Echoing Events

The perpetuation of national narratives in English and Dutch history textbooks, 1920-2010

Tina van der Vlies
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Echo’s uit het verleden

De continuïteit van nationale narratieveen in Engelse en Nederlandse geschiedenisschoolboeken, 1920-2010

THESIS

to obtain the degree of Doctor from the Erasmus University Rotterdam by command of the rector magnificus

Prof.dr. R.C.M.E. Engels

and in accordance with the decision of the Doctorate Board. The public defence shall be held on

Thursday November 21, 2019 at 3.30 PM

by

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They said: ‘You have a blue guitar,
You do not play things as they are.’

The man replied: ‘Things as they are
Are changed upon the blue guitar.’

Wallace Stevens, ‘The Man with the Blue Guitar’ (1937).

Cover: ‘Defeat of the Spanish Armada, 8 August 1588’
by Philip James de Loutherbourg (1796 – oil on canvas).

Graphic designer: Herman van der Spek.

This research was funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).
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Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Professor Maria Grever since she gave me the opportunity to conduct this research. Together with dr. Jacques Dane of the Dutch National Museum of Education and dr. Stephan Klein, an expert in history didactics at Leiden University, she wrote a NWO research proposal about English and Dutch history textbooks. As the proposed PhD candidate, I was invited by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) to 'defend' this proposal. After this interview, we were happy and grateful to hear that NWO was willing to fund this research.

Maria, thanks for your enthusiasm, trust, critical remarks and guidance during the process. You have read my work carefully and with a critical eye. At the same time, you gave me space and freedom to develop my own argument about national narratives’ perpetuation in history textbooks. This was a crucial balance for my research project and I really appreciate this. My sincere thanks also goes to Jacques. During my Bachelor degree, I gave tours in the National Museum of Education and back then, you already shared much information on the history of education. This continued during this project. Next to your knowledge, I would like to thank you for your kind words. It can be very important to hear that someone believes in your work. Stephan, thanks for your guidance in the first stages of this project and your support for the NWO application. You know the craft of making history textbooks very well and this information was essential for the project. Unfortunately, you became ill and therefore, Professor Hester Dibbits stepped in as second promotor during the final stages of this project. Hester, thank you very much for your insightful comments and encouragements.

I would also like to thank my colleagues of the history department, with whom I gave lectures and tutorials or had interesting discussions about history and stories in general. I learned a lot from you, from more advanced quantitative historical methods to the rankings of Feyenoord, the football club of Rotterdam. My thanks also go to the various history students who took my classes: I really enjoyed our discussions! At the Center for Historical Culture (CHC), I could present the first outcomes of my research and thanks to all the colleagues who commented on the first results. A special thanks goes to drs. Hilde Harmsen, who is not only a good teacher and a nice colleague but a great friend as well. This thesis also benefited from your strong analytical skills: you read several pieces and used different pens to structure your – positive and critical – comments. Hence, I feel strong with you as paranymph by my side! I also thank all the other history@Erasmus PhD candidates as well as those who already obtained their doctor degree (in alphabetical order): Alice, Dirk, Geerte, Gijs, Jasmin, Jesper, Judith, Hilde S., Laurie, Lise, Marianne, Mark, Maryse, Norah, Pieter de B., Pieter van den H., Robbert-Jan, Siri and Susan. We were involved in fun activities – from karaoke to laser tag – and had several nice dinners with a good drink. It was great to share the PhD experience with you!
My special thanks are extended to drs. Jan Jüngen, the former librarian Humanities at Erasmus University Rotterdam. Together with Professor Grever, he founded the History Didactics Collection (HDC) in 2007 as a joint venture between the Center for Historical Culture and the Erasmus University Library. Jan, thanks for your knowledge and all the good and enriching conversations about the HDC and beyond. These were a true inspiration for me and the start of this PhD trajectory. I also thank your successor drs. Pieter van Leeuwen and the staff members of the University Library: I visited the HDC many times and the special reading room was a great place to study.

Dirkjan van den Berg was another person who visited the HDC on a regular basis, in combination with the history textbook collection at the National Museum of Education. He did a Master internship on my research project and I thank him for creating a general overview of Dutch history textbooks that have been published since the 1920s. This overview was an important basis for my Dutch textbook sample. In addition, I also thank the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (GEI) in Braunschweig: they offered me two short stays and these weeks were indispensable for my research on English history textbooks. Another person that needs to be mentioned in relation to the English sources is drs. Joke van der Leeuw-Roord, founder and special advisor of EUROCLIO. Thanks to you, I changed my English case study after the first pilot. Moreover, you contacted several English teachers and education experts to forward my questions. Many thanks!

In September 2013, I went to Ghent for the summer school ‘Memory Unbound’. It was very inspiring to meet other PhDs who were interested in more or less the same topics. Moreover, this summer school gave me the opportunity to receive feedback from various scholars and professors, such as Berber Bevernage, Stef Craps, Astrid Erll, Ann Rigney and Michael Rothberg. This was a great and valuable experience for me! Two years later, I went to Luxembourg for the Histories of Education Summer School, with different scholars and different PhD candidates. Thank you too for the great presentations, insightful comments and good laughs! One of the speakers was Professor Cathy Burke, Professor of the History of Education at the University of Cambridge, and I am particularly grateful for her support. In 2016, she gave me the opportunity to come to her university, to conduct research and to present my research to a diverse audience of historians and educationalists. In many ways, this trip was very inspiring and encouraging. I also thank Professor Graham Dawson, who gave me the opportunity to present my research at the Centre for Memory, Narrative and Histories in Brighton.

My sincere gratitude goes to the award committee of the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE) as well. They awarded me in 2014/2015 with the ISCHE Early Career Conference Paper Award and this felt like a true motivation to continue my research. In 2019, ‘The Belgian-Dutch Society for the History of Education’ (BENGOO) awarded me their four-yearly
award – the Maurits de Vroede Prize – for my article ‘Multidirectional war narratives in history textbooks’, published in Paedagogica Historica 52, no. 3 (2016). I am very happy, honoured and grateful to receive this kind gesture.

There are more people who earn my gratitude for their contribution since I could not have written this book without their love, support and distraction. First, I would like to mention my parents, Jaap and Marjo van der Vlies-Brokking. You gave me time and opportunity to study, when I went to high school but also more recently: once a week you took care of our son and this gave me extra time to finish the writing. Mum, thanks a lot for your good care, guidance and down-to-earth mentality. You are a great (grand)mother and I look up to you! Dad, you are one of the most creative persons I have ever seen and it was very nice to share thoughts on the construction process. Many thanks for your advice, valuable tips and the newspaper articles in my mailbox. I also thank my brothers and sisters, who are great storytellers: Casper, Wiebe, Mirjam and Deborah. We often laugh about our friends’ mantra that points out our love for drama, exaggeration and a good narrative: ‘When a Van der Vlies tells a story, you have to take off 25% to approach the truth.’ Deborah, thank you for being my other paranymph!

My (music) friends are indispensable in this list of acknowledgements as well and although I will not mention you all by name, you know how important you are to me. We often drink a good glass wine to discuss life in general, to vent our frustrations and to celebrate our happy moments. Thank you very much for your time, love, honesty and support (from close by and a little further away). And thank you for the music that we made and make together! Next to good friends, kind neighbours are important as well and I thank the graphic designer Herman van der Spek from across the street for the beautiful cover and bookmark.

And last but not least: my dearest Ronald and our beautiful son Lucas Maarten. You two are amazing! Ronald, thanks for your love, laughter, support, strength and humour. We created beautiful memories in Lisbon, the place where the Spanish Armada set sail in May 1588, as well as in England (Devon) where we saw the famous drum of Sir Drake. We went on many adventures and when I think of you, I would like to say so much more! But you have the talent to take my breath away and all the things I want to say can find no voice. ‘Then, in silence, I can only hope my eyes will speak my heart.’

