

## Tools in Teaching Recent Past Conflicts: Constructing Textbooks Beyond National Borders

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When the Russian president Vladimir Putin came to power, his ideas of history were shaped around two key components. In his view, the collapse of the Russian/Soviet Empire was the major catastrophe of the twentieth century and the Soviet ‘victory over fascism’ the most glorious achievement of the Russian people in the same period. In a marked break with the more nuanced and critical treatment of historical issues during *perestroika*, Putin brought his personal influence to bear in order to secure the unquestioned status of these two, to his mind, essential dicta of Russian history in history textbooks. While interested observers did not fail to notice the zeal with which he advocated these doctrines, they evinced little concern. They regarded these actions as an escape to the past, a backward-looking amalgam of nostalgia, popularity-seeking with veteran organizations and a rather futile attempt to reinforce a sense of identity, community and self-worth among Russians via the reactivation of outdated enmities. Today’s perspective gives us a much clearer view on the matter as part of the psychological preparation of the Russian people for the acceptance of imperial ambitions, up to and including Russian aggression toward Ukraine. All that was required was to label the relevant opponent ‘fascist’, and immediately the emotionally charged myths and argumentations presented on the topic of fascism in the Russian history classroom were available for direct use in legitimizing violent conflict. Russian fighters in eastern Ukraine situate themselves in a tradition of battling fascism in the name of the restoration of the ‘unjustly’ defunct Russian Empire. Apart from these two key beliefs held by Putin, another essential belief can be mentioned that the president did not need to dictate to textbook authors and publishers: the myth

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of Russia as victim. This myth traditionally permeates the country's textbooks, depicting the country as perpetually suffering from the egotism and ingratitude of its neighbors. This stereotype gains in strength by virtue of the apparently complete lack of empathy toward these people in Russian textbooks (Maier, 2010: 91–92).

The above provides an emphatic demonstration, in the negative, of the connection between depictions of historical circumstances in textbooks and a will to peace. A similar link emerges when observing well-meant attempts to soothe or banish bloody historical conflict, by refusing to discuss it or turning it into a taboo subject. The textbooks of Tito's Yugoslavia stripped their representation of the events of the Second World War on the country's territory almost completely of their ethnic dimension, in the hope, both politically and educationally, that teaching about the war would not add fuel to the fire of ethnic enmities. What they actually succeeded in doing was creating a 'vacuum of memory' (Höpken, 1996: 168) which after the end of the Tito era was instantly and explosively refilled with fragments of memories passed on over generations and myths from collective communicative remembrance, leading to the hostility which became open war as Yugoslavia fell apart.

So much for the potential of history education to inflame conflict and war; might we hope that the reverse effect is possible and it might have the potential to help generate peace and reconciliation? Michael W. Apple has pointed out that to ask whether education can change society is to put the question wrongly; 'education', in his view, cannot be separated from 'society', as the former is always an integral part of the latter (Apple, 2012: 158). We could mention similar arguments in relation to the connection between history teaching and conflict resolution. The history classroom partakes in the construction of the past, in the form of which bygone conflicts appear to us. It is a key factor in the shaping and dissemination of the discourse on history, which takes place within a society and is a part of young people's historical socialization, the power of which should not be underestimated. For many people, the history lessons they experienced at school have been, and continue to be, their closest encounter with history, in terms of both the time spent engaging with the subject, and the didactically supported and systematic approach taken. In addition, school students generally prove to be curious and receptive toward education and show lower levels of preconceptions than do other age groups. It is for these reasons that history education can be considered to have a high potential for the promotion of reconciliation and peace, just as its susceptibility to abuse has, as indicated above, been exploited to considerable effect in the perpetuation and exacerbation of existing conflict. Research has on many occasions highlighted this ambivalence of history education (Lässig, 2013: 2; Pingel, 2010). Apple made no secret of his skepticism toward the idea that there might be simple answers to the general question of how education acts within and affects societies. However, he recommends to use this question as a starting point for differentiated inquiry regarding pedagogical practices, their sustainability and the actors engaged in them (Apple, 2012: 128).

In this spirit, the discussion that now follows will not attempt to tackle history education as a whole, but rather will focus on textbooks, teaching and learning materials, and examples of text on the basis of which teachers might discuss issues in the classroom. There is no doubt that the textbooks produced under national systems aware of the power of education and educational materials can make important contributions to peace education by eliminating images of others driven by enmity, deconstructing negative stereotypes, and helping to establish respect for others and the capacity to seek to understand them as values to aspire to. Nevertheless, such textbooks will inevitably continue to transport national political and cultural codes which stand in the way of a balanced and sensitive depiction and interpretation of historical events acceptable to all sides. This is especially the case in relation to the treatment in educational media of violent and traumatic conflict between particular nations. As a rule, only teams of authors from both or all nations in question find themselves able to overcome these deeply rooted patterns, because only such an authorship is able to embody and reflect the practice of dialogue between the parties to the conflict. It is for this reason that I will focus here on binational activities whose aim has been to defuse conflict and initiate and support processes of reconciliation.

The idea of transcending national borders in the endeavor to compare and reconcile depictions of history as transmitted in schools and in so doing to promote peaceful coexistence among peoples has its origins in the inter-war period, at which time the League of Nations encouraged such activities. We might be surprised in view of this long history at the relative paucity, despite their growth during this period, of endeavors to produce text, materials and books for the history classroom at joint bi- or multinational level. History curricula and historical narratives continue to be substantially entangled in specific national images of the self and others and to be pressed into the service of national identity formation. This said, the diversity of joint projects and initiatives in this regard has increased dramatically; emerging in accordance with the relevant needs of each case, a wide range of specific and detailed models of binational cooperation has become available, each with theoretical grounding and a track record of case studies in practice. It appears to be only states of war that prevent joint activities in this field from proceeding; these are situations of extreme inclusion and exclusion which tend toward making the images each side holds of its enemy so absolute as to effectively preclude dialogue. By contrast, appropriate instruments exist for situations of ongoing conflict that are not in acute phases, post-conflict settings and extant processes of reconciliation.

