“Others” in Textbooks: The Case of Greek Sixth Grade’s History Textbook

Dimitris Zachos and Anastasia Michailidou

Education is a basic tool for the empowerment of national identity and for the promotion of certain ideological choices. School provides new generations with the “official knowledge,” which arises after a series of social and political controversies that in many cases lead to a new kind of cultural wars. School history is a major influence on the development of students’ views with respect to convictions about democracy and the way and manner they confront “others,” concerning nationality, sex, sexual orientation and special needs. The aim of this paper is to investigate the new sixth grade’s (pupils, 11-years-old) history “package” (textbook, workbook and teacher’s book) which was introduced during the 2012-2013 school year and was used for teaching in the Greek nation’s territory. The researchers, under the lens of critical pedagogy, using content analysis as a basic tool, investigated the way the “others,” the “different” ones were presented in this didactic package. [Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: http://www.transformativestudies.org ©2014 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]

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INTRODUCTION

After their birth, most nation-states attempt to strengthen the coherence

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among the people living in their territories. Therefore, the states propounded and strengthened the common cultural traits of their citizens, while they created national myths (common origin and historical routes of their ancestors). In order to achieve these goals, states established national symbols, celebrations and memorial rituals. They also imposed a very specific version of the common past.

However, the criteria for the inclusion of individuals or groups in a nation, at the same time, were also the criteria for exclusion. People with obvious and different characteristics of those promoted by the nation, the “others,” were excluded. In fact, this “otherness” was presented like “an enemy,” in order to support and consolidate the national identity of the nations’ citizens.

Historically, education has been a basic means of supporting and stabilizing the national community and promoting dominant ideological perspectives. Specific choices concerning significant issues, such as social inequalities, citizenship, minority groups’ status, women’s rights, religious education etc. were promoted by the overt and the hidden Curriculum. The basic function of the Curriculums is helping define the sum of the knowledge that is to be taught to new generations. The process of collecting and choosing the educational syllabus is not neutral, as the perspective through which a series of issues can be presented is not unique and uncontroversial. As a result, the controversies about the “official knowledge” pull the trigger on deep political, economic and cultural relationships (Apple, 1992, 5), which in many cases, according to Zimmerman (2002) can lead to a kind of “cultural war in public schools.”

It should be noted that, although there is a plethora of sources of knowledge through modern means of technology, particularly the internet, many people still depend on textbooks. This is how the school still remains a basic “ideological apparatus of the state” (Althusser, 1999). The Greek National Narrative supports the perception, according to which, the Greek nation has existed for more than two thousand years. The construction of the Modern Greek identity was completed through the integration of the Byzantine period into the historic trajectory of the nation, which was pursued throughout the 19th century through educational and cultural policies (Triandafyllidou and Veikou, 2002, 194). History textbooks have played a significant role in the preservation of this narrative. That is why there were several “fights” for history textbooks in the last thirty years. Analytically, four history textbooks of compulsory education have been withdrawn since 1984 until now. The most recent withdrawal had to do with the 6th grade’s (pupils at the age of
11) history textbook of Repousi, Adreadou, Poutachidi, Tsiva and Aroni (2006) [from now on Repousi et al., 2006], which was introduced to schools in September 2006. It was confronted by various reactions from political parties, organizations and agencies, and cultural associations, especially by the Church of Greece. The objections and controversies over the textbook of Repousi et al. (2006) could be separated into two categories. First, those which came from nationalistic and conservative posts, according to which the textbook:

a) Was anti-Greek, because it did not present the atrocities which the Greeks underwent due to the Ottoman Empire, while it described briefly the (Greek) revolution of 1821. Special emphasis was placed on the absence of two major national events, the celebration of the 25th of March and on the description of the catastrophe of Smirni.
b) It degraded the role of the church during the (Greek) revolution of 1821.
c) It overemphasized the role of women and other secondary issues, while (at the same time) it degraded the role of the national heroes (Anonymous, 2007; Repousi, 2009, 28).

Second, it was criticized by radical posts, whose main ideas were that, the textbook:

a) Reproduces the belief of an unbreakable and constant continuation of Hellenism (Athanasiadis, 2007).
b) Is characterized by fragmentation and lack of objectivity. As a result, it places a barrier to the understanding of history as a “being” defined by internal causes, external conditions and unfortunate happenings (Bistakis, 2007).
c) Undermines historical consciousness and cultivation of critical thought, as historical narration is absent from its pages (Margaritis, 2007).

