

## **Thinking Comparatively about the Textbook: Oscillating Between the National, the International and the Global**

Eleftherios Klerides  
*University of Cyprus, Cyprus*

### **Abstract**

This article suggests an imagining of textbooks as sites oscillating between three different but interrelated archives: the national, the international, and the global. Any textbook, it is argued, draws on themes and perspectives from these three archives and this hybridization of the textbook produces ambivalence. Unclear and ambivalent messages in the textbook are signs of difficulties in accommodating the competing narratives of community and identity that are constituted in the national, the international, and the global. This specific approach to textbooks is discussed with examples of social studies textbooks from England and Greece, especially history textbooks.

### **Introduction**

In an endeavor to contribute to an understanding of the nature, specific properties and characteristics of the textbook, I have suggested that textbooks may be conceptualized as sites of hybridity and ambivalence (Klerides 2010). A textbook is frequently generated from combinations of diachronic and synchronic themes and perspectives from various social fields (education, politics, history, archeology, etc.), and this hybridization of the textbook produces, in the eyes of its readers, ambivalence. If the textbook is determined from multiple perspectives, the various elements that go into its composition are not always effectively combined and thus many of its messages may be ambiguous and unclear, even contradictory. Different, and often conflicting, motifs and perspectives may coexist uneasily to the point that it may not be possible for readers to determine ‘the’ meaning the textbook authors sought to convey.

Underlying this imagining of the textbook is an assumption that the causes of the hybridity and ambivalence of the textbook are located within the realm of the nation state and have their logic in intra-national pluralism and contestation. Any nation state comprises a multiplicity of institutional and individual actors that interpret reality in different and often competing ways. Sub-national actors strive for their voices to be heard and circulated in society, in part through the medium of the textbook. Their struggles for national supremacy leave traces at the textbook in the form of the co-occurrence of rival themes and perspectives. Textbook writers attempt to reconcile such divergent elements in

their work, but accommodation and compromises are not always successful. Hybridity is, thus, an inherent source of much of the ambivalence that characterizes textbooks.

This article seeks to extend these earlier arguments. It adopts and puts forward a viewpoint that transcends the boundaries of the nation state in order to reach a deeper and more complex understanding of the origins and motivations of hybridity and ambivalence in textbooks. This comparative viewpoint is based on an assumption that, although textbooks are produced and contested nationally, their authors have access to themes and perspectives that are articulated outside the realm of the nation state.

Thus, for example, when textbook writers in Australia, Canada and New Zealand were writing for children in settler-societies in the interwar period, they were promoting an array of local themes, such as the growth of the colony, visions of a better future in the colony and celebrations of the local landscape. At the same time, they were also drawing on wider motifs, such as the story of the British Empire, the idiom of the White Man's Burden, and the belief in the superiority of European civilization (Mangan 1993). Likewise, textbook authors in Europe at the beginning of the twenty-first century continue to be influenced by the history, politics and culture of their respective nations (Crawford and Foster 2008; Nicholls 2006). Since at least the 1980s they have also been employing transnational topics in their work, including universal human rights and peace discourses, the intercultural cult of respect for diversity, and the post-modern axiom of multiperspectivity (Foster and Crawford 2006; Schissler and Soysal 2005).

Based on the assumption that textbooks are shaped by voices from both within and outside the nation state, I argue in this article that any textbook tends to blend together themes and perspectives from the national, the international, and the global. This form of the hybridization of the textbook also accounts for much of its ambivalence as diverse, and often competing, elements are appropriated from the national, the international, and the global, but combined ineffectively.

In a sense, this article seeks to articulate a conceptual approach to the understanding of the textbook, which has been only alluded to in the international literature on textbooks (e.g., Nicholls 2006; Foster and Crawford 2006; Schissler and Soysal 2005; Bonides 2004; Dragonas and Frangoudaki 2001; Mangan 1993; Preiswerk and Perrot 1978). In attempting to formulate a language that would permit us to start theorizing what has been evoked empirically, I will borrow insights and concepts from a range of academic fields, from sociology and cultural studies to educational policy and comparative education, and will use examples from my ongoing research on social studies textbooks in England and Greece.