It is by no means the case that both sides in such endeavors are blessed with democratic contexts from which to conduct the work. It may be important in specific cases for discussions around textbooks to proceed with dictatorships or between states whose ideological bases are opposed. This may lead to asymmetrical relationships between the partners that need to find a balance. There are a number of levels on which state authorities and institutions might be included in such discussions; the primary agents of dialogue might

be appointed by each state or instead be representatives of civil society with varying degrees of official support. Differences in the size or economic power of states engaging in joint textbook projects may place the equality of relationships between the dialogue partners in jeopardy. Further, religious or cultural barriers may prove problematic, as may divergent educational cultures or differing ideas of history's purpose.

This chapter will present a typology of the most significant models of bilateral cooperation in the production of educational media and supplement it with examples illustrating their application, as well as discuss their various strengths and weaknesses. We should observe at this point that evaluation of the effectiveness and success of such measures, particularly with relevance to their effect on the development of historical consciousness among students, is a difficult undertaking. Any inferences we may draw in this regard may therefore be limited to assessments of what is plausible rather than provide 'proof' (Lässig, 2013: 11–14). Studies undertaken thus far, however, appear to support the hypothesis that joint history textbook projects have the potential to act as a key method in peace education (Korostelina, 2013).

### COLLECTIONS OF SOURCES

A concomitant of war and enmity between societal groups or nations is an extreme version of selective perception; this means that the knowledge these groups or nations have of the other can be seriously distorted. Where centuries-old 'arch-enmity' is present, historians have often provided those in political power with 'ammunition' in the shape of historical arguments. To this purpose a number of historical institutions actually owe their existence and from it they have at various times drawn their sense of legitimation. The consequence of this was that historical research was conducted along the dichotomous, adversarial lines dictated by the perceptions held by the national group, and that knowledge running counter to these perceptions remained neglected and obscured. In this situation, carefully compiled collections of sources may represent an initial, tentative step toward rapprochement between warring nations or societal groups. They may provide access to previously unexplored perspectives and aspects of an issue, complete partial images of an event or situation and break up familiar narratives; they can also be produced on the basis of an at least initially minimal level of consensus. What matters in this regard is the willingness of those who engage with them to take seriously the facts, arguments and viewpoints presented by the 'other side' and to regard them as of equal value to those advocated by their 'own side'.

Collections of sources designed for use in schools obviously do not share the academic ambitions and standards of editions produced in and for research, yet they can benefit from their association with academic study; further, where sources are chosen carefully and with an awareness of potential bias, they will be regarded as considerably less tendentious and susceptible to ideological influence than the text that appears in textbooks, written by their authors.

Empirical observations in countries which practice censorship or where political pressure is brought to bear on textbook authors have indicated that sources, as what appear to be objective documents, are frequently exempted from processes of censorship.<sup>1</sup>

Binational source collections are a relatively recent emerging tool for supporting processes of reconciliation, although there have been developments we can consider as forerunners. Enno Meyer, a teacher, issued two books of sources on Polish–German history before the German–Polish textbook commission could be established (Meyer, 1963, 1971). While these books were only published in Germany and were intended for use by teachers there, their origins lay in a dialogue with historians in Poland and Polish historians in exile taking place in the 1950s in the context of Meyer’s work ‘On the Representation of German–Polish Relations in History Teaching’ (Meyer, 1988: 67). These source collections represented a unique teaching aid for German history teachers who were interested in discussing Poland in their classrooms, and found extensive use over a period of more than 20 years. A joint Polish–German source collection would not have been feasible at that point in time nor would it have been absolutely necessary for the communication between the two countries. Whereas teachers in Poland have always had access to sources on German history, including Polish translations, access to Polish sources was extremely difficult for teachers in Germany. This comes as no surprise if we consider the fact that over a period of generations, even German historians took the majority view that Polish historical literature could be dismissed on the basis of an attitude of *Polonica non leguntur*. Enno Meyer’s source collections were a specific response to the asymmetry of knowledge to which this situation had given rise.

Another collection of sources intended for schools, issued in 2008 as a joint German–Russian project, had the same aim of filling an extant gap (Chubaryan & Maier, 2008). This project’s concern was to provide teachers in Russia with sources on twentieth-century German history in Russian and thus to enable them to arrive with their students at an independently developed idea of the history of a country engaging in war with Russia twice in this period, with devastating consequences. Those involved in the edition on the German side hoped that it would enable Russian historical narratives to break out of their narrow national focus on the Russian ‘fatherland’ by allowing teachers and students to gain a comparative perspective on a Western European society in relation to a number of events from Russian history. Additionally, they regarded the collection as an invitation to Russian publishers to emulate them. Their hopes were only partly fulfilled. At the project’s outset, at the end of the 1990s, Russian textbook publishers, driven by a ‘hunger for authentic sources’, estimated that they would be able to produce five- or six-figure print runs. In the period that followed, in the context of President Putin’s restrictive and xenophobic textbook policies, their interest dwindled. Eventually, thanks to the commitment of the Russian–German Historians’ Commission, 2000 copies were printed and distributed. Some sources from the collection have been included in Russian textbooks, and an international conference on textbooks

held in Saratov in 2011 bore impressive witness to the creativity of teachers in Russia in their use of the sources (Devyataykina, 2012). As collections of sources tend not to become outdated, we can be optimistic that the publication will evince long-term effects.

