

Representations of 'Europe': a Comparative Analysis of Geography Curricula and Textbooks Used in Cyprus

Stavroula Philippou, Dilek Latif
and Hakan Karahasan

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Exploring Europe and Ourselves:
Geographies and Identities at Work

Aims of the study

- To map Geography Education in Cyprus across the divide
- To build a knowledge base of the position, scope, content, status of the subject of Geography in school education
- To locate European geography within the subject
- To explore representations of 'Europe' in primary and secondary Geography and Social Studies curricula
- To discuss the pedagogical implications of the findings



Structure of the Presentation

- Locating the study in the literature: Geography Education and 'Europe'
- Methodology
- Findings on Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot Curricula and comparisons
- Discussion of findings: suggestions for Geography education and future research



Geography Education and 'Europe'

- Geography as a social studies subject favoured for inclusion in many European countries' curricula since the end of the 19th century as part of the modernist project of nation-building and construction of national identities
- More recently the European Union and the Council of Europe have associated in their policies Geography as a school-subject with the pursuit of a European dimension in education and the enhancement of a European identity and citizenship



Existing textbook research on 'Europe'

- A burgeoning field because of the political context (e.g. Pingel, 2000; Schissler & Soysal, 2005)
- Indicates that representations of 'Europe' are negative or narrow, presented it via war and conflicts or as largely a geographical concept in Greek and Greek Cypriot textbooks in various subjects (e.g. Flouris, 1995; Kapsalis & Kesidou, 2002; Pingel, 2000; Soysal & Antoniou, 2000; 2002; 2005; Philippou, 2007)
- Europe and the EU as a 'rotten apple' and a 'poisoned carrot' in the old history textbooks as opposed to the neutral approach of the current Turkish Cypriot history textbooks (POST-RI, 2007)



Curriculum, textbooks and ideology

- Focus on formal curricula as articulated in syllabi, textbooks, pupils' books and teachers' books
- The study lies methodologically and theoretically within the sociology of curriculum tradition, which examines curriculum as a forum wherein social relations and power are discursively constructed and negotiated
- Textbooks significant within educational systems because they reflect curriculum developments, specify and interpret the content of the curriculum in ways suitable for teaching and learning (Koutselini, 1996)



“Textbooks do not just convey knowledge; they represent what generations of pupils will learn about their own pasts and futures as well as the histories of others. In textbooks, we find what a society wishes to convey to the next generation [...] [T]he analysis of textbooks is an excellent means to capture the social and political parameters of a given society, its social and cultural preoccupations, its anxieties and trepidations. [...]. History, geography, and civic textbooks, though simplified, lay out for us the basic temporal, spatial, and discursive organization of regions, nations and the world”
(Schissler & Soysal, 2005, pp. 7-8).



Defining 'Europe': issues and challenges

- Definitions as historical constructs
- Post-colonial and post-structuralist critique to Eurocentrism
- Example of EU Definitions-Criteria:
 - Maastricht (1992): whether a country is 'European' is subject to political assessment by Commission & Council:
 - Political criteria: democracy, rule of law, human rights, minority protection
 - Economic criteria: market economy
 - Legislative alignment: in line with *acquis communautaire*
 - Copenhagen (1993): repetition of criteria as the rules defining eligibility of membership



Methodology: Sampling

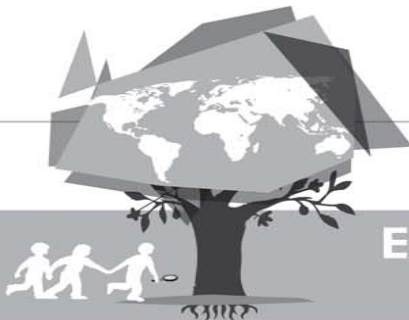
- Data analysed: documents comprising of Geography, Environmental Study, Life Science and Social Science syllabi, textbooks, workbooks and teachers' books currently used in schools across the divide in Cyprus.
- Single-textbook policy and mandatory curricula: centralised systems highlighting the importance of textbooks and curricula in education
- Coding of textbooks e.g. GC6A, TC10B



Methodology: Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative analyses of text (including legends and text on pictures, diagrams, tables; excl. pictures) and maps

