



Dealing with the Past in Spaces, Places, Actions, and Institutions of Memory: A Comparative Reflection on European Experiences

Institutional Expressions of Dealing with the Past

Berlin, October 2015



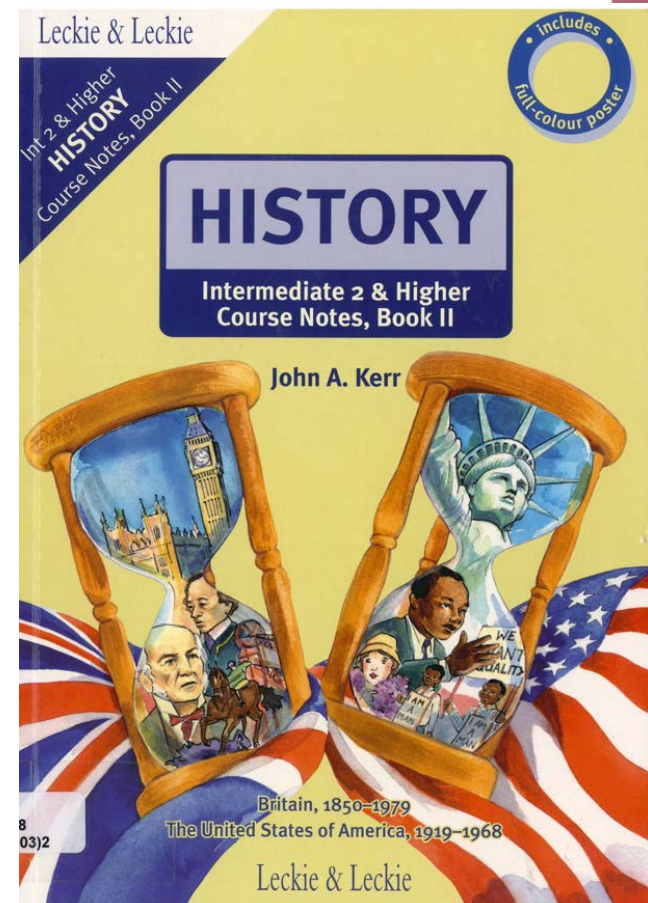
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1. Textbooks and Textbook Revision

- When we think of ways societies create their national memories museums and monuments come to mind but not so much textbook however they are very particular mass media, singular due to their condensed and canonical character
- Textbooks define not only “legitimate knowledge” and desirable competencies, but also communicate nationally and socially preferred concepts of identity.
- Textbooks are therefore also a political issue and refer to the contexts in which these political issues are manufactured, used and negotiated.
- Textbooks can initiate or illustrate ethnic, cultural, religious or political conflicts, yet at the same time can also serve as a means of conflict resolution and compromise.





1. Textbooks and Textbook Revision

- Textbook revision goes back to the beginning of the 20th century
- Aims at international understanding, conflict prevention and conflict mediation
- linked to curriculum reform and peace education



Main Actors:

- International governmental and national non-governmental organizations
- Academic historians
- Historical cyberculture



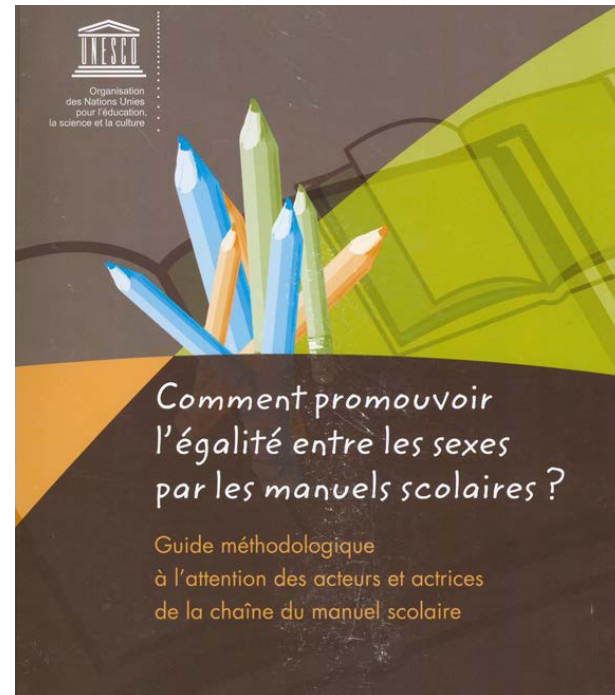
2. Multi- and Bilateral Textbook Initiatives