The most ambitious endeavor of this kind is the Joint History Project (Koulouri, 2005); run between 1999 and 2005 by the Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE), it transcends the binational. In a four-volume edition of sources for schools, 14 authors from 11 south-eastern European countries sought to present the conflict-ridden history of the Balkans as a shared history and to provide contrasts to the national and ethnocentric narratives appearing in the history books of the Balkan nations, thus opening them up to alternative perspectives. The particular resonance and sensitivity of this endeavor emerged from the fact that, in the very recent past, the region of Yugoslavia had been shattered and traumatized by a violent conflict in whose course history was frequently employed by all sides to legitimize their own position in the conflict and discredit their opponents. The JHP sought to counter this situation by harnessing history education for constructive communication and reconciliation. The topics raised in the edition were selected for their relevance and importance to national curricula and contextualized within European history, while any national bias in sources was balanced out by the addition of other sources from a broad range. Suggestions for questions in the context of the issues were added to the sources for the purpose of encouraging students to reflect upon them. Some parts of the edition, by contrast, limited themselves to juxtaposing divergent positions without comment. Highly controversial topics are included in the edition, but in some cases, where its compilers considered a closer discussion of the issue would prove too challenging to national sensitivities, such closer discussion is avoided. For educational reasons, the most recent war does not figure in the edition. The materials included in the JHP were intended to be highly usable in the classroom context; in order to ensure this, the project team recruited teachers and other educational practitioners to the group of authors and demonstrated and tested the materials at training sessions for teachers while working on the edition. The editors hoped that teachers would specifically select particular sources for use in their classes; and it is not unrealistic to surmise that such use of sources from the edition might fulfill the collection's objective of shattering the inaccurate impression of harmony and continuity given by individual national narratives as they appear in textbooks. This said, such developments depend on the extent to which work with sources, and the ability of students to arrive at historical knowledge through their own active participation in lessons, are valued in the actual teaching. Styles of teaching which have thus far operated with no awareness or inclusion of the principle of source-oriented learning will not derive great benefit from bi- or multinational collections of sources. The JHP was conducted as a typical NGO project, with no involvement on the part of state institutions or authorities; their role was limited to providing support for the implementation of the collection in schools and involvement

with the training sessions given in the context of the edition. The publication has appeared in print and is also available online, free-of-charge in English and in almost all the languages of the countries involved, which can be considered an optimal mode of distribution. The project received a positive evaluation from *CREDA Consulting* in 2009–2010, a company committed to advancing creative development alternatives that provide for sustainable institutions and practices of democratic societies, based in Bulgaria (Creda, 2010).

### JOINT RECOMMENDATIONS ON TEXTBOOKS

The oldest form of binational cooperation on peace education via history teaching are the series of bilateral textbook commissions, which first emerged in the inter-war period under the aegis of the League of Nations. After the Second World War, these commissions advanced to become a key instrument in the repertoire of strategies of reconciliation to be found among former enemies. Mostly founded by civil society initiatives, they have received significant support from UNESCO. Textbook commissions are appropriate ways of organizing cooperation in a post-conflict phase, provided there is political support for them or, at the least, no attempt by policymakers to stand in their way. Such commissions work as follows: The initial analysis is conducted by historians from each side on the depiction of the history of the other country. Errors, distortions, demonization, stereotypes and unbalanced content are registered and discussed at conferences with the help of specialist historians. The findings are used to compile recommendations for the educational communities of each country, their textbook publishers and policymakers. The achievement of such commissions consists in their production of an overview, on the foundations of academic research, of the depiction of shared histories in each country and in the concomitant emergence of a discussion of these issues at an academic level. The text of the recommendations produced in these settings essentially represents an initial attempt to bring together divergent narratives. These are meta-level texts, not intended for use in the classroom. However, ideally, they impact upon depictions of history in textbooks and generate, among teachers and the wider public alike, greater openness and acceptance for new perceptions of neighboring nations whose relationship with the country in question had previously been one of enmity.

The most striking example of the potential impact of textbook recommendations may be found in those issued by the Polish–German commission in 1976 (*Gemeinsame Deutsch-Polnische Schulbuchkommission*, 1977) after four years of close cooperation. The agreement reached by the commission on the text of the recommendations amounted to a sensation, subject as it was to the conditions and limitations of the Cold War. The recommendations bore witness to the potential and actual realizability of ideological coexistence, in contrast to the doctrine of vigorously adversarial ideological confrontation held by the Communist states of the time. Among the many challenges it faced, the commission was confronted with the requirement of simultaneously adhering

to the legal reservations held by West Germany in the matter of the recognition of the Oder-Neisse line and respecting the Polish rejection of the German term *Vertreibung* for the expulsion of Germans from formerly German regions of eastern Europe in the closing months and aftermath of the war. The bilateral principle of the commission's work was interpreted in such a strict manner that it excluded any discussion of issues such as the GDR, the USSR and the Jewish population of the region, which was anything but marginal to the issues in any sense.

The text of the recommendations was absolutely justifiable in academic terms, despite essentially being a compromise and its concessions to each side. The process of dialogue that preceded it gave birth to a historical synthesis which later received the epithet of being a 'new form of historiography' (Zernack, 1995: 11). For many of those involved, some of whom were renowned and expert specialists in their respective countries, the experience of working with integrity toward compromise and reconciliation in the commission made a deep impression and permanently changed their ideas of the 'other side'. The open-mindedness, fairness and mutual interest that the commission's members experienced during their work and which frequently grew into personal friendships formed the foundations for a degree and quality of contact and communication between German and Polish historians which continues to exert a positive effect to this day and was vital in creating the relaxed and open spirit in which successive generations of historians from the two countries have been able to approach one another (Borodziej, 2000: 164; Strobel, 2005: 267).

