drawing Boundaries?* ed. Porsteinn Helgason and Simone Lässig (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2010).

[3] Department of Census and Statistics, "Population by Ethnic Group According to Districts, 2012," accessed 17 April 2014, http://www. statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/CPH2011/index. php?fileName=pop42&gp= Activities&tpl=3.

[4] Nihal Perera, "Colonialism and National Space: Representations of Sri Lanka," in *Conflict and Community in Contemporary Sri Lanka: 'Pearl of the East' or 'the Island of Tears'?*, ed. Ian Watson and Siri Gamage (London: Sage, 1999), 23-48.

[5] Ganga Tilakaratna, "Equal Opportunities for the Poor: Sri Lanka", *Policy Brief 11* (2006), accessed 28 May 2014, http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/3126-educational-opportunities-poor-sri-lanka.

[6] Lal Perera, Swarna Wijetunge and A. Balasooriya, "Education Reform and Political Violence in Sri Lanka," in *Education, Conflict and Social Cohesion*, ed. Sobhi Tawil and Alexandra Harley (Geneva: UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2004), 375-433, 396.

[7] Eugene Provenzo, Annis Shaver and Manuel Bello, eds., *The Textbook as Discourse* (London: Routledge, 2011), 1.

[8] Much work on Sri Lanka has been dominated by the conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamils; frequently the Muslims have been forgotten or simply subsumed into the Tamil category. This may give the false impression that Tamil and Muslim interests and activities are equivalent. A detailed discussion of this issue would go beyond the scope of this article.

For an account of the various effects of and reactions to education policies on minorities in Sri Lanka, see, for instance, Brigitte Sørensen, "The Politics of Citizenship and Difference in Sri Lankan Schools," *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 39, no. 4 (2008): 423-443.

[9] Mieke T. A. Lopes Cardozo, "Sri Lanka: In Peace or in Pieces? A Critical Approach to Peace Education in Sri Lanka," *Research in Comparative and International Education* 2, no. 1 (2008): 19-35, 25; Perera et al., "Education Reform and Political Violence in Sri Lanka."

[10] Ariya Wickrema and Peter Colenso, "The Respect for Diversity in Educational Publications – The Sri Lankan Experience," *World Bank Symposium* (2003), accessed 6 September 2012, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1121703274255/14396 4- 1126807073059/Paper_Final.pdf.

[11] Wickrema and Colenso, "The Respect for Diversity in Education Publications – The Sri Lankan Experience"; Perera et al., "Educational Reform and Political Violence in Sri Lanka".

[12] Perera et al., "Educational Reform and Political Violence in Sri Lanka", 398.

[13] Ministry of Education, *National Policy and a Comprehensive Framework of Actions on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace* (2008), accessed 28 May 2014, http://www.moe.gov.lk/web/images/stories/publication/peace_policy.pdf.

[14] Christine Sleeter and Carl Grant, "Race, Class, Gender, and Disability in Current Textbooks," in *The Textbook as Discourse*, ed. Eugene Provenzo, Annis Shaver and Manuel Bello (London Routledge, 2011), 183-215.

[15] Elizabeth Cole, "Ourselves, Others and the Past that Binds Us: Teaching History for Peace and Citizenship," in *Learning to Live Together: Education for Conflict Resolution, Responsible Citizenship, Human Rights and Humanitarian Norms*, ed. Margaret Sinclair (Doha: Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict, 2013), accessed 28 May 2014, http://educationandconflict.org/sites/default/files/publication/LEARNING%20TO%20LIVE %20TOGETHER.pdf, 207.

[16] Monica Mookherjee, "Multiculturalism," in *Issues in Political Theory*, ed. Catriona McKinnon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 190-211.

[17] Ministry of Education, *National Policy and a Comprehensive Framework of Actions on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace*, 4.

[18] Mookherjee, "Multiculturalism," 201.

[19] Charles Taylor, "Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism*, ed. Amy Gutman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[20] W. M. N. J. Pushpakumara, *History 9* (Colombo: Educational Publications Department, 2009), v.