UNESCO:



- Founding of UNESCO as main organization dealing with textbook revision
- 1947: Program for the Revision of Textbooks and Teaching Material

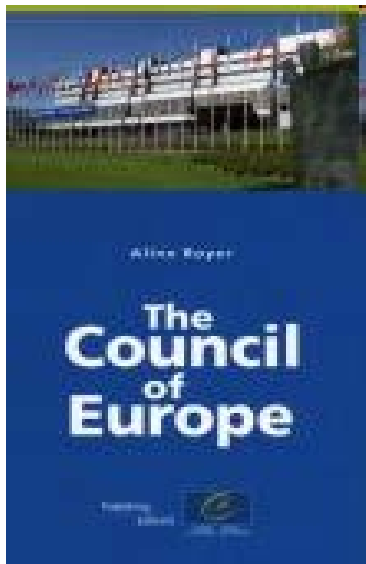
- 1949 „Handbook for the Improvement of Textbooks and Teaching Materials“, which contained a sample contract for international treaties
- regular meetings on curriculum issues
- 1957: Start of the 20-volume edition of the „History of the Cultural and Scientific Development of Mankind“, a textbook for high school and college students
- Today: Middle East and North Africa





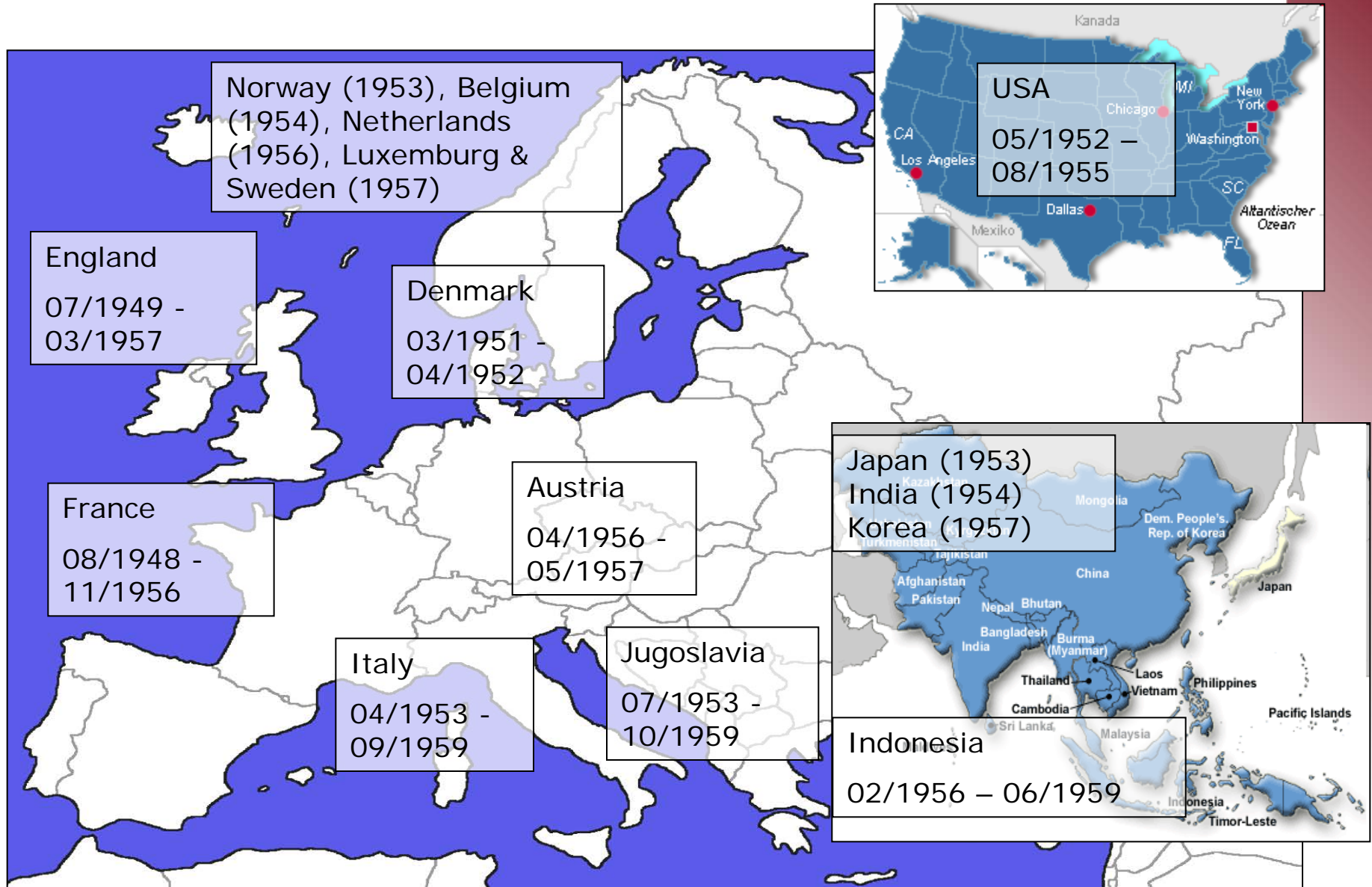
2. Multi- and Bilateral Textbook Initiatives

