

The edge of the *Stone Raft*. From euro-enthusiasm to moderate scepticism in Portuguese History textbooks (2000-2020)*

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to study how issues related to the European Economic Community/European Union (EEC/EU) are presented in Portuguese 9th-grade History textbooks. The methodological approach is mainly qualitative, based on a content analysis of ten textbooks, but some quantitative data was also considered in order to determine the importance given to the EEC/EU construction process and Portugal's integration into it. It can be concluded that although the history textbooks contain some information about the political construction process, the institutions of the EEC/EU and its economic and social policies, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of Portugal's integration into the EU, the information is mainly presented from a linear perspective and does not prioritise the development of students' critical thinking. This study also points to a predominance of content related to national citizenship, the concept of European citizenship being presented in a brief and normative way. Our intention, in the near future, is to expand on this study, with a comparative study between Portugal and Spain, thus encompassing the *stone raft*.

KEYWORDS

Portugal; Contemporary History; Education; Textbooks Analysis; European Union; EU's Perceptions.



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In 1986, the year that both Portugal and Spain joined the European Economic Community (EEC), José Saramago published the novel *A Jangada de Pedra* [*The Stone Raft*].¹ Based on a 17th century saying, the novel imagines a cataclysmic event, when the Iberian Peninsula broke away from the European mainland, becoming a free-floating island, the eponymous *stone raft*, in the Atlantic. This new island wavers between North America, Europe, Africa, and South America. According to Walter Rossa, this allegory attempts to define Iberia as a geographical and cultural being, with a complex history of its own, wandering around the world, and finally being tied to Europe.²

The novel tried to dramatize Portuguese (and Spanish) insecurities about their place in *Europe*, uncertainties that were overcome in the early period of the enlargement of the EEC, after EU, but which heightened with the crisis of sovereign debts. The issue of Portugal's membership of the EEC has been a subject of intense debate in recent years, both in academic circles and in terms of public opinion – a debate centred around concepts such as the country's *divergence* from the EU, moderate scepticism, and even *disillusionment*. According to historian Nuno Severiano Teixeira, the country's process of integration comprised two phases: the first, which took place between 1986 and 2000, was marked “by convergence and euro-enthusiasm”; while the second phase, from the beginning of the 21st century onwards, has been marked by “divergence”, “scepticism” and the need to think “realistically” about the present and the future³. Almost every author who has written on the subject has pointed to the *lost decade* of the 2000s, when Portugal did not grow economically, as well as the following decade, marked by the sovereign debt crisis which led to the intervention of the Troika (that is, the European Central Bank, the European Commission, and the International Monetary Fund), as being responsible for the raised level of doubt. Furthermore, the launch of the Euro currency has been considered decisive for Portugal's economic stagnation, which “*acentuou tanto a sua crise económica interna, como a sua vulnerabilidade financeira externa*” [stressed both its internal economic crisis and its external financial vulnerability]⁴.

Several authors from across the EU have dealt with similar issues regarding the specific case of each country, as well as the timeline of different countries having joined the Union.⁵ On the other hand, the rise of populism as a possible consequence of socio-economic issues has been mentioned in several analyses and was somewhat predicted by Italian History textbooks in recent decades.⁶ In fact, several cross-sectional studies have

1. José SARAMAGO, *A Jangada de Pedra*, Lisboa, Caminho, 1986.

2. Walter ROSSA, “Stone Raft: allegory on the spread of European urbanistics in Early Modern times”, *Joelho. Revista de Cultura Arquitectónica*, 6 (2015), pp. 78-93, https://doi.org/10.14195/1647-8681_6_18.

3. Nuno S. TEIXEIRA, *Portugal e a Integração Europeia, 1974-2015: uma introdução histórica*, in idem and António C. PINTO (orgs.), *A Europeização da Democracia Portuguesa*, Lisboa, Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, 2017, p. 25.

4. Teresa de SOUSA and Carlos GASPAS, *Portugal, a União Europeia e a Crise, Relações Internacionais*, 48 (2015), p. 101.

5. Julian AICHHOLZER, Sylvia KRITZINGER and Carolina PLESCIA, “National identity profiles and support for the European Union”, *European Union Politics*, 22 (2) (2021), pp. 293-315, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116520980068>.

6. Gianni GENTILE, Luigi RONGA and Anna ROSSI, *L'Erodoto. Il Novecento e l'inizio del XXI secolo. Corso di storia per il secondo biennio e il quinto anno*, Brescia, Editrice La Scuola, 2012.

explored the link between national identity and European identity,⁷ while others have analysed how representations of citizenship are expressed in textbooks, concluding that they relate mainly to the issue of mobility and borders⁸. Vice-President of the European Commission Dubravka Šuica went even further back on 25 January 2022, adding that citizens in general and the youngest in particular feel that there are no curricula in schools to teach “more about Europe and European institutions”⁹.

With this in mind, we must ask what the role of formal education has been in regard to these issues. Do curricula and textbooks reflect the European dimension in the teaching of History? Do they already reflect the shift from euro-enthusiasm to moderate scepticism, or even Euroscepticism? How have syllabuses and textbooks dealt with the European issue considering current events in Portugal? Do they refer to the intervention of the Troika?

To answer these questions, we will analyse official documents, as well as two chronological samples of 9th grade History textbooks. History, a particularly sensitive subject in fostering democratic spirit, is a compulsory subject in Portugal up to this grade¹⁰. For most students, the 9th grade is the last occasion during their entire school career when themes related to the EEC/EU are taught. Despite the existence of various types of teaching resources, where the latest generation of technological media is increasingly employed, textbooks continue to be an extremely important teaching tool and one of the most used in everyday education.¹¹ It has been stated that textbooks in fact “also enable students to comprehend and appreciate concepts and values and their significance in everyday life”.¹²



7. Enrique BANÚS, “Educate European identity?”, *Journal of Social Science Education*, 6 (2007), pp. 57-67, and Katalin Eszter MORGAN and Elizabeth HENNING, “Designing a Tool for History Textbook Analysis”, *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum Qualitative Social Research*, 14 (1) (2013), art. 7, pp. 1-21.

8. Filipe PIEDADE, et al., “Learning About the European Union in Times of Crisis: Portuguese Textbooks’ Normative Visions of European Citizenship”, *Journal of Social Education Science*, 17 (2) (2018), pp. 31-40.

9. Dubravka ŠUICA, “The Conference on the Future of Europe: ‘we wanted to listen to citizens’”, Euronews, 25 January 2022, <https://www.euronews.com/2022/01/25/the-conference-on-the-future-of-europe-we-wanted-to-listen-to-citizens>, (accessed: 19-11-2022).

10. The Portuguese education system comprises different levels of education: pre-primary, basic, and upper secondary. Basic and upper secondary levels are universal, compulsory, and free. Basic education last for nine years and is divided into three cycles: the first cycle of four years (expected age of attendance, from 6 to 10 years of age); the second cycle of two years (expected age of attendance, from 10 to 12 years of age); and the third cycle of three years (expected age of attendance, from 12 to 15 years of age). The first and second cycles together correspond to primary education (ISCED 1); the third cycle corresponds to lower secondary education (ISCED 2). Upper secondary education comprises three years of schooling and is currently compulsory for all students aged up to 18.

11. Glória SOLÉ, “A História nos Manuais Escolares do Ensino Primário em Portugal: representações sociais e a construção de identidade(s)”, *Historia y Memoria de la Educación*, 6 (2017), p. 91, <https://doi.org/10.5944/hmc.6.2017.17128>.

12. Ernest KIRA and Godfry BUKAGILE, “Relevance and Quality of Textbooks Used in Primary Education in Tanzania: A Case of Social Studies Textbooks”, *Contemporary Education Dialogue*, 18 (1) (2020), p. 15, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0973184920962702>.