[21] W. M. N. J. Pushpakumara, *History Grade 8* (Colombo: Educational Publications Department, 2008), v.

[22] Ministry of Education, *National Policy and a Comprehensive Framework of Actions on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace*, 4.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Mookherjee, "Multiculturalism," 192.

[25] Stanley Tambiah, *Sri Lanka: Ethnic Fratricide and the Dismantling of Democracy* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 58.

[26] Usually the categories "Aryan" and "Dravidian" are used to describe linguistic groups, but in Sri Lanka they are frequently used in a racial sense to refer to the origins of the Sinhalese and Tamils respectively.

[27] Pushpakumara, *History 9*, 125.

[28] Ibid., 73.

[29] N. Dharmasena, *History Grade 7* (Colombo: Educational Publications Department, 2007), 81.

[30] Pushpakumara, *History 9*, 73.

[31] Ibid., 15.
[32] Ibid., *History 9*, 125.
[33] Ministry of Education, *National Policy and a Comprehensive Framework of Actions on Education for Social Cohesion and Peace*, 4.
[34] For a detailed discussion of the importance of recognition for individual and group identities see Taylor, "Politics of Recognition."
[35] W. M. N. J. Pushpakumara, *History Grade 10* (Colombo: Educational Publications Department, 2007), 27.
[36] Ibid., 50.
[37] Ibid., 27.
[38] For detailed discussions on the controversies surrounding interpretations of the Mahavamsa and other historical sources, see, for instance, S. Sitrampalam, "Nationalism, Historiography and Archaeology in Sri Lanka," in *Pathways of Dissent: Tamil Nationalism in Sri Lanka*, ed. Rudhramoorty Cheran (London: Sage, 2009), 1-32; John Rogers, "Historical Images in the British Period," 87-106, and Ranaweera Gunawardana, "The People of the Lion: The Sinhala Identity and Ideology in History and Historiography," 45-86, in *Sri Lanka: History and the Roots of Conflict*, ed. Jonathan Spencer (London: Routledge, 1990).
[39] Pushpakumara, *History Grade 10*, 1.
[40] Ibid., 26.
[41] Pushpakumara, *History 9*, 27.
[42] Ibid., 28.
[43] Ibid., 82.
[44] Cole, "Ourselves, Others and the Past that Binds Us," 208.
[45] Pushpakumara, *History 9*, 74.
[46] Roberta Martin, "The Socialization of Children in China and Taiwan. An Analysis of Elementary School Textbooks," *The China Quarterly* 62 (1975): 244.
[47] Pushpakumara, *History Grade 10*, 39.
[48] Ibid., 34.
[49] Pushpakumara, *History 9*, 81.
[50] Pushpakumara, *History Grade 8*, 11.
[51] Pushpakumara, *History 9*, 67.
[52] Dharmasena, *History Grade 7*, 68.
[53] Pushpakumara, *History Grade 10*, 28.
[54] Ibid., 44.
[55] Janmaat, "The Ethnic 'Other' in Ukrainian History Textbooks," 309.
[56] Pushpakumara, *History Grade 10*, 50.
[57] Dharmasena, *History Grade 7*, 59.
[58] W. M. N. J. Pushpakumara, *History Grade 11: Part I* (Colombo: Educational Publications Department, 2007), 51.
[59] Pushpakumara, *History Grade 10*, 57.
[60] Ibid., 46.
[61] Ibid., 57.
[62] Dharmasena, *History Grade 7*, 74.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid., 59.
[65] Ibid., 72.
[66] Ibid., 99f.
[67] Ibid., 99.
[68] Pushpakumara, *History Grade 8*, 9.

[69] Pushpakumara, *History 9*, 15.
[70] Ibid., 14.
[71] Pushpakumara, *History Grade 10*, 54f.
[72] Pushpakumara, *History 9*, 122.
[73] Pushpakumara, *History Grade 8*, 74f.
[74] Lopes Cardozo, “Sri Lanka: In Peace or in Pieces?” 30.
[75] Cole, “Ourselves, Others and the Past that Binds Us,” 210.