

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TEXTBOOKS

IN THE FRAMEWORK
OF THE EURO-ARAB
DIALOGUE



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COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TEXTBOOKS

WORKING DOCUMENT
IN THE FRAMEWORK
OF THE EURO-ARAB
DIALOGUE

Summary report

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INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations and the Constitution of UNESCO, calling for peace between peoples and respect for cultural diversity, several National Commissions for UNESCO have taken the initiative to create the conditions for a Euro-Arab dialogue in the field of education. The French and Moroccan National Commissions, in particular, have decided to launch studies to highlight stereotypes, misunderstandings and subliminal bias about Arab countries in European textbooks and about European countries in textbooks in the Arab world.

First, these studies were conducted by researchers focusing on their own countries' textbooks in order to analyse how the history of the countries on "the other side of the Mediterranean" was represented. Second, a common methodology was developed to allow comparative approaches favourable to Euro-Arab dialogue. This was to address any mutual bias or misrepresentations that may exist between the two regions and to work together to find ways of preventing and combating them. The originality of the approach was to conduct a critical analysis of textbooks published in each country and then undertake a comparative study to be used as the basis for common recommendations.

I. Project objectives:

Participants in this project initiated by the National Commissions defined three main objectives:

1. To strengthen dialogue, laying the foundations for learning to live together, based on mutual respect.
2. To help National Commissions for UNESCO, experts, institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to find ways to work together in areas of research of common interest.
3. To contribute to UNESCO's efforts to develop a strategy relating to textbooks, to improve the quality of education for peace, human rights, mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue.

II. Issues and areas of investigation:

While textbooks play a vital role in the education of future citizens, they sometimes contain stereotypes and clichés, particularly in the representation of geographical and cultural areas with which cooperation or trade links have been forged, but also when periods of conflict and colonization have left lasting scars. Even now, textbook contents can conceal prejudices unfavourable to a more open and objective mutual understanding.

Reviewing textbooks and teaching materials in general is a priority for UNESCO. There is substantial scientific production, but it is unevenly distributed among regions.

It was therefore decided that past work on the "representations of the Other" in each of the participating countries would be reviewed, leading to a joint approach to addressing historical events that have connected both cultural areas.

The summary presented here is intended to reflect the wealth of contributions from the National Commissions and the discussions that have taken place among experts and between representatives of the National Commissions and experts.

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■ AN AMBITIOUS PROJECT

Coordinated by the French and Moroccan National Commissions, the project entitled *Euro-Arab dialogue: comparative studies on school textbooks* took place over a period of more than ten years. Its aim was to contribute to the strategic objective of learning to work together to construct a Euro-Arab dialogue, and its strategy was to work collectively to understand differences in the approach and conception of teaching methods and practices, curriculum design and the drafting of textbooks.

A number of aspects of the field of education were considered, in order to:

- ◆ establish links between countries having very different cultural and educational traditions and demographic, economic and political characteristics;
- ◆ consider education in the various areas of transmission of cultural heritage and representations of oneself and the Other through exchanges or conflicts between geographical areas which have maintained relations for several centuries;
- ◆ propose a comparative study based on a shared analysis grid relating to textbooks, which are the main tools of formal education.

1. Building Euro-Arab dialogue

(a) Cooperation in several stages

Euro-Arab dialogue on the theme *Learning to live together* was launched by the National Commissions at the 46th session of the International Conference on Education (Geneva, September 2001). A working group was set up, comprising representatives of nine National Commissions from the two regions.

Representatives of UNESCO, the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) and the Council of Europe were invited to take part in the work of the group, which was coordinated successively by the German and Tunisian National Commissions, the National Commissions of France and of the United Arab Emirates, followed by those of Slovenia and the Sultanate of Oman.

Several meetings were held, including those in Abu Dhabi (10-13 April 2002), Strasbourg (28-29 October 2002) and Cairo (18-19 June 2003), and smaller coordination meetings have taken place in Tunis and Tripoli. The coordination meetings led, among other things, to an interregional strategy known as *Learning to live together*, adopted at

statutory meetings of the National Commissions of the Arab States (Rabat, 3-8 June 2002) and those of Europe (Budapest, 17-18 June 2002).

This strategy has led to a Euro-Arab cooperation framework, open to all the National Commissions of the two regions and through them to civil society in the various countries. It has also helped to strengthen cooperation between UNESCO and the intergovernmental organizations concerned, particularly ALECSO, the Council of Europe, and more recently the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO). A set of recommendations and proposals has been formulated (Cairo communiqué).

(b) Diversified activities

With the overall framework of Euro-Arab dialogue having been defined, the joint implementation of practical projects by National Commissions in both regions developed in a number of directions:

- ◆ Germany: training of teachers from Arab countries through participation in seminars on the subjects *Conflict or dialogue between cultures and civilizations* and *Combating violence at school*;
- ◆ Hungary: the *Béla Bartók and Arab music* programme, with student and teacher exchanges;
- ◆ Lebanon: interregional workshop for the Associated Schools Project Network, in the framework of the World Heritage project;
- ◆ Slovenia: seminar by a network of teacher training colleges in Europe and the Arab world;
- ◆ Tunisia, jointly with France: a Euro-Arab seminar on "cultural and linguistic diversity in the information society", in preparation for the second phase of the World Summit in Tunis (2005).

There have also been various NGO initiatives, supported by National Commissions, with strong determination to develop cooperation between the two regions, including at the civil society level.

2. Decision to study textbooks

(a) The Learning to live together initiative

From 10 to 14 March 2003, the French and Moroccan Commissions jointly organized a conference on the theme *Learning to live together: what kind of education for what kind of citizenship?*

This meeting, involving 70 European and Arab experts from 39 countries and organizations, was inspired by the Delors report on *Education in the 21st century*. The theme *Learning to live together*, with the other three central themes of the report (*Learning to know*, *Learning to do* and *Learning to be*), are of vital importance for redefining education in the context of globalization.

For the first time, the interregional meeting benefited from considerable multilateral participation: in addition to the National Commissions for UNESCO of European and Arab countries, it was supported by UNESCO, the Council of Europe, ALECSO, ISESCO, the International Bureau of Education (IBE) and the *Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie* (AIF).

The three themes discussed were:

1. Europe and the Arab world: understanding each other's values
2. Education for democratic citizenship
3. What must be done?

These three themes were refined during subsequent meetings on the subject of the comparative study of textbooks. Initially, a lack of mutual understanding needed to be overcome and useful convergences defined; lastly, shared recommendations were formulated. (*Those recommendations can be seen in the annex to this document.*)

This meeting generated the idea of a comparative study of textbooks in various subjects. A number of National Commissions took part, in collaboration with pedagogical research centres in the two regions. Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Poland, Slovenia, Switzerland, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates, took part in the project, with support in various areas from ALECSO, ISESCO, the Council of Europe and UNESCO (the Education Sector, the Cluster Office in Rabat and the Regional Bureau in Cairo).

(b) Designing a shared methodology

The work as a whole was guided by the French and Moroccan National Commissions and two expert meetings were held following the Rabat conference.

- ♦ The first meeting was held in Lyon in June 2005 to define a shared approach and methodology as proposed by the Moroccan and French experts. The idea was to make a survey of stereotypes, misunderstandings or misinterpretations and silences or gaps, to be found by researchers in textbooks published in their respective countries. The purpose was to avoid misconstruing things owing to language issues, with each expert working in his or her mother tongue, and to facilitate access to sources.
- ♦ The second meeting, held in Rabat in September 2006, took place halfway through the process. It reviewed the progress of work and how the research was going, and provided for some adjustments.

It was then agreed that the study would relate both to text and iconographic content and on the various contexts in which textbooks were produced, received and used. This would be done on the basis of shared benchmarks and would relate to books for students aged 12-16: history, geography and readers textbooks, literary anthologies and citizenship education textbooks. *(The working document defining the methods used can be seen in the annex to this document.)*

The final meeting took place in Strasbourg in March 2010 at the invitation of the Council of Europe, which had included this study as a contribution to a new project on *The Image of the Other in History Teaching*.

The first contribution to the comparative study was presented, on behalf of the Swiss National Commission, by Elisabetta Pagnossin, from the *Institut de recherche et de documentation pédagogique* (IRDP) in Neuchâtel. The rigorous analysis methodology and the determination to cover the history of Arab countries in all its dimensions and diversity (religious, political and military, social, economic and commercial, scientific and artistic) prepared the way for subsequent research. The French study, led by Alain Choppin (*Institut national de recherche pédagogique*, INRP), an expert in school textbooks, then by Jacqueline Costa-Lascoux, Director of Research at the *Centre national de la recherche scientifique* (CNRS), introduced comparisons not only between history and civics textbooks but also between textbooks for the teaching of geography and of French. The representation of the Arab and Muslim world in those books appears equally diverse and positive through a variety of comparisons and complementarities among different subjects of study. For Slovenia, under the direction

of Danijela Trškan, the panorama on Arab countries' history covers a number of educational levels: primary, secondary and technical school. The Polish study, under Dr Marek Pawelczak of the Institute of History of Warsaw, focused on the factual, ideological, linguistic and graphic analysis of secondary-school textbooks. For the National Commission in Morocco, the report presented by Hassan Idrissi shows how the three main reforms of history teaching in the country translated into an evolving perception of Europe, moving more and more from a subject based on sequences of events to a form of teaching more open to socioeconomic and sociocultural approaches and to a less "politicized" Europe.

