

Wereldgeschiedenis in het Onderwijs

Kwantitatief en comparatief onderzoek naar de niet-westerse component in schoolboeken voor het vak geschiedenis

(World History in Education. Non-Western history in school textbooks: a quantitative and comparative analysis)

Abstract in English

History education may be considered as the basis of the historical conscience of a society. The school textbook forms a vital means and at the same time a rich historical source for studies into historical culture, representation and imagination. Ever since the economic growth of sixties and the overall oil crisis of the seventies, postcolonial solidarity between the west and the rest has grown in cultural, economic and political respect. Also the interdisciplinary and scientific interest in world history has increased. To get insight in the degree and manner in which a world historical perspective features in the Dutch history education a vast quantitative measuring has been done, a number of specific case studies analyze this data qualitatively and comparatively in order to make up the contents and structure of the results.

By discovering a general tendency from the end of the eighties towards more constriction, impoverishment and generalizations of the non-western contents it is possible to conclude that particularly the policies of canonization and fixation on Eurocentric periodisations make it hard for textbooks to shift towards a more global outlook on history. Simply recycling historical frameworks as "antiquity", "the middle ages" or "the world wars" ensures an amount of distortion and clouding of any autonomous non-western experience. Also the traditional tale concerning for example the interaction between people and nature, or between city residents and nomads has a hard time coming to terms with the deeper structural and global history. The main conclusion is that the time has come for a world history textbook which on the basis of holistic and systematic macro-historical themes and categories and randomly selected, but fascinating micro-historical can provide the Dutch student a sound worldhistorical perspective, while the national narrative may take refuge in quizzes in history, or perhaps a separate course called "national history".