The initial reception of the recommendations, in both Polish and German society, was characterized by considerable animosity and resistance due to the way in which they appeared to dispense with national historical narratives or indeed put their previously canonical character up for grabs. Impassioned debates took place in the German media and continued in federal state parliaments. This level of attention and publicity pushed the print run of the recommendations in Germany to 300,000. It is unlikely that any history teacher in contemporary West Germany who was in the habit of keeping up with developments in the field was unaware of them. This impressive impact can certainly be regarded as a success, bringing the significance of Polish–German relations to the attention of the German public as it did for the first time. In Poland, by contrast, the print run was approximately 6000; most of these copies found their way to the part of the Polish elite with a critical point of view on the socialist system.

In the final analysis, the controversies around the recommendations that took place at a political level in Germany and Poland were as crucial to the process of Polish–German reconciliation as the direct communication between German and Polish historians for which the commission provided a forum. The initial effect of the debate on West German society had been to provoke a distinct polarity of opinion; in the longer term, however, the discussion undergirded the German policy of rapprochement and communication with Poland.

The broad acceptance of the recommendations and the ideas at their core was a strong indicator for the emergence of a new attitude in Germany toward its eastern neighbor. The effect on the political situation within Poland favored the anti-Communist opposition and disarmed those in power as it called into question the habit of playing the 'anti-German card' and conjuring the spectrum of German revisionism in critical situations. Thus, the recommendations initiated a virtuous circle of rapprochement, of the development of confidence and trust, and of reconciliation. Textbooks in Germany literally improved overnight. Indeed, the mere fact of the commission's foundation had been sufficient to prompt publishers to eliminate to a considerable extent the negative stereotypes and myths around Poland which had hitherto been present in the textbooks they issued.

The success story of the German-Polish recommendations cannot simply be reproduced in other countries. We should be aware of the fact that at the beginning of the 1970s, the elites of both Germany and Poland evinced a belief in the essentially dead-end nature of the status quo and a powerful desire for change, from which the commission's discussions around textbooks doubtlessly profited. Additionally, there is certainly substance to Włodzimierz Borodziej's supposition that the willingness of those involved in the commission to break with the tradition of antagonism between Germany and Poland was related to factors connected to their individual lives and to characteristics of their generation. The experience of totalitarianism and the knowledge of historians' entanglement in acts perpetrated by the National Socialists and the Stalinist regime had led a substantial number of contemporary historians to call their own discipline into question and enabled them to develop the sensitivity toward the concerns of their interlocutors without which all dialogue is doomed to failure (Borodziej, 2000: 158–159).

### DUAL CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

During the work on the German-Polish recommendations, the idea emerged to prepare them, if the necessity arose, partially in the form of a juxtaposition of Polish and German positions on specific historical events and processes on which consensus seemed impossible. Had such action been necessary then the emerging recommendations would have been, though less valuable than those eventually published, certainly better than a complete failure of the process. Indeed, any attempt to communicate one's view of a shared and difficult history to the other 'side' of a conflictive relationship, using factual and non-injurious language, represents an initial step toward mutual understanding. This is particularly the case where conflict is ongoing; a situation that tends to put bridging narratives beyond the reach of the imaginations of those involved. One example of such a situation today is the animosity between Israelis and Palestinians.

A team composed of members of each 'side' of the conflict convened in 2002 around Israeli Dan Bar-On and Palestinian Sami Adwan, under the aus-

pices of the binational NGO PRIME (Peace Research Institute in the Middle East) and subsequently sought to undertake just such an attempt. Their intent was not to produce recommendations which would entail a structured juxtaposition of Israeli and Palestinian historical narratives, but rather to create an actual textbook in accordance with this principle.<sup>2</sup> The book's principal educational innovation was to be its layout; the two parallel narratives were to be placed to the left and the right respectively of a central, empty column. In this column the student was to be invited to formulate his or her own version of events, to be arrived at in class over the course of a number of lessons. The PRIME team drew their inspiration from the dual narrative approach used in the field of therapeutic practices in relation to Holocaust research. In this context, seminars using dialogical story-telling had proved to be helpful for the development of mutual recognition and acceptance of opposing narratives, which appears to be a primary intractable issue in the relationship between Palestinians and Israelis.

The textbook was composed between 2002 and 2006 by two subgroups, working on a relatively autonomous basis, each of which formulated one of the two narratives (PRIME, 2006). In the years that followed, numerous meetings and discussions led to modifications, more nuanced and less controversial portrayals, and amendments to the language to make it less inflammatory. Fundamentalist positions had been excluded from the outset. The book's authors constructed a narrative which was purposefully susceptible to inconsistencies and ruptures, in order to reflect in essence the majority view of the event on their 'side'. The narratives are not in complete parallel, as the timeline running through the book features different events on each side at a number of points. The book reflects the conflict between the two sides and the intertwining of their narratives in the context of the history of their relationship. It is the first set of teaching materials available to teachers to apply the principle of multiperspectivity to the Israel–Palestine conflict. Academic workshops and seminars took place during the process of its creation, and parts of the material were tested in schools. A teachers' guide to accompany the book, available online, both made the project public and increased its transparency, as well as inviting interested parties to become involved ([vispo.com/PRIME](http://vispo.com/PRIME)).

The project, funded by the USA and the EU as well as individual European countries, drew a great deal of attention worldwide. In the region around which it revolved, however, the textbook was less enthusiastically received. Official authorities in Israel and Palestine alike have rejected its use in history teaching on political grounds. Criticism of the book has also come from academic circles; there have been claims that the two narratives it presents are too normative and authoritative in character and that they fail to include minority positions such as that of Israeli Palestinians. A further criticism has been that it would be precisely the overstepping or transcendence of the two narratives with their monolithic structure that would provide a real opportunity to make the ideological boundaries between them more fluid.

In spite of these concerns, Achim Rohde, who acted as an independent observer to the project, considers PRIME's approach to constitute a meaningful innovation; emphasizing this significant character, he regards the project as 'a civil society initiative that creates bottom-up pressure on politicians by juxtaposing conflicting historical narratives in a collectively authored textbook designed for use on both sides of the barricades' and sees in it 'the potential to become a point of reference in the field of peace education' (Rohde, 2013: 189).