Each of the authors conducted both quantitative studies on the place devoted to the other region in his or her country's textbooks (for example, the number of pages, paragraphs, titles or illustrations), and qualitative, linguistic and iconographic studies to detect representations contained in words, images or instructions given to teachers. Many matters have been clarified through meetings between experts and the representatives of National Commissions.

(c) A novel experience

The adoption of a joint method for the comparative study and each country's task of researching its own textbooks added up to a novel experience, relatively restricting but enriching. Restricting, because it required agreement on definitions and goals, on subjects and on how information would be processed. The linguistic specificities of the three languages used in the project (Arabic, English and French) and the diversity of languages in which the textbooks were written made the task more complicated. Nonetheless, the study produced a wealth of results and, indeed, these overturned many generally accepted ideas. In particular, it drew attention to the manifest efforts in all the countries to bring about change in the very concept of history teaching and attitudes regarding exchanges with other regions and civilizations.

The comparative study with a shared analysis grid responded to a dual strategic goal: to learn to work together to construct Euro-Arab dialogue; and to understand the differences in approach and conception of teaching methods, pedagogical practices and in the design of curricula and textbooks.

Several aspects in the field of education were studied, in order to:

- ♦ help to show connections between apparently far-removed cultural and educational traditions, through an intercultural approach;

- ♦ look at education as the transmission of heritage, a series of conceptions of oneself and of others, through exchanges or conflicts between geographical areas between which relations have existed for centuries;
- ♦ propose a shared analysis grid for textbooks as the central expression of formal education.

The comparative study, therefore, fell within UNESCO's priorities for the improvement of the quality of education. It showed the will to strengthen Euro-Arab dialogue and overcome prejudices and erroneous ideas which these regions may have in relation to each other. It has also been an opportunity for fruitful cooperation among National Commissions, which have learned to better work together despite a constantly changing international context.

3. A troubled international climate

The geopolitical situation in the Middle East and North Africa has made this interregional project difficult but all the more necessary. The Moroccan Minister of Higher Education, Executive Training and Scientific Research, Khalid Alioua, has underlined "the accelerating pace of history, the growth of retrograde values, the threat posed by war to the international system built on the values championed by the United Nations, and the widening of an economic, political and religious divide between Europe and the Arab world". It should be noted that a number of representatives of National Commissions involved in the Euro-Arab Dialogue have highlighted the recurrent problem of how to deal with the Palestinian question in textbooks.

The comparative study on school textbooks has found itself at the heart of developments in international relations in the Middle East, followed by the Arab Spring with its major political and institutional consequences. While these dramatic changes were taking place, globalization was spreading at a rate and on a scale hitherto unknown, bringing with it economic competition, financial crisis, mass cross-border migration and use of communication technologies in social networks that were hard to regulate... all helping to fuel domestic and international unrest.

These swift and far-reaching changes have led to greater inequality. Globalization does not mean universalism or humankind at peace with itself; on the contrary, it is likely to exacerbate conflicts. Because they are no longer able to remain inward-looking, societies are now becoming acutely aware of their fragility, of power relations and of

the aggressive forms of what is commonly termed “modernity”, usually understood as western modernity. The younger generations are particularly sensitive to this, either conforming to artificial forms of modernity or combating a model imposed from outside. Therefore, Education systems could not remain untouched or insensitive by this state of affairs. Some countries were hampered in the textbook analysis that they had begun and were unable to complete it.

2

■ SHARED OBJECTIVES AND OBSTACLES

A variety of obstacles were encountered in implementing the comparative study of school textbooks in the two regions covered by the Euro-Arab Dialogue:

- ◆ Clichéd representations in Europe and the Arab world, with simplistic and sometimes grotesque views;
- ◆ Basic values that seem a long way apart because they are presented as antithetical;
- ◆ Education policy changes in most of the countries concerned, entailing constant updating;
- ◆ Differences in the production of textbooks depending on whether they are issued by public authorities (as is usually the case in Arab States) or private publishers, as in European countries;
- ◆ The range of teaching aids (printed material, imagery, the media, the Internet, etc.), which complicates analysis and means that it is not enough to compare printed material alone. While everyone welcomes the use of the Internet and new media in the learning process, source reliability is a universal concern.

These pitfalls have been clearly identified and extensively discussed in successive meetings. It has been possible to overcome them partially through the shared objectives chosen by the project participants.

1. Understanding the values of others

(a) Entrenched stereotypes

Shaped by a long history of interaction that has frequently been unequal and divisive, collective memories and representations on both sides of the Mediterranean still too often allow room for clichés, stereotypes or even fantasy.

- ◆ In the Arab world, Europe is often depicted in terms of Crusades, colonization, imperialism, depravity and fascination with material prosperity and consumer goods but also economic development, scientific and technological progress, recognition of fundamental human rights and freedoms and artistic creativity. The report from the Moroccan Commission is particularly illuminating here in its analysis of perceptions of Europe through the ages: Antiquity, the Middle Age, the modern period and contemporary times. It describes the emergence of a Mediterranean dimension, whose increasing role in textbooks “aims to build

bridges between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean so that Europe no longer seems far away nor foreign”.

- ♦ In Europe, the Arab world may be perceived as conquering (‘Arab invasions’), anachronistic (inferior status of women, non-secularization of institutions, little recognition of civil liberties) or obscurantist (Dante puts Mahomet in the penultimate circle of hell) but also, conversely, as the source of creative, inventive and flourishing civilizations such as Al-Andalus. Nowadays every school textbook not only deals with the historical stages of the birth of Islam but also explains the importance of its artistic and intellectual output and the scale of its economic and scientific influence.

Stereotypes are a symbolic dimension, punctuating the history of all societies and influencing their imaginations. Before a comparative study can begin, these stereotypes have to be uncovered in order to pinpoint differences and agreements, as studied in textbooks. Every cliché is both a representation of others and a view of oneself, sometimes giving rise to a mirror effect whereby each country sees in the other what the other does not want to see in itself, producing reverse images of invasion and imperialism, for example. As for trade and reciprocal cultural borrowings, these are sometimes minimized despite the fact that they continued for centuries.

(b) Non-congruent values

For the vast majority of Arab country representatives, *‘there can be no society without religion’*. Islam is the basis of identity, a shared tradition, an institutional foundation, a political point of reference and a collective and individual ethic. Its purpose is to govern and sanctify various aspects of existence, including those relating to daily life. The question then arises as to *which type of Islam*: here the participants laid emphasis on an Islam refocused on its basic values of hospitality and tolerance. In recent years, textbooks have shown a clear desire to present Muslim civilizations increasingly in terms of the outside world in order to teach a more dynamic type of history that pays attention to interaction with other regions of the globe.

However, many participants from the South took a critical view of effective enjoyment of citizenship and human rights in their countries because of the an ideological exploitation of religion, which had led them away from the basic teachings of Islam. Ignorance of the sources and humanist philosophy of Islam, especially among undereducated population groups, hampers introduction of democracy. Moroccan textbooks often strike a balance between the need for institutions and society to evolve, particularly with reference to international sources, whilst asserting their

loyalty to Moroccan history and identity. How to engage in change without repudiating the past is a major challenge for the education of young people.

In Europe, Christian traditions, the humanism of the Enlightenment, the philosophy of human rights, and social and economic development are the four basic historical pillars of a modernity built on the idea of progress. For over 20 years – according to European surveys in 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010 – the hierarchy of values in descending order of importance has been family, work, friends, leisure and then religion, whose influence has declined sharply (less than 10% of the population in most European countries consider themselves practising members of a religion). Last among these values comes politics in the partisan sense. The disappearance of political commitment among young people, reflected in particular by high levels of abstention at elections, inevitably raises the question of the effectiveness of history and citizenship teaching.

It should be noted that the secularism established in France for over a century, championing freedom of conscience and religion, neutrality of government and public services (particularly the state education system) and equal treatment of all individuals regardless of origin, religion or philosophy and “without favour”, is often misunderstood in countries where there is an official religion enshrined in the Constitution or which have a list of “established” religions. However, it is striking that the textbooks study show that human rights, democratic pluralism and the rule of law are unanimously claimed and taught as fundamental principles in both Eastern and Western Europe.

The fact remains that, in every European country, the “*chauvinism of well-being*” (Jürgen Habermas) may lull consciences and diminish solidarity and civic-mindedness. The way in which democracy is realized is not always perfect, despite an obvious effort on the part of school textbooks and syllabuses to teach the knowledge, know-how and life skills that help promote both freedoms and individual responsibility.