### **The National, the International and the Global: Archives of Textbook Production**

The article's point of departure is a particular reading of the world and the implications deriving from such reading for the definition of the context in which the making of textbooks is situated. The world does not merely consist of a system of

independent and self-regulatory nation states, but is also a system marked by patterns of political, economic, cultural and educational connectedness between nations, and by cross-national dimensions in national politics, culture, economy and education. This view of the world originates in an emerging body of scholarship, which advocates the need to examine national and local phenomena within their wider regional and global contexts (e.g., Beech 2009; Klerides 2009; Carney 2008; Castells 2000; Dale 2000; Appadurai 1996). A key point of this literature: while the nation state is a powerful agent in shaping communities and identities within its boundaries, inter-national and trans-national dimensions in these processes are also salient.

This understanding of the world opens up novel ways of thinking about the context in which textbooks and their constitution are embedded. In any definition of context, institutional and individual actors and voices within the nation state can no longer be treated as the sole determinants of the forms and meanings of textbooks. It is not simply that national and local forces and their situated history, politics and culture no longer possess the powers to shape textbooks, but rather that textbooks are also shaped by voices that are located beyond the national. From this perspective, the context for textbook production is defined in terms of three domains which are connected in complex ways: the national, the international, and the global. Each domain – the naming of which is borrowed from Cowen (2009) – is a form of social space where certain types of communities and identities are produced and reproduced in certain signifying practices and by certain institutions and individuals. This means that the three domains are also *archives*, to borrow a term from Hall (1992), of themes, propositions, ideas, and images, permitting, and at the same time, restricting what can be written about in a textbook at a particular historical moment. The elements of each archive are constructed according to specific logics, and, writers may or may not draw on them to create their textbooks.

The *national* is the archive of an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991), which is produced, sustained and transformed in and through a set of signifying practices (e.g. maps, historiography, commemorations). The national consists of narratives about ‘us’ and ‘them’, often organized in the form of positive ‘self’ presentation and ‘other’ pejoration, and its scope is to generate links between citizens and a state through the making of national identity and the cultivation of a sense of belonging to a national community. More often than not, the national is attached to a territory and is related to a state and its agencies (e.g., Greece), although it is not always identical with the state (note, for example, the difference between the English nation and the British state).

The *international* is the archive of a multi-national imagined community of shared purpose and interest, which is formed by relationships between nations. It consists of elements that are considered to unify the imagined communities which take part in the making of the international. Its aim is to promote a sense of belongingness to identities that transcends the boundaries of the national. The international may take multiple forms that are often dependent on the geopolitical position of a given national. For example, in the case of Greece, one form of the international involves Greece’s relations with other

Balkan nations and another is its relationship with Europe. In the case of England, one form of the international is constituted by English relations with Scotland and Wales, another by the relations of England with Europe, and another one by English relations with formerly colonized countries.

The *global* is an archive that cuts across state units or national boundaries. It is the archive of transnational networks (Castells 2000) and of transnational flows of images, ideas, terms, and symbols (Appadurai 1996). In different historical moments the global takes on different meaning and shapes. Thus, for example, from the mid-nineteenth until about the mid-twentieth century, the global was the archive of colonial empires, their imperial flows and missionary circuits; since the mid to late twentieth century the global is the archive of globalization and international organizations. The logic of the global is to de-emphasize links of citizens with their respective states and nations and to invite them instead to identify with global imagined communities and identities.

In this paper I argue that the writer(s) of any given textbook will draw on themes and perspectives from the three archives and that the hybridization of the textbook along the national, the international and the global produces ambiguity and ambivalence. A textbook that is created from different and rather antagonistic archives, involves diverse and conflicting elements, which may not be effectively combined in the textbook. Thus, many of its messages may appear ambivalent, even contradictory. The uneasy co-existence of rival elements in the textbook compels the reader of the textbook to move back and forth between the three archives. Oscillations of this sort are manifestations of the difficulties the writer(s) face in negotiating the different versions of community and identity that are projected in and through these archives.