### BINATIONAL GUIDES FOR TEACHERS

A binational teacher's book is a teaching aid, which emerges from collaborative work supported by representatives of the two participating nations and which is designed for use by teachers in both countries. Its purpose is to make available material, prepared for educational use, that can broaden or deepen the scope of the educator's teaching. The intention underlying such a project is to counteract deficits, biases and negative stereotypes which appear in the ideas citizens of each country have of the other country, and which tend to flourish in places marked by a conflict-heavy past. The key challenge facing binational teachers' guides is its need to draw the historical narratives from each country out of their mutual isolation and confrontation, and provide a selection of materials for two national communities within one single publication, within a framework appropriate to teaching. Such an endeavor can only succeed in a very advanced phase of rapprochement between two nations, a phase in which the conflict has been resolved at a political level. In such a setting, binational teachers' guides have the role of providing broadly based societal undergirding for the reconciliation and communication process in the interests of preventing a relapse into the previous state of enmity.

Binational teachers' guides are unlikely to be published in identical form in both countries; there will need to be variations for each group, the extent of which will depend on how much their cultures of teaching and learning differ and the specificity of the guide's planned content. A carefully elaborated educational model geared toward a specific teaching situation will most likely encounter obstacles when applied in other countries. It is for this reason that a binational teacher's book should not contain elaborate lesson plans, but should instead provide raw materials which can be used, abridged or adapted for lesson planning and for structuring and refining learning objectives.

Those compiling a binational teacher's guide should make sure, in the interests of fairness, to include a balanced representation of input from both nations; no one side should be dominant, and consideration needs to be given to the different priorities afforded by each side to the topics covered. Furthermore, binational undertakings in the field of education will almost certainly be doomed to failure in cases where the cooperation partners cannot meet as equals, which they are unlikely enabled to do where funding is not essentially proportionate across the two groups. This does not necessarily mean

that the budget on each side needs to be exactly the same; services often attract different costs in different countries, and the economic strength of a country will need to be taken into account when allocating funding budgets. Another reason for providing the funding for such projects as equally as possible is the fact that a joint endeavor in which one of the parties has not materially invested is likely to be valued less. Generous donors from outside are often met with mistrust, a dictum nowhere truer than in relations between states. Such a lack of trust can only serve to seriously hamper the implementation of any binational project.

Binational guides for teachers are highly flexible in nature; they have the advantage of the ability to concentrate almost exclusively on the history of relations between states and provide space to represent the history of the other country as a continuum. The sections of such guides containing selections of materials, and the didactical considerations, can specifically address their target groups and the prejudices they hold. They can be used selectively in the classroom, linking up with compulsory curricular topics. Furthermore, they are highly suited to up-to-date forms of teaching based on work with sources, and to support teachers in creating distinct and unique lessons for their students. There is no need, particularly in relation to the sources provided, to adhere strictly to boundaries between subjects and disciplines; the sources, for instance, can include literature and art. Such guides can also be used as 'readers', encouraging students to undertake active learning or supplying material for them to hold a class presentation or similar activities. The methodology at the heart of these guides is strictly comparative and encourages work in the same vein. The time and effort involved in creating them is relatively manageable. The lack of bureaucratic obstacles, due to the fact that such guides are not generally subject to the approval procedures student textbooks face, is a key advantage. This circumstance also dispenses with the need for advisory and supervisory bodies to steer the materials through the process. The financial risk of these enterprises is also small. When a guide is produced electronically and made available online, accessibility is optimal and each required language version of the guide can appear side by side and be connected up via linking.

One successful example of bilateral engagement with conflict in an educational context is the guide for teachers 'Germany and Poland in the Twentieth Century' (Becher, Borodziej, & Maier, 2001; Becher, Borodziej, & Ruchniewicz, 2001), which was produced between 1999 and 2001 under the auspices of the Polish–German textbook commission. The guide focused on the twentieth century because this was the period during which the history of relations between the two countries experienced most turbulence and involves most controversy. It concerns events which continue to overshadow the life experiences of teachers and their pupils and touch upon historic events narrated within families in a manner often greatly emotionally charged. The guide contains analysis, educational considerations and sources. The analytical parts present overviews of the current state of research in relation to specific topics, selected in accordance with curricula in both countries and authored jointly

by Polish and German experts. As syntheses of Polish and German historiography, they supply teachers with well-founded information stated factually and are above any suspicion of pushing national agendas. The parts detailing educational considerations were compiled by educationalists in each country for their specific national audiences. The continuous communication in the project team ensured that each side was happy with the work generated by the other. Wherever it was judged to be possible and appropriate, these educational considerations and ideas for teaching were included in both the Polish and the German versions of the guide.

One particularly welcome effect of binational cooperation in this field is the way in which it expands the horizons of national educational cultures and provides an arena for the fruitful emergence and exchange of innovations in history teaching. The source collection included in this Polish–German guide encompasses sources from jointly held corpora, which take the extent of previous knowledge of the subject and the accessibility of the sources into consideration. For instance, the guide accounts for the considerably lower level of knowledge about Poland that exists in Germany than vice versa by including additional sources, bringing the total number of pages in the German version to 432, 140 more than the Polish edition. The references for further reading and research included in the guide—touching on such areas as books for young people, audio-visual media and websites—are different for each country, while the contents of the glossary and the chronological table of events are the same.

