



Censorship

A World Encyclopedia

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CENSORSHIP

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History: School Curricula and Textbooks

History textbooks for primary and secondary schools have a wide reach and a potentially big impact. Censors therefore see them as vital channels for disseminating either approved and official or dissident and dangerous views of history. Authorities worldwide interfere in their production and distribution and monitor them closely. On the one hand, textbook authors are relatively free to express opinions, as they seldom depend on their authorship as a source of income; on the other hand, they lack the professional historian's academic freedom, as they must work under permanent pressure from political and educational authorities (and from publishers and textbook users).

Imposing official views

In many countries, authorities have attempted to align textbooks with the official vision of the past. The evidence, chronologically presented here, is abundant. In the Soviet Union, generations learned by rote the contents of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course* (1938), a highly distorted account of Russian and Soviet history attributed to Stalin himself, which in many revised editions, totalling 50 million copies in **print**, dominated history teaching for 15 years. Even after Khrushchev's 1956 de-Stalinization speech, official dogma kept the subject in a straitjacket for three more decades. In Indonesia, the teacher and journalist Sanusi **Pane**, head of the Office of Cultural Affairs under the Japanese occupation (1942-45), wrote his four-volume *Sedjarah Indonesia* (History of Indonesia) between 1943^{anc'} 1945- It became a popular school textbook. Its Indonesian nationalist tone was muted, due, at least in part, to the wishes of the Japanese occupation authorities who sponsored it. Their sponsorship may also explain why the first 1945 edition of the fourth volume did not include the overview of the development of the nationalist movement that appears in the 1950 edition.

One of the first directives of the new Bulgarian government, established in 1944, enjoined teachers "not to expound the positive actions of monarchs in history lessons, but to stress the tyrannical quality of their rule and the struggle of the oppressed people". Since at least 1954, history education at all levels in Tibet has been completely Chinese-centred and references to Tibetan culture and history have been treated with contempt. History teachers in certain European countries such as Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, Britain, and West Germany feared that official strategies to "modernize" secondary teaching in the wake of the May 1968 movement, by reducing or abolishing history in favour of subjects such as social studies, were partially inspired by history's less malleable nature. During Colonel Qaddafi's "Cultural Revolution" in **Libya**, in April 1973, history textbooks for more **recent** periods were extensively rewritten. The pre-eminent place given to the Sanusi family (to which former King Idris belonged) in accounts of the Ottoman and Italian periods was downgraded almost to the point of nonexistence. Under the military dictatorship in Uruguay (1973-85), periods deemed worthy of study included the Spanish conquest, the Catholic Counter-Reformation, and the reign of Philip II in Spain, during which Western Christendom, in the view of the military, was saved; certain historical events, such as the 1789 French Revolution, could not be ignored and remained in the study programmes, but teachers were advised not to cover them in any depth because this would "exalt the fruit of lewish-Masonic conspiracies".

When General Zia ul Haq assumed power in Pakistan in July 1977, the Education Department started to revise syllabuses at all levels in order to bring them into line with Islamic ideology and principles. The purged material included "atheistic" accounts of history. The rewriting of history books began in earnest in 1981, when Zia declared that it was compulsory to teach *Mutala'a-i-Pakistan* (*Pakistan Studies*) to all degree students. The course was based on the "Ideology of Pakistan" (the creation of a completely Islamized state). Topics that were distorted included the historic origins of Pakistan and its archaeological heritage (because of its largely non-Islamic nature); the sacrifices and anticolonialism of the Muslims in British India; the image of Ali Jinnah, first leader of independent Pakistan; the role of the '*ulama*' (religious scholars) in the nationalistic Pakistan Movement before independence; secularism and regionalism; and the portrayal of Hindus. Treatment of the 1947-77 period, including the 1948 war over Kashmir (fought when a civilian government was in power), the history of East Pakistan (including the

1971 civil war, the Indian invasion, and Pakistan's partition in December 1971), and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's rule (1971-77), was almost entirely neglected in the textbooks. After 1988, under the government of Benazir Bhutto, some of the distortions were rectified.