As a result of the reactions, the Repousi at al. (2006) textbook was withdrawn before the beginning of the 2007-8 school year, just a year after it was introduced. The “didactic package” of Aktipis et al.² (1989), which was taught before 2006, was delivered again at all Greek schools temporarily. After that, a direct “order”³ to write a new didactic “package” was given to a writing team which consisted of Ioannis Koliopoulos, Iakovos Michailidis, Athanasios Kallaniotis and Charalabos
Minaoglou (Koliopoulos et al., 2012).

Pupil’s books and the workbook of Koliopoulos et al. (2012) are the subject of this paper, which aims to scrutinize the way that the “others” are presented. The interesting part of this research lies on, first, the way the educational policy is formed and on the way this policy is fulfilled through national curriculum and textbooks. Schematically, and as a result of the danger of arbitrariness that is entailed in every categorization, in Greece we are able to distinguish between two basic groups of influence. On one side, there are organizations, agencies and political parties who promote the passing from assimilation to a kind of multicultural political model. Furthermore, there is a series of international commitments and agreements signed by the Greek state, as well as some hints from the European Union which lead towards the same direction. On the other side, there are certain economic and political interests, which challenge this development and press for conservatism and hardening of the assimilation policy. Secondly, this research is a test for the consistency/separation between the progressive rhetoric of the public documents concerning multiculturalism, peaceful living, etc., and on the other hand, for the contents of textbooks and other educational material suggested by the national curriculum (Faas and Ross, 2012, 574).

SCHOOL HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

School textbooks are the transmitters of official knowledge, which (usually) after the state’s decision, is going to be delivered to students. School textbooks operate as devices of knowledge which are formed, organized and brought into service in order to compose the legalized national knowledge (Montgomery, 2005, 427). However, this knowledge is structured and hierarchically organized by such ways (McLaren, 1989, 169) which are determined by the balance of power between political and social groups of interests. As a result, textbooks’ form and content connotes a specific structure of reality (Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991, 3) which arise after compromises and disputes (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992) between social groups and political parties, whose expectations are either included or excluded from legalized national curriculum (Anyon, 1979). The orientation, the direction and the quality of school textbooks also depends largely on the foreign policies of a country (Katsoulakos and Tsantinis, 1994, 16-20). As a result, nation’s enemies appear as demons, especially in cases where there are conflicts between the neighboring countries (Al-Haj, 2005, 47; Davies, 2004). Textbook writers are called upon to collect data, to generate or ignore concepts,
phenomena and facts, as well as to interpret actions and circumstances. It is worth saying that even a textbook’s language has a specific character which exhales power’s breeze and stands upon investigation and criticism (Romanowski, 1996, 171).

School textbooks are the main and the oldest means of teaching. Their role in the educational process is central, as they map the larger part of class activities (Bonidis, 2004, 1; Tsiakalos, 1990, 23-24), as well as the most important part of the activities that takes place out of the school environment (Kapsalis and Charalampous, 2007, 200-204). School textbooks may help teachers to be more effective by organizing and supplementing knowledge given at schools, as they present them with the opportunity to assign high-quality homework and allocate teaching time in a better way (Lockheed, Vail, and Fuller, 1986, 380). Textbooks are also useful for pupils because they provide them with basic materials and help them in learning independently from teachers, especially through supplementing school exercises (Lockheed, Vail, and Fuller, 1986, 380).

In Greece, school textbooks strictly follow the national curriculum which was created by the Pedagogical Institute, while teachers’ books describe in detail, the way the lessons should be conducted (Avdela, 2000, 243-244). Teachers should follow those “prescriptions” and to base their teaching on the textbooks. Pupils who study in compulsive education (age 6 to 15) are given a specific number of textbooks, chosen by the Pedagogical Institute. Furthermore, neither the schools nor the teachers have the potential of choosing between different textbooks.

Geography, but mainly history, is considered as the convictional lessons. School history is considered traditionally as the most important part of the national curriculum, according to which, learners’ national identity will be nurtured (Beck, 1996, 180; Foster, 1999, 251). It is the power of the story of the past to define who we are now and our relationship with others (Siexas, 2000, 21). The development of historic understanding of national and global economic, political and social processes is important for the creation of responsible and active citizens (Parker, 2004). To accomplish this goal, education must stop providing a unilateral approach of crucial social issues. One of these issues, the development of Nationalism in curriculums and textbooks, has become the subject of many research studies worldwide. National curriculum and school textbooks usually present indisputable images of national narrations and rights.