History textbooks and methodological tools of analysis

Textbooks have long been objects of study,¹³ there being many reasons for this. By defining and determining their functions, assessing their impact, the pedagogy they reflect, as well as the ideological and cultural values they convey, we can see that, as stated by Falk Pingel, “they reflect the traditions a society has formed over decades or centuries; they contribute to developing the individual’s self-esteem, but they also mark the borders of each society being studied”¹⁴. As mediators between teaching programmes and the learning provided to the students, textbooks remain a preferential medium for transmitting and acquiring the specific knowledge deemed useful and necessary by society: “in addition to transmitting knowledge, textbooks also seek to anchor the political and social norms of a society. Textbooks convey a global understanding of the history and the rules of society”.¹⁵ For a long time overshadowed by other sources, textbooks have, in recent decades, aroused lively interest among historians. Textbooks represent a privileged resource, because of the richness and the multiplicity of perspectives that they can impel upon the students.¹⁶

According to Marcelo Cigales and Amurabi Oliveira, the scholar George Eckert had a decisive influence on this research field due to his focus on the teaching of “patriotism and national identities through textbooks”.¹⁷ Responding to certain epistemological challenges posed by the end of the Second World War, the author campaigned for a non-nationalistic approach to textbooks. Furthermore, in the words of Eckhardt Fuchs and Steffen Sammler:

Eckert deliberately targeted his efforts at those activities carried out in the post-war period by trade unions, governments, and international organisations [...] a policy Eckert believed would stimulate international understanding and peace.¹⁸

However, as Glória Solé states: “*o estudo da historiografia escolar, através dos manuais escolares [...] possibilita compreender as distintas interpretações historiográficas nacionais e da história universal*” [the analysis of school historiography, through textbooks (...) enables the understanding of different national and universal historiographical interpretations],¹⁹ since textbooks tend to follow not only political,

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13. Sérgio CAMPOS MATOS, “O manual de história como lugar de memória”, *Boletim O Estudo da História*, III series, 7, 8 and 9 (1988-1989), p. 134.

14. Falk PINGEL, *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision* (2 ed.), Paris/Braunschweig, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization | Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, 2010, p. 7.

15. Hanna SCHISLER, “Limitations and Priorities for International Social Studies Textbook Research”, *The International Journal of Social Education*, 4 (1989-1990), p. 81.

16. Alain CHOPPIN, “O historiador e o livro escolar”, *History of Education Journal*, vol. 6 (11) (2002), pp. 5-24.

17. Marcelo CIGALES and Amurabi OLIVEIRA, “Aspectos Metodológicos na Análise de Manuais Escolares: uma perspectiva relacional”, *Revista Brasileira de História da Educação*, 20 (2020), p. 4, <https://doi.org/10.4025/rbhe.v19.2019.e099>.

18. Eckhardt FUCHS and Steffen SAMMLER, *Textbooks between tradition and innovation. A journey through the history of the Georg Eckert Institute*, Braunschweig, Georg Eckert Institute – Leibniz Institute for International Textbook Research, 2016, p. 6.

19. Glória SOLÉ, “A História nos Manuais Escolares do Ensino Primário em Portugal: Representações Sociais e a Construção de Identidades”, *Historia y Memoria de la Educación*, 6 (2017), p. 92, <https://doi.org/10.5944/hme.6.2017.17128>.

economic, and social trends, but also academic research. At this point, we should also keep in mind the delay between academic research and its incorporation into textbooks, something which happens more quickly in the natural sciences than in the humanities. Nevertheless, History textbooks help students “to become more aware of themselves as individuals and as part of different groups, [...] to understand themselves and ‘otherness’, [and to] examine societies throughout time”.²⁰ And, as Rafael Valls Montés points out, textbooks also influence both the individual student’s imagination, as well as collective memory and even cultural stereotypes.²¹

As mentioned before, although History textbooks are becoming increasingly valued as a source for historical, educational, and sociological research, a great debate on methodological aspects of their use persists. For example, Morgan and Henning point out that Pingel “provides a comprehensive list of possible questions and approaches, e.g., quantitative and qualitative, inductive and deductive, including some examples of how History text analysis could be conducted”.²² Pringle also states that researchers should select a sample and then “decide which methods are to be applied”, that is, they need to decide between “a didactic analysis that deals with the methodological approach to the topic and explores the pedagogy behind the text” or “a content analysis that examines the text itself”.²³ He also stresses that “both quantitative and qualitative methods should be used”²⁴ and points out that researchers who are “checking the content coverage of a topic should at least discern between different levels of presentation such as *information vs. explanation* or *depth vs. breadth*”.²⁵ As such, John Herlihy in *The Textbook Controversy: Issues, Aspects and Perspectives* proposes three categories of analysis: expository-descriptive, explanatory, and investigative-argumentative.²⁶

In this study we use a comparative methodology based on a qualitative²⁷ analysis of the contents of the textbooks studied:²⁸ factual accuracy/completeness; updated portrayal; selection/effort (balance)/representativeness of topic; the relation of facts and views/interpretations. Nevertheless, some quantitative methods are also employed, like frequency and space analysis with respect to the personalities mentioned or how much space is allotted to a topic. In addition, we also employ the Herlihy’s categorisation mentioned above.

20. Danielle Renée WAGER, “A Textbook Analysis: A Case Study of Changes in History Textbooks Based on the Revolutionary War”, master these, Grand Valley State University, 2014, p. 11, <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1704&context=theses>, (accessed: 10-12-2022).

21. Rafael VALLS MONTÉS, *Historiografía escolar española: siglos XIX-XXI*, Madrid, UNED Ediciones, 2012, p. 40.

22. Kalalin MORGAN and Elizabeth HENNING, “Designing a Toll for History Textbook Analysis”. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 14 (1), Art. 7 (2013), p. 2.

23. PINGEL, *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research...*, p. 31.

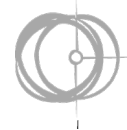
24. *Ibidem*, p. 67.

25. *Ibidem*, p. 70.

26. John G. HERLIHY, *The Textbook controversy: issues, aspects, and perspectives*, Praeger, Westport, 1992.

27. Louis COHEN, Lawrence MANION and Keith MORRISON, *Research Methods in Education*, London, and New York, Routledge/Falmer, 2001.

28. Laurence BARDIN, *L’analyse de contenu*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2013, <https://doi.org/10.3917/puf.bard.2013.01>.



Concerning the two chronological samples of History textbooks examined here, this comprised ten 9th grade History²⁹ textbooks, chosen on the basis of their representativeness in the market: five were in use in the first years of the 21st century (2003/2005), while the other five, published from 2013 onwards, are still in use today with minor changes (2020 sample).³⁰ Additionally, following the same “market approach”, we will also examine some older textbooks in order to glean “first” perceptions about the EEC/EU, i.e., before, and right after Portugal joined (1975-1989).

It is worth mentioning that, in Portugal, the topic of the EEC/EU is taught in the 6th grade and the 9th grade, as well as in the 12th grade for those students who choose a scientific-humanities path in Languages and Humanities or Economics. The curriculum of the 9th grade divides the topic of the EEC/EU into two areas: 1) “The construction of the EEC/EU”; 2) “Portugal’s European Integration”. However, for practical reasons related to the organisation and operationalisation of our analysis, we will divide it into three: 1) The background of the EEC/EU; 2) The European institutions and their social and economic policies; 3) Portuguese integration in the EEC/EU.

Brief considerations on education in Portugal

In the mid-1970s, Portugal underwent a series of political, socio-economic, and cultural changes – the result of the Carnation Revolution of 25 April 1974, which put an end to forty-eight years of dictatorship and the colonial regime. The consolidation of democracy opened up a series of broad perspectives regarding education. Up until that point, formal education involved only four years of compulsory education, with Portugal having one of the highest illiteracy rates in Europe. In the early years of the dictatorial *Estado Novo* regime (1933-1974), emphasis was placed on Primary Education for the general student population, and on the development of Technical and Industrial Education for the wealthier classes. However, in the 1950s and 1960s, the opposite became true: after the impulse of the 1947 reform, which sought to alleviate some of the pressure of the demand on the scarce Secondary Education System, this demand was then partially absorbed by the rapidly developing private education network³¹. Government initiatives of the early 1970s already showed concern in bringing supply closer to demand, within the framework of the educational policy of Marcello Caetano, the successor to the dictator António de Oliveira Salazar. These initiatives included reforms in Lower and Upper Secondary Education, the expansion of the public secondary school network, and the creation of new, decentralised universities (up until then, only Coimbra, Lisbon, and Porto had universities).

29. Although other subjects touch upon EEC/EU’s themes – Economics and Geography, for example, as well as Citizenship and Development – it is History’s role to confer chronological depth to the process, by recalling that European understanding was preceded by two World Wars and a long history of conflicts between the ruling houses of the Modern Age.