In the 1980s and 1990s, history and geography teachers in Transylvania, a region in Romania with a large Hungarian-speaking minority, had to be Romanian by government decree. This was considered provocative because Romanians and Hungarians gave conflicting accounts of Transylvanian history. In the early 1990s, another decree made Romanian the mandatory language for these subjects, despite protests from the Hungarians. In July 1997, the decrees were abolished. From 1990 on, the teaching of history in Kosovo (Yugoslavia) was "Serbianized" and Albanian history replaced with Serbian history. School textbooks were heavily censored.

In June 1996, the Hong Kong Educational Publication Association announced that school textbooks would be revised after 1997 to reflect the official Chinese view of history. More emphasis would be placed on Hong Kong's past as part of China. References to the Opium War (1840-41) were to be purged of "western bias", the co-operation between Sun Yat-sen and the warlords would be questioned, Taiwan would no longer be a "country", and there would be a ban on the expression "mainland China" with its implication that there is more than one China. Details of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre would be left to the discretion of individual editors, but fears were expressed by the Teachers' Union Resource Centre that schools were already dropping the use of teaching materials on the massacre in anticipation of a possible ban. In August 1997, Hong Kong textbook publishers revised modern history texts for primary and secondary schools, removing references to the Tibet conflict, the 1957 Anti-Rightist campaign, the Cultural Revolution (1966-69), 1976 dissident protests, and the 1989 Tiananmen massacre and its aftermath.

Censoring unwelcome views

Some authorities concentrate on censoring unwelcome views of history. In 1945, for instance, the Allied Powers banned all history textbooks that had been in use during the Third Reich and no history lessons were given in the reopened schools. Similarly, in September 1945, officials of the Japanese Ministry of Education issued detailed orders to amend wartime textbooks. Following this order, teachers and students deleted objectionable passages in wartime textbooks as they saw fit. From late October 1945, the supreme commander for the Allied Powers gradually asserted control over the textbooks, culminating in a total ban on the use of wartime textbooks on Japanese history in December 1945.

The United States and Brazil provide two notorious (but wholly different) examples. In the United States, some school boards attempted to tailor the textbooks to their views. In 1954, the school board in El Paso, Texas, banned the use of a history textbook that printed without comment the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration of Independence. The State Board of Education, however, rejected a demand to drop the book from its list. In the early 1960s, the Texas House of Representatives approved a resolution urging that "the American history courses in the public schools emphasize in the textbooks our glowing and throbbing history of hearts and souls inspired by wonderful American principles and traditions". In 1966, immediately after the election of Ronald Reagan as governor of California, school inspector Max Rafferty opposed any revision of textbooks aimed at giving

a fairer share to the history of ethnic minorities, such as *Land of the Free: A History of the United States* (1966) by John Caughey, John Hope Franklin, and Ernest May. In March 1987, a federal district court ordered the removal of 44 previously approved textbooks (including history textbooks) from Alabama public school classrooms on the ground that the books violated the First Amendment by promoting the "religion of secular humanism". The ruling was a victory for conservative Christians who claimed that secular humanism was essentially a religion, although based on human rather than divine values. In August 1987 the decision was reversed by a court of appeals.

In Brazil, the *História Nova* case occurred after the military coup of March 1964. In February 1964, five out of ten volumes of a new history textbook for secondary schools, *Historia Nova do Brasil* (A New History of Brazil) were published by the Ministry of Education and Culture. They were written by a small group of young history teachers under the co-ordination of General Nelson Werneck Sodré, a Marxist historian, head of the history department at the Institute Superior de Estudos Brasileiros (ISEB), and considered by many as the Brazilian Communist Party's official historian. There were heavy protests in several newspapers and on television against the apparent plan to make the textbook obligatory reading in Brazil. In March 1964, volumes one and two were out of print. A decision to reprint and to continue with subsequent volumes to be published by the Editora Brasiliense encountered a hostile atmosphere shortly after the coup. The controversial textbook focused on the Brazilian people and emphasized the economic dimension of history, but it was deemed subversive and the ministry withdrew its support. Articles, written by Sodre and others in July and September 1965, provoked further investigations and the military police moved against the authors, imprisoning and torturing them. The authors were deprived of all opportunities to lecture and, with the exception of Sodre, were exiled for many years. The textbooks were confiscated in the bookshops, burned and banned, and the ISEB was closed.