This imagining of the textbook is discussed with examples from textbooks that were in use in English schools during the age of British imperialism and with examples from Greek textbooks of the late twentieth-century. The choice of textbooks from two different places (England, Greece) and two different historical periods (age of imperialism, age of globalization) embeds the possibility of illustrating the diverse array of shapes and meaning that the three archives may acquire in different spaces and times.

### **Examples from Imperial England**

This section employs examples from history textbooks that were written and used in English schools at the age of British imperialism to illustrate the imagining of the textbook as oscillating between the national, the international and the global. It does so with three particular examples: (a) the nature of the British Empire; (b) England's and Britain's relation to Europe; and, (c) the image of European and British colonialism. In all these examples, the discussion seeks to: offer brief sketches of the national, the international, and the global; illustrate how textbooks draw on themes and perspectives from the three archives; show that an effect of intermingling elements from antagonistic archives is that it creates ambivalence; and, finally, identify the difficulties textbook

writers face in accommodating elements that promote different and rather competing images of community and identity.

History textbooks often promote two different views on the nature of the British Empire. On the one hand, they put forward a perspective through which the Empire is seen as an English creation. This perspective is drawn on from the national: the archive of the imagined community of the English nation. More precisely, the reading of the Empire as an invention of the English is appropriated from the English academic historiography of the late nineteenth century, which positioned the English as an imperial people in a double way: they created a land empire, the United Kingdom of Great Britain, and an overseas empire, first in North America and later in the Indian sub-continent, Southeast Asia, Africa and Australasia (Kumar 2003).

Nunn's textbook, *The Growth of the British Commonwealth* (Nunn 1949), serves as an illustration of this tendency. From the very beginning, Nunn informs readers that the intent of her story is to show how the English created an overseas empire:

“The Portuguese, the Spaniards, the French, the Dutch, and the English took possession of different parts of the earth and sometimes quarreled with each other when they wanted the same places. Each nation tried to build up an empire with which it could trade. They sent their own people out to settle in the new lands and to make a New Spain, a New France, Holland, or England. In this book we shall read how our own people fared in the struggle. We shall learn how Englishmen took possession of the uttermost parts of the earth, and made new homes in them; how they disputed with other folk for them; how they gradually built up a far-flung empire.” (pp. 11-12)

On the other hand, Nunn conveys in her textbook the message that the British Empire was a joint project in the creation of which, the Scots and the Welsh had played a prominent role. For instance, the textbook refers to the Fairbridge School in New South Wales (p. 221) and the beautiful harbor of Sydney in New South Wales (p. 229). It also describes in detail the expeditions of David Livingstone, a Scotsman and medical missionary, in Africa (pp. 140-154), as well as the military expedition of the Scottish General John Forbes in Pennsylvania (pp. 80-82). Moreover, the textbook touches on the establishment of the Prince of Wales' Achimota College in the Gold Coast (p. 205), talks about the inclusion of Nova Scotia in the Dominion of Canada in 1867 (p. 208), and illustrates the colonization of Canada with an image of a Scottish Highlander colonist in Manitoba (p. 214).

All these signifiers, favoring an interpretation of the Empire as a British invention, are drawn on from the international. The international is the archive of the imagined community of the British nation, which encompasses Scotland and Wales along with England. The international was invented in the period between the Act of Union of England and Wales with Scotland in 1707 and the accession of Queen Victoria to throne

in 1834 (Colley 2003). Unlike the national that is constituted of elements that set England apart from Scotland and Wales, the international comprises themes and perspectives that unite the three British nations.