1. Content analysis of the 'weighing' type: counting pages on Europe and other geographical areas because of regional/topographical approach of textbooks
2. Content analysis of terms and phrases referring to Europe: thematic emphasis within European content: derivatives of or including the term 'europe' (ευρωπ- in Greek and avrupa- in Turkish) or referring to individual European countries or people: UNESCO Guidebook



3. Analysis of maps by type and region: important as a powerful visual tool to define political and geographic entities and reveal representations of various geographic areas (Dargie, 2005; Villanueva & Gonzalo, 2000)

4. Qualitative analysis from a constructivist perspective: thematic coding and discourse analysis drawing upon

- sociological analyses of meanings ascribed to 'Europe' as geographic, political, economic, cultural, historical entity
- discursive construction of Cypriots and Europeans, how they were defined in the text



Overview of Geography Education I

GC Geography Education

- Geographical content is largely located in the subjects of *Patridognosia* (Learning about the homeland) or *Spoudi Perivallontos* (Environmental Study) for Grades 1 and 2 and Geography for Grades 3-6 in primary education and Grades 7-8 in secondary education.

TC Geography Education

- Geographical content is covered in the subjects entitled *Hayat Bilgisi* (Life Science) for Grades 1-3 and *Sosyal Bilgiler* (Social Science) for Grades 4-5 of primary education and Grades 6-10 in secondary education.
- Grades 6 and 7: Social Science (Geography)
- Grade 8: Principles of Kemalism
- Grades 9-12: option Social (includes Geography) or Science



Overview of Geography Education II

GC Geography Education

- Subject allocated two 40-minute periods (out of 35 periods per week) in all primary grades.
- In secondary education during Grade 7 Geography is taught for 1 45-minute period per week and during Grade 8 for two 45-minute periods per week.

TC Geography Education

- Life Science is taught 5 times a week in 40-minute periods (out of thirty 40-minute periods per week).
- Social Science is taught two times a week in 40-minute periods per week in primary education.
- Social Science (Geography) lessons take place once a week in 40-minute periods in Grades 6 and 7.
- Geography is taught twice a week in 40-minute periods in Grades 9, 10 and 12



Overview of Geography Education III

GC Geography Education

- The textbooks used in the first two grades are published in Greece (GC/1A-1C and GC/2A-2C)
- Rest of the textbooks used in primary and secondary education are published in Cyprus
- Parallel use of some Greek textbooks as support material

TC Geography Education

- Life Science textbooks are published in Turkey
- Social Science and Geography textbooks are published in Cyprus
- Parallel use of textbooks published in Cyprus and Turkey in upper secondary education



1. Mapping content on 'Europe' in GC textbooks

Grade (GC)	1			2			3	4	5	6	3-6	7	8	Total % (pages)		
Textbook	1A	1B	1C	2A	2B	2C	3A	4A	4B	5A	6A	3-6A	7A	8A	8B	
Europe										177		45			101	17.41 (323)
Cyprus							54	104	103	22		63	2	83		23.23 (431)
Greece	29	11	20	14	1	7		18	17	22		16				8.35 (155)
Turkey													3			0.16 (3)
World General Geography										16	195	58	80			18.81 (349)
Other	118	36	62	96	41	57	26					34				7.22 (134)
Total	147	47	82	118	44	71	103	132	132	253	204	241	97	83	101	1855

1. Mapping content on 'Europe' in TC textbooks

Grade (TC)	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		9		10		Total % (pages)
Textbook	1A	1B	2A	2B	3A	3B	4A	5A	6A	7A	9A	10A	10B						
Europe	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	6	0	0	5						
Cyprus	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	50	12	17	0	0	120						
Greece	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						
Turkey	9	7	7	9	15	12	4	0	4	0	37	70	0						
World General geography	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	13	10	0	40	21	0						
Other	115	90	152	117	141	123	88	29	2	0	16	0	0						
Total	125	98	160	127	170	149	126	103	110	73	206	235	125						

1. Mapping content on 'Europe' in TC & GC textbooks: an overview

- The analysis showed that both GC and TC geography curricula are based upon the 'expanding environment curriculum' or 'widening horizons' conceptual framework which suggests that pupils benefit more from starting to learn in a concrete manner in an environment they are familiar with (class, school community) and progressively move on to more distant and abstract places (Weeden, 1997; Blyth & Krause, 1995; Skeel 1994).
- Both geography curricula [GC & TC] start from the environment students are familiar with such as the classroom, the school, the neighborhood and gradually proceed to more distant places.
- However, the GC geography curriculum includes much more content on Europe, Cyprus and the World but much less content on local and general geography in comparison to the Turkish Cypriot one.