In Yugoslavia, a high school textbook, *History of Philosophy*, was banned in the early 1970s, because one of its authors, Miladin Životić, was a member of the dissident *Praxis* group. In 1981, demonstrations were held in the Soviet Republic of Georgia, in protest against the reduction of the study of Georgian history in the republic's schools and universities. In February 1984 the Greek Ministry of Education ordered the immediate dismissal of Dion Nittis, a teacher in an Anglo-American school in Athens, following complaints that he had been engaging in pro-Turkish propaganda. He had asked his class to write an essay on the 1974 Turkish invasion of northern Cyprus from the Turkish viewpoint and to compare it with the Greek view. He had included a few official Turkish government publications with the recommended reading for the class; the ministry invoked a 1931 law that prohibited foreign schools in Greece from holding any kind of educational materials considered unfavourable to the Greek nation. In Poland, 650,000 copies of a textbook, *Modern History* by Andrzej Ścieżniak, were withheld by the censors and ordered to be destroyed in February 1985, apparently because it touched upon "sensitive" facts that had been passed over in previous school books. In August 1995, president Alyaksandr Lukashenka of Belarus banned all history textbooks published after 1992, because they were allegedly "politically biased" and developed a nationalist version of the Belarussian past, contradicting his own russophile version. In anticipation of new textbooks, old pre-1991 Soviet texts had to be used. In practice, an outright ban was not imposed owing to textbook shortage. The issuing of the directive prompted the resignation of two deputy ministers of education.

Censors have also intervened before and after textbook production. Refusal to grant a book textbook status occurred, for example, in 1928, when a book by Gu Jiegang (Ku Chieh-kang), a historian famous for his critical discussions of Chinese antiquity, did not receive official authorization for use in high school because Guomindang officials denounced his treatment of the Golden Age as a myth. More frequently, interference has been at manuscript level. The Japanese example is telling. Since 1956 the Japanese Ministry of Education has screened all history textbook manuscripts, and many critical views are liable to censorship. Sensitive topics include: government policies; the national flag; the national anthem; the emperor, the royal family and their relationship to the Shinto religion. Also under scrutiny are the foundation of the nation; the 1889 Meiji constitution; the Korean independence movement of March 1919; armed forces atrocities during the Pacific War, including the invasion of China by the Japanese Imperial Army in the 1930s, the 1937 Nanking massacre, and the bacteriological experiments of Unit 731 at Harbin; the conscription of Koreans into forced labour in Japan during 1939-45; the 1941 Russo-Japanese NonAggression Pact; the question of "comfort women"; and the 1945 battle of Okinawa. Many believe that the textbook authorization system (*kentei seido*), in conjunction with other measures such as textbook selection, national examinations, and teacher job rating reports, lead to a narrow and centralized view of the past. Into the 21st century, numerous textbook manuscripts had to be adapted before they were authorized for use in the classroom.

"Textbook wars"

States are not the only bodies to interfere with the content of textbooks; unofficial groups have also tried to intervene, as demonstrated by an early case in Japan. On 19 January 1911, one day after 26 men charged with an assassination attempt against the Meiji emperor were convicted, a leading newspaper criticized the contents of a textbook entitled *Jinjo shogaku Nihon rekishi* (1906, Japanese History for Primary Schools), written by Kita Sadakichi and revised by, among others, Mikami Sanji, both members of an advisory textbook board at the Ministry of Education. It treated the Namboku-chō period (1336-92) as one in which two imperial courts co-existed on equal terms, thereby suggesting that the imperial authority was divisible, whereas the official line supported popular sympathy for the Southern Court. This sparked off a controversy in the press and a discussion in the Diet was prevented at the last moment. The opposition party Kokuminto and several societies, such as the nationalistic Society for the Protection of the National Polity of Great Japan, sent letters of protest to the government. In February, the cabinet decided to recognize the Southern Court as the only legitimate one (a decision approved by the emperor on 3 March). On 27 February, Kita was dismissed from the advisory board and placed on leave of absence from his position in the Ministry of Education. When his leave ended two years later, he resigned from the ministry. Mikami, director of the Institute of Historiography at Tokyo Imperial University, resigned from the advisory board voluntarily. The government appointed Shigeta Joichi, a professor of history at the Hiroshima Higher Normal School, to rewrite the textbook, and a new edition that focused on the role of the legendary imperial ancestors and endorsed the Southern Court legitimacy was published in October 1911.