The co-articulation of two different views on the Empire is an instance of the hybridization of the textbook. An effect of this hybridity is that it leaves the reader of the textbook ambivalent and puzzled about the nature of the Empire – English or British? This ambivalence seems to reflect the difficulties the textbook editor and authors were faced with in dealing with the overlapping and intersections of the identities of England and Britain, and in clarifying their blurred boundaries. Historically, English identity played a large part in the making of British identity and British identity affected the meaning of English identity, to the point that they are said to be so interfused as to be virtually indistinguishable (Langlands 1999).

History textbooks of the imperial period tend to also articulate ambivalent, even contradictory, relations between England/Britain and continental Europe. While in many occasions textbooks focus on their differences, projecting an image of Europe as an ‘other’ of the English/British ‘self’, in other instances, the English/British ‘self’ is located within the boundaries of Europe through an emphasis on their commonalities. Instances of this form of ambivalence are a direct outcome of mixing together the national and the international.

The national is now the imagined communities of England and Britain, which although they are different in many ways, they also share certain features (Kumar 2003; Langlands 1999). Such a feature is the idiom of England and Britain as distinctive, even superior, compared to continental Europe. Among the first manifestations of this motif is the rhetoric surrounding the English Reformation in the sixteenth century and the late eighteenth-century writings of Edmund Burke on the French Revolution, in which a well-ordered England and Britain were seen as threatened by Continental despotism (Smith 2006). Kumar (2003) points out that the perpetuation of this motif was abetted by geography, England’s and Britain’s island location off the European continent, by warfare and antagonism (e.g. the post-revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, rivalry with France for colonial dominance, the two world wars with Germany), and by England’s and Britain’s peaceful march towards parliamentarism.

English and British exceptionalism and the ‘othering’ of Europe are evident in Oman’s textbook, *England in the Nineteenth Century* (Oman 1899), in the account of Europe’s transition to democracy in modern times. “Ever since 1815 the continent had been under the control of the autocratic monarchs”, Oman writes. The nations of Europe

“lived in dread of a recrudescence of the revolutionary ideas, which had been started by the Jacobins of France, and governed their subjects with a very tight hand, utterly refusing to listen to any petitions for the introduction of representative government or constitutional reforms. This was all the more hard because of the liberal promises which they had made to their peoples, when they were rousing them in 1812-13 to

join the general crusade against Bonaparte and the Continental System. The nations felt that they had been scurvily treated by their rulers, and from Poland to Portugal the whole continent was full of ferment and unrest. There were plots, conspiracies, and agitations in every quarter, some aiming at the overturning of autocratic government and the obtaining of a free constitution, others more national in character, and directed against the ruthless cutting up of ancient states and peoples which had taken place at the Congress of Vienna” (p. 65).

At the same time, Oman draws on the international in his textbook. The international is now Modern Europe, mainly Western Europe, to which England and Britain belong. This archive is dominated by ideas such as secularism, democracy, personal liberty, justice, rationality, science, the rule of law, order, education and social welfare (Davies 1997; Delanty 1995).

In his account of British imperialism in India, Oman (1899) evokes the international via England’s and Britain’s participation in Western European civilization. In particular, after explaining how “we have covered it [India] with railways and canals, broken up millions of acres of jungle, and irrigated hundreds of miles of desert”, and how “we have given equal laws and justice to all”, he stresses that “we are doing our best to teach our subjects self-government, by giving the cities native municipalities and trying to interest our vassal princes in public works, sanitary and educational reform, and *such-like Western ideas*” (pp. 238-239, italics added).

The mixing of the national and the international generates ambivalence making it difficult for the readers of the textbook to determine the position of England and Britain in relation to Europe. Ambivalent moments of this sort in the textbook seem to register an unsuccessful attempt of the writer to play down and perhaps suppress a European dimension in English and British identities. The English and the British were an inseparable part of Modern Europe, but they thought of themselves as different from, even superior over, their European neighbors (Kumar 2003).

History textbooks that were produced and consumed during the imperial age also combine themes and perspectives from the global and the national, and this form of the hybridization of textbooks is an extra source of ambivalence.