The project received strong support from policymakers, including a number of respected figures, such as the foreign ministers of both countries involved warmly recommending teachers on both sides to make use of the guide. Indeed, it was welcomed by educators and those in the educational field able to disseminate new materials and practices. The reviews and demand for the publication—which saw a dynamic development, presumably boosted by word of mouth among teachers—bore witness to this. In total, the guide's print run topped 32,000, with 26,000 of these copies distributed in Germany. This success was partly due to the fact that the project benefited from the expertise and networks of the German–Polish textbook commission and its members, which provided it with authors open to and practiced in binational dialogue and the assurance that both sides of the endeavor were committed to taking a self-critical approach to their own history.

### CONVENTIONAL/CURRICULAR BINATIONAL TEXTBOOKS

The idea of young people from once-warring nations learning history from one and the same textbook is immensely attractive and redolent with symbolic power at the political level. A bilateral textbook can be regarded as a synecdoche for a highly advanced, successful process of cross-border reconciliation; it is a living proof that this process has reached broad swathes of society on each side and has essentially arrived at a point of no return. It means that both countries involved have given the other permission to help write the history

which will be taught to their upcoming generations. A book of this kind is compiled in accordance with the curricula of each country, enabling it to be used as a regular textbook and to compete on the textbook market and in schools with existing approved works; it will cover general curricular content, which may span a time period from prehistory to the present. In other words, the product of this type of endeavor does not revolve around the history of relations between the two nations of those involved in its conception; instead, it provides an unconventional forum for the perceptions and educational traditions of both these countries.

The production of such a work requires a setting free from acute conflict and featuring political and economic factors that favor the likelihood of the endeavor overcoming national dissent within each society. In this vein, it is not surprising that the only two books of this sort reaching realization are Franco-German and Polish-German history textbooks, the latter of which is still in progress. All three countries which have been involved in these projects share similar values within a common community, have the same political allies and are among those countries within the EU which have essentially synchronous plans for their future development. The communities of historians in each of these three countries have long since abandoned their adversarial starting points in relation to one another's history and have contributed to the deconstruction of images of one another based on enmity, the overcoming of prejudice and the development of nuanced perspectives on historical events. The ideas of history they propagate, particularly in regard to their relations with other countries, are increasingly independent of national paradigms, turning toward European leitmotifs and connective transnational elements. The decades of work put in by the Franco-German and Polish-German textbook commissions have seen these three countries make unprecedented efforts to fundamentally and systematically revise and overhaul the histories they have written of their relations with the others and undertake experimental attempts to produce binational teaching and learning materials. Each of the three countries have additionally experienced changes to the format of textbooks in the context of a general reorientation of education systems in accordance with European standards and an advancing similarity of cultures of teaching and learning across the continent. The workbook has become the predominant medium in history education, primarily characterized by the inclusion of contrasting sources, a multi-perspective and student-centered approach and the presentation to students of plural potential interpretations. A medium of this type is considerably more open to transnational elements and evolving into binational work than were books of the more traditional kind, which tended to follow a closed and unquestioned narrative. We can thus observe that a binational book used as a regular curricular tool can represent the culmination of a long process of rapprochement.

Such a production will only be possible in specific conditions. The political situation in each country will need to be such that there is no prescribed interpretation of history that contradicts the other one. Instead, both nations

will need to share the political will to make the project a success, as well as similar standards in historiography and comparable philosophies in relation to the perceived function of history education, its general learning objectives and curricular stipulations. The history of each country will need to be relevant in a similar way to the other one. Finally, there should not be major divergences in cultures of teaching and learning, predominant educational principles or the cultures of their implementation.

The idea of producing a Franco-German textbook first emerged in 2003 in the context of a civil society initiative and rapidly found support at the top political level (see for more detail Defrance & Pfeil, 2013). The book, whose three volumes were published between 2006 and 2011, was aimed at upper secondary school level and produced via the cooperation between publishers on each side. It has proved highly popular in bilingual schools in both countries and with teachers with an interest in Franco-German interaction. Nevertheless, the high hopes for the book to be used widely in conventional schools were not met. A short time after the third and final volume came onto the market, curricular reform in France rendered parts of it obsolete. Revision adapting to these changed conditions has yet to take place due to the prohibitively high cost of the joint endeavor. At a symbolic level, the book has doubtlessly proved a success, despite its rather limited influence on educational practices in the two countries thus far. Contrary to the ambitions initially bound up with the project, it does not represent a step toward the creation of a 'European history textbook', although it is the publication that has progressed the furthest toward the Europeanization of national narratives and as such certainly has ground-breaking status (Defrance & Pfeil, 2013: 62).

Calls for a Polish-German textbook could be heard at the time the Franco-German project was announced. It was not until 2008, however, that the undertaking was launched after a long period of preliminary discussions at the political level. The German-Polish textbook commission took on the conceptual work on the project along with its coordination and additionally acted in an advisory role, while a publishing house from Poland and one from Germany were commissioned. The resulting book, the first volume due to be published imminently, is designed for lower secondary school students and aims to cast light on the role of history in the formation of identity and allow pupils to approach matters fundamental to European history via engagement with issues of national history and of the relationship between the two countries. The Polish-German setting may well prove ideal in terms of delivering a potential opportunity to analyze and eventually overcome the psychological division of the continent into East and West which has overshadowed the European idea since before the Cold War era.

The Polish-German experience once more demonstrates that the production of a binational textbook requires great investment and effort. An additional complication in this case was the fact that those involved did not always possess bilingual competencies, giving rise to an immense amount of translation. In many respects, however, those carrying out this project were able to

draw lessons from the Franco-German endeavor. For example in the decision to publish the volumes of the Polish–German book in chronological order and to produce it for lower rather than upper secondary level, due to the lesser significance of textbooks in the latter phase of schooling.