1. Mapping content on 'Europe' in TC & GC textbooks: an overview

- The textbooks in both sides place emphasis more on the human/social/economic/cultural geography of Europe rather than on its physical geography
- Comparing between local, national, regional and global geography, most content is on Cyprus in both TC and GC textbooks.
- Most content on Europe is given from a regional (emphasising the diversity of various areas or countries of Europe) rather than a general (homogenising) perspective.
- Finally, the approach to European geography is mostly regional/topographical rather than problem-oriented since countries or areas structure the content rather than issues or problems (with the exception of some content in GC/8B and TC/1-7A).

2. Content Analysis of References to 'Europe' in textbooks

- The analysis focused on terms or phrases referring to 'Europe' as described in the methodology.
- This analysis aimed at locating such references in all pages of the textbooks, and not only in those where 'Europe' was a direct object of study.



Grade (TC)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	10	Total % (f)		
Textbook	1A-B	2A-B	3A	3B	4A	5A	6A	7A	9A	10A	10B	
												17.89
Europe	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	1	5	33	7	(51)
												1.40
Eurasia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	(4)
												4.91
EU(or EEC or EC)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	1	1	4	(14)
												1.05
EU Institutions												(3)
European Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0.35
												(1)
European Commission	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.35
												(1)
Council of Ministers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1.05
												(3)
European Court	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1.40
												(4)
Euro (money)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0.35
												(1)
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.35
												(1)
Council of Europe	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.35
												(1)
European(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9.12
												(26)
European (people)	0	0	2	0	2	10	2	0	0	7	3	61.40
												(175)
European (objects etc)	2	4	10	0	24	14	10	16	36	40	21	285
Total	4	0	13	0	30	22	14	34	42	82	42	285

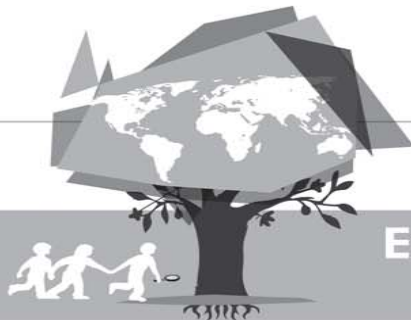
2. Content Analysis of References to 'Europe' in textbooks

- In both GC and TC textbooks 'Europe' is ascribed more frequently a content which denotes materials aspects and less frequently content which refers to people and their activity, either as individuals or as Europeans as a group.
- The percentages of references to the EU and its institutions are comparatively small, which perhaps suggest that 'Europe' is represented in ways which do not restrict it to the EU.



3. Analysis of Maps

Grade (GC)	1	2	3	4	5	6	3-6	7	8	Total % (f)		
Textbook	1A-C	2A-C	3A	4A	4B	5A	6A	3-6A	7A	8A	8B	
World	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	6	2	0	4.20 (10)
Globe/Sphere	0	1	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	1	3.36 (8)
Europe	0	0	0	1	0	18	0	6	0	0	56	34.03 (81)
Greece	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	2.94 (7)
Turkey	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0.00 (2)
Cyprus	0	0	9	8	5	2	0	12	3	20	0	24.78 (59)
Other Regions	0	0	0	0	0	1	14	8	42	4	2	29.83 (71)
Total	0	2	9	11	5	29	14	30	53	26	59	238



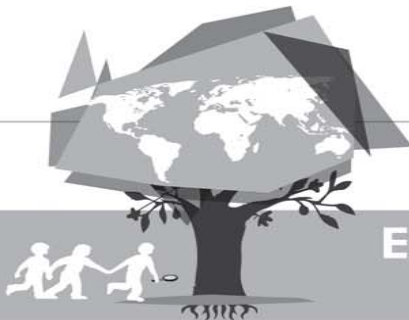
3. Maps by region in GC textbooks

- Majority of maps in GC textbooks are European maps (34.03%): mostly included in textbooks GC/5A and GC/8B.
- All other continents, regions or areas taken together (29.83%) are not as many as European maps.
- The third category in size includes maps of Cyprus (24.78%), all of which depicts Cyprus as not divided (except 2 cases).
- In all European maps, Cyprus is depicted as European, whereas Turkey and Russia are divided in European and Asian.
- When it comes to world maps, on 2 of these maps, Europe is clearly separated from Asia, whereas in the rest of the 8 world maps there is no clear demarcation of Europe as separated from Asia.
- There are very few maps of Greece (2.94%) or of the Earth as a globe/sphere (3.36%) or of the world (4.20%), the latter largely located in the older grades (7th and 8th).