The global refers to modern European colonialism. It is a transcultural archive of flows of imperial images, symbols and narratives, which was constituted by, and from the standpoint of, the colonising ‘self’, with the aim of justifying the establishment and perpetuation of empires (Bowden 2009; Stockwell 2008). The global includes elements such as the positive valorization of Europeans as the most civilized race in the world, the denigration of non-white races as backward and as savages in inferior stages of civilization, and, the glorification of empires as a vehicle for material progress, spiritual liberation and religious truth.

The national is now the archive of the imagined community of the subaltern, the oppressed, and the colonized (Ashcroft et al. 2002). The national is shaped by

interpretations of the history, culture and politics of a colonized place from the viewpoint of the colonized, and is marked by resistance, of the colonized to the transnational discourses of the colonizer. A major feature of this archive is a tendency to narrate the colonized 'self' in positive terms and the colonizing 'other' in negative.

A history textbook series written between 1947 and 1949, *The Four Freedoms Histories or The People We Are*, is used to exemplify the intermingling of the global and the national. In this series, the materialization of the global takes a number of forms. It is apparent for instance in what Castle (1996) calls "the story of Empire" (p. 4), a narrative of British political and territorial expansion in the world, in which the British and European 'self' is positioned as benefactors of humanity: "with the help of civilized nations", Volume III (1949) remarks, "the people of Africa could become worthy members of society" (p. 201). Williams and Williams, the textbook series authors, evoke in their history the stereotype of the inferior non-white 'other' in their disparagement of the native populations of Australia and New Zealand as "savages" and "cannibals" (Vol. III, pp. 230-231). They also allude to a hierarchical conception of civilization in which Europeans occupy the pre-eminent place and the rest of the world follows in various degrees of inferiority. This is embedded in their depiction of European nations as civilized and "the negro peoples" as being "in very different stages of development; some were partly civilized, others were savages" (Vol. III, p. 193).

At the same time, the Williams and Williams' textbook series contains traces of the national, which is evident for example in accounts of the British rule in India. The routine listing of all those benefits of European civilization that were given to the Indians is irregularly interrupted by phrases such as "the Indian people had complaints against the British" (Vol. III, p. 218) and "the British connexion was regarded as a burden to India" (Vol. IV, p. 172). Some space is also devoted to narrate the founding of the Congress Party "formed to gain home rule for India" (Vol. IV, p. 172), and, to Mahatma Gandhi (illustrated with his image) who demanded "swaraj", i.e. complete self-government, and who "taught that the proper method to redress injustice was to avoid violence and offer resistance in such a way as to shame or melt the heart of the 'oppressor'" (Vol. IV, p.173). Contradicting in part the glorification of the British Empire as a force for good in India, the textbook series finishes its narration of the British rule with the creation of the Indian state and the "enormous tasks [that] await them in raising the great mass of the people from the state of poverty, ill-health, and ignorance in which they now live" (Vol. IV, p.174).

The appropriation of themes and perspectives from the global and the national creates a further line of ambivalence for readers: Were empires a force for good in the world or a burden that the people of the world had to bear? This ambivalence may be seen as giving expression to the difficulties the writers were facing in trying to reconcile between opposing perspectives on European colonialism. At a deeper level, it seems to register a dilemma: how far do we go in restructuring 'our' identity to incorporate elements of 'theirs'?



## Examples from Late Twentieth-Century Greece

Like the textbooks of imperial England, Greek textbooks written in the 1990s tend to oscillate between the national, the international and the global. This conceptualization of the textbook is illustrated with three examples from the available literature and my ongoing research on history and geography textbooks: (a) the image of Balkan neighbors; (b) Greece's relation to Europe; and, (c) the nature of interaction with the 'other'. In these examples, my aim is to: offer brief sketches of the national, the international and the global; exemplify how textbooks draw on themes and perspectives from the three archives; show that an effect of intermingling elements from antagonistic archives is that it creates ambivalence; and identify the difficulties textbook writers seem to be facing in reconciling elements that promote different and rather competing images of identity.