In this context, history textbooks cultivate a sense of national pride which is supported by patriotism with clear nationalistic elements. This chauvinism is supported first, by the presentation of national narrations
and mythologies as incontestable historical data; secondly, by the specific selection of historical facts that textbooks present. Emphasis is given to glorious pages of national history, to victorious battles and cultural achievements. Defeats receive limited space. In addition, there are extensive references to famous liege lords and outstanding patriots. Thirdly, national pride is supported by the way facts and actions are presented. The same acts done by the “enemies” are presented as outrageous, but if they are done by “our people,” they are presented as necessary for the defense of the fatherland, human culture etc. Cultivating this kind of patriotism, results in limiting the field of universal values, such as freedom and solidarity within the border of national community. Such historical narratives have contributed to the development of racist practices and have created conditions that allow the development of specific illustrations and disclosure of others (Stanley, 1998, 41).

A second basic characteristic of this kind of textbook is that they give a sense of national and social consent to young boys and girls. They ignore or give only passing attention to the inequality based on race, sex, disability, and social class (Sleeter and Grant, 1991, 280). The threat against nation’s rights is still a useful tool for the dominant economic and political groups of each state. These elites, by using the real or fictional national risks, were promoting, and still do promote their ideology. Thus, they manage to reach consensus or tolerance of the subordinated populations. Within this framework, the battles for history textbooks could be better understood.4

In summary, textbooks, especially history textbooks, have contributed to the ascent of nationalism. Particularly in conditions of ethnic conflict, as in the case of Greece and its neighboring countries during most of the twentieth century, textbooks, as Marsden (2000) stated, permeated by the glorification of war and the vilification of the ethnic enemies.5 Therefore, global organizations over the past centuries already made efforts to localize and eliminate hate expressions, ethnic stereotyping and prejudice in textbooks.6 The Greek state, as a member of global organizations and unions, has according to Antoniou and Soysal (2005), successfully attempted to consort with the national requirements and discard the negative data about “other” people.

THE NEW HISTORY TEXTBOOK OF 6TH GRADE

The “portfolio” of Koliopoulos et al. (2012) includes the pupil’s book, the correspondent workbook and the teacher’s book. This particular
portfolio was introduced during the 2012-2013 school year and is used in all the schools of the Greek nation’s territory. Its rationale, goals and thematic units, as happened with the previous one (Repousi et al., 2006), was determined by the Cross Thematic Curriculum Framework (CTCF) of 2003. The introduction of CTCF (2003) signified a great change in the field of compulsory education, as it was accompanied by the replacement of all school textbooks for the first and second grades.

According to the CTCF (2003) introductory text (Minister’s Decision, 21072α/Γ2 ΦΕΚ Β 303 2003), “the phenomena of the internationalization of civilization and the globalization of the economy, in combination with the reduction of distances contributes to the creation of a social environment with a plethora of cultural, linguistic, national and socioeconomic characteristics. This is the reason why we should diminish firstly the potential possibility of imposing a single-dimensional cultural model, and secondly the empowerment of xenophobia and racism.” The text itself (ΥΑ 21072α/Γ2 ΦΕΚ Β 303 2003) repeatedly stresses the need for respect and harmonious co-living between people coming from different ethnic environments within the framework of a multicultural society, as well as the growth of a European identity. The Cross Thematic Curriculum Framework for History is based on the same philosophy, and one of its basic aims is the respect for the civilization and tradition of all nations, as well as the willingness for peaceful co-existence, co-operation and mutual understanding between neighboring countries.

**METHODOLOGY**

The research purpose was to explore the way the “others” or “the different ones” are presented in the 6th grade’s (last year of pupils in primary education) history student’s book and workbook (Koliopoulos et al., 2012). The two central research questions are: first, to what extent are the different ethnic, cultural and national groups presented in the 6th grade’s history textbook? How are their activities, habits and special cultural characteristics presented? Secondly, is there an agreement or juxtaposition between the rhetoric about harmonious co-living of different cultural/ethnic groups of the Greek state and the way they are presented in school textbooks?