1 Robert Sexton.
List of abbreviations

CSE       Centraal Schriftelijk Examen
DES       Department for Education and Skills
DfES      Department for Education and Skills
EU        European Union
GEI       Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research
Havo      Hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs (higher general education)
HBS       Hogere Burgerschool
HEG       Werkgroep Herziening Eindexamen Geschiedenis en staatsinrichting
HMSO      Her Majesty's Stationary Office
IAAM      Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters
Ledo      Leren door doen
MMS       Middelbare Meisjesschool
MULO      Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs
NC        National Curriculum
OFSTED    Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills
QCA       Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
SCAA      School Curriculum and Assessment Authority
SCHP      The Schools Council History 13-16 Project (1972-1976)
UN        United Nations
UNESCO    United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UK        United Kingdom
VGN       Vereniging van leraren Geschiedenis en staatsinrichting in Nederland
          [Dutch History Teachers Association]
VWO       Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs (pre-university education)
WWI       World War I
WWII      World War II
1. Introduction

It raised men's hearts in dark hours, and led them to say to one another, 'What we have done once, we can do again'. In so far as it did this, the legend of the defeat of the Spanish Armada became as important as the actual event – perhaps even more important.¹

Stories echo other stories and acquire meaning in this way. Garrett Mattingly (1900–1962) ends his bestseller *The Armada* (1959) – for which he received the Pulitzer Prize in 1960 – with the example above: he shows that although the sixteenth-century sea battle between the English Navy and the Spanish Armada dated from a long time ago, 'it influenced history in another way'. The American professor of European history at Columbia University explains that a 'golden mist' has magnified the story. The English victory of 1588 has become a 'heroic apologue of the defence of freedom against tyranny, an eternal myth of the victory of the weak over the strong'.² In this way, it offered hope and comfort to people during the dark hours of World War II: 'What we have done once, we can do again'.

Mattingly had learned much about naval operations during World War II, when he served as a lieutenant commander in the US Naval Reserve, and this was useful knowledge and experience for his bestseller. Moreover, just as in his epilogue, Mattingly narrates 1588 and World War II as 'echoing events' in the preface: he explains that the idea of writing about the English naval victory over the Spanish Invincible Fleet came to him – 'as it must have come to others' – in June 1940, when the threatening events on the surrounding seas of Great Britain were again world news.³

These examples show that 'echoing events' can be generated by direct cross references and by the generative force of metaphor. Echoing national narratives can unify various histories by attributing the same meaning to them. That is why Mattingly as well as Jan Assmann argue that the way in which history is narrated could – in the long term – become more influential than 'what really happened'.⁴ A historical event like 1588 can function as an important anchor in social memory due to its narrative form, which has moved away from the particular context, bridged temporal distance and received universal significance.⁵ Therefore, an important issue is why certain narratives are perpetuated and have become a canonized anchor in a nation's social memory, while others are not.

This study questions national narratives' perpetuation, actualization and canonization in the genre of history textbooks. History textbooks are widespread media and especially national narratives in this genre have provided many people with meaning, memory and identity. These narratives appeal to people and have been extremely explosive in their consequences since the nineteenth century. They often contributed to the mobilization of the masses for war and for committing genocides by presenting tendentious myths or distorted understandings of the past, while conversely wars were major sources for producing national narratives. National history will most likely remain a central topic in history education, despite attempts to implement other perspectives. A greater understanding of national narratives' underlying structures and mechanisms, and insight into their 'perpetual construction and reconstruction' can be helpful in 'defusing their explosive potential'.

This study is a mnemohistorical analysis and is – next to the content – particularly interested in the mnemonic form in which national communities remember, narrate and transmit the past as detectable in the forms of 'echoing', schemata and plot structures of national narratives in English and Dutch history textbooks, published in the long twentieth century. An understanding of textbooks' 'sociomental topography of the past' can not only help to elucidate how the national past is narrated, interpreted and organized in this genre, but it can also reveal why certain events, periods or persons have acted as 'figures of memory'. The latter term refers to culturally formed 'images' of the past that are significant for a group's social memory and identity. These 'images' can be transmitted in text as well: historical narratives can concentrate on fixed points in the past (such as 'fateful events') and the meaning of these crystallization points, when touched upon in other narrations, can become accessible again.

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8 Berger, 'Writing National Histories in Europe', 66.


11 See also: Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', New German Critique 65 (1995): 125–133, 129; Stefan Rohdewald, 'Figures of (trans-)National Religious Memory of the Orthodox
1.1 Aims and research question

Research has demonstrated that history textbooks often perpetuate ‘traditional narratives’, despite new findings and ideas, and contribute to structural amnesia and other ways of forgetting in societies. Sensitive topics of the past are often suppressed, ignored or erased. Explanations have highlighted the role of textbooks as ‘political vehicles of the state’ and showed how national governments have imposed their idea of the ‘right’ knowledge. Although history education is more politicized than many other school subjects, ‘the conviction that history education should in the first place be considered an effect or an instrument of specific policies or ideological agendas is hardly questioned’. The political impact on historical narratives is too often taken for granted and other reasons for the perpetuation of national narratives in history textbooks are easily overlooked. Therefore, this study aims to shed light on national narratives’ perpetuation and canonization in history textbooks from a different angle by using a more inclusive approach.

To achieve this aim, this study will answer the following research question: How and why are national narratives perpetuated in English and Dutch history textbooks between 1920 and 2010? A pilot study confirmed that certain national narratives were indeed perpetuated during this longitudinal research period (p. 9–10), although their length and form varied. Hence, this study does not regard national narratives as fixed entities but is precisely interested in their changes and continuities over time. Although English and Dutch history textbooks are definitely not apolitical, England and the Netherlands do not have a national system of approved textbooks unlike many other countries. Their governments do not prescribe textbooks and schools are free to choose from the open market.

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17 Although, the approval from the church played quite an important role as well in these countries.
By selecting these countries, this study directs attention to the idea that national narratives are ‘autonomous’ to a certain extent.\textsuperscript{18} Historical narratives can be very powerful and partly immune to (political) change. Researchers of folklore have pointed out that the main elements of popular tales remained intact – after being transmitted to different generations – since these redundant elements disclosed ‘a social memory that precedes and transcends any specific act of storytelling’.\textsuperscript{19} Ray Raphael, who investigated founding myths of the United States, uses the same argument and argues that some elements of national narratives have remained the same because they surpass the details of a specific story. He writes about the power of ‘narrative demands’ – the ingredients of a good story – such as heroes, clear plotlines and a happy ending. He also mentions national narratives’ powerful and persuasive ‘imaginaries’, such as the battle between good and evil, or freedom and tyranny.\textsuperscript{20}

‘Even if they don’t tell true history, these imaginings work as stories. Much of what we think of as “history” is driven not by facts but by these narrative demands.’\textsuperscript{21} Some national narratives are simply too good not to be told, according to Ray, since they are good stories. Precisely this feature makes them immune to new academic findings and autonomous to a certain extent.