30. Cláudia AMARAL, Bárbara ALVES and Tiago TADEU, *Missão: História 9 - 9.º Ano*, Porto, Editora, 2020; Joana CIRNE and Marília HENRIQUES, *Viagem na História 9 - 9.º Ano*, Lisboa, Areal Editores, 2020; Maria Emília DINIZ, et al., *História Nove - 9.º Ano*, Lisboa, Raiz Editora | Lisboa Editora, 2020; Custódio LAGARTIXA et al., *Hora H 9 - História - 9.º Ano*, Lisboa, Raiz Editora | Lisboa Editora, 2020; Cristina MAIA, Cláudia PINTO RIBEIRO and Isabel AFONSO, *Novo Viva a História! - 9.º Ano*, Porto, Porto Editora, 2020; Ana RODRIGUES OLIVEIRA, et al., *O Fio da História 9.º*, Lisboa, Leya, 2020.

31. Rómulo DE CARVALHO, *História do Ensino em Portugal. Desde a Fundação da Nacionalidade até ao fim do Regime de Salazar-Caetano*, Lisboa, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1996, p. 809.

Portugal became a member of the EEC in 1986. As far as the education system was concerned, the 1980s were marked by the implementation of the *Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo* [Framework Law on the Education System], approved in 1986. The new feature was the first systemic reform carried out by the democratic regime, ten years after the approval of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic in force at the time, which instituted, for the first time, the socio-political principle that “*todos tenham o direito à educação e cultura*” [everyone has the right to education and culture].³²

The consolidation of curricula only occurred after the Educational Reform of 1986 and the publication in 1989 of *Decreto-Lei n.º 286/89, de 29 de agosto* [Law no. 286/89, of 29 August], which approved the programmes for Lower and Upper Secondary Education. However, only two years later, in 1991, the first normative document was published, the *Organização Curricular e Programas* [Curricular Organisation and Programmes]. The reforms of the 1990s and the new century, in turn, sought to introduce legislative measures to promote quality in education and to overcome inequalities within the school system – and particularly the issue of school dropout. In 2009, compulsory education was extended until the age of eighteen, and efforts were made to promote special education, “*inclusão*” [inclusion] and “*integração*” [integration] as watchwords of education provision.³³ According to a recent article, with the introduction in 2009 of the *Currículo Nacional do Ensino Básico - Competências Essenciais* [National Curriculum for Lower Secondary Education. Essential skills] the growing English-speaking influence promoted a constructivist approach, rather than the prevailing positivist one.³⁴

In 2013, the contents and proposals set out in the *Curricular Organisation Program* for Lower Secondary Education were combined with a new learning framework, the so-called *Metas Curriculares* [Curricular Goals]. The aim was to develop a more flexible curriculum, simplifying the contents and focusing on enquiry-based learning.

Finally, in 2018, the new, and current, curricula guidelines, known as *Aprendizagens Essenciais* [Essential Learning Goals], reduced, as the name suggests, the contents. For instance, in the *Curricular Goals*, the theme “*Conhecer e compreender a Revolução Soviética*” [Knowing and understanding the Soviet Revolution], which had seven descriptors, was reduced to only three descriptors. The theme of the “*Primeira Guerra Mundial*” [First World War], which included its causes, development, and aftermath, with seventeen descriptors in the *Curricular Goals*, was mostly dismantled, leaving only four descriptors in the *Essential Learning Goals*.³⁵ For the specific case of



32. José David JUSTINO (dir.), *Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo: balanço e prospetiva*, vol. I, Lisboa: Conselho Nacional de Educação, 2017, p. 157.

33. Cleia Demétrio PEREIRA, Geovana LUNARDI MENDES and José Augusto PACHECO, “Políticas de inclusão escolar e decisões curriculares: justiça curricular na escolarização de alunos com deficiência”, Geovana LUNARDI MENDES, Márcia Denise PLETSCHE and Regina Célia LINHARES HOSTINS (orgs.), *Educação Especial e/na Educação Básica: entre especificidades e indissociabilidades*, São Paulo, Junqueira & Marin Editores, 2019, p. 21.

34. Raimundo RODRÍGUEZ PÉREZ and Glória SOLÉ, “Los manuales escolares de Historia de España y Portugal. Reflexiones sobre su uso en educación primaria y secundaria”, *Arbor. Ciencia, Pensamiento y Cultura*, 194-788 (2018), p. 4, <https://doi.org/10.3989/arbor.2018.788n2004>.

35. Ana Isabel RIBEIRO, João Paulo AVELÃS NUNES and José Pedro PAIVA DA CUNHA, *Metas Curriculares de História. 3.º Ciclo do Ensino Básico*. Lisboa: Ministério da Educação e da Ciência, 2013, pp. 23-24 and *Aprendizagens Essenciais. Articulação com o perfil dos alunos. 3.º Ciclo do Ensino Básico. História. 9.º ano de escolaridade*, Lisboa: Ministério da Educação, 2018, p. 6.

the 9th grade, despite the slight changes that successive editions of textbooks have undergone, only in the school year 2023/2024 will the first textbooks written following the *Essential Learnings* be adopted. The *Curricular Organisation Programme* and the *Curricular Goals* – which coexisted with the *Essential Learnings* until the end of the school year of 2020/2021 – were revoked by *Despacho n.º 6605-A/2021, de 6 de julho* [Dispatch 6605-A/2021, of 6 July].

European integration: a comparative perspective

The *European Dimension of Education* is a concept that has evolved alongside the development of the European Union itself. In this regard, since 1976, with the launch of the action programme on education, several initiatives have been set up with the aim of “*dar uma dimensão europeia à experiência dos docentes e dos alunos das escolas primárias e secundárias*” [giving a European dimension to the experience of teachers and students of all educational levels].³⁶ If, in the beginning, the concept of the European dimension of Education focused on the knowledge students and teachers needed to have about the member states, nowadays the concept implies not only knowledge but also “o exercício de uma cidadania europeia ativa” [the exercise of active European citizenship]³⁷.

However, of greater relevance to European integration is the issue of whether, and how, “Europe” and “the European dimension” are incorporated into curricula, and what “Europe” and “the European dimension” really mean to the young. According to Claudio Radaelli, Europeanisation can be defined as the:

[s]et of processes of (a) construction (b) diffusion and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, “ways of doing things” and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies.³⁸

To achieve this concise and consistent definition of Europeanisation, it is crucial that syllabuses and curriculums reflect the European dimension promoted since the 1970s by the EU. However, the study *The European Home*, carried out by Falk Pingel in 2000 and based on textbooks from all the countries of the EU as well as other European countries, like Switzerland, Ukraine and even the Russian Federation, concluded that:

In many textbooks the European dimension can only be discovered as an underlying assumption or hidden concept; only in a minority of the textbooks analysed has it been dealt with as a separate entity with its own history. It would be wrong to say that the European dimension has been successfully integrated.³⁹

It is also important to stress that despite the accepted notion of History being deemed central to citizenship and a more or less faithful mirror of the state’s worldview,

36. Luís Filipe SANTOS and José Vítor PEDROSO (coord.), *Referencial Dimensão Europeia da Educação para a Educação Pré-Escolar, o Ensino Básico e o Ensino Secundário*, Lisboa, Ministério da Educação – Direção-Geral da Educação, 2016, p. 6.

37. *Ibidem*, p. 10.