Both projects demonstrated the difficulties and issues inherent in the production of a binational textbook and shone a light on the extent of the continuing divergence in the details of the ideas and interpretations of history and traditions of teaching and learning held by different nations. The hurdles to be overcome were doubtlessly higher in the Polish case, because the official political resolution of all conflict between Poland and Germany had taken place as recently as 1990 with the countries' mutual agreement on the course of their shared border. This was also due to the controversies between the two nations that subsequently erupted on an intermittent basis and generally involved the citation of historical arguments. Yet precisely these instances of friction and controversy around particular issues are indicative of struggles and therefore of productive process; all-too-harmonious consensus would tend, in a peace education context, to signal limited actual or potential impact.

### JOINT SUPPLEMENTARY HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

The idea of joint history textbooks can be traced back to 1950, where it emerged within international discussions around textbooks in relation to a 'joint European history book' (Pingel, 2013: 155). It was not until the end of the 1980s, however, that it came closer to realization, having drawn attention and acute interest from both the political scene and historians who were passionate about Europe. Political circles considered such an endeavor to have the potential to promote communication and reconciliation and to help secure peaceful coexistence within a Europe primarily conceived as a 'Western' continent via the development of a shared historical narrative. EU policymakers perceived it as a means for the formation of a European identity which might serve to legitimize the exercise of political power at this level. The first such attempt to initiate the development of a 'European textbook', which was conceived of from the outset as a supplementary teaching and learning aid, was driven by Frédéric Delouche (Delouche & Aldebert, 1992). It attracted substantial criticism for its perceived shortcomings, which included a failure to reflect Europe's inherent diversity, the exclusion of populations with smaller numbers and the considerable marginalization of the east of the continent. Despite this, it was translated into a number of languages and supplied emphatic inspiration among historians for its transcendence of national narratives. The debate also cast light on the general issues facing any undertaking to create a supranational textbook and in fact strengthened reservations toward such projects, particularly among history teaching specialists. Indeed, it led many of those participating in the debate to reject the idea outright and saw a European curricular history textbook move further and further away from realization.

It was the Franco-German endeavor that revived the idea and provided encouragement to potential authors. At the same time, the emergence of transnational and ‘entangled’ history as a research subdiscipline inspired historians to reapproach the potential of binational history textbooks for schools. Projects currently in progress include a German–Czech and a Russian–German history book, each of which are planned for publication in both relevant languages. The latter project has been seeking to produce a book for schools and higher education whose purpose is to contribute to ‘a better understanding [in both nations] of the other people, its traditions, values and cultural mentalities’, a task, as observed in the book’s foreword, ‘all the more urgent after a century full of wars, large-scale crimes and tragic events’ (Möller & Chubaryan, 2014: 9). The work addresses both a general audience and those with a specific interest in history. This hybrid character is clearly apparent in its third volume, which revolves around the twentieth century and has already been published in Russian and German. The book’s approach, which entails exploring the history of the two countries’ relationship via investigation of significant sites of shared memory, is of substantial educational value and estimable potential productivity. Its layout, featuring color-coded chapters, maps and sources, and a chronological table of events, is familiar to those accustomed to interacting with teaching and learning materials. By contrast, the tone of its text is highly academic, with a reduction in complexity for educational purposes apparent only in specific chapters. This leads to a rather overwhelming volume of facts, while some of the excursions undertaken by the narrative into subdisciplines such as the history of art go markedly beyond what is required of school students. The book has followed the principle of a Russian and a German author working together tackling each issue. Where this proved impossible, it contains parallel discussions of the issue. This manner of proceeding enables readers to rapidly identify those areas on which consensus was achieved and those of which the assessments on each side remained irreconcilable. The presentation of each position with recognizably equal status is conducive to allowing those working with the book to form their own judgment in the matter.

Since the 1980s, observers in East Asia have kept a close eye on the European activities seeking to promote reconciliation through textbooks. China, South Korea and Japan have repeatedly been sites of conflict around the remembrance and assessment of the sensitive past which has at various points stood in the way of cooperation. The successful processes of reconciliation between Germany and its Second World War opponents have been the particular focus of attention in this part of the world. A number of conferences have explored whether specific activities undertaken by or with Germany might be applied, in adopted or adapted form, to the Asian setting. Likewise, in this context we can situate the decision taken in 2002 by a trilateral forum to create an ‘alternative supplementary history textbook’ for middle and high school students to learn about the history of relations between the three countries (for more detail see Yang & Sin, 2013). The book was to focus on modern and contemporary history and feature a topic-based structure. The three coun-

tries embarked upon the endeavor from very different starting points due to marked differences in categories, periodization and the use of terms in their historiographies. Also, discrepancies, stemming from divergences in classroom practices and methods of teaching, existed in their ideas of the relative status of narratives by the authors and sources. The participants came to an agreement that authors' narratives would form the backbone of the book and be broken up to a degree by the periodic inclusion of documents and photographs. The book's foreword, composed jointly by the project team members, emphasizes the fact that historiography in each of the three countries has exacerbated violent conflict in the course of their modern history. Apart from indicating where the various perspectives remained divergent it reports that the communication taking place in the work on the book brought about consensus in relation to a considerable number of issues. Each version of the book—one for each country—subsequently contains an introduction for the relevant national audience, written by the appropriate sub-team. The book's chapters encompass a mosaic of topics with text composed by one particular national group of authors. Taken together, they provide readers with a historical overview and enable them to gain a parallel perspective on various developments and events, and the differing ways in which these have been regarded from country to country.