Hence, certain narrative elements play a crucial role in the preservation and transmission of national history and are repeatedly reproduced because they are powerful, persuasive and socially relevant in the present, for example in the construction of social cohesion and national identity.\textsuperscript{22} Barry Schwartz, an American sociologist who works extensively on social memory, has elaborated on two techniques that facilitate the interaction of past and present in narratives: ‘framing’ and ‘keying’. He argues that precisely these techniques play an important role in the perpetuation of historical narratives: ‘The coherence of most historical accounts results not only from the obduracy of the reality they represent but also because their preservation and transmission processes – keying and framing (…)– are so consequential.’\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{18} Verschaffel and Wils, ‘History Education and the Claims of Society’, 2.
\textsuperscript{20} Raphael, Founding Myths, 5.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that historical stories are representations of the past but not everything that has happened can easily be represented.
\textsuperscript{23} Schwartz, ‘Where There’s Smoke, There’s Fire’, 15.
Since this study is interested in the perpetuation of national narratives, it aims to scrutinize general ‘narrative demands’ as well as more specific processes of framing and keying in the practice of preserving and transmitting these narratives in history textbooks (see Figure 1 on the next page). An in-depth analysis of these elements can shed new light on the question of how and why national narratives are perpetuated in this genre. 'Narrative demands’ are elements of a powerful and persuasive story, as explained on page 4. With the term 'frame', I mean schemata of interpretation, shared organizing principles that provide recognizable structures while making sense of experiences and information.24 An example of framing is narrating a specific historical battle as a ‘fight for freedom’. In this way, a historical event receives a meaningful structure by placing it into a larger, recognizable scheme of interpretation.25 Shared historical memories can become frames for the ‘perception and comprehension of current events’ as well.26

In the interpretative context of framing, keying plays an important role: the act of associating ‘a present person, event, institution or experience to a past counterpart’.27 The established connection and the values associated with it can transform the meaning of an event by associating it with the interpretative framework of another event.28 An example of keying is the term ‘Black Holocaust’ which directs renewed attention to the history of slavery by mentioning it in relation to an ‘event’ that has precisely been regarded as unique in its horror.29 Keying can be helpful while interpreting unknown or complex events by way of familiar and already available codes of memory and narration. The cross reference between slavery and the Holocaust is paradoxically based on the ‘unimaginable’ nature of the events, demonstrating the latter as a master trauma and its tropes as ‘a readily recognizable lexicon of atrocity’.30 Keying connects ‘otherwise separate realms of history’: the established connection and the associated values provide a new interpretative context.31

26 Schwartz, 'Memory as a Cultural System’, 911.
28 Goffman, Frame Analysis, 45. Barry Schwartz and others have elaborated on Goffman’s idea of keying. The German philosopher and intellectual historian Hans Blumenberg (1920–1996) has worked on metaphors as well. See: Hans Blumenberg, Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie (Bonn: Bouvier, 1960).
29 Michael Rothberg, Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 11. See also America’s Black Holocaust Museum in Wisconsin.
31 Thatcher, Memory and Identity, 3; Schwartz, 'Memory as a cultural system', 911.
This research scrutinizes cross references and interrelations between histories in textbooks in order to examine the framing and keying process. Information about the organization of historical knowledge can uncover associative connections between histories and expose familiar frames, while narrating and interpreting the (national) past in textbooks. This approach is also useful in clarifying why specific national narratives are perpetuated since it offers the opportunity to analyse underlying conceptions of history and interpretations of the relationship between past, present and future.\(^ {32} \)

In this way, this research aims to contribute to the field of textbook research as well: it explores a new approach in textbook analysis that goes beyond a representational analysis of the past that is limited to one event, person or period in a particular section of the textbook. It scrutinizes national narratives’ frames and keys in a comparative analysis in order to shed light on the interpretation and transmission of history as a meaningful connection between the three time dimensions.\(^ {33} \) This study acknowledges that national narratives’ meaning can change while separate entities of the national narrative are still perpetuated. Therefore, this study also investigates if, how and why national narratives’ dominant system of meaning can change, for example after large-scale societal transformations associated with different views on the past, present and future.

This section continues with the argumentation for the research period, the comparative component, the two selected case studies and various contexts that could affect national narratives’ perpetuation in history textbooks. Section 1.2 elaborates on national narratives and section 1.3 sketches various problems and challenges in the field of textbook research. A response is formulated in section 1.4: it proposes a new approach in textbook analysis, and discusses the processes of framing and keying with insights from different fields such as history, memory and literature studies. The final section 1.5 addresses the sources, methods and general outline of this study.

**Figure 1: Discursive analysis of national narratives’ perpetuation in history textbooks.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative demands</th>
<th>Elements of a powerful and persuasive story, such as binary oppositions (e.g. good against evil) and a clear-cut plot.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Framing</td>
<td>Familiar, recognizable schemata of interpretation (e.g. interpreting a specific historical event as a fight for freedom).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keying</td>
<td>Explicit cross references between various events and time periods (e.g. ‘Black Holocaust’) and recurring plotlines (e.g. interpreting multiple historical events as a fight for freedom).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^ {32} \) To read more about conceptions of history, see also: Robbert-Jan Adriaansen, *The Rhythm of Eternity. The German Youth Movement and the Experience of the Past* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015).

The research period is quite long, but this is also necessary due to the ‘textbook time lag’: the gap between new findings or ideas and the production of new or revised textbooks. Furthermore, as this study is concerned with the underlying patterns of historical narratives, this research needed to include a substantive time period in order to detect continuities and changes. The research starts after World War I in 1920, because at that time several initiatives for textbook revision were initiated in order to reduce strong nationalistic visions. In 1925, The International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, an advisory organization for the League of Nations, suggested a ‘comparative analysis of textbooks in order to revise texts that were biased and flawed’.34 Three years later, a report on nationalism in history textbooks was published.35 In the 1990s, the process of re-nationalization played an important role and this still does, therefore this recent period is included as well. In the new millennium, many countries witnessed a strong revival of national narratives in education as a response to the accusation that school history was marginalizing national history and taught a fragmentary approach as well as relativistic narratives.36 Hence, the research ends in the year 2010. The longitudinal research period is divided into four, partly overlapping periods: circa 1920–1940 (the interbellum period and the discussions about the goals and consequences of school history in the light of WWI); 1940–1965 (the period during and after WWII, and the process of Dutch ‘depillarization’); 1965–1988 (educational reforms and changes in the historical discipline); 1988–2010 (the implementation of the National Curriculum in the UK, followed by the implementation of national core curricula in Dutch history education at a later time).

A comparative analysis is needed in order to understand the role of the national context. Members of a particular culture often remember and narrate the past according to the same mental schemata and plot structures as these cultural codes are relevant to its members.37 Textbooks from England38 and the Netherlands are compared because both countries share some important historical and educational characteristics. They are nations originating in early-modern times and

34 Falk Pingel, UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision (Hanover: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1999), 9.
37 Zerubavel, Time maps.
38 In the United Kingdom, textbooks often use the term ‘British history’ for international (imperial) contexts; when it comes to state politics the books are predominantly English. John G.A. Pocock, The Discovery of Islands: Essays in British History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
were Atlantic Rim nations in the forefront of commercialization and Enlightenment culture.\(^{39}\) Both countries were involved in overseas expansions and transformed into colonial empires.\(^{40}\) Moreover, they were both involved in the Atlantic slave trade and the slavery system.\(^{41}\) They also have a population that has become more culturally heterogeneous in the past half century. An important difference is the international position of both countries. Although the Netherlands lost its power, England was still a world power in the first half of the twentieth century. Differences also include the infrastructure of the history profession, the amount of national history in school curricula, curriculum organization and the textbook market for commercial publishers.

Since the 1970s, in both countries historical skills have become important components of the history curriculum. A persistent complaint in public debates is however that youngsters are not familiar with the history of their country of residence. English and Dutch historians have participated in public debates about school history and in both countries; some groups seem to act out a ‘counter-revolution’. First in the UK and later in the Netherlands, the government initiated the making of a national history curriculum in order to increase the knowledge about national history among young people. Policymakers expect a chronologically arranged history curriculum with a coherent and uniform national narrative; national governments demand the transmission of national historical canons to bolster national identity.\(^{42}\) Yet requirements closely linked to identity politics are often incompatible with criteria of the historical profession, such as distance and critical judgement.\(^{43}\)

All these discussions about history education produced more newspaper coverage than any other school subject. However, some generalizations were incorrect and a historical perspective was often lacking. Moreover, history education of the past was too easily rejected or looked upon with


nostalgic feelings. Sam Wineburg also pointed out that studies often focus on what students do not know, instead of what they do know. Many discussions about history education are normative and have been coloured with simplistic dichotomies, such as ‘traditional’ or ‘old’ versus ‘new’ history education. A historical perspective can contribute to present debates: ‘research with a long-term perspective has the potential to uncover – and dismiss – these dichotomies’. Although scholars have studied specific periods and domains in English and Dutch history textbooks, longitudinal and comparative research on textbooks’ national narratives is hardly available. Hence, this research aims to elucidate this development by investigating almost a century.