38. Claudio RADAELLI, “The Europeanization of Public Policy”, in Kevin FEATHSTONE and Claudio RADAELLI (coord.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 30. <https://doi.org/10.1093/0199252092.003.0002>

39. Falk PINGEL (coord.), *Representations of 20th Century. Europe in History Textbooks*, Strasbourg, Council of Europe Publishing, 2000, p. 110.

the reality highlights its clear and increasing side-lining in the school curriculum, exemplified by the reduction in weekly teaching hours dedicated to it. The tendency toward the marginalisation of the Humanities is not new, nor is it exclusive to Portugal. Martha Nussbaum has noted that “the humanities and the arts are being cut away, in both basic/secondary and college/university education” since they are “seen by policy-makers as useless frills, at a time when nations must cut away all useless things to stay competitive in the global market”.⁴⁰ Indeed, recent studies have set out from that same point. For example, Brennetot analysed the issue through focusing on maps and their political use; he concluded that “when studied, the EU appears mostly as an incomplete political power, characterised by some strengths and weaknesses”.⁴¹

Also, Elmersjö discussed the different meanings of Europe in Swedish textbooks. While this case study demonstrates that in recent years, following Sweden’s entry to the EU, the amount of information regarding EU institutions has increased, the truth is that the EU is perceived as a *fait accompli*.⁴² It should also be mentioned that Keating and Janmaat addressed the question of what the EU means to people by focusing on youth civic engagement and the decline in participation rates in activities such as voting and volunteering. They concluded that education and school activities “can have a lasting and independent impact on youth political engagement and provide support for the continuation of education through citizenship, as well as about citizenship”.⁴³

As for the Portuguese case, the issue has been considered by several researchers. However, most of the studies in textbooks have focused on the national and post-colonial dimensions, rather than the European dimension. Indeed, researchers have identified the lack of the European dimension, both in curricula and textbooks relating to certain academic subjects, as well as in pedagogical approaches to the teaching/learning process. For instance, one of study surveyed the degree of civic involvement among students in upper secondary education, using a methodology based on questionnaires filled in by students in several schools.⁴⁴ Another, more recent, study analysed five textbooks (History and English), concluding that the approach taken to the EU is superficial,⁴⁵ while another used a quantitative/qualitative methodology, but added a comparative angle/perspective with other countries, in order to measure the number of pages dedicated to the EU, the historical sources used, the activities suggested, and the way the topic has been developed over recent years.⁴⁶ This latter work concluded that, although History



40. Martha NUSSBAUM, *Not for profit. Why democracy needs the Humanities*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2010, p. 2.

41. Arnaud BRENNETOT, “Europe representations in textbooks”, in Laurent BEAUGUITTE (ed.) *EuroBroadMap Working Papers*, Paris: CNRS, 2011, p. 2.

42. Henrik Aström ELMERSJÖ, “The Meaning and Use of ‘Europe’ in Swedish History Textbooks, 1910–2008”, *Education Inquiry*, 2 (1) (2011), pp. 61-78, <https://doi.org/10.3402/edui.v2i1.21962>.

43. Avril KEATING and Jan Germen JANMAT, “Education Through Citizenship at School: Do School Activities Have a Lasting Impact on Youth Political Engagement”, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 69, 2 (2016), p. 409, <https://doi.org/10.1093/pa/gsv017>.

44. Andreia CAETANO, et al., “Construindo cidadania europeia: impactos de uma intervenção com jovens em escolas portuguesas”, *Revista Educação Sociedade e Culturas*, 49 (2016), pp. 11-30.

45. PIEDADE et al., “Learning About the European Union in Times of Crisis”, pp. 31-40.

46. Clara Isabel SERRANO and Sérgio NETO, “De Clío a Cassandra. Perceções da União Europeia nos Manuais de História Portugueses”, *Revista de História das Ideias*, 40 (2) (2022), pp. 327-347, https://doi.org/10.14195/2183-8925_40_14.

textbooks contain some information about the process of the EU's political construction, its institutions and economic and social policies, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of Portugal's integration into the EU, they mainly present it in a critically linear way, not giving priority to the development of students' critical thinking. By analysing textbooks from other southern European countries such as Italy and Spain, these same authors reached an important conclusion: there are structural flaws at the level of the operationalisation of knowledge transfer, which leads to History textbooks having a less positive impact in the areas of education and citizenship.⁴⁷

EU in Portuguese History textbooks: general considerations

History textbooks, as well as all official documents issued by the Portuguese Ministry of Education, point to perspectives on Universal and European History centred on the History of Portugal. The themes are introduced in two ways: 1) by analysing certain structures based on national History (politics, economy, society, art, culture, and religion); 2) by considering the wider global and European context and inserting the analysis of the Portuguese case— a case which usually stands out for its specificity.⁴⁸ In this way, and despite the recent changes in the student profile, they tend to follow the “expository-descriptive” trend identified by Herlihy⁴⁹. Regarding Pingel's “factors influencing textbook writing”, it is possible to say that Portuguese textbooks, in general, follow mainstream historiography.

The first references to the EEC were made in a textbook for 3rd degree in the Lyceum written during the Carnation Revolution and published during the *Hot Summer* of 1975. With wording strongly supportive of the socialist world, akin to the Carnation Revolution, the textbook did not envisage the EEC as a necessary alternative for post-colonial Portugal:

As expressões mais concretas do progresso económico da Europa são as seguintes: a Comunidade Europeia do Carvão e do Aço (CECA), a Comunidade Económica Europeia (CEE), a Associação Europeia do Comércio Livre (EFTA) e a Organização para a Cooperação e Desenvolvimento Económico (OCDE). [...] [Podemos] situar a construção do socialismo português entre o mundo capitalista (a que Portugal se confina geograficamente), onde passou a ser uma força de desagregação irreversível, e o Terceiro Mundo (a que Portugal se liga historicamente).

The most tangible expressions of Europe's economic progress are the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC), the European Free Trade Association and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). [...] [We can] situate the construction of Portuguese socialism between the capitalist world (to which Portugal is geographically attached), where it became a force of irreversible disintegration, and the Third World [*sic*, to which Portugal is historically linked].⁵⁰

The textbooks of the following years progressively began to make use of a language with a less *revolutionary* undertone. The consolidation of democracy in Portugal (and in

47. *Ibidem*, pp. 327-347.

48. Ana HENGLER, “O Ensino da História de Portugal: um Estudo Comparativo”, *Boletim O Ensino da História*, III series, 18 (2000), p. 63 and António SIMÕES RODRIGUES, “Um manual de História da Europa. A construção de uma utopia?”, *Estudos do Século XX, Europa-Utopia/Europa-Realidade*, 2 (2002), p. 216.

49. HERLIHY, *The Textbook controversy...*, p. 7.

50. A. DO CARMO REIS, *História 3.º Ano do Liceu*, Lisboa, Edições Asa, 1975, p. 107.

Spain) and the process leading to the integration of both countries into the EEC led to some changes in how the process of European construction were explained to the younger generations. Nevertheless, in the 1980s, school History textbooks still highlighted the economic aid given to Europe by the USA under the Marshall Plan, claiming that this budget had been decisive in enabling European countries to regain their financial and economic independence. For instance, a textbook from 1984 describes the formation of Benelux, the ECSC, and the EEC, which had the aim of creating “*uma Europa onde haja livre circulação de pessoas e bens, uma Europa sem fronteiras económicas, com uma moeda comum, uma política comum, uma língua comum*” [a Europe where there (was) free movement of people and goods, a Europe without economic frontiers, with a common currency, a common policy, a common language].⁵¹ That said, this textbook still highlighted the socialist model of the USSR, Cuba, China, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia (twenty-four pages), and described the “Japanese economic miracle” in seven pages, while only dedicating four pages to the EEC.

In 1989, just three years after Portugal joined the EEC and two years before the first normative text, published in 1991, the *Organização Curricular e Programa de História. 3.º Ciclo do Ensino Básico* [Curricular Organisation and History Programme. Third cycle of Basic Education], the textbooks did start to emphasise EEC issues, including Portugal’s new membership. In a word, those times defined the model from which the EEC/UE was to be presented: “the rise of Europe” in the aftermath of the Second World War; the beginnings of the EEC from the previous organisations of Benelux, the Council of Europe, and the ECCS; the “*pais fundadores*” [founding fathers] Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman; the EEC’s enlargements and “developments” (the Common Agricultural Policy, CAP; the European Social Fund, ESF; the European Regional Development Fund, ERDF; the European Monetary System, EMS; and the Single European Act, SEA); as well as its principal institutions. The textbook also discussed the federalist approach as a “*desafio para o futuro*” [challenge for the future]. Finally, the integration of Portugal was considered, from its formal application in 1977 until the time of publication (1989). Additionally, there were several references to the free trade agreement signed in 1972 between Portugal, under the *Estado Novo* dictatorship, and the EEC.

