EUROCENTRIC HISTORY IN SPANISH TEXTBOOKS

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Abstract

This paper examines the presence of Eurocentric bias in mainstream Spanish textbooks used to teach history in secondary education. The research objective is to analyse how the relationships between Europe and colonised populations are presented in history textbooks. The research hypothesis is that Spanish textbooks have a Eurocentric bias, involving not questioning colonialism. To this purpose, a representative sample of six textbooks was selected, and those chapters related to imperialism, colonialism and decolonisation processes were subjected to content analysis, in three dimensions: written information, pictures and maps. The methodology involved comparing the textbooks' narratives, conveyed both through text and images, with the consensual historiography about colonisation processes. The results show the persistence of a 'Rosy Tradition' sustaining certain continuity with the old colonial propaganda, for instance minimising or ignoring colonial violence; treating colonised territories and metropolis asymmetrically, disregarding non-European history; conveying a stereotypical image of colonised and colonisers through pictures, and resorting to maps with a colonial perspective. The conclusions bring forward some proposals that could improve the teaching and learning of the history of colonialisms, in order to avoid reinforcing the Eurocentric bias already existing among secondary students.

Keywords

Colonialism, Eurocentrism, School textbooks, Teaching history, Secondary education.

Representations of the age of imperialism: background of the study

The analysis of imperialist processes in the classroom allows us to better understand ethnocentrism in the teaching of history. Europe dominated a large part of the world using its military, economic and technological development and during this process there were considerable changes to its perception of other societies and of the perception of other societies towards Europe. Studying these processes enables us to approach the contacts between cultures, which, according to Berlin (1991) and Christian (2004), fosters progress and generates significant collective learning. The analysis of the circulation of knowledge regarding these processes becomes especially relevant in a globalised world in which Europe is losing weight in favour of its former colonies or semi-colonies.

Textbooks are the main and sometimes sole school resource in Spanish mainstream teaching (Valls, 2007). They influence almost every activity carried out in history classes in secondary education, including oral explanations and exercises.

Changing textbooks is necessary and, as pointed out by Mikk (2000), much easier than to change thousands of teachers through professional development. However, research into this field is still lacking in many aspects. There are no global studies about textbook dissemination (Nicholls, 2003), nor much consensus regarding the basic principles about how to analyse them. Institutions such as the *Georg Eckert Institute* and authors like M. Apple who have addressed this issue have not explicitly described their instruments of analysis. The future of textbooks is uncertain, as they may be replaced by electronic resources. These, on the other hand carry on many of the traditions, bias and shortcomings of the textbooks themselves. Furthermore, for the time being they prevail over other pedagogical materials.

Colonial domination acquires relevance when analysing ethnocentrism in modern history textbooks. Conklin and Fletcher (1999) highlight the legacy of racism and European nationalism. For instance, a sample of 13 French textbooks used in primary education have been analysed in a report edited by Falaize (2009), showing that, although there are more pages accorded to colonial processes, and a greater range of documents presented, the narrative about colonialism continues to reflect the euphemisation that omits colonial violence and racism. Drawing from Marc Ferro's (2003) notion of 'Rosy Book' in opposition to the Black Book and Black Legend, terms used to denote historical narratives allegedly exaggerating the darker aspects of Spanish colonisation, we call this treatment of colonial violence the *Rosy Tradition*. This *Rosy Tradition* is characterised by omitting or downplaying slaughter, genocide or mass deportations; by ignoring the relationship between colonialism and slavery or the relevance of the development of weapons in the establishment of large empires in such a short period of time. According to Fernández-Armesto (2000, p. 357) historical narratives also avoid referring to violence, '*slavery, environmental plunder, massacres practised as a sport or the use of terror as a form of government*' whenever a given society considered itself to be more civilized than its victims. Such omissions generate a serious educational problem, given that teachers, at least in France (Falaize, 2009), do not offset this discourse: they usually emphasize the size of the empires but not the reasons for the conquest.

There are few studies examining how colonialism is addressed in textbooks, one for instance is that of Falaize (2009). Our research has the aim of bridging this gap, by examining content related to colonialism and decolonisation processes in Spanish textbooks. The Spanish case has particular relevance for these issues, due to its past as coloniser.

Research Objectives and Methods
This paper is part of a doctoral research on the teaching-learning of imperialism (Pousa, 2012). It consists of interviews of students and a classroom study during one academic year. The research objective is:
To analyse how the relationships between Europe and colonised populations are presented in history textbooks. It has three specific objectives:

1. To analyse the *written content*, examining how issues related to colonialism and decolonisation are addressed, or if they are ignored.
2. To analyse how *pictures* represent colonisers and colonised.
3. To analyse the images of colonised territories carried out by *maps*.

For the sample six history textbooks of the 1st year of the Baccalaureate (16–17 year old) from five of Spain's major publishers were selected. They have the largest share of the market, with about 80 % presence in schools (Valls, 2007). Four of them are from 2008, and two from 2002, in order to explore whether there were changes in approach.

The textbooks were published by: Anaya (2008), Rodeira (2002), Santillana (2008); SM (2002; 2008) and Vicens Vives (2008). The complete references are given in the Appendix. The following acronyms are used: SM 02 and SM 08 for the textbooks by SM, VV for Vicens Vives, and the full names for the other three.

The methodology involves recursive content analysis, comparing the textbooks' visual and written narrative about European colonisation processes with consensual history about these processes in current historiography. The categories emerged from an interaction between the literature and the data: First the chapters addressing colonisation or

decolonisation processes were analysed, and a preliminary list of issues, such as violence, consequences of colonialism, non-European history, or asymmetrical treatment of Western and non-Western territories, was drawn up. Then the textbooks were subjected to a second round of analysis, leading sometimes to a revision of categories.