National narratives of different nations can be compared on their narrative structure and shape. In order to conduct an in-depth analysis, this study focuses on two case studies. The comparison between English and Dutch history textbooks is conducted on a meta level, concentrated on how history is interpreted and narrated. This research does not aim to examine how a certain historical event is differently portrayed in textbooks from different countries but, instead, endeavours to select a historical ‘event’ that is narrated as a national ‘origin’ story and is still referred to as important in the national context. The two selected case studies are both sixteenth-century ‘events’ and share the function of being regarded as important for the ‘foundation’ or the continued existence of the ‘nation’. Consequently, the hypothesis is that these events play an important role in the narrated pattern of meaning and might be referred to in the narration of other histories as well.

After a pilot study, two case studies have been selected. The first one is the English defeat of the Spanish Armada under the reign of Elizabeth I (1588) in English history textbooks. In a complex

46 For the Netherlands, Joop Toebes (1987) researched in a comparative study the pros and cons of the combination of history with social studies subjects (e.g. civics) in high school curricula for Germany, England and the Netherlands after 1945; textbooks are briefly discussed. André Beening (2001) explored the image of Germany in Dutch history textbooks. Hilda Amsing (2002) investigated changing identities and education ideals of Dutch secondary schools between 1863 and 1920, focusing on history as a school subject; two chapters of this study are devoted to history textbook research. Willeke Los (2012) examined the Batavian Revolution in Dutch history textbooks and Alexander Albicher (2012) wrote his dissertation about distance and empathy in Dutch history education, 1945–1985. For England, Jason Nicholls (2006), Stuart Foster and Keith Crawford (2006) studied international perspectives in English history textbooks.
48 The first pilot study examined the Glorious Revolution (1688) in English history textbooks. However, this ‘event’ was not perpetuated over time and was missing in several textbooks. This can be interesting as well but this study endeavored to ‘follow’ a certain case study over a long time period. Therefore, after contact with several specialists in history education (UK), the Glorious Revolution was replaced by a new case study: the English defeat of the Spanish Armada (1588). This event is still important and referred to in the public sphere.
tangle of religious and political matters, piracy conflicts and colonial disputes, many tensions had been building between Spain and England when, in 1588, a huge Spanish fleet set sail to England aiming to stop the harm caused to Spanish interests, to overthrow Queen Elizabeth I and to end the Tudor establishment of Protestantism. Moreover, the Catholic Philip II aimed to put an end to English support of the rebels in the Spanish Netherlands.\footnote{Geoffrey Parker, \textit{Imprudent King. A New life of Philip II} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).}

The second case study includes the start of the Dutch Revolt (1566–1584) in Dutch history textbooks.\footnote{On 30 April 2013, Prince Willem-Alexander was inaugurated as king of the Netherlands and in his first speech as king he referred to the year 1581 as the ‘birth certificate’ of the Netherlands. Another example is the exhibition \textit{80 Years’ War. The Birth of the Netherlands} held in the Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam) from 12-10-2018 to 20-01-2019. The museum aimed to tell ‘how the Dutch nation was born’ in order to mark the 450th anniversary of the outbreak of the Eighty Years’ War. See also the Dutch television series \textit{80 jaar oorlog} in 2018.} The seven northern provinces of the Spanish or Habsburg Netherlands revolted against the Spanish empire and the King of Spain, Philip II. The beginning of this revolt is found in 1566 (Iconoclasm) or 1568 (Battle of Heiligerlee).\footnote{Laura Cruz, ‘Reworking the Grand Narrative: A Review of Recent Books on the Dutch Revolt’, \textit{BMGN – The Low Countries Historical Review} 125, no. 1 (2010): 29–38; Judith Pollmann, ‘Iconoclasts Anonymous: Why Did it Take Historians so Long to Identify the Image-breakers of 1566?’, \textit{BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review} 131, no. 1 (2016): 155–176; S. Groenveld, \textit{Facetten van de Tachtigjarige Oorlog} (Hilversum: Verloren, 2018).} Prince William of Orange – stadtholder of Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht – played a key role in the revolt and the advent of the Dutch Republic. In 1580, Philip II declared the Prince an outlaw and put a price of 25,000 guilders on his head. Four years later, the Prince was murdered by the Catholic Balthasar Gerards. The revolt continued and ended with the Treaty of Munster in 1648, meaning that the Dutch Republic was recognized as an independent state.\footnote{S. Groenveld, \textit{Facetten van de Tachtigjarige Oorlog} (Hilversum: Verloren, 2018).} Due to the length of the dispute, another name for this period is the ‘Eighty Years’ War’.

This study investigates English and Dutch history textbooks that have been published for pupils in the age group 11 to 14 years old (Year 7–9, nowadays Key Stage 3 or ‘onderbouw’) in higher secondary education. The research is focused on this age group because they are generally taught an overview of national history, meaning that the case studies could be traced. Furthermore, the general overview of history was important, given that this study aims to track the case studies throughout the whole historical narrative of a textbook in order to analyse if, how and why the selected case studies are referred to and interrelated with other narrated histories.

Textbook authors live and work in various contexts and their final products are affected by many factors and contexts. During the pilot study, the socio-political context turned out to be important: history textbooks referred for example to the World Wars, processes of decolonization, the terrorist attack of 9/11 and public debates on societal developments and history (e.g. multiculturalism, migration, citizenship and identity). Moreover, textbooks exposed tensions
between academic historians and the relatively new group of experts in (history) didactics. Based on this outcome, this study will focus on four selected contexts (see Figure 2): 1. the socio-political context; 2. the historical disciplinary context; 3. the educational and pedagogic context; 4. the narratological context. These contexts affect each other as well. The first context involves political interference with the history curriculum but does not necessarily refer to direct state intervention; for example, national and international events and accompanying discussions are included as well. The second context refers to academic historiography and to changes in the infrastructure of the history profession. The third includes pedagogic and moral ideas on school history as well as the rise of history didactics: disciplinary guidelines for teaching and learning history. This context is separated from the second, precisely to analyse their dynamic relationship over time.

Whereas these three contexts refer to possible explanations for the perpetuation of national narratives in history textbooks (why), the inner circle of Figure 2 refers to the textual dynamics (how). At the same time, the inner narratological circle can function as an explanatory context as well (context 4): persistence can be located in the ‘textual dynamics of memory itself’ and on how these accounts are constructed: ‘Memories form genres that unfold over time by referring not only to their contexts and to the “original” event, but to their own histories and memories as texts.’ Collective memory is path-dependent and affected by previous representations of its contents. The next section will explain that especially national narratives are very powerful constructs.

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53 Olick and Robbins, ‘Social Memory Studies’, 130.
1.2 National narratives

Since the nineteenth century, the nation-state has been a very influential socio-cultural framework in the Western world. In the mid-nineteenth century, history education became compulsory in many Western countries and has traditionally been seen as an instrument of the state to fortify national identity and ideas about nationhood. ‘Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined’, according to Benedict Anderson. Next to historical legends and fiction, historical scholarship and school history have been major producers of national narratives and have contributed to the process of nation-building. National narratives are (often canonized) stories about a nation’s origin, achievements and the perceived characteristics of a national community to make sense of past events and to create cohesion in the present with a view on the future. This study is interested in the discursive construction of a national community in the genre of history textbooks and how the national identity as well as characteristics of such a group are translated over time.

People construct meaning about themselves, the world that surrounds them and the past via narratives. Narratives place ‘social phenomena in the larger patterns that attribute social and political meaning to them’. Especially the analysis of national narratives can help to expose the generated meaning: by a particular organization of past experiences and future expectations, a national narrative can create continuity and a pattern of meaning in which several events and periods can be entered. Narratives can be defined, therefore, as mediational in the sense that they are meaning-making cultural artefacts through which people give sense to reality. Next to the fact that narratives interpret reality, they can create a reality: by narratively linking the past, the present and

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57 Grever and Van der Vlies, ‘Why National Narratives are Perpetuated’, 287.
the future, stories can add significance to these three time dimensions. Jörn Rüsen explains that a historical narration ‘mobilizes the experience of past time, which is engraved in the archives of memory, so that the experience of present time becomes understandable and the expectation of future time is possible’. Moreover, Ricoeur states that the unity of the three time dimensions in a historical narrative creates a continuity, which establishes or supports a narrated identity, an ‘attempt to obtain a narrative understanding of ourselves’.