In 1991, in the *Organização Curricular e Programa de História. 3.º Ciclo do Ensino Básico* [Curricular Organisation and History Programme. Third cycle of Basic Education] – according to which the textbooks of the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century were to be structured – the study of the European Union’s process of political construction was included in theme 11 *Da Segunda Guerra-Mundial aos Anos 80* [From the Second World War to the Eighties] and in the sub-theme *As Transformações do Mundo Contemporâneo* [The Transformations of the Contemporary World] under the heading *O dinamismo económico dos países capitalistas* [The economic dynamism of capitalist countries].⁵² Among other relevant learning points, it was suggested that students explain the formation of the EEC as “*a resposta da Europa Ocidental ao poder hegemónico dos EUA, reconhecendo o alargamento do número de países membros como resultado dos êxitos obtidos*” [Western Europe’s response to the hegemonic power of the USA, recognising the enlargement of the number of member

51. Maria Luísa GUERRA, *História 9*, Porto, Porto Editora, 1984, p. 136.

52. *Organização Curricular e Programa de História. 3.º Ciclo do Ensino Básico* (3 ed.), vol. II, Lisboa, Departamento da Educação Básica | Instituto Nacional Casa da Moeda, 1994, p. 75.



countries because of the successes achieved].⁵³ It should be noted that the *Organização Curricular e Programa de História. 3.º Ciclo do Ensino Básico* [Curricular Organisation and History Programme. Third cycle of Basic Education] which was in force until the adoption of the *Metas Curriculares de História do Ensino Básico* [History Curriculum Goals for Lower Secondary Education] in the 2013/2014 academic year, provided thirty-one descriptors (from the late 19th century to the present day), of which only one dealt with themes pertaining to the EEC/UE, i.e., only 3.2% of the total number of items.

The *Curriculum Goals* aimed to define the fundamental, and scientifically updated, contents which should be taught to students. The textbooks currently in use conform to these indications, although in 2018 new legislation created the *Essential Learnings of History*, which replaced the target goals with descriptors. Thus, since 2018, the EEC/EU subjects have been included under the item *Do Segundo Pós-Guerra aos desafios do nosso tempo* [From the Second Post-War Period to the challenges of our time], and students – according to the *Essential Learning Goals* dictates – should be able to “*integrar a formação da CEE*” [integrate the formation of the EEC] into the events following the period of the 1939-1945 conflict. Similarly, students must be able to “*compreender a importância da entrada de Portugal na CEE para a consolidação do processo de democratização e para a modernização do país*” [understand the importance of Portugal’s entry into the EEC for the consolidation of the democratisation process and the modernisation of the country].⁵⁴

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Simply put, out of a total of fifty-one descriptors in the *Essential Learning Goals*, the theme of European construction comprises only two (4%), whereas the Second World War, which had dire consequences for the whole world, but in which Portugal did not participate, comprises six descriptors (9.8%). Moreover, the assumed importance of Portugal’s entry into the EEC contrasts sharply with the reduction in the number of hours allocated to History (two/three hours per week) and the lack of depth devoted to the study of this subject in general, or to the process of the political construction of the EU in particular – which successive curriculum reforms have introduced. A recent study, already mentioned above, states that textbooks “*falam pouco da União Europeia, não contribuindo para a construção de um perfil crítico e ativo na vida política*” [say little about the European Union, and do not contribute to the construction of a critical and politically active (student) profile].⁵⁵ The same study suggests that History textbooks develop an “instrumental approach” and tend to neglect “dimensions concerning a sense of European belonging or identity”⁵⁶. In the following pages, we will try to address these issues.

Origin and expansion of the EEC/EU

The textbooks in both samples situate the first projects for European construction in time. While textbooks of the first sample list as forerunners to the EEC/EU Benelux

53. *Ibidem*, p. 76.

54. *Aprendizagens Essenciais. Articulação com o perfil dos alunos...*, pp. 9-10.

55. Liliana BORGES, “Inquestionável e longínqua. Assim é a União Europeia nos manuais escolares portugueses”, *Público*, March 19, 2019, <https://www.publico.pt/2019/03/19/sociedade/noticia/inquestionavel-longinqua-assim-uniao-europeia-manuais-escolares-portugueses-1865430> (access: 26-3-2022).

56. PIEDADE et al., “Learning About the European Union in Times of Crisis”, p. 36.

(1944), Winston Churchill's appeal to the "United States of Europe" in 1946⁵⁷, the Treaty of Brussels (1948), the European Organisation for Economic Cooperation (1948) and the Council of Europe (1949), the textbooks of the second sample focus on the Schuman Declaration (1950), which they deem the first "*proposta concreta com vista à edificação de uma Europa unida e organizada*" [concrete proposal for building a united and organised Europe]⁵⁸. In both samples, the ECSC and the Treaty of Paris which established it are considered by every textbook as being "*o início do projeto de união da Europa, que levará ao fim das fronteiras económicas (aduaneiras) entre os países membros*" [the beginning of the project of the European Union, which will lead to the end of economic (customs) borders between member countries].⁵⁹

It should be noted that both the previous and the following excerpts are permeated by a somewhat simplistic tone, based on close precursors to the process (the Second World War and the Cold War), but passing over the long history of relations on the continent before the 20th century: once "*recuperada do desgaste da Guerra, graças, em parte, ao auxílio do Plano Marshall*" [recovered from the devastation of war, thanks in part to the aid of the Marshall Plan],⁶⁰ Europe could move "*para um espaço económico comum capaz de competir com os EUA, a URSS e o Japão*" [towards a common economic area capable of competing with the USA, the USSR and Japan].⁶¹ For example, a 2004 textbook formulated the same idea in almost identical terms, which hints at a certain scientific-pedagogical stagnation in the wording of texts: "*em 1951 a Europa já se encontrava recuperada do desgaste da Guerra, graças, em parte, ao apoio americano*" [in 1951 Europe had already recovered from the devastation of war, partly thanks to American support].⁶²

The narrative in both samples states that "*o êxito desta associação (CECA)*" [the success of this association (ECSC)] led its six founding countries to "*assinarem, em 1957, o Tratado de Roma*" [sign the Treaty of Rome in 1957],⁶³ which established the ECSC, the EURATOM and the EEC. The objectives of the latter organisation are clearly defined: "*formação de um Mercado comum, aberto à livre circulação de mercadorias, pessoas e capitais*" [the formation of a common market, open to the free movement of goods, people, and capital]⁶⁴ and "*o desenvolvimento de políticas económicas comuns*" [the development of common economic policies].⁶⁵ In textbooks, the emphasis is placed, as usual, in most cases on the economic objectives which presided over the constitution of the EEC/EU, rather than on the goal of creating a more supportive, cooperative, pacifist, egalitarian and humanist Europe. This is one of the criticisms that is often levelled at the European project itself: compare, for example, the harsher tone of political

57. ALVES et al., *História 9*, p. 156.

58. LAGARTIXA et al., *Hora H 9 - História - 9.º Ano*, p. 166.

59. AMARAL, ALVES and TADEU, *Missão: História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 163.

60. DINIZ et al., *História Nove - 9.º Ano*, 2020, p. 168.

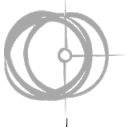
61. MAIA, RIBEIRO and AFONSO, *Novo Viva a História! - 9.º Ano*, p. 158.

62. NEVES et al., *Novo Clube de História 9*, p. 68.

63. DINIZ et al., *História Nove - 9.º Ano*, 2020, p. 168.

64. *Ibidem*, p. 168.

65. AMARAL, ALVES and TADEU, *Missão: História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 163.



communication between the member states during the sovereign debt crisis with the apparent consensus of solidarity in the face of the crisis brought about by COVID-19.⁶⁶

This same aspect is, indeed, one of the differences between the textbooks of the two samples. Those of the first sample emphasise the Community's economic success as a decisive factor in its enlargement: "*nos anos seguintes, o desenvolvimento económico dos membros da CEE é superior ao dos restantes países europeus, o que faz com que algumas nações comecem a mostrar interesse em ingressar neste organismo*" [in the following years, the economic development of the EEC's members is higher than that of the other European countries, which makes some nations begin to show interest in joining this body].⁶⁷ The textbooks of the second sample, however, emphasise the difficulties that have beset European unit since the 1990s. While the following quotation could be applied to European integration at any time since the 1950s, the truth is that new/old doubts are being referred to in the last sentence:

Como reagiram os estados-nações europeus - tão numerosos e diversos - à existência de um governo supranacional? Como estabelecer uma política externa e de defesa comum, sem pôr em causa a autonomia nacional de cada Estado-membro? E será que os cidadãos veem nas instituições europeias os seus órgãos representativos? Aceitarão delegar nelas os poderes de decisão?