**Research Method**

The presence of “the others” in the 6th grade’s history textbook was
explored within a framework based on the theoretical tenets that have been mentioned in previous sub-chapters. The method that served the research purposes was content analysis. Content analysis (CA) is a research method developed to offer researchers the opportunity to examine a wide frame of problems, whose communicative content is useful as a basis for inference (Cohen and Manion, 1997, 86). Using CA, one can explore values, opinions, stereotypes and prejudices; hence, it is used widely in social and humanity studies. The popularity of CA has increased within the last few decades in the fields of sociology, psychology, journalism, and communications (Neundorf, 2002). CA’s particular use in education is to explore cases of biased presentation of social and ethnic groups or of ideological propaganda in textbooks. CA is a research method which aims to depict the issues, images and performances of a written, oral or iconic communication (Vamvoukas, 2000, 264). Using CA makes it possible to succeed in the compression of the text into categories, which is nevertheless realized through specific ciphering rules (Berelson, 1952; Krippendorff, 1980; Weber, 1990).

During the development of the method, one major deficiency that was observed was that the analysis was restricted to the obvious parts of the text (Bos and Tarnai, 1999, 662). In other words, the typical CA did not help researchers to bring the latent content into prominence, the one that lies between the lines, such as the laughter during recorded interviews, or the gestures, the grimaces and the stature in photographs and films. In addition, the quantitative CA did not help in exploring the creators’ motives and the recording of the general atmosphere during which the explored material was created. As a result, some researchers have included a qualitative evaluation of the content, for the sake of research itself as well as for the sake of making the quantitative data more credible (Newman, 1997, 273). This tendency resulted in a process of utilizing qualitative research, so that the CA effectiveness could be increased (Mayring, 2000; Mponidis and Chontolidou, 1995). Thus, a qualitative or interpretive version of CA was created, which according to Hsieh and Shannon (2005, 1278) is used in interpreting the text content through its systematic categorization. Indeed, in many cases in which qualitative CA is used where texts are the materials examined by researchers, they do not follow a predetermined protocol of analysis. Instead, through reading and re-reading the text, they attempt to draw the key points and then highlight its imagery and meaning (Perakyla, 2005, 870). Emphasis in interpretation, in the subjective nature of the derived analyses and particularly the influential personality of the encoder, forms the focal points for the critics of qualitative CA (Oleinik, 2011, 860). At
this point, it must be mentioned that as far as the character of qualitative CA is concerned, qualitative CA is not separable from the classic CA, neither is it based exclusively on interpretive tradition. Moreover, although it has been widely used, particularly in nursing studies, the research studies that deal with its application are limited (Elo and Kyngas, 2008).

The authors of this paper are supporters of the approach, according to which research is triggered by the research questions and purposes (Robson, 2002, 354). This is the reason they chose to investigate their material with a kind of CA that was defined by their theoretical interests and by the problems they examined. The analysis that was conducted was qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative analysis focused on the presence or absence of the “others,” as well as the way they (the “others”) were presented. The quantitative analysis was concerned with:

a) The frequency of appearance (how many times “the others” were presented in the material).
b) The direction of the message. For example, the references that promote peaceful attitudes and friendly emotions towards “the others” were considered positive. References that cause aggressiveness, xenophobia and violent emotions were considered negative. Ultimately, the ones that do not convey neither negative nor positive messages or are not positively or negatively evaluated were considered as neutral.
c) How much space they extend?

In summary, to answer the research questions of the present study, a CA instrument was created, which was based on and utilized by the relevant research studies. The 6th grade’s history pupil’s book and the workbook was the unit of analysis (Koliopoulos et al., 2012), while the theme (words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs) was the unit of analysis for recording.

After clarification of the research questions and purposes, and after multiple readings of the 6th grade’s history pupil’s book and the correspondent workbook (Koliopoulos at al., 2012), the “deductive” and “inductive” system of categories and subcategories was formed. Based on relevant research, a ciphering mode was used and the feasibility of its categories was tested so that the necessary modifications could be made. The number (ciphers) ranged from 334 to 123. Later, the filing and classification of the material occurred. The analyses resulted in three different material categories, photographic material, illustrative texts, and
narrative texts. More thoroughly:

**Photographic material**
Who and what is depicted in every photo or draft? In how many of the photos given are there “others”? How are they presented (positively, neutrally, or negatively)?

**Narrative texts**
In how many of the texts of the books under research are “the others” presented? Number of negative references to the ethnically “different” ones? Number of neutral references to the ethnically “different” ones? Number of positive references to “the others”? How are the Greeks and “the others” presented?