Therefore, a national narrative will particularly highlight events that mark the emergence and the identity of the national collective. Complexities are flattened and history is often presented as a univocal story. It ‘simplifies, dramatizes and selectively narrates the story of a nation’s past and its place in the world, its historical eschatology: a story that elucidates its contemporary meaning through (re)constructing its past’. A national narrative is a group-defining story that reaches back into a people’s distant past, aimed at legitimation and glorification. Next to glorification and pride, these stories stimulate forgetting and are ‘effective protective shields’ against periods and events that a nation tries to obliterate. They narrate a ‘usable past’: a set of heroes, events and storylines that can be marshalled to serve present needs by shaping popular and understandable responses.

Although national narratives are sometimes seen as stories without a narrator, they are ‘grounded in institutions and shaped by ever-present and evolving power relations’. Hence, social structures produce national narratives, next to the fact that these stories construct social structures with inclusion and exclusion principles reinforced by the use of ‘we’ and ‘them’.

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64 Bell, ‘Mythscapes: Memory, Mythology, and National Identity’, 75.
Furthermore, national narratives can be highly patterned and be constituted according to the same structure. This cultural pattern can be very dominant and remain the same, even if the details of the narration change. It functions as ‘mental equipment’ for the interpretation of past and present events and can influence how individuals narrate their lives. Consequently, some researchers speak of a complex national narrative, which is ‘constructed from a set of secondary narratives, myths, symbols, metaphors and images’. Different generations can produce historical stories that seem to vary considerably but, when taking a closer look, these various narratives might share the same frame or underlying pattern.

That is what James Wertsch experienced when he examined the war memories of different Russian generations. Accepting the interpretative and mnemonic power of narrative, Wertsch elaborated on the narrative organization of collective memory. He argues that specific narratives about different persons, periods and events can share the same underlying structure or ‘narrative template’: specific narratives about various events and persons, uniquely situated in space and time, can be organized around one and the same plot. Hence, various unique histories can be framed in the same way and these ‘schematic narrative templates’ can be described as ‘deep frames’: they are very strong and influential, and were shared by distinctive Russian generations even when their accounts differed in narrative details. Wertsch refers to Propp, who analyzed Russian folk tales in order to disentangle several generalized functions of narratives, such as ‘hero leaves home’ and ‘hero and villain join in direct combat’, and argues that he focused on the abstract, schematic and generalized function of the narrative. Narrative templates take the form of a ‘generalized schema’ and an ‘underlying pattern’. However, Wertsch argues that these templates are not universal narrative archetypes, but belong to a specific narrative tradition within a specific cultural setting.

Hence, collective memory contains a ‘cultural tool kit that includes a few basic building blocks’ instead of lists of specific narratives, according to Wertsch. Stories about the past are often narrated according to these basic building blocks, which means that stories may vary in their details

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75 Wertsch, ‘Specific Narratives and Schematic Narrative Templates’.
76 Wertsch, ‘Specific Narratives and Schematic Narrative Templates’, 57.
but look like replicas as they draw on the same general storyline. This storyline could affect how history is narrated and what is selected or left out. There is 'the tendency to patch the new research into the old story even when the research in detail has altered the bearings of the whole subject'.

Although narrative templates can be discerned in different media and genres, the specific features of the textbook genre – such as narrating history in a concise, understandable and appealing way – and the attempt to give a general historical overview, may cause patterns of historical organization to prevail over details. However, whereas Wertsch argues that change only takes place at the level of specific narratives – in contrast with the level of the schematic narrative template, which is dominated by ‘conservatism and a resistance to change’ – the dynamic, historicized approach of this study will challenge Wertsch’s argument and considers the possibility of a new narrative template that might arise after drastic changes in society or the world. Hence, this longitudinal study directs attention to continuity and change and will, in addition to Wertsch’s macro-level, argue for a ‘meso-level’ in the analysis of national narratives’ underlying patterns.

1.3  The field of history textbook research: problems and challenges

Textbook research is a rather strong international research field. This was already the case in the early 1920s, when the League of Nations encouraged comparative textbook research on stereotypes and portrayals of the ‘Other’ in order to accomplish international understanding. After the Second World War, UNESCO and the Council of Europe continued this type of research. Since its foundation in 1951, the Georg Eckert Institute in Braunschweig (Germany) has contributed tremendously to textbook research. Gradually the research developed into a more detached approach by providing critical analyses of contexts of production, content perspectives and discourses. These studies have raised questions, for instance, about the relations between power, ideology and historical

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80 Philpott also distinguishes a meso-level but with a different meaning: he contrasts the ‘local’ (meso) with the nation-state (macro) and the individual (micro). Carey Philpott, ‘Developing and extending Wertsch’s idea of narrative templates’, International Journal of Research & Method in Education 37, no. 3 (2014): 309-323.
81 Parts of 1.3 are published in Grever and Van der Vlies, ‘Why National Narratives are Perpetuated’.
knowledge. International organizations have supported textbook research on various school subjects and this research has been conducted in a variety of disciplines (history, geography, peace studies, education, media studies, sociology and psychology), but researching history textbooks has always been considered a crucial topic in the general field of textbook research.

History textbooks are educational resources related to the historical discipline, produced with the aim to support or – depending of the country – to determine the contents of formal history teaching and learning, mostly in schools. Because textbooks are intentionally written for teaching and learning purposes, they contain – implicit or explicit – pedagogic and didactic visions as well as moral messages. History textbooks give information about agreed and preferred values, norms and behaviour; their codes and interpretations are socially dominant. History textbooks preserve and communicate cultural truths intergenerationally. Consequently, history textbooks are a rather hybrid object of research: they are not only embedded in the context of a specific discipline with its own cultural status, tradition and jargon, but also in the wider context of politics, media, (popular) culture, commerce and education. The subject content knowledge is automatically accompanied by pedagogical visions and ideas, such as why history is important to study. Pedagogy entails any process ‘through which we are encouraged to know’ and is concerned with a certain way of ordering and making sense of the world: ‘pedagogy attempts to influence the way meanings are absorbed, recognized, understood, accepted, confirmed and connected as well as challenged, distorted, taken further or dismissed’.

The pedagogical and disciplinary context are connected to ideas on history didactics: disciplinary guidelines for teaching and learning history. Since the 1980s history textbook series often cover three products: 1. the textbook with stories, source fragments, images, graphs, maps, references to films and websites; 2. a workbook with assignments for students, also often including images, graphs and maps; 3. a teachers’ guide with explanations of historical topics, references to

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83 Foster, ‘Dominant Traditions’.
87 Roger I. Simon, Teaching Against the Grain: Texts for a Pedagogy of Possibility (New York: Bergin & Garvey, 1992), 56 and 59.
museums and other media, didactic advice and pedagogical help. Currently, textbook series have become even more hybrid as they are expanded with educational websites and digital media.\textsuperscript{88}

Traditionally, history textbooks have a special status: they contain historical knowledge which is generally believed that everyone should master. This status of authority is often strengthened by the fact that words and sentences seem to be objective and impersonal; stories are told by an omniscient narrator; and learners or readers have a subordinate epistemological status.\textsuperscript{89} Elie Podeh, who researched Israeli textbooks, describes them as ‘another arm of the state, agents of memory’, and a kind of ‘supreme historical court’ because they ‘decide’ what is appropriate to include.\textsuperscript{90} From this perspective history textbooks are collective memory agents of the nation.\textsuperscript{91} Moreover, they function as instruments for socialization and identity politics.\textsuperscript{92}

Although history textbooks preserve and communicate ‘cultural truths’,\textsuperscript{93} the opinions on these ‘cultural truths’ can vary widely and history textbook contents have been debated for decades. These debates even led to the so-called textbook wars, such as in West Virginia in 1974: ‘Schools were hit by dynamite, buses were riddled with bullets, and coal mines were shut down.’\textsuperscript{94} The more recent ‘textbook wars’ of the 1990s and 2000s are another example.\textsuperscript{95} Political elites, opinion leaders, churches, historians, education experts and teachers negotiate or even fight about which historical topics are relevant and worth being presented in textbooks, and in what ways.