How did the European nation-states – so numerous and diverse – react to the existence of a supranational government? How can a common foreign and defence policy be established without calling into question the national autonomy of each member state? And do citizens see European institutions as their representative bodies? Will they agree to delegate decision-making powers to them? These are the doubts that have weighed heavily, from the 1990s to the present day, upon the fate of Europe.⁶⁸

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Nonetheless, even in the textbooks of the second sample, "success" turns out to be the most repeated word, at least for the first fifty years of the EEC/EU. "*Sucesso económico da CEE*" [Economic success of the EEC]⁶⁹ and success in enlargements: "*face à expansão económica que a Europa dos Seis atingiu, o Reino Unido, até então relutante, aderiu, em 1973, à CEE, o mesmo fazendo a Irlanda e a Dinamarca*" [in the face of the economic expansion that the Europe of the Six achieved, the UK, hitherto a reluctant nation, joined the EEC in 1973, as did Ireland and Denmark].⁷⁰ The same descriptivist vein points out that "*os países do sul da Europa só viram a sua adesão efetivada anos depois de acederem à democracia: a Grécia, em 1981; a Espanha e Portugal, em 1986*" [countries in the south of Europe only saw their accession take effect years after gaining access to democracy: Greece, in 1981; Spain and Portugal, in 1986];⁷¹ later, other "*países europeus aderiram a este mercado comum, dando lugar à Europa dos 28*" [European countries joined this common market, giving rise to the Europe of 28].⁷² Once again, the authoritative nature of the discourse and some official optimism leaves out the failed enlargements, such as Norway's non-accession (it decided against joining in two referendums, in 1973 and 1994) and Turkey's status, the *eternal* candidate, a state which,

66. Milton NUNES, "Mais olhos que bazuca", *Público*, February 24, 2021.

67. CRISANTO, SIMÕES and MENDES, *Olhar a História* 9, p. 164.

68. DINIZ et al., *História Nove - 9.º Ano*, 2020, p. 172.

69. LAGARTIXA et al., *Hora H 9 - História - 9.º Ano*, p. 166.

70. *Ibidem*, p. 168.

71. *Ibidem*.

72. AMARAL, ALVES and TADEU, *Missão: História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 165.

faced with major reticence from the European community, has distanced itself and diverged from Europe.⁷³

While the textbooks of the first sample explain in some detail the importance of the treaties that have strengthened European ties, such as the Single European Act, Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaty, the textbooks of the second sample merely list them, providing no further comment. Take, for example, the case of the Maastricht Treaty: “*este tratado, autêntica reforma dos Tratados de Roma, estabeleceu a entrada em vigor, a partir de 1993, de um verdadeiro mercado interno, onde poderão circular livremente os produtos, as pessoas e os capitais*” [this Treaty, a genuine reform of the Treaties of Rome, established the effective creation, from 1993, of a genuine internal market in which products, persons and capital could move freely].⁷⁴

In keeping with this structuralist approach, the textbooks of the second sample highlight only two figures in seven decades of the ECSC/EEC/EU: Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman. These are the “*concretizadores da ideia de uma Europa unida*” [builders of the idea of a united Europe],⁷⁵ for “*em maio de 1950, Robert Schuman, com o apoio de Jean Monnet, proferia um discurso no qual apresentava o primeiro projeto para a construção de uma Europa unida*” [in May 1950, Robert Schuman, with the support of Jean Monnet, delivered a speech in which he presented the first project for the construction of a united Europe].⁷⁶ The most recent textbooks not only drop the somewhat *sentimental* terminology regarding the *Founding Fathers* used in the textbooks of the first sample, but they also likewise eschew any reference to Winston Churchill and the famous 1946 Zurich University Speech. Is this omission because the United Kingdom did not join the EEC/EU until 1973, only to abandon it less than five decades later, so that the words of an English prime minister – although decisive and influential at the time –, now seem like mere utilitarianism?

If we want to respond by arguing that the reduction in the number of players highlighted in textbooks contributed to boosting Monnet’s and Schuman’s standing, in fact the opposite is true. The textbooks of the second sample do not hesitate in stating that the EEC/EU “*teve como principais protagonistas dois franceses: o economista Jean Monnet e Robert Schuman, que era então primeiro-ministro*” [had two Frenchmen as its main protagonists: the economist Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman, who was then prime minister].⁷⁷ However, they say nothing about their political affiliation or even the connection of Jean Monnet to the League of Nations (Deputy Secretary-General). Only one textbook presents a few lines on Monnet, instead of a short biographical note⁷⁸. On the other hand, two of the textbooks in the second sample do not devote a single word to the Schuman Declaration of 9th May 1950, whereas in some schools this day is marked by activities, lectures, and exhibitions of students’ work on Europe Day. As for the remaining textbooks, they either merely underline the importance of Schuman’s lecture,

73. Cengiz AKTAR, “European Union and Turkey: why it failed? What is next?”, in Asaf Savaş AKAT and Seyfettin GÜRSEL (ed.), *Turkish Economy at the Crossroads: facing the challenges ahead*, Singapore, World Scientific Publishing, 2020, pp. 265-294, https://doi.org/10.1142/9789811214899_0008.

74. BARREIRA and MOREIRA, *Páginas do Tempo 9*, p. 200.

75. LAGARTIXA et al., *Hora H 9 - História - 9.º Ano*, p. 166.

76. CIRNE and HENRIQUES, *Viagem na História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 164.

77. AMARAL, ALVES and TADEU, *Missão: História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 163.

78. LAGARTIXA et al., *Hora H 9 - História - 9.º Ano*, p. 166.



or present it as a source for students to analyse, but only as an excerpt of a few lines. For instance, one of the textbooks mentions the declaration, but links it, without any context whatsoever, to another document which turns out to be a speech by Jean Monnet on 5th August 1943, during a meeting of the French Committee of National Liberation.⁷⁹

How do we explain this last choice? Is the 1943 text more *effective*? Is there any advantage in using a lesser-known text so as to avoid using the same document over and over? Or is it an attempt to remedy the absence of Europeanist aspirations before 1945, so that teachers can explain those efforts in class? Or is it ultimately just a symptom of the loss of relevance of the EEC's subject in the teaching of History?

Institutions, European citizenship, and economic and social policies

Although the beginnings of the EEC/EU and its main historical figures is dealt with rather briefly, especially in the textbooks of the second sample, the issue of institutions is given greater emphasis, and is approached visually. While all textbooks agree that “*a União Europeia é gerida por um conjunto complexo de instituições*” [the European Union is run through a complex set of institutions],⁸⁰ the strategy used to explain them is generally based on organisational charts that simplify the presentation of the information. Another visually impactful mechanism is the use of maps with a timeline of the accessions of member states, and the locations of the headquarters of the different EU bodies – the European Commission, the European Council, and the Court of Justice.⁸¹ Only two textbooks, one from each sample, develop the topic of European citizenship: “*a União Europeia criou também um espaço de cidadania comum, com leis e órgãos próprios que asseguram a defesa dos direitos de todos os cidadãos dos estados-membros*” [the European Union has also created an area of common citizenship, with its own laws and bodies which ensure the protection of the rights of all citizens of the member states]⁸². The book from the second sample also emphasises precisely that aspect of the EU that affects students directly: “*a livre circulação foi estimulada para os estudantes (através do Programa Erasmus), de forma a despertar nos jovens a consciência da identidade cultural europeia*” [free movement has been stimulated for students (through the Erasmus Programme) to foster an awareness of European cultural identity in young people].⁸³ It should be noted that the two books mentioning EU citizenship are by the same authors.

Written documents, in turn, complement visual information by providing simple but objective explanations of each institution and its dynamics – even if the interpretation sometimes lacks clarity, and some of the exercises proposed lack specificity. Two examples from the second sample illustrate this: there is ambiguity in the distinction between the EU's Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights;⁸⁴ students are asked to “*indica[r] o país e a cidade onde se situa a sede do Parlamento Europeu*” [name the country and city where the seat of the European Parliament is located] on the basis of an image entitled “*Sede do Parlamento Europeu em Estrasburgo, França*” [Seat

79. CIRNE and HENRIQUES, *Viagem na História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 164.

80. DINIZ et al., *História Nove - 9.º Ano*, 2020, p. 172.

81. *Ibidem*.