This manner of proceeding did not succeed in generating a shared East Asian view of history that transcends national divides. In view of the tough and robustly conducted negotiations around the text, during which highly divergent views met and collided, it is nothing short of a miracle that the textbook eventually made it to print (*History that Opens the Future*, Hanjoong-il Gongdong Yeoksa Pyeonchanwiweonhoe, 2005). A series of issues remained without consensus. In these cases, the book's editors either pointed explicitly to the disagreement among the various sides and left it to readers to make up their own minds or made use of general and superficial language in discussing the issues. Some events, including the Cultural Revolution and the Tiananmen Incident of 1989, were not included in the book. One of those involved in the process commented that 'compromises had to be made. Thanks to this principle of a "minimum common denominator", cross-national history dialog was able to continue on a regular basis and reach a relatively high level of agreement in various stages' (Yang & Sin, 2013: 216). The book received a generally positive reception from the political establishment in the three countries, the Korean president Ro Moon-Hyun praising it highly. The impressive sales figures for the publication, which reached over 300,000 across the three nations, bear witness to how the book and its objective met latent needs in society and the history teaching community. Nevertheless, those who have engaged with the book and discussed its impact largely appear to be adults, and the actual use in the classroom seems to be sporadic. Since the publication of this pioneering work, Japanese and Korean academics have produced further bilateral history books.

The success of their endeavor encouraged the trilateral team to develop a 'New History Book', intended to transcend national perspectives by taking an approach modeled on global and structural history and avoiding texts authored by particular national groups. The resulting work might be regarded as rather dry and theoretical; a next volume, focusing on the history of everyday life, restored individuals and groups as historical subjects to the reader's horizon. As this book has only recently been published, we cannot yet make statements on its dissemination or reception. It suffices to comment at this point that the outlined activities in this region have doubtlessly enabled the East Asian region to embark upon a path toward a shared understanding of their common history.

### CONCLUSION

The bi- or multinational activities around the production of educational media discussed in this chapter all drew their initial inspiration from the idea of promoting peace and reconciliation through the factual and fair depiction of past conflicts. All the nations involved in these activities have in recent years or decades seen the emergence of processes of mutual communication, which have on occasion taken on impressive dimensions. To claim that these processes have been purely the results of such undertakings would be giving too much credit to efforts made in this direction in the field of history education. The impact of all the examples of binational textbook projects that we have discussed here, most of them starting out as bottom-up initiatives driven by NGOs, has always been dependent on the political and societal contexts in which they came into being and journeyed toward implementation. We should take into account that such activities have very little chance of generating significant effects if they run counter to the political projects of governments. In a functional democracy, as demonstrated in the case of the Polish–German textbook recommendations, a parliamentary opposition might push the project's progression against the resistance of a government majority. The Balkan region's JHP demonstrated how the activities of international NGOs caught the interest of initially indifferent political elites. Activities in North-East Asia generated such curiosity and great expectations that governments preferred to throw in their lot with the project rather than to risk appearing as obstructive. The only project of this kind that met with a political cold shoulder was the Israeli–Palestinian venture, which accordingly found itself limited to the symbolic demonstration that dialogue is possible and that it has the potential to change people and to create at least an atmosphere, if not a culture, of mutual respect and acceptance. The fact that the group gave birth to a new variant of binational teaching and learning media—the dual-construction history book—in the process is testament to its flexibility and creativity. Attempts to resolve conflict via binational educational media will inevitably founder and fail without the enthusiasm their creators bring to the process and without being welcomed by history teachers. Such

passion and commitment on the part of historians and history educators—if it can emerge and become active within a wider context of support—has the potential to disturb ossified ideas and animosities around other peoples and set off a shift in attitudes among the broader population.

It will always be of key importance that those embarking upon such a project select their format in accordance with the conditions in which they are operating. Collections of sources agreed upon by both sides are the most tentative and cautious form of cooperation in this regard and may be suitable even for periods where violent enmity is only just abating or in early post-conflict settings. There are instances in which calculated provocations, such as recommendations on textbooks or dual-construction works, may be appropriate, while in others comprehensive and detailed teachers' guides may be called for. Yet another path might be the creation of a regular curricular textbook. The influence and impact of the financial situation in each case should not be neglected, as it may set limits on the activities possible. All types of cooperation we have enumerated here need acute awareness of the strength of national values in education in the countries involved. The greater the extent to which a nation relies upon its history as a resource for the creation of national cohesion, as a method of generating political legitimation, or as a 'trump card' in its interaction with its neighbors, the more difficult it will be to create room in that national historical narrative for critical reflection on the nation's own role in that history and for empathy for others—and these are two essentials for the success of any journey toward reconciliation and peace.

Despite all this, we can rest reassured by observing that a number of developments which have taken place have been conducive to binational textbook initiatives and indeed have helped boost their incidence over the last two decades. The advance of economic globalization has meant that nation states are no longer in a position to act as isolated entities. Global developments in mass culture have enabled young people in particular to come together in networks of mutual interest, liking and support that transcend national borders. A worldwide discourse on transitional justice and reconciliation has emerged, which very few countries have been able to ignore. The progressive internationalization of the community of historians and the ideas of transnational and global history this has begun to propagate have provided key cornerstones of bi- and multinational ways of teaching the subject, including educational media. At the other end of the continuum, the emergence of local and regional history has likewise left its traces in creating binational teaching materials, although it would go beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss these.<sup>3</sup> Finally, all these activities have seen the development of strong bonds among those who have brought them to life, who have learned from one another during their course and drawn inspiration from one another. This may well prove a highly fertile empirical subject of study for researchers in the field of knowledge production and dissemination.

## NOTES

1. The authors of a Russian year-9 textbook on the ‘History of the Fatherland’ made use of this circumstance; although they did not mention the mass Soviet killing of Polish officers at Katyn in the book’s text, they supplemented the chapter on the Second World War with selected sources, one of which was an NKVD document on Katyn which bore bald witness to the atrocity (Shestakov, Gorinov, & Vyazemskiy, 2002).
2. The following discussion makes reference to Achim Rohde’s essay (Rohde, 2013) and the description of the project given by Dan Bar-On and Sami Adwan (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006).
3. Examples here might be the trilingual textbook for the Upper Rhine region, binational classroom materials for the Czech–German border region, and materials, frequently Internet-based, in EUREGIO areas.

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