In fact, as noted at the Rabat meeting, today “*what unites Europe and the Arab world is greater than what separates them*”, particularly regarding education for democratic citizenship.

2. A shared objective: education for democratic citizenship

(a) Active citizenship

- ◆ An initial approach might see citizenship as a body of allegiances, memories, values and lifestyles. But if defined in this way, it becomes confused with a collective ethnic, linguistic or religious identity.
- ◆ Yet citizenship means first and foremost recognition that an individual has “legal personality”, and it entails a coherent set of rights and duties secured by democratic institutions. In this respect, it is certainly not “an act of consumption” or just a de facto circumstance but rather a contract with reciprocal obligations. Because it relies on mutual respect, education for democratic citizenship calls for knowledge, know-how and life skills.
- ◆ For young people today, citizenship extends in concentric circles from the individual to the family, school, country and – more and more often – the world. However, these multiple allegiances may also be a source of anxiety, with a temptation to turn inward and retreat into one’s immediate environment. Building citizenship democratically is therefore all the more necessary. It is an integral part of international cooperation and exchanges with young people from other countries, as encouraged by UNESCO Clubs.

(b) Becoming “citizens”

- ◆ The “*social contract*” (as understood by Jean-Jacques Rousseau), which forms the basis of citizenship and fundamental rights, including every child’s right to education, is rooted in the history of nation States. Syllabuses for future citizens reflect each people’s representation of its own roots, history, identity and relationship to the world. This is why some countries are reluctant to reexamine their history textbooks and, even more, to subject them to foreign criticism. Conversely, following the trauma of the Second World War, French and German historians have managed, not without difficulty, to design and write a history textbook together. Similarly, collaboration between Germany and Poland has made it possible to consider a joint approach to a history that was certainly divisive but was marked by the same events. However, States themselves have now been swept up in the maelstrom of globalization.

- ◆ Globalization and the need for a “*dialogue based on wisdom and reason*” call for a broader view of citizenship and also of a global civil society founded on trust, able to make itself heard and play a part in the future of institutions and the choices of society, particularly for developments in the education system, since representative democracy is not enough to create common ground. Hence the discussion on participatory democracy, particularly on the position of NGOs and civil society in public debate. These issues are being raised on both sides of the Mediterranean.
- ◆ Europe has built a European citizenship on the basis of the European Convention on Human Rights, its own law and institutions. Some people have seen this as foreshadowing citizenship that will not stop at borders. Apart from each country’s specific cultural and institutional features and its national sovereignty in fields that are the prerogative of the State, a community built on the foundations of democratic citizenship is in keeping with the EU motto “Unity in diversity”. At its best, Europe embodies a “*multi-voiced intellect*” (François Cheng), emphasizing the individual and his or her choices, unlike identity-based communities focused on their own interests at the risk of creating conflict.

However, the fragile equilibrium of citizenship conceived as a collective project, built on a contract, requires a willingness to live together. Irrespective of the origins or allegiances that may historically have separated communities, it is the role of the school system to encourage the aspiration to share knowledge and spread ideas. But, as National Commissions’ reports have emphasized, school textbooks and syllabuses cannot do everything. They can bear fruit only if educational methods are accompanied by the active teaching of citizenship.

3. School: a key player

“In the course of the twentieth century, wars killed more than 180 million human beings. Most of their leaders were highly educated. Never have we had so much education and never have we had so many wars”, as Cecilia Braslavsky, Director of the International Bureau of Education, has pointed out. This disillusioned observation challenges automatic assumptions about the virtues of education or, at any rate, of a certain kind of education. It also shows that school is not in a position to redress all the evils of society. Similarly, school is only one element of young people’s environment: according to the survey cited by César Birzúa, Director of the Institute of Educational

Sciences in Bucharest, school accounts for only 26% of educational influence, after family and the media. However, notwithstanding these basic reservations, it is equally true that democratic citizenship implies an educated and informed citizen. Schooling plays a key role in teaching pluralism, diversity and acceptance of difference.

While the aim of “living together” means more than just living in the same place or a factual acceptance of others, lifelong education remains a primary means of combating clichéd views of other regions of the world, discriminatory conducts, power relations and attitudes of rejection. This is a task that has to be endlessly reinvented.

The National Commissions for UNESCO, which have done all the work on textbooks from start to finish, have moved the debate on without limiting it to factual answers to the questions asked. They have consciously followed the UNESCO guidelines in the 2009 World Report *Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue*: “This is a new kind of literacy, on a par with the importance of reading and writing skills or numeracy: *cultural literacy* has become the lifeline for today’s world, a fundamental resource for harnessing the multiple venues education can take (from family and tradition to the media, both old and new, and to informal groups and activities) and an indispensable tool for transcending the ‘clash of ignorance’”.

3

■ THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE COMPARATIVE STUDY

The collective study carried out on textbooks, whatever orientations taken owing to their countries of origin, went beyond subject-based teaching and the purely technical or formal aspects of the teaching of history. Its approach was open to a critical and sufficiently coherent reading which would later allow a comparative overview to be formed and common ideas to be identified.

Progress has been observed in terms of fundamental questions such as the role of textbooks in relation to official programmes and the impact on their content of the recent acceleration of reforms. Significant examples have shed light on these questions: the importance of the issue of “access to modernity” in the proposed chronology, the place of religion in the history of the Arab and Muslim world, the “forgotten” periods when relations between East and West were less frequent, evolution in choosing which key events and illustrative documents to include, privileged links to a particular geographic area depending on previous bilateral relations, but also the minimal presence of women in the teaching of history.

Progress was also highlighted in terms of the methods used; in the analysis of sources, in the organization of chapters and periods and the manner in which they are treated, in taking into account the competition between academic culture and the media, in discrepancies with what students around the world see on the Internet, and in the need to start from a work on stereotypes to avoid misunderstandings and misconceptions.

These exchanges in viewpoints gave food for thought on the strategic issues facing education systems such as the use of the textbook as a cultural product entering into education policy and, in Europe, consideration of the market and competition between publishers. But they also showed the need to help students take a scientific approach to history. This will help to promote an intercultural approach while taking into account what is imprinted in the collective memories of peoples. In this way, comparative studies encouraged critical reflection on the transfer of knowledge and values to generations already belonging to a globalized world.

Many differences were observed in the various national contributions, depending on the region or country involved, but also numerous similarities, both among European studies themselves and in comparison with the Moroccan study and the interventions of representatives of Arab countries at the expert meetings.

1. Cultural and political differences

This comparative study shows many differences, some relating to the education system itself, while others relate to a more fundamental concept of the relation to the “Other” in textbooks as taught in schools:

(a) The publishing of textbooks

An initial marked difference relates to the publishers of textbooks, depending on whether they are the Ministry which defines curricula or whether the books are the work of private publishers, which are generally numerous and in competition with each other (for example, there are eight main publishing houses in France). The Moroccan study indicates that before the 2002 reform, there was one single textbook with a pre-determined narrative, which has been replaced by a “skills-based approach which, far from being a “ready-made” textbook which the students learn by heart, opts resolutely for intellectual training and prepares the students to exercise independent thinking”.

Evidently, the plurality of private publishers impacts on textbooks composition . Even if the authors, who often work as a team, are faithful to the structure of the official curriculum, they have relative freedom when it comes to the choice of sources, content and illustrations, depending on their own interpretation and the editorial policies of the publishing house concerned. This does not apply in countries where those who decide the content of curricula are the publishers of the textbooks.

The rapporteur of each National Commission therefore drew up, from the outset, a table showing the organization of the education system in his or her country, highlighting the role played by textbooks. This played an important part in understanding recent changes in teaching, notably the move towards a pluralist view of history. The opportunity to compare sources, documents and different editorial points of view, all following a common thread, encourages critical thinking or at least a certain critical detachment. In France, for example, it is normal practice for teachers to use a variety of different textbooks to teach their courses.

(b) The place of religion

The importance accorded to religion and its role in society is a significant marker. There is clearly a sensitive divide between countries where religion plays an integral part in formal education, often in favour of the majority or official religion and, on the

other hand, countries which are strongly secular, where religions are presented in their plurality, without favouring one in particular and without religious instruction or denominational ethics.

Relations between Islam and Christianity are likely to be represented differently, especially when the Crusades are on the curriculum. All school textbooks give great weight to this moment in history, yet this contentious period is also one which most captures the imagination of students and for which historians can access a wealth of important documentation and a rich iconography, often in the form of epic poems detailing war and heroism.

The Moroccan study shows how the period of the Crusades was used, in previous versions of textbooks, as an opportunity to use derogatory and violent adjectives to describe the crusaders, who were deemed savage, ungodly and barbaric. Similar examples can be found in the first European textbooks when referring to the Saracens. Nowadays, textbooks have abandoned this dramatization in favour of neutral terms and analysis of economic, political, demographic and social factors. This unbiased approach promotes explanation rather than dramatization.