In early 20th-century France, a textbook war took place when Catholics opposing state intervention organized petitions against "bad" textbooks, put them on the index and burned them. An unusual

example from the same country is the successful boycott by the French teachers' union in 1926-28 of 26 anti-German history textbooks and readers that glorified war. The publishers were forced to withdraw and replace the textbooks.

In the United States, the right-wing group Texans for America (TFA) intimidated the Texas state textbook committee in 1961 and pressed several publishers to make substantial changes to their books on US history and geography. The publishers Macmillan deleted a passage that suggested that World War II might have been averted if the United States had joined the League of Nations, and the Silver Burdett Company took out two passages on the need for the US to maintain friendly relations with other countries and on the possibility that some countries would occasionally disagree with the United States. The substituted passages simply stated that some countries were less free than the United States. Also in 1961-62, TFA took action against the use in Texas of the history textbook *This Is Our Nation* by Paul Boiler, a historian at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and Jean Tilford, a high school teacher. Boiler was accused, among other things, of being soft on communism, of omitting vital facts about American history, of giving too much space to the Native Americans and to the subject of slavery, and of providing a too favourable view of president Roosevelt and the New Deal. He received hate calls in the middle of the night. Despite the pressure, the book was adopted in November 1961. In 1962, however, the TFA sent out a four-page circular throughout Texas denouncing the book and threatening "indignation meetings" if it was selected anywhere. It was successfully boycotted in all school districts but one. In 1963 the TFA wanted 50 textbooks to be banned from the classrooms, including: *America: Land of Freedom*; *A History of the United States*; *The Story of Our Country*, *American History*; *Living World History*; *The Rise of the American Nation*; *The Story of America*; *The Record of Mankind*; *The Adventure of the American People*; and *United States History*.

In 1979 a conservative coalition in New Mexico demanded (apparently without success) that 43 textbooks be excluded from the state list of adopted textbooks, including many US history and civics or government textbooks. In 1983 the Texas Board of Education, considering world history books, ordered publishers to make several changes in the portrayal of prehistory and evolution, religion, capitalism, communism, and the New Deal, in accordance with the views of conservative groups led by Mel and Norma Gabler, a Texan couple active in textbook selection since 1961 and operating as Educational Research Analysts Inc. A few years before, an Alabama state board had removed *Unfinished Journey: A World History* from the approved list of school texts because it defended the evolutionary position. Unofficial action against textbooks also occurred elsewhere, although information on this is scarce. In March 1976 Server Tanilli, a university lecturer in Turkey, was denounced to the police by the paramilitary Hearths of Idealism, the youth movement of the Pan-Turkish Nationalist Action Party (NAP), for being the author of the textbook *A History of Civilization*. He was charged with subversion but acquitted in April 1978. A few days after his release, a group of youths believed to be NAP militants attempted to murder him; four bullets left him paralysed from the chest down.

Public controversies

Controversy over history textbooks often became a focus for public concern. In the early 1970s, a debate in the Peruvian media focused on the use of certain high school textbooks and whether history should be

more than a description of the heroic deeds of a few great men. In the Soviet Union, the final history exams for 16- and 17-year-olds and the annual examinations on the history of the Soviet period for other forms were cancelled in 1988, because the old history textbooks had been found full of lies: their credibility had disappeared. New textbooks appeared in 1989 and 1990. In 1997, the Slovak government announced that it would withdraw a controversial history textbook, *The History of Slovakia and the Slovaks*, by the Catholic priest Milan Durica. This followed an outcry from, among others, Slovak historians, who claimed that it denied the persecution of Slovak Jews during priest Joseph Tiso's pro-Nazi war regime (during which fewer than 10,000 of 70,000 Jews survived).