An ambivalent image of Greece's neighboring peoples in the Balkans is often embedded in Greek textbooks. On the one hand, these textbooks speak of Balkan neighbors in derogatory terms portraying them as an 'other' of the Greek nation. On the other hand, the Balkan 'other' is depicted, either implicitly or explicitly, in a positive manner, as the peoples with whom the 'self' is held to share cultural heritage and political aspirations of peaceful co-existence and cooperation. This ambivalent message is an outcome of mixing the national and the international.

The national is the imagined community of the Greek nation. One of the traditional elements of this archive is a tendency to denigrate Greece's Balkan neighbors, Albania, Bulgaria and, above all, Turkey, and to constitute them as "enemies" (Koliopoulos and Veremis 2004). This enemy-image is a reflection of Greece's historical trajectory in the Balkans, the constant feature of which is conflict with other Balkan nations. Modern Greece emerged in the 1830s out of the Ottoman Empire and this abetted the articulation of the Turks as a people who forced the nation into slavery and hindered its material and spiritual progress (Kitromilides 1994). In the early twentieth century, Greek political claims on Ottoman territories brought Greece into further conflict with Turkey, as well as with Albania and Bulgaria, which were also fighting for Ottoman lands. While cleavages during the two world wars and the logic of the Gold War play a significant part in maintaining antagonism between Greece and its two former communist neighbors, "the danger from the north", disputes over Cyprus and the Aegean Sea perpetuate Turkey's image as "the danger from the east" (Anastasakis et al. 2009).

The 'othering' of Balkan peoples and their belittling were mirrored in textbooks written from the late nineteenth- until the late twentieth-century. The Turks were disparaged in a direct and overt way, as "barbarians", "savages", "aggressors", "uncivilized", "brutal" and "bloodthirsty" (Koulouri, 1988; Millas, 1991). Through derogatory wording, the Albanians and the Bulgarians were also assigned a set of negative attributes being portrayed as "unclean, barbarous and pestilent" (Veremis cited in Anastasakis et al. 2009, p. xi; Achlis 1983, p. 40).

Recent studies (Dragonas and Frangoudaki 2001; Ksochellis et al. 2000a; 2000b)

show that negative qualifications and hostile statements against the Balkan ‘other’ have disappeared from textbooks of the 1990s. On the contrary, a semiotics of positive ‘other’ presentation began to emerge in various forms and degrees of directness. To mention an example, a history textbook, *Istoria Neoteri kai Sigchroni*, makes use of “bereket”, a Turkish word denoting prosperous living conditions, to convey the idea of a harmonious past between Greeks and Turks in Asia Minor. The textbook also promotes an interpretative position through which the Turk is to be seen as “a close friend of ours, like a relative, as our brother” (Sfiroeras 1996, p. 328). A second example comes from a reading textbook also from the mid-1990s. The textbook talks of events that “contribute to the founding of undisturbed peace in the Balkans”. Such events are athletic games with parades where “the Balkan youth was marching in solidarity”, and, folk art exhibitions which “were reflecting the political ties, the many common elements, that unite the Balkan peoples” (cited in Ksochellis et al. 2000b, p. 55).

The eradication of direct and explicit depreciatory predications against the Balkan ‘other’ and the espousal of positive ‘other’ valorization are signs of the colonization of textbooks by the international. The international is the archive of a Balkan community of friendship, co-operation, solidarity, shared heritage and common history, which was made possible by the shifting relations between Balkan nations. Since about the 1980s and particularly following the collapse of the Iron Curtain, Balkan countries sought to normalize their diplomatic relations and to form closer economic and cultural ties (Anastasakis et al. 2009). The aim of Balkan bi- and multi-lateralism is, in the words of the Greek Premier A. Papandreou (1981-89, 1993-96), “to transform the Balkan Peninsula from the powder magazine of Europe into a peninsula of peace” (cited in Bonides 2004, p. 116).