**Illustrative texts (sources)**
In how many of the book’s illustrative texts do “the others” appear? Number of negative references to the ethnically “different” ones? Number of neutral references about the ethnically “different” ones? Number of positive references to “the others”? How are the Greeks and “the others” presented?

Then, all the sheets that corresponded to each of the categories and subcategories were studied and described using the practice of paraphrasing in accordance to content structure (Bonidis, 2004). Finally, following the primary structure, the most distinctive references of the researched books within each category and subcategory were located and exhibited.

**THE RESEARCH RESULTS**

**Photographic material**

In the sixth grade’s history pupil’s book (hereinafter PB) (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012) and the correspondent workbook (hereinafter WB), there are 458 images (photos, portraits, sketches). There are about 456 images in the pupil’s book, 309 of which have a caption (i.e., a text that accompanies the images), and 2 images in the workbook, 1 of which has a caption. The “others” are present in 185 of these 458 images (40.39%) and referred to in 142 captions (46.00% total number).
The majority of the “others” presented are the Ottomans, who appear in 56 images (30.27%), while 30 of them have captions. The next majority are the French, who appear in 22 images (11.89%) and are referred to in 24 captions (16.90%). Followed by the Germans who appear in 21 images (11.35%) and 22 captions (15.49%) (For a more detailed account, see Appendix Table 1).

As far as the qualitative characteristics are concerned, some data concerning the Ottomans, the “eternal enemy” can be seen. The writers have chosen images where the Ottomans appear to fight (15 - 26.79%), assault, plunder, destroy, kill (8 - 14.29%) and discriminate against their foreign citizens (5 - 8.93%). Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that Ottoman women are completely absent from the images and that in five (16.67%) of the captions, the Ottomans are called “Turks.”

Narrative texts

To this end, this category includes the writers’ narrative texts, the introductions, the chapter glossaries, the columns called “a look at the past,” the questions at the end of each chapter and the recaps at the end of each unit. Every word, phrase and sentence belongs either to the photographic material and the maps or to the sources.

The pupil’s book consists of 49 chapters, and there are references to the “others” in all of them (for a more detailed account, see Appendix Table 2). However, only three (6.12%) chapters are exclusively devoted to other people and countries. The sum of the topics concerning “other” people that were detected in the narrative texts is 1504. From them, 1293 (85.97) themes are neutral, 135 (8.98%) are negative and 74 (4.92%) are positive. Most of the topics concerning “other” people and countries are related to the Ottomans, 359 (23.87%) from which 298 (83.01%) are neutral, 54 (15.04%) are negative and 7 (1.95%) are positive. The next most frequent group are the French with 135 (8.98%) topics, from which 118 (87.41%) are neutral, 10 (7.41%) are negative and 7 (5.18%) are positive. In the third place are Germans with 105 (6.98%) topics, from which 90 (85.71%) are neutral, 10 (9.52%) are negative and 5 (4.76%) are positive (see Appendix Table 2).

As far as the way the Greek people are presented is concerned, they are not presented in the narrative texts (Koliopoulos, et al., PB and WB, 2012) as victimizers. On the contrary, in many texts within this category, they are presented as victims of discrimination and abuse (tax surcharges, restrictions in religious matters, education, land use, etc.). When facts are described, phrases such as “massacres,” “atrocities,”
“horrific death,” “lootings” and “destructions” are used. For equivalent actions, when the Greeks are the attackers, most of the descriptions included in the researched books are expressed in a neutral way, for example, “Turks soldiers were trapped” and “they killed hundreds of Ottoman soldiers” (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012, 107, 111).

In summary, in the narrative texts of Koliopoulos et al. (PB and WB, 2012), the negative, diluting characterizations, labeling, ethnic stereotyping and prejudice, hate expressions are avoided, while the negative comments about the “others” are limited.

Sources

The writers of the sixth grade’s history didactic portfolio cited 150 sources. Particularly 147 sources are cited in the pupil’s book and 3 in the workbook. From the 147 sources of the pupil’s book, 113 (76.87%) refer to “other” people or countries, while the 3 workbook sources, 2 (66.66%) refer to “others.”