Council of Europe:



- 12 conferences on history textbooks and instruction between 1953 and 1983
- Evaluation of about 1,000 history textbooks from 17 countries
- 1964: Glossar of historical terms for Europe
- Since the late 1960s: Incorporation of European history into the national narratives
- Major focus since then: Problem of European history and identity
- Mediation and Revision in South Eastern Europe

2. Multi- and Bilateral Textbook Initiatives





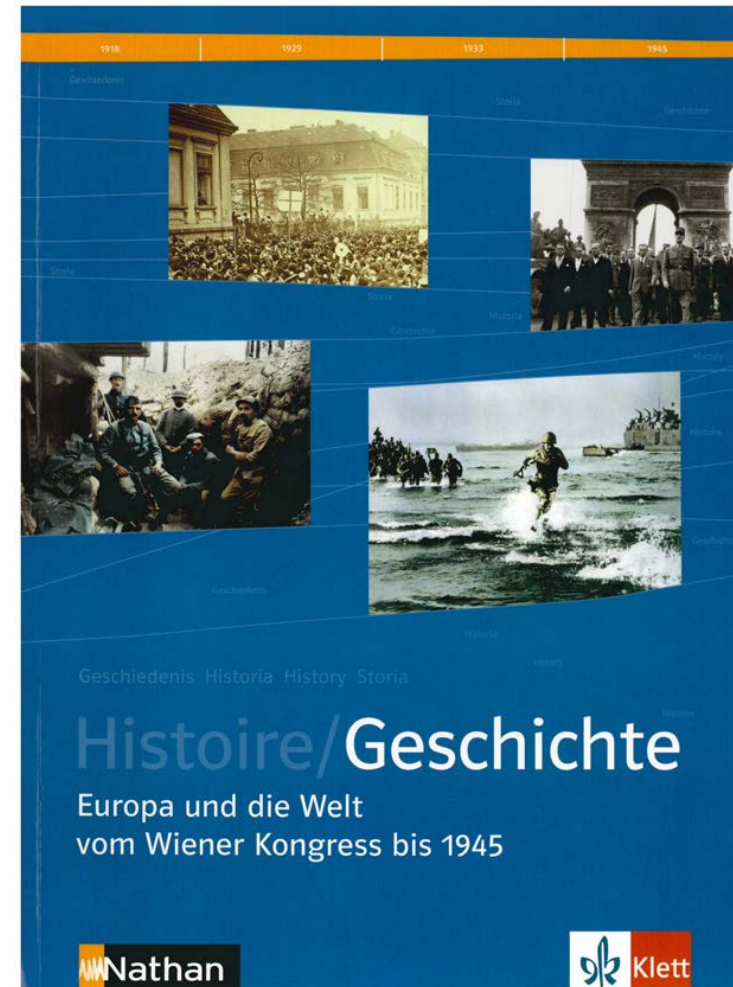
2. Multi- and Bilateral Textbook Initiatives

Bilateral Activities:

**Main Actor: International
Textbook Institute (1951)**

German-French Textbook

- since 1952: Bi-annual meetings of German and French history teachers → German French Textbook Commission (coordinated by ITI)
- Aim: Reconciliation
- France and Germany as part of European history





2. Multi- and Bilateral Textbook Initiatives

- German-French Textbook (2006 – 2011)
 - Vol. 1: History after 1945
 - Vol. 2: History 1815 – 1945
 - Vol. 3: Antiquity to 1815
- Identical issues for upper secondary schools in both countries
- Initiative: 2003
 - 40th anniversary celebrations of the Élysée Treaty
- Aim:
 - NOT reconciliation → it marks the end of a long transnational dialogue
 - Franco-German textbook on the history of Europe
 - Seen as first step on the way to a European textbook



2. Multi- and Bilateral Textbook Initiatives

- Main Problem:
 - Different Curricula (especially for third volume)
 - Usage in schools (not high school but bilingual schools)
 - Sept. 2010: unilateral curriculum reform in France
- Topics/Themes
 - Consensus on War 1870/71 and WWI/WWII
 - Main discussion: how to weight certain topics (such as popular culture)
 - Different views: role of U.S. after 1945, communism
 - Extra Text-Box on “Franco-German Changes of Perspective”
- In Asia, the Franco-German experiment is a point of reference, indeed a “model,” for reconciliation between former enemies
 - Announcement by President Park in 2013
 - translated into Japanese and Korean



2. Multi- and Bilateral Textbook Initiatives

Since 1972:

German-Polish
Textbook
Commission



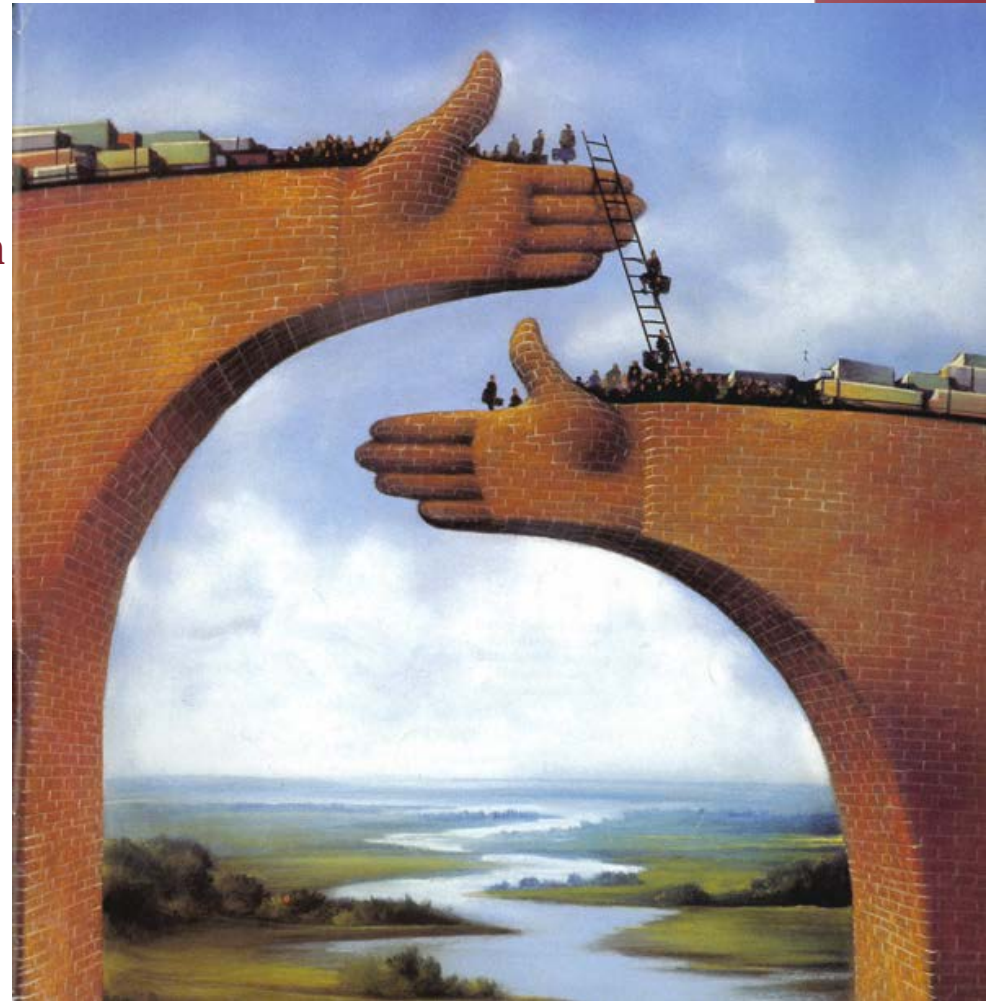
- 2006: Initiative by German Secretary of Foreign Affairs in 2006