The following cases, describing controversies in India, Japan, Colombia, and Mexico, allow for some comparisons. In May 1977 the principal secretary to Morarji Desai, then prime minister of the newly elected Janata government (1977-79) ¹¹ India, sent a note to the minister of education about the contents of four books on Indian history (written at the behest of educational authorities, for use in the higher school classes and the primary stage of college instruction, and already prescribed in certain institutions). The minister was asked to consider withdrawing recognition. The textbooks were *Medieval India* (1967) by Romila Thapar; *Modern India* (1970) by Bipan Chandra; *Freedom Struggle* (1972) by Amal Tripathi, Barun De, and Chandra; and *Communalism and the Writing of Indian History* (1970) by Harbans Mukhia, Thapar, and Chandra. A fifth textbook, *Ancient India* (1977) by Ram Sharan Sharma, was added after it had been denounced at a mass meeting. The Education Ministry referred the matter to the publishers of three of the books, the National Council for Educational Research and Training, who dismissed the criticism.

A virtual ban on the use and reprint of the books did nevertheless occur. The most disputed feature was their interpretation of "medieval" Indian history, the period when Muslim rule prevailed in much of India (c. 1200-1757) and characterized by some as anti-national, anti-Hindu, and pro-Muslim. Much discussion centred around the question of whether Muslim rule could be called "indigenous" or "foreign". Other important points were the authors' attention to social and economic history and their propensity to explain conflict among elites primarily in political rather than religious terms. The controversy took place in the press (among others, between Thapar, who defended the secularist view, and Romesh Chandra Majumdar, who argued from the communalist point of view), journals of opinion, and in parliament. A leaflet against the authors was distributed, but teachers and students at two universities in New Delhi signed petitions in their favour. Sharma's book, published at the height of the controversy, was withdrawn from the syllabus in 1100 schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education in July 1978. The books by Thapar and Chandra were not formally withdrawn, but their distribution was *de facto* sharply reduced. Fourteen other textbooks were on a list of works to be withdrawn. After the Indian History Congress strongly supported the textbook writers, the Janata government encouraged the creation of a rival organization, the Indian History and Culture Society.

In Japan, a controversy of a different nature took place between June and September 1982. Many Asian countries, led by South Korea and China, disputed the ways in which some new textbooks portrayed Japanese military imperialism in Asia between 1910 and 1945. In July 1982, China lodged an official protest and, in South Korea, widespread anti-Japanese demonstrations broke out. One of the points raised in the debate was the extent to which foreign governments could interfere in the writing of a country's national history. In late August 1982, the Japanese government announced that it would correct the

textbook accounts and that the criteria for textbook authorization would be revised. Korea and China accepted this promise. At the end of September 1982 Japanese students clashed with riot police at demonstrations in which grievances were expressed over various issues, including the revision of history textbooks. In November 1982, a new policy for textbook examination and authorization was adopted, with, however, several exemptions.

In several October and November 1985 issues of *El Tiernpo*, Colombia's largest newspaper, German Arciniegas, president of the Academia Colombiana de Historia (Colombian Academy of History) and former minister of education, accused history textbook author Rodolfo Ramón de Roux (who, with Fernando Torres Londoño, had published *Nuestra Historia*, a textbook in two volumes, in 1984) of omitting or ridiculing the most important figures of the independence period and of overemphasizing contemporary history. He rejected the New History approach in Colombian textbooks as Marxist and non-patriotic. Despite the moral condemnation of the academy, the textbooks continued to be used in schools. In 1988, a third volume in the textbook series was published, *Historia de Colombia*, written by Silvia Duzzan and Salomón Kalmanovitz. A judgement of the academy condemning the New History methodology used in the textbook was cited approvingly in the daily *El Siglo*. In a March 1989 issue of the Medellín newspaper *El Colombiano*, an academy member added that it depicted Spaniards and Creoles unfavourably, thus inciting hatred against them. The academy urged the minister of education to censor the textbook. This was followed by a petition from teachers and professors of the National University in which they endorsed the textbook and criticized the academy's dogmatic attitude.