Nowadays, the authors of European textbooks try to present both sides of the story. Furthermore, they describe the birth of Islam, its sacred sources and the originality of its message. But it is in a secular country such as France, which is home, according to various estimates, to more than five million Muslims (in a society which has fewer than a million Jews, 900,000 Protestants and 700,000 Buddhists), that the rich diversity of religions is deliberately presented as historic fact and facets of civilization. (Currently, all State-run education institutions in France are governed by a "Secularism Charter"). All public education staff, since they are responsible for a mission of national education, must remain neutral out of respect for the freedom of conscience of students and their families. There is a clearly visible difference between these countries and those where religious instruction is given.

The place of Islam in history and culture may be treated differently, but European textbooks cover all its important developments. In France, for example, history lessons in the second year of secondary school (children aged 12) start with the birth of Islam and the development of Muslim societies, a theme which reappears at other times throughout the curriculum in various subjects.. French textbooks in the first year of secondary school (children aged 11) are notably devoted to the art of storytelling, with Arabic and Persian stories forming a key part of the material covered. Furthermore, the emphasis placed on scientific inventions, technological and medical

advances and the development of philosophy and art in all its forms (architecture, calligraphy, illumination, stories and poetry) highlights the intellectual and aesthetic contributions religion has brought to civilization. In this area, the parallel with recent Moroccan textbooks is particularly instructive: starting from societies with dissimilar histories, the desire to present religion in context and in all its dimensions, not only its sacred element, is causing textbooks to become increasingly similar in their choice and treatment of sources.

Lastly, it is in the area of modern and contemporary history that the differences are accentuated. European textbooks jump abruptly from the Middle Ages to the period of colonization, where European history unfolded continuously, involving just as many struggles for basic rights as wars and revolutions, just as many economic changes as changes in customs and attitudes. The Arab and Muslim side, on the other hand, appears as a story in instalments, marked by long dark periods, where there was less contact with the West. This creates difficulties in understanding Arab and Muslim societies. Religion is seen as an obstacle to achieving democracy, equal status for women, respect for the rights of religious minorities and freedom of artistic creation or scientific invention. The stereotypes used here more or less explicitly call for a North/South debate, particularly in terms of the role of intellectuals, artists and popular opposition movements. Arab and Muslim societies appear to be implicitly homogenous and unmoving, not conducive to societal evolution.

(c) The importance attributed to foreign sources

European countries give a prominent place to international law and European conventions. This double legal basis obviously interests countries to a lesser extent which history does not relate to them. However, a change occurs notably thanks to the Euro-Arab Dialogue initiative. Thus, openness is reflected through the consideration of other cultural areas with recognition of international sources which generated them. Furthermore, the evolution of a more self-critical Europe works in favor of a reciprocal movement and the development of international law, global or regional is now mentioned in most textbooks.

Relations with other cultures are enriched by more diverse subject-specific learning thanks to the teaching of foreign languages, access to open-resource centres on foreign cultures, and exchanges and internships abroad. The representatives of Arab countries regret that the Arabic language, (seen as difficult and spoken relatively little internationally outside the Arab and Muslim world) is not more present in Europe, whilst English and French, made more attractive by their international spread, their

economic use and their media influence, are widely taught south of the Mediterranean. Moreover, many European countries have top universities and research centres dedicated to Arabic language and civilizations. Even if the need to integrate the principal results of scientific research into textbooks is not yet clear, the fact remains that increasing access to the Arab and Muslim world through documents, press articles, websites, television programmes, museums and exhibitions encourages students' curiosity and allows access to dedicated spaces. Take, for example, in France, the Louvre's permanent department of Islamic Arts, the exhibitions and activities of the Arab World Institute in Paris, numerous calligraphy, weaving and illumination workshops and the documentation and information centres attached to every educational establishment. The attention given to international exchanges and mutual contributions is supported by considerable museum, documentary, artistic and scientific resources.

(d) A certain critical distance

In terms of the role of "self-criticism", an outside perspective on one's own history, certain differences can be observed between school textbooks. French textbooks, for example, look at slavery and colonization from the viewpoint of the unacceptable infringement of fundamental human rights and the plundering of goods, presenting sources from formerly colonized countries as well as abolitionist and anti-colonialist texts, speeches and posters – the figure of Abd-el-Kader appears in all textbooks, as well as organizations such as the National Liberation Front (FLN) and the Algerian National movement (MNA), presented with their doctrine and main leaders. It is not a matter of repeating a sanctimonious lesson condemning the acts of violence which have punctuated our history, but also explaining the thinking and mechanisms at work. Texts by authors such as Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire or Léopold Sédar Senghor are prominent in all French textbooks alongside those of Abbé Grégoire and Condorcet. The fact that school textbooks no longer accept a discourse of self-justification or the glorification of national history is now a trend which the comparative study, while allowing for an analysis of the differences, clearly reflects.

2. Growing convergence

A convergence can be seen between all European textbooks and, it seems, in textbooks produced in Arab countries, notably Morocco. There have been distinct changes over

the last decade, in both lesson content and teaching methods and resources, as well as the concept of teaching in relation to citizenship education.

(a) Successive reforms

The vast majority of the countries involved in the comparative study have seen numerous reforms to their education systems since the turn of the century. The revision of textbooks in light of these reforms has been the object of commissions, consultations and trials in all the countries. These reforms are focused on a move away from national history, which was formerly too ethnocentric and idealized (presented in the form of a national story). Nowadays, more weight has been given to exchanges with other countries and to their influence. Mutual contributions between different cultural areas are more generally developed, with unilateral influences being replaced by a multilateral perspective in the fields of economics, commerce, political relations, art and culture.

The Moroccan contribution highlights this change: “discourse on civilization, which was exclusively dedicated to the influences of Muslim civilization on the Christian West, seems these days to want to respond to the author of “The Clash of Civilizations” (Samuel Huntington) by developing the idea of a “dialogue of civilizations””. These remarks coincide with the evolution of history teaching in many European countries, eager to give both a richer and more precise representation of the Southern countries.

(b) The end of event-based history

Textbooks on both sides of the Mediterranean have moved away from history teaching focused solely on major events, power struggles, wars and heroic characters or leading politicians. They now include economic, social and cultural aspects; in other words, they provide a history of the people. Textbook presentation is in itself significant, comparing numerous artistic and literary documents or describing daily life with illustrations, alternating factual information with demographic and economic statistics.

The work and recommendations of UNESCO seem to have had a positive influence in this respect. High-quality documents have been produced by UNESCO and by the Council of Europe on education for democratic citizenship (the adjective “democratic” was added at the request of the countries of Eastern Europe in order to differentiate from the civic education of the communist period) and on education for cultural diversity. Particular attention was paid to the wealth of countries’ heritage. There

is also greater balance in the representation of men and women, the presence of minorities and the consideration of a plurality of world views, beliefs and lifestyles. It is as if the classic logic of a dichotomy between the centre and the periphery has given way to a more complex world and the accelerated circulation of people and ideas. So, all school textbooks cite international migrations as one of the major occurrences of the last 30 years, but also of history in the longer term.

The reports of National Commissions include a great number of initiatives which constitute a wealth of knowledge and experience. However, the desire to study other cultures and the use of new sources and a greater number of references cannot completely erase the stereotypes, lack of understanding and innuendo. With the “best will in the world”, derogatory images and condescending or paternalistic remarks can slip through in an expression or an illustration. The same type of reference used in different textbooks can be presented in such a way that its interpretation is modified to the point of being reversed. We must therefore compare the use which is made of the information contained in these textbooks, as stereotypes are often ambivalent in the way they are presented, displayed or met with “eloquent” silence.

3. The persistence and ambivalence of stereotypes

Relations with other cultures are often marked by prejudice. When representations refer to periods during which exchanges or conflicts were occurring, superimposed images, far from erasing stereotypes, often reinforce them. The Other is identified through representations which ignore any contradictions and nuances. The history of the complex relations taking place over centuries between Europe and the Arab and Muslim world is smoke and mirrors reflecting images which influence understanding and interpretations. The example of the Crusades in all textbooks is, as we have seen, one example of this.

Textbooks, necessarily succinct and constrained by teaching choices, are not exempt from sweeping generalizations about civilizations or peoples. That is, incidentally, one of the ways in which students commit to memory political, economic or cultural events in an unfamiliar world with which they cannot easily identify. Moreover, the public authorities in the States concerned, the economic powers and the people themselves often willingly refer to stereotypes to mark out their differences, to express their characteristics and even their commercial or touristic attractiveness, to sell products

or to identify themselves as members of a community with origins and a sense of belonging, as unifying concepts.

Many European critics are quick to judge school textbook illustrations, seeing them as simplistic or archaic, while they bear a singular resemblance to the posters, films and photographs which fire the imagination. The very same images are used to attract tourists and investors South of the Mediterranean. Is it wrong that Islam is always represented by a mosque, crowds in prayer facing Mecca, the Kaaba and an illuminated Quran? The debate as to the representations of the self and of the Other is still ongoing.