82. DINIZ et al., *História Nove*, 2004, p. 170.

83. DINIZ et al., *História Nove - 9.º Ano*, 2020, p. 172.

84. AMARAL, ALVES and TADEU, *Missão: História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 165.

of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France], which is too simple a task for the age group (14-15 years old).⁸⁵

As far as socio-economic issues are concerned, the analysis in the textbooks tries to conceptualise the better-known elements. There are some differences between the first and second samples regarding the CAP. While every book in the first sample emphasises the “*organização dos principais mercados de sector (cereais, leite, carne), a fixação de preços comuns, assim como a criação de um Fundo Europeu de Orientação e Garantia Agrícola (FEOGA)*” [organisation of the main sector markets (cereals, milk, meat), the setting of common prices, and the creation of a European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund],⁸⁶ only two books in the second sample deal with the CAP, choosing instead to highlight the “stabilisation of markets”, the “increase in productivity”, the “setting of production quotas” and the “provision of aid to farmers”.⁸⁷

There is also only one textbook in the second sample that consistently addresses the difficulties faced by the EEC/EU, such as the “*custos excessivos da CAP; carência de recursos energéticos; assimetrias regionais profundas*” [excessive costs of the CAP; lack of energy resources; deep regional asymmetries], as well as attempt to solve them by “*constituição de fundos de apoio (como o FEDER ou o Fundo Social Europeu) aos países ou regiões mais pobres*” [setting up support funds (like the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund) for poorer countries or regions].⁸⁸ Ultimately, considering that Portugal is deemed to be one of the poorest EU countries, and often makes use of structural and investment funds, the fact that little emphasis is placed on this issue by textbooks may seem somewhat paradoxical. And there has been no shortage of warnings about this lack of education about these aspects of the EU:

O atual ciclo (de financiamento) do Portugal 2020 é apenas o quinto capítulo de três décadas de fundos europeus no país. Os investimentos patrocinados pela União Europeia já ultrapassam 10 mil euros por português, mas 91% dos cidadãos não sabem indicar um único projeto que tenha melhorado as suas vidas desde a adesão à CEE.

Portugal 2020’s current (funding) cycle is only the fifth chapter of three decades of European funds in the country. The investments sponsored by the European Union already exceed €10,000 per Portuguese citizen, but 91% of citizens cannot name a single project that has improved their lives since joining the EEC.⁸⁹

As for the single currency, whereas textbooks of the first sample only mentioned that the Maastricht Treaty was intended to move towards “*a criação de uma moeda única e de um banco comum*” [the creation of a single currency and a common bank]⁹⁰, those of the second sample consider it to be one of the crowning achievements of the EU, “*o sonho da união económica e monetária*” [the dream of economic and monetary union],⁹¹ although it is only mentioned briefly: “*em 2002, entrou em circulação o euro como moeda*

85. CIRNE and HENRIQUES, *Viagem na História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 164.

86. BARREIRA and MOREIRA, *Páginas do Tempo 9*, p. 200. <https://doi.org/10.4000/cultura.1271>

87. LAGARTIXA et al., *Hora H 9 - História - 9.º Ano*, p. 166; and DINIZ et al., *História Nove - 9.º Ano*, 2020, p. 170.

88. DINIZ et al., *História Nove - 9.º Ano*, 2020, p. 170.

89. Joana Nunes MATEUS, “Ninguém sabe dos fundos europeus”, *Exame*, November 1, 2015, p. 40, <https://www.compete2020.gov.pt/admin/images/Artigo-Exame-29-10-2015.pdf> (access: 28-3-2022).

90. BARREIRA and MOREIRA, *Páginas do Tempo 9*, p. 200. <https://doi.org/10.4000/cultura.1271>

91. LAGARTIXA et al., *Hora H 9 - História - 9.º Ano*, p. 166.



única para 12 dos Estados da União Europeia” [in 2002, the Euro came into circulation as the single currency for 12 of the states of the European Union]”.⁹² It follows that, should a teacher decide to follow the syllabus and the textbook to the letter, and fail to address key issues such as the loss of financial sovereignty, these issues will not be revisited during the rest of the students’ school careers, since the European theme is only taught in some courses in secondary school.⁹³

How should we understand this apparent contradiction? Without resorting to Nussbaum again, it is important to point out that the 9th-grade programme covers a lot of ground – from the third quarter of the 19th century up to the present day –, more so if there are contents still pending from the previous school year, which happens often. Additionally, the subject of Portugal’s integration into the EU only appears at the end of the school year and is usually taught *en passant*, if at all. Another reason we must consider is the fact that students see the EU as a finished project: “*para a geração que nasceu na União Europeia ser cidadão europeu é uma realidade inquestionável. Mas o conhecimento que a maioria dos jovens têm do projeto europeu é superficial e enviesado*” [for the generation born in the European Union, being a European citizen is an unquestionable reality. But most young people’s knowledge of the European project is superficial].⁹⁴

Portuguese EU membership

The topic of Portugal’s membership of the EU hardly makes an appearance in the first sample. It is treated more rigorously in the second sample, even though the number of pages devoted to it is the same as or a little more than are dedicated to the more general topic of European construction. Nonetheless, the textbooks of the second sample tend to focus on the second aspect of the *Essential Learning Goals* descriptor concerning Portuguese accession, i.e., “*a importância da entrada de Portugal na CEE*” [the importance of Portugal’s entry into the EEC] in terms of “*a modernização do país*” [the modernisation of the country] and, to a lesser degree, its contribution to the “*consolidação do processo de democratização*” [consolidation of the democratisation process]⁹⁵. As is well known: “*a ligação à comunidade de sociedades europeias modernas com democracias liberais, economias de mercado, foi uma parte essencial da estratégia de consolidação da democracia portuguesa nascente*” [the link to the community of modern European societies with liberal democracies, market economies, was an essential part of the strategy of consolidation of the nascent Portuguese democracy].⁹⁶

However, textbooks in the second sample are unanimous in emphasising the economic aspect: “*Portugal parecia condenado a permanecer um dos países mais atrasados na Europa*” [Portugal seemed condemned to remain one of the most backward

92. AMARAL, ALVES and TADEU, *Missão: História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 165.

93. Marília GAGO, *Consciência Histórica e Narrativa na Aula de História. Concepções de Professores*, Porto, CITCEM | Edições Afrontamento, 2018, p. 102, <https://doi.org/10.21747/978-989-8970-00-8/cons>.

94. BORGES, “Inquestionável e longínqua. Assim é a União Europeia...”.

95. *Aprendizagens Essenciais...*, pp. 9-10.

96. Maarten VINK, “Conclusão: europeização e democratização em Portugal – brothers-in-arms ou frères ennemis?”, in TEIXEIRA, and COSTA PINTO (orgs.), *A Europeização da Democracia Portuguesa*, p. 243.

countries in Europe]⁹⁷, mentioning that “*a situação económica de Portugal só viria a alterar-se com a integração [...] na CEE, em 1986*” [Portugal’s economic situation would only change with its integration [...] in the EEC, in 1986].⁹⁸ It should be noted, however, that only one book in the second sample explains, and once more, only briefly (six lines), that accession “*teve consequências importantes na sua evolução global destacando-se: a consolidação da democracia [...]; o reforço do incipiente estado social e a democratização da educação*” [had important consequences for [Portugal’s] overall development, in particular: the consolidation of democracy [...]; the strengthening of the incipient welfare state and the democratisation of education].⁹⁹

As we have stated above, little importance is given to structural and cohesion funds, despite the fact that they have changed the face of the country through the “*melhoria das infraestruturas e na formação profissional*” [improvement of infrastructures and professional training].¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, a plethora of public works is listed, ranging from the construction of the motorway network, hospitals and schools to the Lisbon Metro and the *Casa da Música* in Porto, though without ever losing sight of the symbolic works of the democratic regime: the Expo’98 buildings and the Vasco da Gama Bridge. And although “*a qualidade de vida das populações*” [the population’s quality of life] has changed, namely the rise in per capita income, “*a descida do desemprego, o aumento do poder de compra e a melhoria das condições salariais*” [the fall in unemployment, the increase in purchasing power and the improvement in salaries],¹⁰¹ the textbooks do not hide the problems that began to cast a pall over the country from the end of the 1990s, in the aftermath of that “*momento áureo da História Portuguesa*” [golden moment in Portuguese History in 1998] in 1998.¹⁰²

Though traditional economic activities such as agriculture, fishing, and industry (textile, footwear, wood, cork, and paper) had begun to undergo major transformations from 1986 onwards, benefitting from Community funds, the truth is that “*estes setores não aguentaram a concorrência e as regras/imposições da própria Comunidade Europeia*” [these sectors could not stand the competition from and the rules/impositions of the European Community itself].¹⁰³ In turn, “*integração no euro (moeda única) obrigou ao cumprimento rigoroso de metas orçamentais*” [integration in the Euro (single currency) forced strict compliance with budgetary targets], facilitating access to housing credit more than industry credit, a fact that “*a médio prazo, acabou por enfraquecer a economia*” [ended up weakening the economy in the medium term].¹⁰⁴ One of the textbooks is unequivocal about it: “*a década de 2001/2020, ao contrário da anterior, foi, do ponto de vista económico, uma ‘década perdida’ para Portugal*” [contrary to the



97. DINIZ et al., *História Nove - 9.º Ano*, 2020, p. 192.

98. CIRNE and HENRIQUES, *Viagem na História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 178.

99. LAGARTIXA et al., *Hora H 9 - História - 9.º Ano*, p. 204.

100. *Ibidem*.