This also becomes manifest during major social and political transformations which often leave their mark on the contents and perspectives of history textbooks. A telling case in this respect is the regime change in post-1989 Russia and ‘the enormous task of revising and rewriting textbooks to adjust to a new reality’ which evoked fierce debates over the contents of history textbooks in the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{90} Podeh, ‘History and Memory in the Israeli Educational System’, 66. See also: Apple and Christian-Smith eds., The Politics of the Textbook.
\item \textsuperscript{94} http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/textbooks/ (accessed March 1, 2019).
\item \textsuperscript{95} Stuart Macintyre and Anna Clark, The History Wars (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2003).
\end{itemize}
mass media and professional forums. More recently, Russian President Putin has asked historians to develop a univocal history curriculum, ‘free from internal contradictions and ambiguities’. Critics say the proposed version of history is ‘highly politicized and grossly distorts the facts’. Another case is the Texas Board of Education in the USA, who evoked a heated debate with their plans to change the contents of history schoolbooks in 2010. Historians protested since a number of the Board’s changes were historically incorrect and politically inspired. Other examples are Japan, Australia, France, Greece and Israel.

However, as Barton and Foster have rightly claimed, we must be careful not to assimilate different pedagogical contexts and curricular arrangements, ending up with misunderstandings about the various national contexts of history education practices. Although governments control the textbooks and history curricula in different countries – such as in France, Germany, the USA and Japan – this is not always the case. Since the political impact on historical narratives is often taken for granted, this study is precisely interested in non-prescribed history textbooks. William Marsden even pointed to an anti-textbook ethos in British education: financial constraints were withholding teachers from using textbooks, while new technologies provided them with other teaching methods.

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methods. However, he also argues that this anti-textbook ethos is more evident among primary teachers than secondary teachers. Moreover, since the 1980s and 1990s several English and Dutch textbook series have implemented historical thinking skills due to debates between experts in history education and revisions of the history curricula.

While history textbook research attracts a lot of attention in the public arena, it is almost absent in handbooks of historiography and philosophy of history. History textbook research can be considered as educational/school historiography with fascinating views on the substantive development of the historical discipline and its (inter)national infrastructure. One of the reasons for this neglect might be that traditionally, studies on history textbooks have focused on describing change and continuity in the historical representations of specific topics. The main questions in this research are: How are people, events or processes represented and what/who is marginalized or neglected? Another likely reason of this historiographical neglect is that printed textbooks seem an outdated resource. Examining textbooks in the age of digital humanities is regularly considered antiquarian both as a research object and as a method. Yet textbooks are still widely used in the classroom, often in combination with online media, such as apps.

This historiographical neglect might have other causes as well, as evidenced by the publication of James Loewen’s *Lies my Teacher Told Me* (1995). Particularly sociologist David Horowitz complained that this book is not ‘a scholarly work’ but ‘a sectarian polemic against the traditional teaching of American history and against what the author views as the black record of the American past’. Loewen’s book – a prize-winning bestseller – was based on a research of twelve popular history textbooks in the USA, observations in classrooms and interviews with high school students and teachers. He not only revealed mythological, inaccurate and Eurocentric histories in the textbooks, but also indicated ignored historical themes, such as the American exploitation of enslaved black people. In this way he emphasized that American history textbooks favour a feel-good (white) perspective. Beyond who is right, the polemic between Loewen and Horowitz clearly illustrates some wider challenges within the field of textbook research.

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First, research on historical representations in this genre tends to reveal what is not in the history textbook and what has been distorted or censored. However, these studies do not clarify much about the question: what is in the history textbook and why? Second, history textbooks are often placed along the yardstick of academic historiography. History textbooks are therefore hardly praised, but ‘frequently criticized as inadequate or unworthy’. What many critics quickly forget is that history textbooks present, depending on the age of students, simplified versions of complex and layered histories because the narratives must be understandable for youngsters. Moreover, other genres and media can also affect history textbooks, as well as popular circulating narratives, images and myths. Therefore, it is important not to regard history textbooks as poor substitutes of academic historiography but as mediators and adapters of discourses: as a genre, specific and complex in itself, fitting into a larger cultural formation.

This is not to say that historians and other researchers cannot be right in their criticism. However, this judgemental approach is not really helpful in illuminating why particular narratives are perpetuated and why textbook authors seem to cling to ‘old canons’. The aim of this research type is often to adjust textbooks instead of understanding its assumptions, narrative plotlines and how history textbooks function in relation to other media such as novels, poems and films. For that reason some researchers argue for a new type of research questions: in order to shed light on textbook structures, a discourse analysis is more helpful than criteria such as ‘true’ and ‘false’.

A third challenge is the issue of authorship. We need to know much more about who actually wrote history textbooks but sometimes, this information is hard to find. This study also faced the problem that some authors from the past cannot be traced anymore. Moreover, the production of history textbooks is highly influenced by commercial interests of the textbook industry. Sometimes publishing companies hire ghost authors and make agreements with professional historians to lend their names. The various forms of authorship not only influence the historical content and the quality

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111 Van der Vlies, ‘Echoing National Narratives’.
of assignments, but it might also offer an explanation for the practice of duplicating familiar narratives. The fourth challenge is connected to the ‘consumers’\textsuperscript{114}: how do frames and keys in history textbooks impact teachers’ and students’ views on the past?

Furthermore, several scholars have indicated the lack of generic methods in the field of textbook research. In 1999 former GEI director Falk Pingel initiated a start and published a methodological guidebook for textbook research. Four years later Nicolls argued that methods are still ‘rarely discussed clearly and in depth’, an issue that ‘remains a gaping hole in the field’.\textsuperscript{115} Nowadays, several researchers have tried to overcome this gap by being more explicit about their analysis and by attempts to develop (digital) tools for textbook analysis. Scholars use quantitative as well as qualitative software to code the content of textbooks and to examine characteristic vocabulary of a certain discourse.\textsuperscript{116} Hence, history textbook research is an increasingly flourishing field and guidelines for a systematic analysis of textbooks are still being further refined.\textsuperscript{117}

This study aims to contribute to the methodological ‘gap’ as well as to the first two challenges by proposing a new approach in textbook analysis. An analysis of the ‘narrative conception of history textbooks may open hidden dimensions’, argued Bert Vanhulle in 2009, and he explains that such an analysis needs a different methodology since the whole textbook is the object of research rather than specific parts.\textsuperscript{118} He is interested in locating the start and the end of the narratio, and wonders for example if history has a fons – ‘a well from which the current of history springs’ – and if so, in what direction? This study investigates history textbooks as a narrative unity as well and aims to elaborate the narratological approach of textbook analysis, as will be explained in the next section.


\textsuperscript{115} Nicholls, ‘Methods in school textbook research’, 25.


1.4 Towards a new approach in textbook analysis

This study draws attention to textbook narrations that combine different histories, places and times in a productive way to generate meaning from historical combinations. Since the ‘social meaning of past events is essentially a function of the way they are structurally positioned in our minds vis-à-vis other events’, this research examines the interrelations between histories in order to shed light on recurrent systems of meaning and networks or knots of memory in textbooks. Hence, this new approach can offer insight into the perpetuation of national narratives in this genre from a different angle. An in-depth analysis of national narratives’ frames and keys can elucidate how certain events and persons of periods have functioned as ‘anchors’ in the narration, interpretation and organization of history in textbooks. Especially during times of crises and change – when groups face new experiences and challenges – ‘established exemplars’ can be helpful in making sense of present experiences; they can provide a sense of continuity and common identity.