Western images of the East cannot be erased that easily. For that matter, clichés can portray a part of reality, such as camels and oil wells in the desert, or crowds in which students recognize men wearing djellabas or keffiyehs or women wearing the hijab as signifying the Arab and Muslim world. A photograph of Tahrir Square appeared in many Western newspapers in early February 2011, showing a scene which might have come from another era in the same place, that of camels charging at protesters in the Egyptian capital's emblematic square. Some things remain the same in the midst of great changes. The essential question is perhaps one of respect for diversity of expressions, forms and productions to avoid entrenching in people's minds that which would be seen as archaic, with fundamental differences creating a barrier between "us" and "them".

The comparative analysis of school textbooks has shown a sudden marked change in the education of younger generations through a view of history which is more complex, international and multidimensional than that of some 20 years ago in certain countries. A collective reflection, regardless of the position taken by the different countries, has allowed them to go beyond the didactics and technical and formal aspects of history teaching. It has enabled an open process of critical and sufficiently coherent reading of textbooks in order to subsequently fill in a comparative analysis table.

Progress has been observed in terms of fundamental questions such as the content of textbooks in relation to official programmes and the impact on their content of the recent acceleration of reforms. Significant examples have shed light on these questions: the importance of the issue of access to modernity in the proposed chronology, the place of religion in the history of the Arab and Muslim world, the "forgotten" periods when relations between East and West were less frequent, evolution in choosing which key events and illustrative documents to include, privileged

links to a particular geographic area depending on previous bilateral relations, but also the minimal presence of women in the teaching of history.

Progress has also been highlighted in terms of methods used, the analysis and citing of sources, organizing historical periods into separate chapters, the place given to ruptures or continuities, the recognition of the recent competition between media culture and the culture taught in schools, the role of the internet and the discrepancy between what students see with regard to classwork, and the need to work on stereotypes to avoid misunderstandings and misconceptions.

The comparisons have given food for thought on the strategic issues of education systems such as textbooks as a cultural product in education policy and (in European countries) competition among publishers. But they have also shown a need to help students take a scientific approach to history, an intercultural approach which also takes into account the memories – and the burden of guilt – which are imprinted in people's minds. In this way, the comparative approach has encouraged reflection on the transfer of knowledge and values to generations already belonging to the globalized world.

Participants in the Euro-Arab study raised some fundamental questions: which elements of history should we include in curricula and textbooks? Do they make sense to today's young people? What distance do academic authorities maintain with regard to their national history? How well equipped are teachers in relation to the history of civilizations far outside their frame of reference? What consequences does this have on teacher training? What should be prioritized: combating stereotypes, diversity in methods and content, social history, the history of mentalities, the history of events? How should the religious question be approached in a way that respects minorities and the diversity of beliefs?

Certain paradigm changes still need to be considered in terms of education for democratic citizenship. This requires, in effect, that we all agree to see ourselves through the eyes of others and to discuss fundamental values. After the comparative study on school textbooks in the framework of the Euro-Arab dialogue, it was then time to draw up recommendations to go beyond a mere description and analysis of the current situation.

4 ■ RECOMMENDATIONS

The comparative study of school textbooks in the framework of the Euro-Arab dialogue has explored trends in education policies in relation to goals, educational content and teaching methods. This, however, did not cover the issue of how they were received by young people. To put together a set of methods and tools to promote education for democratic citizenship, the obstacles to it first had to be removed and favourable conditions had to be created to foster its implementation.

1. Lifting obstacles to citizenship education

(a) An uncomfortable relationship with history

First, young people's difficult relationship with citizenship in European countries appears to relate mainly to a guilt-filled relationship with the past. The *Connect* project on "European Citizenship" in 2000-2002, involving secondary-school students in four European countries (France, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal), had already drawn attention to a point which will be emphasized in future studies: young people's lack of interest in a collective history which they saw as too great a burden (colonization, world wars, the Holocaust). When young people were surveyed by that project, they were asked to name the events which had had the greatest impact on European history and the historical figure who had done the same. Some 83% to 87% of the teenagers cited the Second World War and the Holocaust, and the same numbers mentioned Hitler! Europe is associated with a history of wars and suffering leading to successive periods of repentance. On the other hand, questions which enabled the young people to think of Europe through fiction, such as "If you were going to write a novel, a film or a video, what place and what character would you choose?", revealed very different views. People and places they mentioned included the Ancient Agora at Athens, Erasmus, the voyages of Marco Polo, Leonardo da Vinci, Darwin, General de Gaulle and his Appeal of 18 June, Churchill, and the fall of the Berlin Wall; a creative, inventive and free Europe. To emphasize guilt rather than proposing projects is to elicit a feeling of inevitability among some young people. The economic crisis and the "tyranny of the market" have accentuated this tendency among those who feel excluded from society.

Second, the idea that citizenship enables all people to partake in a common destiny regardless of their origin or identity is not universally shared. Essentialism in relation to identity often dominates. Nonetheless, when a teacher cites witnesses

who “made history”, such as former resistance fighters or political refugees, or shows a documentary film or takes pupils to a historical site, he or she captures their attention and makes them think. Witnessing history brings it to life and makes it believable; it draws attention to people’s commitment to protecting liberties and reveals the chronological order of events. Nowadays, the task of the teacher is all the more difficult because the notion that ethnic and religious identities are “natural” is increasingly influential. Antagonistic memories and identity-based demands are incompatible with the very idea of peaceful coexistence; indoctrination by radical, sectarian or fundamentalist movements give an illusion of recovered dignity.

Such issues currently exist also for young people in the Arab countries, but the disturbances caused by the “revolutions” and wars which have destabilized North Africa and the Middle East have led to contradictory relationships with history and citizenship. From activism to feelings of powerlessness, from involvement to the desire to move to another country, young people look for ways to escape from unwanted inherited situations.

(b) Victimization and rebellion

The teachers, the educators, can testify to it: young people’s relationships with the law and the authorities have worsened. The law is seen as reflecting the dominance of arbitrary and often unjust authority, and this leads to attempts to infringe it or to negotiate regarding its application. The legitimacy of institutions declines, as does that of “academic” history, seen as “official”. It is not easy for people to believe in democracy when they are suffering discrimination and in a vulnerable social situation, when the reality of violence contradicts legal principles, but feelings of victimization are a major obstacle to education and citizenship. Any event, any remark is interpreted in terms of domination and injustice or even humiliation.¹ To feel victimized removes individual responsibility and justifies reparation, something owed, a debt in relation to society. As the sociologist Erving Goffman puts it (particularly in relation to African-Americans), identification with the role of victim extends to laying “claim to the stigma” in order to exist. By openly bearing the status of the dominated, exploited and excluded party, one reflects guilt back onto the dominant side and rejects the “Other’s history”.

1 See Jacqueline Costa-Lascoux, *L’humiliation. Les jeunes dans la crise politique (Humiliation. Young people in political crisis)*. L’Atelier, Paris, 2011.

What kind of citizenship education, then, can be applied in such conditions, and can it be constructed on the basis of international solidarity?

2. Building conceptual and methodological tools

While students may show keen interest in discussions of liberties, justice or equality, they appear to be unaware of the conceptual and methodological tools about which they have, in theory, been taught at school, such as critical and comparative thinking and contextual perspective, which were intended to help them understand change and the winning of rights. In truth, they are often closer to stereotypes than to reasoned argument.

When parental and social functions lose their legitimacy, when representation is not a matter of competence but of “look”, when popular perceptions dominate, democracy becomes meaningless and history is obscured by the present moment. Welcoming young people whose family cultures are, for various reasons, far from the educational culture and the values being taught requires a pedagogical approach which is truly democratic and citizenship-oriented. Denial of the cultural dimension of inequalities leads students towards behaviour patterns of disconnection and rejection, particularly in wealthy countries where the right to education is taken to mean “the duty to attend school”. There is sometimes a huge gap between what teachers say and what students hear. Adults are discovering the extent to which adolescents are retreating into their peer groups. They have their own words, images, codes and social networks. “It is as if we had not watched the same film,” said a teacher who was covering the colonization of Algeria on the basis of a British film shot in the Aurès region; his students’ comments struck him as surreal.

Teacher-student relations should not ignore the anthropological dimension of culture. Critical discussion with students regarding stereotypes and the vocabulary they use is an opportunity to measure their receptiveness to their lessons, the shifts in meaning which sometimes occur and, sometimes, the forms of opposition they lead to. On the basis of their representations, it is not merely a matter of “being within their reach” but also of ensuring that they get equipped with these knowledges. Students must also be encouraged to consider the processes taking place beyond the area of factual events. And when teachers take account of inclusive education methods, their closeness to their students is a matter of sharing, not familiarity. When they seek to

develop intercultural competences, work on stereotypes becomes less abstract and more operational.

New goals can be selected on this basis. Beyond the comparative study of school textbooks, their reception by students themselves needs to be understood and teaching methods to complement formal education need to be considered.

(a) Cultural dimension of democracy

An ethics of responsibility is involved in citizenship education. To prevent tensions, education mobilizes a cultural heritage and a body of rules, but it also teaches procedures of dialogue and mediation.² The very idea of a progressive construction of democracy, however, is foreign to many of our contemporaries. Schools tend to be peremptory rather than engaging in debate. In an era where interactive media and social networks play a vital part, students deride the academic cult of written texts. When knowledge is presented from a position of authority, the message is rejected.