From August to October 1992, a history textbook controversy took place in the Mexican mass media over the contents of the new official mandatory history textbooks for 9- to 12-year olds. The new books, entitled *Mi Libro de Historia de México* (My Book of Mexican History), were intended to replace social science textbooks since, in May 1991, the minister of public education (the future president, Ernesto Zedillo) had declared that the public had an insufficient knowledge of national history. The protest was directed against what was called their biased interpretation of Mexican history, especially contemporary history (including a description of the October 1968 Tlatelolco massacre of students), in support of the legitimization of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party. Traditional (nationalist) heroes were excised or played down; the 1910 Revolution was no longer glorified. The *Porfiriato* (1876-1911), when president Díaz attempted Mexico's modernization at great human cost, was depicted as a liberal and technocratic precedent and rehabilitated. As a result of the protest, the government withdrew the textbooks. A year later, in August 1993, the revised editions, which broke off Mexican history in 1964, thus avoiding description of the 1968 events, aroused new criticism and they, too, were withdrawn. *Ad hoc* history teaching materials were distributed instead.

In India, Japan, Colombia, and Mexico the press was the main forum for the controversy. Parliamentary debates on school history were held in India and Japan. Everywhere large groups of historians were mobilized to express their opinion. The controversies were accompanied by attempts at censorship in all the countries except Mexico, where the debate concerned the admissibility of official propaganda. In Japan, the controversy acquired an international dimension because other countries disputed the portrayal of history in Japanese textbooks. In each case, the controversy constituted the most visible manifestation of a more deeply rooted conflict. In India, it was the clash between secularist and communalist views of history; in Colombia, a struggle between conservative and progressive views

of history; in Japan, a conflict between those who wanted a positive portrayal of Japanese history and those who also wanted to discuss its dark sides; and in Mexico, a collision between those who wanted contemporary history to support the ruling party and those who resisted this. In India, Colombia, and Mexico, it was also a conflict between traditional and modern methodologies.

Serious disagreement emerged in each of these countries about the textbooks' shift of emphasis from the history of great men towards the history of the masses and of daily life. The textbook controversies clearly show that history is an important issue whenever it concerns the public at large and future generations. They not only reflect very different interpretations of the past, but also, ultimately, different underlying conceptions of national identity.

Resistance

Some textbook authors, teachers, and students have protested against the mutilation and censorship of their textbooks. Two cases in which some success was achieved illustrate the forms of this resistance. Late in 1974 the Mississippi Textbook Purchasing Board refused to approve *Mississippi: Conflict and Change* (1974), by James Loewen and Charles Sallis, for use in state schools, giving no reasons for the ban. The book, the product of a collaboration between students and staff of Tougaloo and Millsaps Colleges, discussed racial conflict and pointed out the contributions of black people and other ethnic minorities to the state. The manuscript had been turned down by several textbook houses before Pantheon published it. In 1975, it won an award for the best work of Southern nonfiction. At the end of that year, the authors, together with many teachers and organizations in Mississippi, sued the state school authorities for permission to use the book on the ground that the only authorized history book championed white supremacy. In April 1980, the court ruled that the textbook "was not rejected for any justifiable reason" and that the ban was "motivated and influenced by racial issues". It ordered the book to be placed on the approved list for a period of six years. However, the *New York Times* reported in March 1981 that, in some schools, pressure, including threats of dismissal, had been applied against teachers interested in adopting the textbook.