Interactions between past and present in historical narratives show people where they come from and where they are heading, illustrating that difficult situations have occurred before and what the outcome could or should be in the future. The generated continuity between past and present in a narrative establishes an emotional as well as a logical relationship between the two periods. This can be dangerous as well. For example, when decision makers see a current event in the perspective of the past, they tend to narrow their thinking and to filter out the information that does not fit in. History is a shaping power and especially the ways in which history is framed and keyed play an important role in the construction of social reality.

Researchers of different fields – such as history, memory studies, literature and sociology – have examined how memories of different periods can intermingle. An example is Michael Rothberg, who uses the notion of ‘multidirectional memory’. Rothberg develops his idea as a counterweight to

\[119\] I have used the notion of multidirectional textbook narratives in: Tina van der Vlies, ‘Multidirectional War Narratives in History Textbooks’, Paedagogica Historica 52, no. 3 (2016): 300–314.
\[120\] Zerubavel, Time Maps, 7.
\[122\] Tom Thatcher, Memory and Identity, 2.
the viewpoint of collective memory as a competitive zero-sum struggle in which memories could only be included or excluded. New events or histories cannot only gain attention by replacing others (competitive) but also by starting a conversation with already dominant memories and histories (interactive). Hence, he examines the ‘dynamic transfers that take place between diverse places and times during the act of remembrance.’

Another notion for the same process is ‘palimpsest memories’, used by Rosalind Shaw in her research into memories of the slave trade in Sierra Leone. She demonstrates that these memories have been (re)shaped by other experiences, such as colonialism and the rebel war, and argues that ‘phantoms from different layers of time flow into each other and make hitherto invisible realities apparent’. Shaw elaborates on the work of Jan Vansina: he used the notion of ‘palimpsest tradition’ to stress the ‘borrowed elements’ in a text, elements of different times. He compares it with an old house that can be fashioned to current ideas, but only by a certain degree.

Already in 1845, Thomas De Quincey described memory as a palimpsest, with different layers of ideas, images and feelings. A palimpsest is a manuscript that is written over and over again: parchment was strong but expensive, so it was washed or scraped and used again. Despite these attempt to remove the ‘old’ writing, it was often still visible and could lead to a layered text over a period of time. Since then, this concept has been used in different areas such as architecture, genetics, literature and memory studies.

Recently, the palimpsest metaphor regained new attention by Max Silverman who published his book Palimpsestic Memory in 2013. Silverman also discusses borrowed elements from the past: he shows that the present is shadowed or haunted by ‘a past which is not immediately visible but is progressively brought into view’.

The relationship between present and past therefore takes the form of a superimposition and interaction of different temporal traces to constitute a sort of composite structure, like a palimpsest, so the one layer of traces can be seen through, and is transformed by, another. Second, the composite structure in these works is a combination of not simply two moments in time (past and present) but a number of different moments, hence producing a chain of signification which draws together disparate spaces and times.

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125 Schwartz, ‘Collective Memory and History’, 471.
126 Rothberg, Multidirectional Memory, 11.
127 Rosalind Shaw, Memories of the Slave Trade: Ritual and the Historical Imagination in Sierra Leone (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 264.
131 Silverman, Palimpsestic Memory, 3.
It is important to remark that these studies highlight a process that cannot be discussed simply in terms of drawing historical analogies. Historical analogies are often criticized and discussed in relation to the uniqueness of certain events, leading to questions about comparability, such as which historical event was ‘worse’ or more ‘important’ than the other. Rather than getting sucked into these discussions and writings that examine if the meaning of A is really analogous to B, the notions of multidirectional and palimpsestic memory stress the process of the new, productive meaning that occurs when one element is seen through and transformed by another.

Moreover, instead of a comparison between two moments in time (as by a single historical analogy), the chain of signification is derived from a combination of cross references and interconnections between histories. Distinct moments in time and space are recomposed into a ‘different spatio-temporal configuration’. The “history which returns” to shadow the present (...) condenses different moments, and recreates each due to the connection between them. Furthermore, Barry Schwarz argues that these interpretative processes are more than a new word for analogical thinking since they transform memory ‘into a cultural system’: it is a public ‘discourse that flows through the organizations and institutions of the social world’. Hence, this discourse is widespread and probably visible in the genre of history textbooks as well.

This study examines to what extent there are cross references between histories in English and Dutch textbooks and analyses them against the background of the discussed theoretical contexts, focusing on the techniques of framing and keying since they facilitate the interaction of past and present. This research pays special attention to the configuration of time (diachronic and synchronic) in textbook narrations as an element in the formation of a narrative plot. The empirical chapters will further elaborate on the discourse time of the specific textbook series: how is the sequence of events presented? Why do some textbook authors deliberately portray them out of chronological

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132 See also the remark of Max Silverman on page 4: ‘I have chosen the term “palimpsestic memory” to discuss this hybrid form because, of all the figures which connects disparate elements through a play of simililarity and difference (analogy, metaphor, allegory, montage and so on), the palimpsest captures most completely the superimposition and productive interaction of different inscriptions and the spatialization of time central to the work of memory that I wish to highlight.’
133 Silverman, Palimpsestic Memory, 3.
135 Schwartz, ‘Memory as a cultural system’, 911.
order and interrupt the sequence by referring backwards and forwards in time? Narratives can reorder events and they can include elements from outside the direct ‘story’, for example to increase the dramatic effect or to be better able to tell what is going on. Hence, a narrative is ‘a kind of organizational scheme expressed in story form’ and by means of the plot, several events can be related to each other in a meaningful and coherent way.\textsuperscript{137}

The French literary theorist Gérard Genette uses the term ‘anachrony’ to denote disarrangements at the level of chronological order. He distinguishes flashbacks to earlier points (analepsis) and fast-forwards to later moments (prolepsis) in the chronological sequence of events.\textsuperscript{138} According to the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, the temporal composition of a narrative with flashbacks and fast-forwards is governed by the meaning of the work as a whole.\textsuperscript{139} As a result, the anachrony of a narrative that interacts between different histories, times and places becomes a ‘quality’: ‘its bringing together of now and then, here and there – is actually the source of its powerful creativity, its ability to build new worlds out of the materials of older ones.’\textsuperscript{140} Events from different time periods can be interrelated on basis of the same plot or the main storyline; this returning plot can transcend historical boundaries and function as a frame of reference while interpreting the present and the future as well. As a result, Berber Bevernage argues that a ‘persisting “past” does not simply deconstruct the notions of absence and distance; rather, it blurs the strict delineation between past and present and thereby even questions the existence of these temporal dimensions as separate entities’.\textsuperscript{141}

Next to chronological order, Genette also discusses frequency. An event may occur once and be narrated once (singular), occur $n$ times and be narrated $n$ times (multiple) or occur $n$ times but be narrated once (iterative). An example of the latter is the marginal presence of internal struggles and ‘domestic’ victims in a national narrative that is primarily presented as a fight against a foreign enemy. Another possibility: an event occurred once and has been narrated $n$ times (repetitive). For example, the English defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 occurred once, but this sixteenth-century event can be narrated repetitively in an English textbook series and several different historical happenings (unique in time and context) can be portrayed as ‘echoing events’. By analyzing these forms of ‘echoing’ and the generated chain of meaning, this study aims to contribute to the debate about national narratives’ perpetuation in history textbooks from a different angle.