Adolescents' growing distrust of institutions is worrisome. At the same time, young people have a marked interest in community activities and collective projects in favour of solidarity or against discrimination. Education has suffered from the idea, often widespread among teachers, that the rules of democracy were set in stone, whereas much remains to be built or rebuilt. How many adolescents confuse democracy with the welfare state which provides benefits and services, or with the consumer society?

(b) Distinction between identity and citizenship

The human person is construed in a dichotomy between identity and citizenship, like the bust of Janus, the two faces of which constitute the person. These two aspects are complementary. The former is a matter of heritage, filiation, blood relationship, community, native soil or ancestral land, lineage and *ethnos*; the latter is a matter of social contract, will, choice, solidarity, territory, suffrage and *demos*. These two concepts might be further described by showing how they differ and relate to each other in the interplay of memory and history. Many adolescents are locked into their

2 The Act of 15 March 2004 prohibiting the open wearing (in order to display, pressure or threaten) of religious tokens in French schools led to a discussion which is required before any decision is taken in relation to the student concerned; the student may be assisted by the parents, accompanied by a lawyer. Thousands of "dialogue procedures" have led to negotiated agreements, reducing the numbers of litigious cases to a few dozen out of 11 million students.

peer groups, where resemblance is a form of equality and isomorphism is stronger than isonomy.

It is regrettable that political culture, particularly in relation to the history of ideas, is so seldom present in teaching and that the fundamental rights of the human person are taught in such an abstract fashion. The weakness of the history of ideas and science is equally flagrant. Similarly, it is not enough to give a few hours of classes on religions when so little time is spent on considering how beliefs relate to politics, family life, freedom of conscience and scientific knowledge.

Democratic pluralism requires a plurality of sources and encourages confrontation of world views and of the answers offered by various ways of thinking. Thus, it demonstrates the unifying nature of political links because it connects diversity of expression to fundamental principles. Artistic works, scientific inventions and intellectual products have a greater impact on students. By seeking to apply subject-based teaching, schools have minimized the history of ideas, of spirituality and of the arts. "Cold Science" has moved students away from "Fun Science", which would have given them a taste for learning. If students are not shown history with its lines of force, advances and contradictions, as was the case with the twentieth-century Franco-German history book, how can students be expected to show interest? Alexis de Tocqueville and Lamartine had shown how confidence in democracy penetrates individual relationships; how it makes citizens likely to give each other credit, to anticipate the fulfilment of obligations on the basis of contracts entered into. Why should teachers be so shy to teach the values contained in major historical texts?

(c) Shared heritage

The rejection of history actually hides an "us and them" viewpoint. It is often on the basis of a shared good, a shared heritage, that it becomes possible to break free of closed identities. The evolution of school history books reflects both a desire to be open to the world and to value mutual borrowings among cultures which are apparently far apart. Thus, the ways in which the history of the Arab and Muslim world is portrayed, even though it is not free of gaps and stereotypes, emphasizes the intensity of relations among the peoples of the Mediterranean. Comparative research under the aegis of UNESCO in the framework of the Euro-Arab dialogue provides a remarkable example of the interest shown by students of many different origins in an approach to history teaching in which peoples are described with their diversity and complementarity.

3. Proposing long-term operational measures

Citizenship education requires working for the long haul and in several contexts: in the school environment, corresponding to formal education and curriculum-related activities outside the school, in non formal-education;out-of-school educational activities, and in informal education. To complement this citizenship education project for students, a training programme must be designed for teachers and educators. Lastly, the means for a broader mobilization can be considered, to promote involvement by young people and adults in innovative, democratic forms of participation.

(a) Formal education

Formal education is what States and teachers think of first in the context of successive reforms of the education system. With a view to the development of democratic citizenship and the acquisition of intercultural competences, a whole series of measures can be proposed:

- ◆ **making the teaching of democratic citizenship universal in educational curricula.** Already present in many countries, this subject benefits from a multidisciplinary approach and cross-cutting themes. It uses a variety of teaching tools, including books, images, the Internet and various forms of expression on the part of students to encourage them to become more independent and acquire a taste for discussion in meetings with other people. It is primarily based on history, which can measure changes and revitalize dogmatic thinking;
- ◆ **defining a frame of reference for cross-cutting and intercultural competences** to discover connections between different data, knowledge and interpretations and with learning processes which are open to exchanges;
- ◆ **revision of textbooks, particularly history books, to unmask stereotypes, fill gaps and reveal unspoken bias,** to integrate a more open world view, permit a confrontation of views among countries which have shared experiences, and study imported ideas, exchanges, mutual inspirations and the movement of people, ideas and goods;
- ◆ **promoting sensitivity to the world's religious and cultural diversity** to reveal its wealth and encourage more tolerant attitudes, invite young people to express their personal convictions and prevent brainwashing, resulting from ignorance, by totalitarian or sectarian movements;

- ◆ **valuing intellectual and artistic input from various trends in thinking**, showing both their originality and what they have in common;
- ◆ **expanding the teaching of foreign languages**, encouraging greater attention to the languages which are most widespread in the countries of the South, such as Arabic, and those of migrant population groups in Europe;
- ◆ **transferring the benefits of research into school curricula and activities**, promoting access to data available from resource centres, particularly on the civilizations of foreign countries, and access to meetings, exhibitions, films, videos and sites;
- ◆ **media education** for critical and pluralist study of information and for production by the students themselves of printed or audiovisual school news bulletins and websites. All the resources of information and communication technologies for learning contribute to the education of future citizens who are aware of world events;
- ◆ **creation of an observatory of policy for education, curricula and textbooks** with a triple objective:
 - (1) to survey the main changes and innovations in the various countries of the Euro-Arab dialogue on approaches to relations with other countries;
 - (2) to promote comparative studies on shared themes chosen by the partners in relation both to the content of teaching and to teaching methods;
 - (3) to survey good practices favourable to intercultural competences.

(b) Non-formal education, outside the school environment but connected to curricula

Such out-of-school education is a mean of motivating students by showing them how school learning extends into “real life”. It is an approach in which the choice of activities, in connection with school curricula, is open, adapted to the reality of society and respectful of students’ own pace of work. It results in a variety of practical discoveries:

- ◆ **meeting elected officials, civil-society representatives and researchers** (in the framework of public events, “open house” sessions or presentation of tools which make research accessible), such as visits to major democratic institutions, attending meetings of decision-making bodies and participation in the Children’s Parliament. Each of these is preceded by a historical briefing on the place or entity being visited and the ideas to be debated;

- ◆ **discovering the work of artists from the countries of the North and the South**, for an initiation to their respective cultures through meetings, discussions, sharing of certain activities, visits to workshops and creation of homes for artists in schools;
- ◆ **in-depth study of democratic life in schools**, by inviting external personalities for conferences, celebrations and meetings;
- ◆ **dealing with and regulating conflicts in the school environment**, which offer many opportunities to learn to live together, accept the Other, strangers, those who are different;
- ◆ **opening up activities to parents** by encouraging them to be informed and take part in shared activities;
- ◆ **twinning, trips, exchanges and correspondence between schools** particularly through the Internet, which – at least virtually – brings closer the Other and those who are far away;
- ◆ **civil-society commitments “from the local to the global”** with bodies which are friends of UNESCO, for example (clubs, UNESCO Chairs, associated schools...).

(c) Informal education, away from school

- ◆ **using various means of socialization and expression** (radio, television, story or poetry readings, theatre fora, voluntary activities, musical groups, workshops...), creating links to the world of adults in the near or more distant environment;
- ◆ **improving the quality of facilities for young people** for “*a society, a school, with hospitality, personal fulfilment, cultural diversity and solidarity*”, for a kind environment for young people;
- ◆ **intergenerational mentoring** and activities between different generations;
- ◆ **activities to promote boy-girl and social mixing;**
- ◆ **accounts of migratory journeys** in history and currently, between distant countries;
- ◆ **personal accounts and stories from “witnesses to history”** for the embodiment of history in everyday life and with viewpoints expressing different ideas or views;

(d) Training of teachers and head-teachers

- ◆ **creating specific modules** in education for democratic citizenship and intercultural competences;

- ◆ **preparing teachers for the role of regulator and mediator** to prevent conflicts caused by intolerance, counter aggressive racist behaviours and discriminatory attitudes and recognize and avert forms of radicalization;
- ◆ **training teachers for relations with parents** and families so that school culture is not seen as foreign to theirs, to help them to discover other spaces, ways of life, ideas and beliefs which can be discussed;
- ◆ **North-South exchanges and internships** to promote partnerships among professionals and activities on shared themes;
- ◆ **dissemination of good practices** in various forms (written texts, videos, teaching materials, online exchanges ...);
- ◆ **publication of a teachers' guide on Euro-Arab dialogue**, illustrated by examples taken from studies such as the one on textbooks.