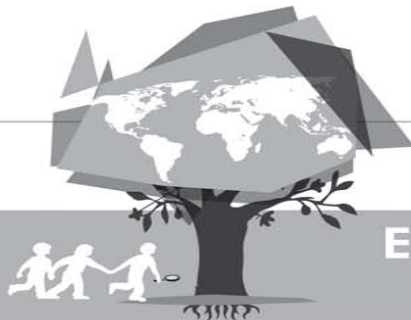
3. Maps by region & type of map in GC textbooks

- Most maps in Greek Cypriot textbooks were geophysical, climatic, or showing natural resources or vegetation (a total percentage of 35.28 % for these 4 types of maps).
- An approximate number of maps were political, economic or showing population distributions (a total percentage of 33.18%) i.e. illustrating human activity or interaction with geographical space, a finding indicating a balance between emphasis to physical geography with the human/social/cultural/economic geography.
- In the case of Europe, however, the majority of European maps are those depicting economic activity or geomorphological features.



3. Maps by region in TC textbooks

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	10	Total % (f)
Textbook	1A-B	2A-B	3A-B	4A	5A	6A	7A	9A	10A-B	
World	0	0	1	1	3	12	4	16	13	36.23 50
Europe	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	3.62 5
Turkey	2	1	2	3	0	0	2	17	18	32.60 45
Cyprus	0	0	0	4	6	1	2	0	9	15.94 22
Other Regions	0	0	0	6	0	0	1	1	8	11.59 16
Total	2	1	3	14	9	13	12	36	48	138



3. Maps by region in TC textbooks

- The majority of maps in Turkish Cypriot textbooks are world maps (36.23%), closely followed by maps of Turkey (32.60%). In the Life Sciences textbooks (TC/1A, TC/2A and TC/3A) the maps included are only those of Turkey and they are located at the very end of the textbooks; most maps of Turkey appear in TC/9A and TC/10A-B.
- European maps are the smallest category, whereas maps of Cyprus (15.94%) and other regions (11.59%) occur in similar frequency. Almost all maps of Cyprus illustrate the island as divided (with the exception of two maps)
- When Cyprus is included in maps of Turkey, it again appears as divided. There are only 5 maps of Europe, which are geophysical.



3. Categorisation of maps by region and type of map in TC textbooks

- Most maps in Turkish Cypriot textbooks were geophysical, climatic, or showing natural resources or vegetation (in total 43.46%).
- A smaller number of maps were political, economic or showing population distributions (in total 38.40%)
- The choice of geophysical maps to cartographically represent 'Europe' allows a certain openness in defining it: in these European and world maps, Europe is not separated from Asia or from any other continents with boundaries.
- Instead, Europe is generally shown in the world maps and there is just an inscription 'Europe'. In this way, 'Europe' is not rigidly defined as a geographical entity in the maps, nor in the text of the TC textbooks.



4. Locating Europe in GC curricula I

- Scant references in syllabi
- First references occur in GC/4A-B through study of Greece
- GC/5A (European Geography):
 - 2/3 on European content-out of date information
 - content organised around nation-states, mostly EU or Western European countries
 - stereotypical representation of each nationality
- GC/6A and GC/7A (World Geography):
 - Europeans as colonisers
 - References to Europe to provide economic data



4. Locating Europe in GC curricula II

- GC/8A (Cyprus Geography):
 - References to Europe to explain Cyprus's Europeanness
 - Majority of references to Europe denote economic data
- GC/8B (European Geography):
 - Content structured under 3 themes: geophysical characteristics, population and economy; case-studies of economic activity in various sectors; political and economic division of Europe, processes of change, position in the world
 - most informed by construction of geographic concepts
 - most sophisticated and diversified representation of Europe