Yet, despite both the omission of overt and direct derogatory references to Balkan neighbors and the appearance of positive representations, the national is still a prevailing interpretative code in textbooks. Negative ‘other’ evaluations are conveyed indirectly to readers and through latent messages that are embedded into the narrative structure of textbooks (Dragonas and Frankoudaki 2001; Constantinidou 2000). Thus, while portraying a picture of the Turk as “a close friend of ours, like a relative, as our brother”, the history textbook of Sfiroeras (1996) insinuates, at the same time, the barbarism of the Turk in its account of the fall of the Byzantine Empire: “Long before the fall of Constantinople, the Byzantine lands of Asia Minor suffered a fierce invasion by the Turks. Prosperous cities were destroyed, the population of the countryside was decimated and the land came to the possession of the conquerors” (p. 103). Similarly, together with the discourse of inter-Balkan friendship and solidarity, the above-mentioned reading textbook reproduces the enemy-image of the Albanian in its account of how Moscho, a Greek woman, “safeguarded Souli, when the Albanians came very close and were about to capture the place”. Her heroic example, the textbook informs the reader, inspired the defenders of Souli who “also attacked and drove away the enemies” (cited in Ksochellis et al. 2000b, p. 54).

The mixing of elements from the national and the international generates

ambivalence leaving the reader of the textbooks oscillating between a negative and a positive image of the Balkan 'other'. Instances of such ambivalence may be seen as manifestations of the difficulties the textbook writers faced when restructuring the image of the Greek nation to include narratives of a Balkan identity.

Often textbooks of the late twentieth century also promote unclear, even contradictory, relations between Greece and Europe, and this form of ambivalence is a direct effect of co-articulating the international and the national.

The international is now the New Europe, the archive of a European imagined community, the Europe of peoples (Cram 2001; Delanty 1995), which emerged in the first post-war years and went through several fundamental transformations since then. Greece became a member of the then European Economic Community in 1981. One of the constitutive elements of the European archive, a discursive device that is used to create the European citizen, is the idiom of cooperation, peaceful coexistence, tolerance, international understanding and respect of other peoples. This idiom, itself one of the many overlapping contours of the European and Balkan archives, functions as a further motivation in justifying the dismantling of negative stereotypes against Balkan neighbors and their positive portrayal in textbooks.

The international is evident in Aktipis et al.'s history textbook, *Sta Neotera Chronia* (Aktipis et al. 1992), especially in the opening and closing sections of the textbook. The textbook is illustrated with two maps (one at the beginning, one at the end), showing the member states of the European Economic Community including Greece (p. 11, p. 306). The Community is depicted in positive terms, as "the great political and economic union of European states" (p. 305), and so does Greece's membership in the union: "Today, our country continues its efforts and historical trajectory, within a united Europe, for a better future." (p. 11).

At the same time, the textbook builds up a reading position through which peoples of Europe are interpreted in negative terms, as the European 'other'. For example, England is said to have repeatedly interfered in the internal affairs of Greece in the nineteenth century creating divisions and conflict amongst the Greeks (p. 187); "the French and the Italians" are accused of changing sides during the Greco-Turkish War in Asia Minor (1919-22) and "began to openly support Kemal" (p. 261); and, "the Germans" are associated with all sorts of atrocities in the Axis occupation of Greece during World War II (1941-44): "they imprisoned, tortured, destroyed, and burned towns and villages" (p. 280).

All these unfriendly and hostile statements are drawn on from the archive of the national. The disparagement of the "Great Powers" of Europe (England, France, Germany, Italy) and accusations of opportunistic action in pursuing their national interests have long been amongst the most powerful defining pillars of the Greek imagined community (Koliopoulos and Veremis 2004).