Faced with people's disenchantment with politics and the slow pace of social changes, teaching requires intellectual rigour and a sense of ethics which demand that misinterpretations and innuendo should be challenged, collective thinking and critical thinking be cultivated, and efforts be made to discover what people have in common beyond cultural differences. More than ever, school is destined to become a place of democratic citizenship and hospitality to foster intercultural competences, by exploring the history of ideas, science and the arts, beyond demographic, economic or institutional information. Education for democratic citizenship is the way to rediscover the desire to learn and the pleasure of doing so.

National contributions to the study of textbooks in the framework of the Euro-Arab dialogue have made it possible, from the starting-point of varying traditions, for us to look at our own self-image, our image of the Other and the image the Other has of us. These converging views have freed the speech and resolved many misunderstandings. This approach can lead to an alternative view on history teaching and construct a new humanism.

ANNEXES

1. Joint methodology

2. Recommendations of the Rabat Conference :
Learning to Live together : what kind of education
for what kind of citizenship ?”, 14 March 2003.

Annex 1: Joint methodology

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TEXTBOOKS IN THE EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE

Jointly coordinated by the French and Moroccan National Commissions for UNESCO

METHODOLOGY

This document should under no circumstances be seen as a pre-established programme.

It is a working document aimed at facilitating and advancing the work of the first experts' meeting, when the definitive work programme will be drawn up. The following pages will therefore discuss a number of points along with some areas on which discussions could be based. These decisions should be made collegially by the group of experts in order to launch the study; each expert will be tasked with researching the textbooks of his or her own country.

I. Review of the objectives

1. To strengthen dialogue and improve coexistence
 - promoting the development of teaching content based on knowledge and understanding of European and Arab societies in order to better understand the dialogue between them;
 - promoting the improvement of teacher training in order to create a dialogue through which the students from both areas can build a more favourable image of one another, an open and real view respecting all forms of difference and a spirit of mutual trust and understanding.
2. To help National Commissions for UNESCO, experts and institutions to find ways to work together in areas of research of common interest
3. To contribute to UNESCO's efforts to develop a strategy relating to textbooks, to improve the quality of education for the promotion of peace, human rights, mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue

II. Background

Although sources of knowledge have considerably diversified, textbooks play an important, if not leading, role in education and attitudes. By showing all young people the same content, using the same language, sharing the same values, the same historical, literary, even religious references, textbooks help to maintain cultural traditions, forging a sense of identity, promoting linguistic uniformity and maintaining national cohesion.

The review of textbooks and teaching materials in general has been one of UNESCO's main aims since its creation in 1945; numerous actions were also taken by the Council of Europe, starting in 1949, to encourage understanding internationally or on the basis of initiatives by associations of historians. Since the 1970s, research on the content of school textbooks has also considerably increased in universities.

There is a considerable amount of scientific production but it is very unevenly distributed among countries.

Prior to launching the study, it is therefore appropriate to draw up an inventory of the work already carried out in this field in each of the participating countries, noting the scientific publications drawing on stereotypes in education and focusing especially on those which examine the image or representation of the "foreign" or the "other" in textbooks. This inventory could be carried out by the National Commissions and it is essential that the experts have access to the initial results of this research by their first meeting.

III. Issues and areas of investigation

1. Research on schoolbooks

In many countries, changes in teaching conditions have weakened the links between the educational content proposed and real experience. Moreover, the research can no longer be limited to school books: it involves all the teaching methods which supplement it, compete with it or replace it. The coexistence of school teaching and information from other sources softens the borders of education and makes assessment more difficult; but the diversification of educational tools is not just a consequence of technical changes, it reflects educational evolution. In some cases, textbooks no longer provide students

with judgements but allow them to develop their own opinions based on contradictory discussions and a variety of different analyses and opinions.

This conceptual change focuses simultaneously on the methods, the definition of the field of research and the issues. In the end, what we refer to as research on textbooks does not appear as an academic discipline: it is not the methods but rather the aim which unifies it. It seeks to understand the textbook in its overall context and notably to recontextualize its discourse. The textbook's complexity and the need to consider all the approaches and perspectives used means that research in this field calls on many different disciplines, stemming from very varied issues and research methods. This requires a holistic, even ecosystemic, approach.

It therefore seems theoretically valid to suggest that an analysis of the content of textbooks only makes sense if one takes account of all the contexts in which they are devised, produced and distributed as well as the context in which they are used and "received". However, the aims of the study and the conditions of its implementation are affected by a difficult regional and international situation which must be taken into account.

2. The global education context

The organization of the education system has a strong influence on the existence and nature of educational publications. The following points must be considered:

- Is the organization of the education system centralized or decentralized?
- Is the education system standardized or do several systems coexist? What are their distinctive features (public/private; secular/confessional; etc.). Do they have specific textbooks?
- Do the textbooks have to follow an official curriculum? How are the curricula devised? Are they enacted on a national, regional or local scale? Are there specific textbooks for these levels?
- Is the language of instruction standard? If not, are there different textbooks in each language?
- Is education compulsory? Up to what age and what level? For both sexes?

- Are girls and boys taught separately? Is there a difference in the content taught? Are there specific textbooks for teaching to a particular gender?

Collecting information on all these points seems necessary, if not essential, if only because of the choice of books to be analysed.

3. Production and the publishing market

- Who writes the textbooks? Professional independent authors? Teachers or tutors for whom this is an occasional exercise? Professionals in the education field such as inspectors or expert civil servants ?
- Are textbooks produced by private publishing houses (independent, subsidised etc.)? Is it a hybrid system?
- Are all the textbooks used produced in the same country or are co-produced or foreign textbooks also being used?
- Are there admission, authorization, approval or certification procedures for school publications? If so, how are they used and at what stage in the production and distribution process?
- Are there different textbooks for each subject and school level or does the same work cover various subjects and/or school years?
- Is there only one textbook or is a range of publications available for the same subject and level?
- Who pays for the textbooks?
- Do the textbooks belong to the students or are they lent to them during their time at school?

4. Usage in the classroom

- In cases where there is more than one textbook available, who chooses which one will be used in the classroom? The administrative authorities (national, regional, local authorities? The school principal ? The teachers? (Individual or collective decisions?) What is the procedure?
- Which educational methods and strategies are encouraged by the institution? Are these applied systematically to the textbooks currently in use?

- Do teachers (all of them?) receive initial and/or ongoing professional training? Does this training allow them to put the textbook into perspective to adapt its use to their students' specific needs?
- Are certified courses of information or tools likely to complete or replace the textbooks available to students and teachers? If so, what are they? Do they use them? In what circumstances?
- In what ways are the textbooks used in the classroom? At home? By the teachers? By the students? by parents?

This last complex question cannot be avoided; the textbook, as with any tool, can be properly measured only in the context of its use. Too many "academic" studies analysing textbooks lose much of their validity because they focus solely on the content of the textbook without taking into account its effective implementation in the school environment.

5. The textbook itself

It should first be noted that textbooks are likely to have four functions, the relative weight of which varies considerably depending on the time and place.

- an ideological and cultural function;
- a referential function (teaching programmes are sometimes referred to as the "formal curriculum" and textbooks as the "real curriculum");
- an instrumental function;
- a documentary function.

Analysing a textbook's content should not therefore be restricted to the factual elements it contains. These elements are part of the scientific theory, even if this is not always evident; they relate to a certain view of subject knowledge; their implementation is guided by a certain didactic strategy; and the layout, typography, and "design" relate ever more closely to didactic discourse.

From an operational perspective, certain points should be kept in mind during the data collection stage as well as when interpreting the information.

(a) The status of the textbooks

This is based on the historical evolution of each country involved in the study. Over the last 40 years, the priority in Arab countries has undoubtedly been given to the position and function of their education systems, which has sensitive repercussions on the production and use of textbooks.

(b) The respective roles of text and images in textbooks

In modern times, the text itself is not the only component of the textbook. The development of the documentary function has meant that iconography has also become essential, especially in European countries. The omnipresence of images goes hand in hand with the diversity of their nature (engraving, photography, drawing etc.) and their status and functions.

(c) The approach to reality

For educational reasons, textbooks – especially those for younger students – present a succinct, incomplete, even schematic vision of reality. The internal structure of textbooks should also be analysed, as should that of the index or of any glossaries.

(d) The influence of the author

Authors' intentions are often revealed by what they leave out rather than what they say. In the case of a cross-analysis, close attention should be paid to gaps or "silences", notably when dealing with historical encounters or events where various parties were involved.

(e) References to an idealized society

For varied but consistent reasons, textbooks always present a skewed, sterilized, refined and often idealized view of the society to which they belong; consequently, through a mirror effect, representations of the "other" are also a negative-image representation of the "self".

(f) The importance of language

The language used in textbooks, which often reveals the author's prejudices – such as repetition of certain words or expressions, use of pejorative or ameliorative adjectives, semantic ambiguities (relations between literal and implied meaning) also deserves close attention.

(g) Formal features

Particular attention should also be paid to differences in typography and layout which create a hierarchy of ideas; the same vigilance should be applied to the interrelation between texts, between images or between texts and images which are likely to change the original meaning.