\textsuperscript{139} Ricoeur, \textit{Time and Narrative} 2, 83.
\textsuperscript{140} Rothberg, \textit{Multidirectional Memory}, 5.
\textsuperscript{141} Bevernage, \textit{History, Memory, and State-Sponsored Violence}, 5.
1.5  **Sources, methods and outline of the study**

Since England and the Netherlands do not have a system of approved history textbooks, their textbook markets are wide ranging. Due to the quantity of history textbooks, this study works with a textbook sample that consists of twelve English and twelve Dutch history textbook series, published in the period between circa 1920 and 2010 (see Appendix I and II – in total 225 books). Most of these history series do not only include textbooks but also workbooks and teachers’ books. Although England and the Netherlands have no official figures of printed and sold textbooks, this sample aims to include textbook series that were ‘long-sellers’ or ‘best-sellers’ to a certain extent. However, it was not intended to create a full representative textbook sample in order to present a complete overview of this period. Instead, this longitudinal and comparative study endeavours to explore a new way of textbook analysis in order to contribute to the debate about national narratives’ perpetuation in history textbooks.

Several English and Dutch teachers, as well as other specialists in the field of history education, gave advice about these ‘long-sellers’ and ‘best-sellers’. They also advised to include a variety of textbooks series, chronological based as well as thematically based. Another valuable resource were the English handbooks for history teachers. These handbooks arrange textbook series under the header ‘chronological arrangement’ or ‘topical arrangement’. They contain a selection of history textbook series and these are reviewed as well. For example, the editors of the 1962 *Handbook for History Teachers* mention that due to the limited space available, ‘the reviewers have only been able to include a few of the many series in current circulation’. The reviewers have inserted ‘old but still useful’ series as well, such as *The Kingsway Histories for Seniors* first published in 1935: ‘The inclusion of some older series in the first section reflects the relative scarcity of good narrative histories.’ Hence, considering the fact that this series (1935) was worthwhile to be reviewed and reprinted until the 1960s, it is part of the English textbook sample.

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142 I contacted several publishing houses but they could not or did not want to hand over any figures of printed and/or sold history textbooks.
143 Stuart Foster (Executive Director of the First World War Centenary Battlefield Tours Programme and the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education), Terry Haydn (Professor of Education at the University of East Anglia), Joke van der Leeuw-Roord (former director of EUROCLIO), Dean Smart (Senior Lecturer in History and Citizenship Education at the University of the West of England, Bristol). I also would like to thank Dirkjan van den Berg who did a master internship at my research project in 2012: he provided a general overview of Dutch history textbooks (authors, publishing houses and reprints) at the Dutch national museum of education, since the 1920s. Dirkjan van den Berg, *Geschiedenisschoolboeken in het Onderwijsmuseum* (Internship report, 2012).
To sum up, the English and Dutch textbook samples are based on the following criteria: chronological based as well as thematically based history textbook series, written for pupils in the 11–14 years age group in higher secondary schools between circa 1920 and 2010, reprinted over a certain length of time and/or published at publishing houses with different (religious) backgrounds. The sources were gathered at various institutions and libraries, such as the National Museum of Education in Dordrecht, the Historical Didactics Collection at the Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in Braunschweig (GEI in Germany), the Everton Library at the University of Cambridge (Faculty of Education), the Falmer Library at the University of Brighton, the Institute of Education (IoE) in London and the British Library. For an analysis of the context, several primary sources have been studied as well, such as newspapers, handbooks and government papers (see ‘other primary sources’ in the list of sources and literature).

This study uses an integrated approach and discourse analysis to scrutinize how, why and where the selected sixteenth-century case studies pop up in the textbook, workbook or teacher’s book. It scrutinizes plot structures in English and Dutch textbook series by close reading, textual and visual analysis of the main text, opening stories, short biographies, paratext and assignments. Next to an analysis of flashbacks and fast-forwards in textbooks’ organization and narration of national history, this study also focuses on narrated ‘turning points’ since they mark an end as well as a new beginning in the composition of a national narrative. As Zerubavel has argued: ‘Temporal discontinuity is a form of mental discontinuity, and the way we cut up the past is thus a manifestation of the way we cut up mental space in general’.\textsuperscript{146} Turning points underscore discontinuous time experiences in people’s lives and are important anchors in mnemonic communities.\textsuperscript{147}

Besides an analysis of the formation of time – the configuration of subjective experienced time and objective measurable time\textsuperscript{148} – the geographic scale is also taken into account: to what extent is the English or Dutch nation placed in a European or global setting? Furthermore, the integrated approach gives insight into the selection and naming of events and persons as well as metaphors like ‘Sea Beggars’ and ‘sea dogs’. Next to the use of colligatory concepts – higher order concepts that organize history in a thematic way, such as ‘Golden Age’\textsuperscript{149} – textbook authors might use more explicit metaphors for history itself, such as ‘journey’. These metaphors can elucidate

\textsuperscript{146} Zerubavel, \textit{Time Maps}, 85.
\textsuperscript{147} Maria Grever, \textit{De enscenering van de tijd}, 11, 18.
conceptions of history and play an important role in the framing process: they draw 'the audience into viewing the situation through the conceptual lens proposed by the person who utters it.'

This research is preliminary focused on texts but maps, graphs and illustrations are also taken into account: they can criticize or confirm the textual plot. Pictures can play an important role in the processes of framing and keying in history textbooks: for example, pictures of a twentieth-century event can be placed within the framework of a sixteenth-century narrative in order to compare histories or to create a chain of signification through time. Consequently, the paratext and complete layout of a series are relevant in these processes of recontextualization and interdiscursivity.

The following chapters contain the analysis of the twenty-four selected textbook series and has the following structure: discussions on educational and pedagogic developments in relation to the historical academic discipline and wider societal (political) issues precede the textbook analysis. The first two sections are concerned with English history education and the analysis of English history textbooks, followed by two sections on Dutch history education and accompanying textbooks. Some chapters contain a fifth section in which English as well as Dutch textbooks are discussed in relation to a (shared) narrative model. Chapter two is concerned with the period between circa 1920 and 1940 and the role of national narratives in the aftermath of World War I. The period between circa 1945 and 1965 is the central focus of chapter three. Whereas World War II had generated feelings of superiority in Great Britain, the Nazi occupation had created the opposite in the Netherlands. Chapter four is concerned with the period between circa 1965 and 1988, in which national narratives became contested issues. The central heroic actor of previous transmitted national narratives almost disappeared in both countries. Next to changing ideas about the nation, narratives themselves were at stake. This discussion is often simply summarized as a fight between ‘factual stories’ and ‘skills’. The last empirical chapter discusses the contemporary period between circa 1988 and 2010. This is a very recent period for a historical analysis but cannot be neglected in view of the central topic of this study: a longitudinal analysis of the perpetuation of national narratives in history textbooks. The last chapter provides a synthesis and aims to elucidate how and why these narratives are perpetuated in English and Dutch textbooks during the long twentieth century.

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About the author

Tina van der Vlies (1987) started to study history at Erasmus University Rotterdam after her gymnasium graduation in 2005. In 2010, she finished the Master History of Society with honours trajectory and graduated cum laude on a thesis about the socio-cultural meaning of the Ragged School in England and the Netherlands between 1850 and 1920. A year later, she finished an educational master at ICLON, Leiden University, while working as a history teacher and graduated cum laude on a thesis about sensitive histories in the classroom and pupils’ moral judgements.

Afterwards, she went back to Erasmus University Rotterdam and started as a PhD candidate at the Center for Historical Culture, part of the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication. Van der Vlies taught several courses in the History Bachelor, such as Historical Representation and Imagination, Rethinking History I and II, and Quantitative Historical Methods. She also participated in the Master program as the coordinator of the MA research internships.

Her research project on national narratives in English and Dutch history textbooks was funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). Van der Vlies presented her PhD research at various international conferences and went to several summer schools, such as ‘Memory Unbound’ in Ghent (2013) and the Histories of Education Summer School in Luxembourg (2015). Moreover, she received the ISCHE Early Career Conference Paper Award for her paper at the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE) in London in 2014. In 2019, The Belgian-Dutch Society for the History of Education (BENGGO) awarded her their four-yearly award – the Maurits de Vroede Prize – for her article ‘Multidirectional war narratives in history textbooks’, published in *Paedagogica Historica*.

Publications