- 2007: accepted by Polish government

- Jan. 2008: GEI and GPTC produce a project proposal based on academic study of the curricula of Poland and each of the 16 German federal states for secondary school and sixth form level (years 7-13).

- May 2008: Establishment of a German Polish Textbook Commission
- with academic and political stakeholders from both countries





2. Multi- and Bilateral Textbook Initiatives

Outside Europe:

The Middle East and
North Africa Region

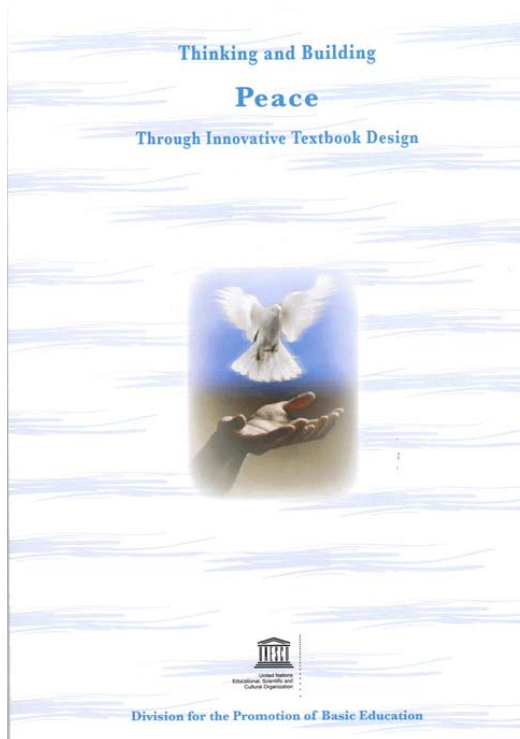
Theory:

UNESCO and ISESCO (since
2007)

→ Development of *Guidelines
and Criteria for the
Development, Evaluation and
Revision of Textbooks and
other Educational Materials in
International Education*

Practice:

Israeli-Palestinian Textbook





2. Multi- and Bilateral Textbook Initiatives

Textbook Revision in East Asia

Trilateral History Forum since 2001

Common History Textbooks
No successful reconciliation
Territorial conflict

Ahbe – Beijing military parade
Name of war in China: War of Japanese aggression against China





Lessons

- Reconciliation as political process
 - Political situation needs to be in favour
- Communication/cooperation on level of equality (e.g. not just victim vs. perpetrator)
 - Development of trust (obstacle: nationalism, superiority of any kind)
- Support by governments but independence of work
- Don't start with most controversial topics



Successful reconciliation in Central Europe after 1945¹⁴
but....



New Challenges

- Memory conflicts not only between but within societies (Northern Ireland, Bosnia)
- Political conditions not stable but fragil (post-conflict societies such as South Eastern Europe)
- Most recent history (of contemporaries) is part of the conflict/reconciliation (SEU, Spain, Latin America)
- No equality but stigmatization
 - Reconciliation vs. dominance of one narrative (SEU, France, Greece-Macedonia, Greece-Turkey, Turkey-Armenia, Hungary-Slovakia, Armenia-Azerbaijan, East Asia)



4. Reconciliation through Textbooks

- Three approaches:
 - Consensual Narrative Approach
 - East Asia Common Textbook, German French Textbook
 - Dual Narrative Approach
 - Israeli-Palestinian Textbook
 - Multiperspective Narrative Approach
 - German-Polish Textbook
- UNESCO guidelines as „theoretical modell“
- Bi- and multilateral textbook commissions as „practical modell“