6. The textbooks' reception

The question regarding the expected or elicited reaction of the target audience was for a long time reduced to the potential role of textbooks in the shaping of attitudes. However, recent studies have helped put the "efficiency" of textbooks into perspective, notably in terms of actual school attendance, the use of school books and opportunities for access to other sources of information.

The textbook has a strong symbolic status: the textbook reflects school and, beyond that, society in general. This explains the arguments it causes and the criticisms periodically levelled at it in certain countries.

IV. Application

1. Educational level

It seems suitable, within the framework of a joint study coordinated by the French and Moroccan National Commissions to UNESCO, to focus on those works which reach the largest school population, that of compulsory education, and do not present ideas which are too simplified. Theoretically, therefore, textbooks targeting the end of primary or the beginning of secondary education seem best suited to fulfil these two requirements.

2. Subjects of study

Textbooks for all subjects influence the shaping of attitudes, from science to history and geography. The difference lies in the degree, not the nature.

This being said, it is well known that it is in the field of arts and humanities (history, geography, reading, literature, modern languages textbooks, or even singing) where the greatest number of stereotypes or prejudices implicating different social groups can be found. Providing that the subjects were taught at

the level of study under investigation in all the participating countries, the focus could be placed on history and reading textbooks (particularly anthologies).

3. The question of sampling

There are two possible approaches which the study of textbooks could take: focussing either on production or reception.

In the first instance, the textbooks have equal significance: a work which has not been very successful is equally as important as one which has been widely distributed. In this way the diversity of textbooks can reflect competing scientific "camps", different schools of thought, varied didactic options, particular publishing choices, etc.

In the second instance, when studying the performance of a textbook, the qualitative element becomes more important: with works which have been widely distributed having greater significance than others. From a methodological viewpoint, one can either study all the works concerned and apply weighting during the analysis, or, if there is an abundance of material, focus only on those works which are the most widespread. However, experience has shown that it is often difficult to determine the actual distribution of school textbooks.

4. Methods of analysis

The choice of a common research method and a detailed description of the ways in which information should be collected and treated will be the subject of a lengthy discussion in order to reach a common position, which is essential for the feasibility of comparative studies, but also for their validity. Decisions will be needed on the following:

- a consideration of the different sources of information presented by the textbooks — texts, images -reproductions of documents, diagrams, charts, etc. - but paratextual elements, an aspect which is often overlooked;
- taking into account the specificity of didactic functions — for example, should equal weight be given to information from a literary text and to a question drafted by the author?;
- taking account of information from "alternative" or complementary teaching tools that may be available to teachers or students;

- the relative importance of hermeneutic, qualitative and quantitative analyses. Choices have to be made regarding how the information gathered is to be categorized (qualitative analysis) and quantified (spatial analysis, frequency analysis...), a subject which has inspired many critical writings, particularly among linguists and sociologists.

V. Expected outcomes

Since the study is intended to attract the attention of education managers and teachers in general to the messages of cultural misunderstanding that textbooks may carry, it will endeavour to:

- (1) Assessing the content of textbooks; outlining different approaches relating to teaching methods and pedagogical practices;
- (2) Analysis and study of the type of messages which may lead to lack of comprehension, misunderstandings or prejudices;
- (3) Sharing methodological and factual information which may promote evolution in the content of curricula, textbooks and teacher training;
- (4) Exploiting outcomes of analyses from participating countries to encourage others to conduct similar work.

VI. Proposed timetable

The following tasks may be selected, to be carried out successively or concurrently in some cases; precise deadlines for completion would remain to be set:

1. The state of the art in each country. Results, even if incomplete, should be available for the first experts' meeting;
2. Defining the scope of research (discipline(s), level(s)) and adopting shared methodology and analytical procedures (to be done at the first experts' meeting);
3. Highlighting the various national contexts (see II). If recent data are not available, a field survey should be planned in order to observe local usage;

4. Identifying textbooks and complementary or alternative tools which may fall within the scope of the research; analysis of their content and collection of factual information;
5. Initial interpretation of results in the framework of national contexts. Initial (provisional) drafting phase for each partner and sending each participant's contributions to all participants;
6. Pooling the contributions of the various partners (handing in work); results comparison; upgrading and deepening of subject matter (second experts' meeting);
7. Second (final) drafting phase for all partners;
8. Editing and summary, with a view to producing a trilingual publication (hard-copy and digital versions).

The effective realization of this operation will require, in addition to the two planned meetings (spring 2005 and early 2006), regular and frequent contacts among participants, by means such as e-mail. The operation will conclude with an interregional conference of managers of education systems and the specialized bodies and institutions concerned (UNESCO, Council of Europe, ALECSO and ISESCO).

This document was created jointly by the Moroccan and French National Commissions to UNESCO.

Annex 2:

Recommendations of the Rabat Conference: “Learning to live together: what kind of education for what kind of citizenship?”, 14 March 2003

After thorough discussion of the various topics of the conference “Learning to live together: what kind of education in what kind of citizenship?” organised in Rabat from 10 to 14 March, 2003, the conference participants agreed on the following recommendations:

1. We reaffirm our will to develop and strengthen Euro-Arab dialogue, and it is our wish that various meetings involving UNESCO National Commissions be organised to look further into the topics approached at this meeting.
2. We ask that the co-ordination of all of these projects be entrusted to the “Special Team” set up at the 31st session of the General Conference of UNESCO for the follow-up of Euro-Arab dialogue³This team will have to satisfy itself as to the proper organisation and information flow within the National Commissions concerned, UNESCO, ISESCO, ALECSO and the Council of Europe. It will be responsible for setting up various technical committees and groups of experts in charge of the implementation of such projects as it may adopt.

On the basis of the foregoing:

3. Education systems should be invited to strengthen education in human rights, in particular by integrating it into extra-curricular activities;
4. Emphasis should be given to initial and in-service training for teachers and other personnel involved in education, such as heads of schools or colleges, within the framework of lifelong education in citizenship and human rights;
5. Parents and social actors should be more closely associated with the development and implementation of activities concerning education in citizenship;

3 The special team consists of the Secretaries-General of the UNESCO National Commissions of the following countries: Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, Kuwait, the Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, the Netherlands, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Slovenia, Syria, Turkey, Tunisia and the Ukraine, as well as representatives of ALECSO, UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

6. Emphasis should be given to exchanges of teachers and pupils, on twinning, on joint pilot projects, in particular within the framework of UNESCO's Associated Schools Network;
7. Meetings such as summer schools should be organised between countries of the two regions;
8. A set of comparative studies should be undertaken, from a dual standpoint, on school textbooks in certain countries, bearing on one or two disciplines, with the aim of drawing up an inventory of stereotypes, misunderstandings and "things left unsaid". The study of values should also be taken into account. These studies should be undertaken by institutes of research or independent researchers;
9. The creation of a database of work already undertaken on school textbooks should be considered, as well as the publication of a guide for teachers to enable them to use the results of the comparative studies;
10. A guide to good practices concerning education in citizenship should be compiled;
11. An investigation into various values could be undertaken in the Arab countries , possibly by ALECSO, on the model of that which was carried out by the Council of Europe and which was presented at the conference;
12. It would be appropriate to create a forum of research centres and teaching institutes, aided in particular by better networking. Chairs of European and Arabic languages and cultures could be set up or networked;
13. We propose the idea of launching mutual translations of proverbs, sayings, tales, legends and songs , for the use of teachers and pupils;
14. A glossary of frequently used words with discriminatory or racist connotations could be compiled;
15. The idea was approved of using new information technologies to launch virtual libraries or files of knowledge about countries (for example, Arab countries could draw up files in Arabic on the Central and Eastern European countries , and vice versa);
16. Training in communications should be strengthened in particular by placing emphasis on media education;

17. Audio-visual programmes should be developed to promote education in citizenship and intercultural dialogue, and the creation of a Euro-Arab educational television channel could be envisaged;
18. Emphasis must be placed on mutual training in the languages of the two regions. In particular, an effort must be made in the European region to develop training in the Arabic language and knowledge of Arab culture, both for the younger generations and for adults, as well as training in the lesser-known European languages such as those of Central and Eastern Europe;
19. The countries of the Arab region should exploit the expertise of their centres for teaching Arabic as a foreign language , in order to develop the teaching of Arabic in European countries;
20. The countries of the two regions should attempt to strengthen the role of their arts centres in order to develop intercultural dialogue;
21. Communication and interaction with NGOs for the implementation of projects in both regions should be strengthened, in particular by means of UNESCO clubs;
22. The entire project should benefit from suitable follow-up, in particular by organising regular seminars to enable each country to present its achievements and to evaluate any difficulties encountered and the progress accomplished;
23. Financing must be sought from national organisations and foundations, as well as from international organisations, regional institutions and financing funds concerned by the project;
24. A Draft Resolution relating to promotion of Euro-Arab dialogue should be prepared by the countries concerned, within the framework of the debate on the draft programme and budget at the next General Conference of UNESCO.



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