4. Locating Europe in TC curricula I

- TC1-3A (Life Science)
 - Indirect references (Ataturk Week)
 - Examples from European countries (Flags and Nations; Our planet; Human Rights Week)
- TC4-5A (Social Science)
 - Emphasis on Citizenship rather than Geography
 - Emphasis on Cyprus; indirect ref. to Europe
- TC6A (Social Science: Geography)
 - scant references to Europe/emphasis on general geography
- TC7A (Social Science: Geography)
 - More references because of chapter on the EU
- TC9A & TC10A: (Social Science)
 - General geography/Colonialism/Migration
 - Eur. countries as examples



4. Representations of Europe: a qualitative and comparative perspective I

- **Europe as a geographic entity**

- Clear and rigid definitions of 'Europe proper' in GC textbooks conflating Europe's geographical with its political boundaries

- TC/10A: 'Cyprus belongs politically and culturally to Europe and geographically to the Middle East'

- **Europe as an economic entity**

- Quite strong across the divide because of references to the EU, colonialism and economic migration



4. Representations of Europe: a qualitative and comparative perspective II

- **Europe as a political entity**

- Europe as a safe-haven of democracy and respect for human rights (EU, CoE)
- limited emphasis compared to economic and cultural representations
- 'Europe' as a political entity used interchangeably with the 'EU'

- **Europe as a historical entity**

- stronger in GC textbooks-closely related to cultural representations: Greek and Roman past, Christianity, Renaissance in GC textbooks
- Industrial Revolution, Colonisation, World War I/II

4. Representations of Europe: a qualitative and comparative perspective III

• Europe as a cultural entity

- more obvious in GC textbooks: Greece and Rome as the cultural foundations of Europe: 'Europe was inhabited since very ancient times and its peoples progressed like nowhere else on earth. The European culture constitutes the continuation of the ancient Greek and Roman civilisation. An important element of the European cultural heritage are also the teachings of Christianity' (GC/5A, p. 100).
- colonialism as an opportunity for cultural oppression but also interaction
- culture is essentialised (language, religion, fine arts, scientific discoveries, education etc)



4. Representations of Cyprus as European I

- **More European content in GC textbooks because of how Cyprus is 'positioned' in relation to Europe**

- a. Economic relations with EEC since the 1970s and full membership in 2004: Recognised as the legitimate government on the island by the EU, the textbooks make frequent references to its relations with the EU as a clear-cut issue of membership despite division, a division not illustrated in almost any map in GC textbooks



4. Representations of Cyprus as European II

- b. Cultural definitions of Europe and Cyprus: Cyprus as European because of Greek-Roman and Christian heritage (ex. of maps in GC8B) which encourages divisions and excludes 'Others';
- c. a logical progression from national to regional
- d. "Cyprus, based on archaeological heritage, on the Christian and European tradition and culture follows its European orientation and destiny. Conquerors come and go. Nobody succeeded in changing its Greek and European character" (GC/8A, pp. 8-9)



4. Representations of Cyprus as European III

e. Paradox: Is Cyprus mono-cultural? Not when demography is examined in GC textbooks

f. TC textbooks: As 'Europe' is ambiguously defined, so its relation to Cyprus



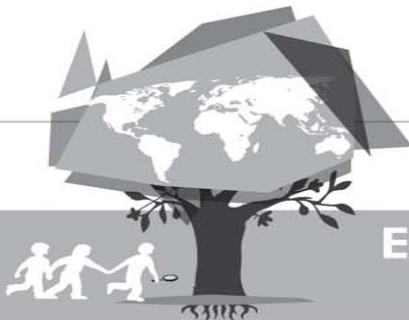
Discussion

Surprises:

- Despite EU membership, GC geography textbooks have not been updated
- Despite political context, no emphasis on Europe in the TC textbooks

Suggestions:

- review of textbooks so that they 'discuss' rather than 'teach' Europe: ongoing issues, debates, struggles in Europe need to be reflected in the curricula as challenging pedagogical material to structure discussions over European identity and Cyprus.



Limitations-Future research

- Absence of research on geography education
- This study restricted to curricula analysis; future research needs to explore geography curricula from a 'text-in-use' or 'reader-response' perspective (perceived, enacted, learnt curricula)
- How is Europe represented in other subject-areas such as History and Civics across the divide?



Discussion

Geography useful:

- in exploring the different definitions of 'Europe' over time and space
- in illustrating the constructedness of 'Europe'
- in highlighting the changing criteria we use to define it or countries 'inside' or 'outside'
- in introducing a European dimension to school curricula in inclusive ways



Acknowledgements

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Thank you
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