The sum of the themes that were detected in the book’s sources referring to “other” people is 351. From them, 207 (58.97%) are neutral, 118 (33.62%) are negative and 26 are positive (7.41%). Most of the sources of this category refer to the Ottomans (105 - 29.92% of the total about “others”), from which 41 (39.05%) are neutral, 63 (60.00%) are negative and 1 (0.95%) is positive. Then followed the Italians, with 42 (11.96%) themes, from which 20 (47.62%) are neutral, 20 (47.62%) are negative and 2 (4.76%) are positive. In the third place, English people have 23 (6.55% of the total for “others”), from which 20 (86.96%) are neutral, 2 (8.69%) are negative and 1 (4.35%) is positive (for a more detailed account, see Appendix Table 3).

Furthermore, there is a text where the Greeks are presented as victimizers (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012, 96). In most quotes in this category, however, the Greeks are presented as victims of discrimination, desecrations, destructions, lootings, burnings, massacres and genocide. The category of sources contains a specimen of the way textbooks served “nationalism without mercy” (Kohn, 2008). Namely, there are some derogatory characterizations, “terrible, cruel, antichrist and ruthless Turk” (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012, 30).

To sum the quoted sources of the PB and WB, there are more negative topics as compared to the category “narrative texts” concerning the “others.” Furthermore, derogatory, negative characterizations, hate expressions, as well as ethnic labeling, stereotyping and prejudice are not avoided.
Discussion

The book has the title “History of the Modern World” (Koliopoulos et al., PB and WB, 2012), but in the same way as the other Greek history textbooks (Faas, 2011), it primarily chronicles the history of the Modern Greek nation–state. As its writers characteristically mention, the book deals with “our country’s history” (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012, 4). As a result, the narration, as well as the sources and the images, is mainly related to acts and deeds of those groups and individuals included by the writer in the Greek nation. It should be mentioned that in this particular didactic portfolio, as in the previous ones (Milas, 2001, 289-291), an approach, according to which the Greek nation exists and continues over 2000 years is adopted. Thus the nomination or specification “Greek” is used in all the items of the didactic portfolio (pupil’s book, workbook and teacher’s book) of Koliopoulos et al. (2012) and covers every historical period, including those preceded by the creation of the Modern Greek nation-state. In some cases, the Greeks are identified with the “Rums,” i.e., the Christian populations of the Ottoman Empire. The same approach is used in references to the name of the Ottoman Empire and its people. In many cases, they are referred as “Turkey” and “Turks” correspondently. Furthermore, the Ottoman occupation is called the Turkish occupation, the wars between the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire Russian, the Turkey wars, etc. Given the fact that in Greece, school textbooks are written under detailed instructions and supervision, it seems that the Koliopoulos et al. (2012) portfolio confirms the conclusions made by other researchers (e.g. Bonidis, 1995; Sleeter, 2001), according to which ethnocentric views, despite their contestation are still dominant in education.

A second remark which has to be made concerning textbooks focuses on the Greeks who have been living in a specific territory – which the writers called “Greek land” (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012, 4) as well as in various places in the world. In this way, the textbook fails to represent historical events in a way which does not discriminate against the “others.” The later appear only when their acts relate to the Greeks. So, in this textbook, as in the previous ones (Bonidis, 1995, 25), the “others,” with whom the Greeks did not have hostile relations and military adventures, are not mentioned at all. There are not references to “different” ethnic and cultural groups that have been living and acting in this area within the whole period covered by the book. The most
characteristic absence is the one of the Roma groups (Gypsies). Despite more than twenty years of European Union and various Greek state agencies, universities, municipalities, Non-Governmental Organizations and Orthodox church actions related to the problems, activities and needs of the members of Roma groups, the Koliopoulos et al. (2012) didactic portfolio does not include a single reference nor even a source about them. It is unclear how such an absence will strengthen the cultural and linguistic identity of Roma origin pupils within a multicultural society. Furthermore, it is unclear how this will help each person learn to coexist with others, respecting their culture and their language. Is such an approach compatible with the declarations about the need to, “minimize both the potential of a one-dimensional cultural model impose and also the strengthening of xenophobia and racism phenomena” (CTCF, 2003, General Part – Introduction)?

The research results concerning the “others” highlight the supplementing role they play. Only 3 out of 49 chapters of the pupil’s book (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012) are not related to historical facts that took place in Greece, while the “others” appear in less than half the images (40.39%) and captions (46.00% of the correspondent total number). Furthermore, there is a difference between the narrative text and sources. In the first, the negative topics related to the “others,” even if they are twice as many as the positive ones, are limited (8.98%). Contrary, in the portfolio’s sources, the negative topics reach 33.62% of the total, while in the case of the Ottomans, it is almost double, 60.00%. The need to align with the international environment and with the political and social balances can make this treatment more understandable.