The blending of the international – solidarity and commonness in scope with Europe – and the national – the 'othering' and negative representation of other peoples of Europe – generates ambivalence. This form of ambivalence makes it almost impossible for the

readers of the textbook to construct for themselves a consistent image about Greece's European partners. It also reflects the difficulties the authors faced in trying to renegotiate the well-established contours of Greek identity and to reconcile it between the meanings of being Greek and being European.

Textbooks produced towards the end of the twentieth century also tend to combine themes and perspectives from the global and the national, and this hybridization is an extra source of ambivalence in textbooks.

The global is the Global Village, the domain of the "network society" (Castells 2000) where various types of "scapes" flow across national boundaries (Appadurai 1996). One constitutive ideaspape of this archive is the ideals of peace, conviviality, mutual respect, and sympathetic understanding of other peoples. This rather humanist, intercultural and universalist kind of rhetoric is also used in the making of the European and Balkan imagined communities, pointing to the complex overlaps, intersections and exchanges between the global, the European and the Balkan. The three archives are in no way one and the same archive, but they certainly have certain common features and characteristics.

The global is evident in textbooks in positive 'other' presentation and in the eradication of explicit and direct negative references to 'others'. It is also manifested in a language of different but equal and inter-dependent nations cooperating to solve shared problems. This language, alluding particularly to the discourse of the League of Nations first and then the United Nations and UNESCO, is illustrated with extracts from *H Gimas*, a geography textbook that was published in 1992. The textbook instructs its readers: "all countries of the world are related to one another. No people can live in isolation from others." The problems of humanity "are shared problems. They can be solved through mutual understanding, collaboration and joint efforts by all peoples" (Christias et al. 1992, p. 50).

At the same time, the textbook draws on the national, especially the motif of the superiority of the Greek national culture and identity. A few pages after it promotes the idea of different but equal and inter-dependent nations, the textbook denies interaction and exchange between peoples, evoking a hierarchical order of national communities in which the Greek 'self' occupies the pre-eminent place and the 'others' follow in various degrees of inferiority. "Over the centuries Cyprus was conquered by many peoples (Persians, Romans, French, Venetians and others) and in 1571 AD by the Turks. The Turkish domination lasted until 1878, when the island was given to the English and became English colony. Cyprus has throughout its long history preserved its Greek character" (Christias et al. 1992, p. 87).

This ambivalent, even contradictory, representation of the nature of interaction between nations, which is an effect of co-articulating the global and the national, registers the difficulties the authors were faced with in incorporating transnational themes and perspectives of a global community into the image of the Greek imagined community. It reflects, in other words, their struggle and difficulties in reconstructing the entrenched

frontiers of Greek identity to include a global dimension.

## Conclusion

This article, based on a certain reading of the world in which textbooks are situated and using examples from textbooks of imperial England and late twentieth-century Greece, seeks to articulate and illustrate a comparative conceptual approach to the understanding of the textbook. It suggests that textbooks may be conceptualized as sites oscillating between the national, the international, and the global. Textbooks are typically generated from a variety of combinations of themes, propositions and perspectives from the three archives and this form of textbook hybridization creates ambiguity and ambivalence. If textbooks are determined by multiple archives, each with competing aims and ideologies, then the various elements that constitute a specific textbook are often unclear, discontinuous, ineffectively combined and even contradictory. In short, different, and often conflicting, themes and perspectives coexist uneasily in social science textbooks, in some cases making it difficult for readers to determine 'the' actual meaning of the text. The uneasy co-existence of rival elements in textbooks compels readers to move back and forth between the three archives. These moments of oscillation and border crossing reflect the struggles and difficulties textbook writers face in negotiating the different versions of community and identity, which are constructed in and through the national, the international, and the global.

The making of a conceptual approach along the lines articulated above is unfinished. I am certain that the proposed comparative framework has its own inconsistencies, ambivalence and possible contradictions. With this in mind, my intention in this article is to identify potential lines of comparative thought about the nature, specific properties and characteristics of the medium of the textbook and, in doing so, open up new debates rather than to promote their closure.

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