101. MAIA, RIBEIRO and AFONSO, *Novo Viva a História! - 9.º Ano*, p. 202.

102. José NEVES, *1998. Portugal, uma retrospectiva*, in Rui TAVARES (dir.), v. 2, Lisboa, Público & Tinta-da-China, 2019, p. 10.

103. CIRNE and HENRIQUES, *Viagem na História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 206

104. AMARAL, ALVES and TADEU, *Missão: História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 203.

decade that preceded it, 2001/2010 was, from an economic point of view, a ‘lost decade’ for Portugal].¹⁰⁵

As the textbooks of the second sample begin to chronologically encroach on current events, with most of the problems highlighted still ongoing, the analysis tends to become muddled with the political and journalistic discourse, and sometimes lacks the necessary historical distance. Textbooks list *structural difficulties*, such as the ageing population, the abandonment of the countryside, the increase in unemployment, the increase in emigration and the high level of foreign debt. And yet they also suggest solutions, for example when they indicate that “*o país tem potencial: recursos humanos qualificados, apelo turístico e um alto grau de segurança*” [the country has potential: qualified human resources, touristic appeal, and a high level of security].¹⁰⁶ Thus, in a hopeful, almost propagandistic tone, they repeat the political desires built around the “*novas gerações bem-preparadas, [do] crescimento das exportações, [das] apostas pioneiras nas energias renováveis e na exploração dos recursos da imensa plataforma marítima de Portugal*” [new, well-prepared generations, the growth of exports, pioneering investment in renewable energies, and the exploitation of the resources of Portugal’s immense continental shelf].¹⁰⁷

In one of the textbooks, there is even an attempt to pass on the generational baton, with the tone shifting from hopeful to visionary, or perhaps paradoxically resigned to Fernando Pessoa’s famous verse “*falta cumprir-se Portugal*” [Portugal remains to be accomplished]: “*cabe agora também aos jovens aceitarem o desafio de dinamizarem e modernizarem o seu país*” [it is now also up to young people to accept the challenge of energising and modernising their country].¹⁰⁸

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Final remarks

As we know, the teaching of History played and continues to play a key role in the response to the political, cultural, and social challenges that Europe faced and faces today. We should keep in mind the challenges posed by the integration of migrants and refugees in Europe, as well as the Ukrainian War, and the populist speech thundering against democracy and democratic values. Moreover, some signs of populism and hate speech are already visible in EU members, such as Poland and Hungary, namely their exclusion policies.

Our paper intended to answer some very important questions regarding the way curricula and textbooks reflect the European dimension in the teaching of History. As almost all the quoted authors state, the treatment of themes relating to the EU in formal education are insufficient. This is the opinion of students, teachers, EU’s representatives, and general citizens alike. The high level of abstention in European elections, namely of young people, can be seen as a sign of ineffective communication between the institutions and the citizens. In this regard, the EU has tried to reinforce its presence in schools, through several activities. Recent studies also point to the fact that in History textbooks the nation-oriented identity aspect prevails over the European identity/dimension. Very

105. DINIZ et al., *História Nove - 9.º Ano*, 2020, p. 220.

106. LAGARTIXA et al., *Hora H 9 - História - 9.º Ano*, p. 204.

107. DINIZ et al., *História Nove - 9.º Ano*, 2020, p. 220.

108. AMARAL, ALVES and TADEU, *Missão: História 9 - 9.º Ano*, p. 203.

often we can find the European dimension appearing as the standard phrase “the Europe” and we cannot expect students to clearly understand how the topic relates to the history of European Integration.

Namely, the authors of the first sample anchor firmly the European context within the national History. They also adopt a historical approach that mixes a providential and linear vision of Europe’s past and a nostalgic vision of a supposed *European way of life*, based on the prevalence of the economic and social models provided by the EU. Namely, the authors of the first sample. Nevertheless, both samples ignore other *founding fathers and ideas of Europe*, such as Saint Pierre, and Kant, i. e., the utopian future conceived by philosophers and writers over the centuries.

In fact, to form a clear and quantitative idea of the (limited) treatment given by curriculums and, consequently, by textbooks to this particular subject, let us look at these numbers: the five textbooks of the first sample, published between 2003 and 2005, with an average of 268 pages, devote four pages on average to the EEC/EU, i.e., 1.5%, while the five textbooks of the second sample, published in 2020, with an average of 215 pages, devote six pages on average to the EEC/EU, or 2.8%.

Although still very limited in scope, the approach to the subject of European construction/integration has increased slightly in the second sample. However, the qualitative analysis points in another direction in that the 2003/2005 sample focused on EEC/EU construction process, while the 2020 sample highlights other concerns – specifically Portugal’s modernisation after joining the EEC/EU and, above all, the ensuing difficulties. It seems that textbooks from the second sample reflect the recent past and present and, therefore, they incorporate some scepticism regarding the EU due to the lost decade of the 2000s, the sovereign debt crisis, and the Troika’s intervention period (2011-2015) in Portugal. This does not undermine the teaching on European integration but represents a change in the tone adopted by textbook authors, and, in our opinion, even a certain nostalgia or *saudade* for the economic growth and heyday of the welfare state of the 1990s. Although we cannot speak of Euroscepticism, the discourse adopted by the textbooks related here reflects an inflexion that can also be seen in society and that is also reported by studies: the Portuguese people’s public support for European integration, previously among the strongest in the EU, has decreased.

Another important conclusion is that the EU’s importance in textbooks is a very pale reflection of the situation in the real world: few pages and little information. Though textbooks are known to be renewed through re-editing, and many texts are rewritten and recycled, it appears that they do not always include the necessary updates, although science textbooks follow a more constant pattern. Moreover, the fact that the content relating to the EEC/EU is taught at the end of the school year creates additional constraints due to the lack of time to discuss EU themes. By somewhat neglecting individual figures, with only two *founding fathers* of Europe mentioned in the second sample, the school curricula tend to follow a structuralist methodology. This methodology has dictated a reduction not only in the content of the EEC/EU subject but also of the human dimension, in favour of institutions and processes. Also, the textbooks explain the institutions using organisational charts, reserving text to talk about the topic of European citizenship. Is this an indication that the Portuguese know the EU well enough already, even though studies, opinion texts and surveys show the opposite? Or are the textbooks echoing some *disillusionment* with the EU project? To this end, we must conclude that much has to be done in the Portuguese curricula and textbooks to achieve the three distinct notions of the European dimension: education in Europe; education about Europe; and education for Europe”.



Writing/teaching about a past that is near to us, or even about the present, involves extra caution, especially since the EU's historical process has inverted the narrative of economic and political success in recent decades. In this respect, by closely following the political and journalistic discourse, in a more pamphleteering and less analytical tone, the textbooks of the second sample echo the disillusion and expectation that punctuate the Portuguese vision of the EU for the 21st century, as if resuming the old theses of *European decline* from Oswald Spengler and his followers. With a few years left before the students became adults a more considered reflection is required. Moreover, recent events, such as the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and the energy crisis, as well as the rise of populist speech that has a clear anti-EU agenda, deserve a closer look. Thus, it would be interesting to carry out future research into how Spanish textbooks have dealt with and deal with issues relating to the EEC/EU and integration. In a word, to take measure of the other edges of the *stone raft*.