CONCLUSIONS

The research results show the extent to which the curriculum focuses on the Greek nation. Furthermore, the “others” who have been living in this area are downplayed or ignored. Their history is treated as a “taboo.” This approach contributes to the cultivation of nationalistic views, because, as Schlesinger, (1991, 21) argued, everything that pupils learn at school will have a significant impact on the way they see the “other” people and their understanding of democracy. When pupils remain with the impression that in “the Greek land” there are no “others,” then it is very likely that they will have difficulty in understanding that “the composition of the Greek society is constantly changing, enriched with individuals and institutions from different linguistic and cultural

Finally, it should be stressed that the case of the Koliopoulos et al. (2012) portfolio is indicative of power relations, resistances and setbacks that determine Greek policy against people of different national and ethnic origin. Just like the history’s portfolio is carefully written, Greek multicultural policy is carefully designed in order to be in line with European norms; however, both seem to make efforts to partially satisfy the “trustee of nation’s rights,” namely parties, politicians, cultural associations and populist journalists.

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Table 1. Number of topics about the "others" in the textbook
Table 2. Number of topics about the “others” in the narrative texts of the textbook
Table 3. Number of topics about the "others" in the images of the textbook
ENDNOTES

1 More about this issue in Repousi (2009, 27-29).
2 The term “didactic package” is used to refer to the pupil’s book, the workbook, the teacher’s book and the glossary all together for one school subject.
3 The order was given through minister's decision 62620/ Γ1/14- 05-2008. The deviation from a competition provoked reactions and protests (Papamattheou, 2008).
4 Zimmerman (2002) stated that in the United States of America, cultural wars for history textbooks, religion in schools and sexual education arose from the beginning of the 20th century.
5 That is one of the reasons why Balkan nation–states see themselves as eternal victims of foreign oppression (Koulouri, 2001). This issue is further elaborated in (Zachos, 2009).
6 For these efforts see Pingel (2010).
7 According to Vamvoukas (2000, 268), CA is a research method, as it refers to material (data) that is produced by the researcher.
8 Where text could be newspaper articles, chapters books, interviews, discussions, as well as sound, iconic materials, etc.
9 Category is a group of words with similar meaning (Weber, 1990, 37). The ciphering frame consists of a group of questions (ciphers), with which the researcher classifies the material and guides the answers to predefined alternative answers (Bauer, 2000, 139). The definition of the categories requires systematic work and is a primary concern of the CA (Duvenger, 1990, 99).
10 Indicatively see pp. 33-34, 87, 91, 95, 104, 225 (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012).
11 The words “destructions,” “massacres” and “lootings” appear once (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012, 91).
12 The example of the Kanaris’ (a Greek National hero) attack during an Ottoman religious celebration is characterized. In its description are phrases such as “they found death,” “It was the revenge of the Greeks for the destruction of Chios a few months earlier” (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012, 103).
13 Indicatively see (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012, 88, 196, 197, 214).
14 The most characteristic is the case of the image of the “Rum” road, which in its caption it is referred as Greek road (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012, 51).
15 Only the presence of the Jews of Greece is mentioned in the pupil’s book (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012, 210), while there is only one topic
about Arvanites, which deals with the language spoken by the Souliotes (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012, 67). For further elaboration of this matter, see Zachos (2009).

16 The issue of the presence of the Greek territory’s Roma groups in school textbooks was presented in [name deleted to maintain the integrity of the review process].

17 These two goals are clearly stated in the current Cross Thematic Curriculum Framework (CTCF, 2003, General Principles, paragraph d).

18 As the authors (Koliopoulos et al., TB, 2012, 13) stated, history teaching, according to the decision of the Council of Europe, along with the promotion of national identity, should exhibit respect for others and neighbors and also attempt to eliminate social and national prejudices.

19 Last year, low concerning the acquisition of Greek citizenship had the same treatment as history’s textbooks: It was withdrawn.

20 It should be mentioned once again that in this didactic package (Koliopoulos et al., PB, 2012) the dilutive characterizations and the negative references about “other” people that existed in many of the previous ones (Achlis, 1983; Bonidis, 1995; Glouris and Kalogianaki, 1996) are generally avoided.