The most famous example of resistance was perhaps that of a Japanese historian who initiated three suits against the state. In 1963 the Ministry of Education refused to approve the fifth revised edition of a high school history textbook, *A New History of Japan*, written by Ienaga Saburō. The author was asked to modify about 300 items. In June 1965, Ienaga filed a suit, the first of a series known as "the textbook cases". In them, he challenged the authorization system as an unconstitutional transgression of his freedom of expression, his academic freedom, and the children's right to education. Ienaga partially won his case in August 1997, when the Supreme Court ruled as illegal the deletion of references to Unit 731 and the Nanking massacre. At the same time, it upheld the Ministry of Education's constitutional right of textbook screening, saying that it did not constitute censorship, because it did not prohibit the book from being published commercially. In March 2001 Ienaga was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. In 1993 Takashima Nobuyoshi, a teacher of social studies in Tokyo, whose manuscript was also not approved, followed Ienaga's example and sued the state. In April 1998 a district court ruled that two changes to his textbook demanded by the ministry were illegal. The court ordered the ministry to pay damages to the author.

Textbooks remain a most sensitive area of attention. In May 2000 right-wing parliamentarians in Chile (unsuccessfully) tried to persuade the Lagos government to withdraw a Ministry of Education primary school history textbook that covered the 1973 military coup. They complained about 19 "tendentious" or "biased" assertions, including the use of the word *golpe* (coup), instead of *pronunciamiento* (pronouncement) to describe the coup. In June 2000 the Spanish Real Academia de la Historia (Royal Academy of History) published a report in which it criticized the systematic omission of Spanish and non-contemporary history and the nationalistic bias in some high school history textbooks of the Galician, Basque, and other regions. The report sparked a controversy. In July 2000 the writer Edward Said criticized Palestinian Authority history textbooks for obliterating the history of post-1948 Palestinian Israeli relations with the aim of not disturbing the Oslo peace process. In November 2000 Francesco Storace, a member of the far-right Alleanza Nazionale in Italy, voted for the creation of a commission to evaluate history textbooks in the Lazio region. This sparked a controversy because professional historians feared that it was the first step of a process in which right wing political parties would demand the end of the antifascist paradigm, a condemnation of the communist experience and a re-evaluation of the Republic of Salò which fought against the partisans after the 1943 armistice. In Turkmenistan, president Saparmurad Niazov ordered that the entire printing of a new Turkmen history textbook be burned. And in March-April 2001, South Korea, North Korea, China, and Taiwan protested against a nationalist Japanese history textbook.

Terence Leonard, a member of the British textbook section of the Control Commission of Germany after World War II, used to say that if foreign offices would read foreign history textbooks, they could save all the money they spent on agents' reports on public opinion abroad. The examples given here show that, on the contrary, authorized textbooks in many countries tend to reflect public opinion only poorly, or not at all: they are barometers for the views propagated or condoned by the authorities. There often remains a huge gap between the history taught at school and the history remembered and told at home, with the former supplemented and corrected by the latter.

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Hojas de Parra (Parra's Pages)

Chilean play by Jaime Vadell and José Manuel Salcedo, with texts by Nicanor Parra, 1977

Many observers have come to regard *Hojas de Parra* as the first significant act of resistance to the dictatorship of the Chilean military. There had been other acts of dissidence in theatre. The first was the Aleph Theatre's production of *Y al principio existia la vida* (And in the Beginning There Was Life), soon after the military takeover in 1973, which portrayed the captain of a sinking boat addressing his crew in words reminiscent of president Allende's last address to the nation on the day of the coup. The play was closed down days after it opened; its director and several members of the cast were arrested and jailed.

In late 1976 the prestigious Teatro Ictus opened *Pedro, Juan y Diego* (Tom, Dick and Harry), written collectively by Ictus and sociologist/playwright David Benavente around the widespread problem of unemployment. It was the first play since the Aleph incident that dealt with themes of the times. But until *Hojas de Parra*, no play had such a large-scale public impact.

During the successful run of *Pedro, Juan y Diego*, actors Jaime Vadell and José Salcedo, who had been part of Ictus for six years, found themselves in disagreement with other company members about what their theatre company should be doing under the military government, Salcedo and Vadell believed that, with the string of successes to its credit, Ictus could risk moving out to larger, more massive spaces. Failing to convince those members of the company who preferred to conserve the security of a more