The results are presented in three sections, addressing respectively the objectives about written content, pictures and maps.

Eurocentric bias in written content

This section discusses findings related to the first objective: To analyse the *written content*, examining how issues related to colonialism and decolonisation are addressed, or whether they are ignored. The findings are distributed in seven subsections, although these issues are closely intertwined.

Addressing violence: Forgotten or minimised massacres

Do textbooks address the violence involved in colonisation and decolonisation processes? Textbooks ignore issues such as the lack of interest and information in the metropolis about what happened in the colonies, the participation in colonial expansion of ruthless characters like H.M. Stanley or killings that are key to understanding the rift between colonisers and colonised such as Amritsar (1919), Sétif (1945), Croke Park (1920), or Madagascar (1947). Amritsar is mentioned in one section, significantly called *Beyond Europe (*Anaya, p.306), presented outside the common structure in chapters, dealing with Extra-European history and in sepia, all of which reinforces its secondary character. Sétif is quoted only as a reference (Anaya, p.374) to 40,000 deaths in Algeria in 1945, without mentioning that it was a massacre, the name of the place, nor its occurrence on the same day that Germany surrendered to the Allies. The fact that it was triggered by the killing of around a hundred Europeans is not mentioned either. The concealment of the violence carried out by the colonised during the liberation processes is also noteworthy.

Events such as the genocides of the Herero (German South West Africa, now Namibia) and Tasmanian peoples (Australia) are forgotten, as is the attempted one on the Khoisan (Southern Africa). The only genocide that finds its way into textbooks is the Shoah. Not knowing about such facts makes it more difficult to understand decolonisation processes and the reparations demanded by former colonies.

One outstanding case of such historical misinformation lies in the references to Leopold II's Congo. The textbooks reviewed ignore the extreme cruelty of the conquest of Central Africa and they merely mention the condition of the Congo as a territory privately controlled by the Belgian king, without explaining it. They maintain the propaganda version generated by Leopold, introducing him as '*sovereign entrepreneur*', '*the world's first trader of ivory and cocoa*', or they speak of the '*rubber industry in French Equatorial Africa*'. They declare a success in Leopold having established as personal property a territory '*90 times the size of Belgium*' (Anaya, p. 151) that he 'bequeathed' to his country and emphasize its title of 'free state'.

None of the textbooks mentions the tragic destiny of the native peoples or quote the doctrine of *terra nullius*, that is so important in order to explain the actions carried out by the colonisers, nor how many national identities, as for instance those of Argentina, Chile or Australia, were built around the opposites of civilization/barbarity.

In summary, the textbooks adhere to the narrative that casts colonisation as a mere 'commercial' or 'trade' issue, ignoring the violence exerted against the natives and, by doing so, they distort Europe's past.

Consequences of European colonialism: The fate of tribal societies
Do textbooks discuss the consequences of European colonialism in the transformation and disappearance of indigenous societies? The way the consequences of European colonialism are addressed may be appreciated in how empires are described: a section present in every book, which merely enumerates territories and their metropolis. The only criticism of colonisation is formulated in the sub-sections on the consequences of Western expansion. This is done in a brief and general manner, although no ethnocentric or cultural bias is perceived: textbooks apply the same criteria of analysis to non-European colonialisms, as to Japan's. None of the textbooks mentions the failure to educate colonised populations, especially girls.

Tribal societies only fit into the history curricula when addressing prehistory. This perpetuates the 19th-century stereotypes basing historical explanations on theories of progress. As there is no conflict among nation-states, the fact that nomadic hunter-gatherer or primitive agricultural societies were displaced from the territories in which they had been evolving for millennia is ignored or minimised. We interpret these findings as another way of minimising colonial violence, by not addressing the consequences of colonialism for the indigenous peoples.

Internal colonisations: The United States and other American countries
How are processes of colonisations internal to nation states addressed in textbooks, if they are addressed at all? Internal colonisations have been common phenomena in the establishment of some nation states, causing the disappearance of native cultures. Such processes are usually ignored in the teaching of history. In the textbooks examined, they are neither explained as multi-secular phenomena nor are they identified with a form of colonialism, as Fernández-Armesto (2001) and Kaplan (2006) do. The only internal colonisation described is that of the United States, which merely enumerates events, emphasizing '*expansion*', and excluding events which damage the image of white Americans as the *Trail of Tears.* There is no mention of the 378 treaties breached by the whites nor that, even in 1987, the justification for the expropriation of native lands in the US was based on the 'right of conquest', ignoring that there had been no declaration of war nor any peace treaties to justify it (Wilmer, 1993).

In the explanation of the birth of the United States, the perspective adopted is that of American colonists seeking emancipation from Great Britain, ignoring the fate of indigenous societies. The revolutionary character of the American Revolution is highlighted. However, the fact that this led to the construction of a British empire is omitted, and the American War of Independence is never related to similar movements that later took place in the rest of the continent.

There is no room either for similar events that happened in Canada or Brazil, nor for the wars against the Indians in Patagonia and El Chaco. However, some textbooks address the great migrations of Europeans starting towards the end of the 19th century to the 'new' territories, stating that they brought opportunities for progress. Such a viewpoint implicitly justifies the extermination or at least the dispossession inflicted on native peoples.

Empire, stereotype and propaganda
Do myths, stereotypes and propaganda justifying colonisation persist or are they questioned? Conflicts originated during the invasion processes and defeats suffered by Europeans are omitted. Knowledge about them would facilitate dismantling the myth of the military inability of conquered societies. This colonial legend (Ferro, 1994) still prevails as the explanation in the cases where there have been no anti-colonial rebellions, and it is

extended to decolonisation processes. Not much relevance is attributed to the feelings of national humiliation in the decisions to create and maintain the empires. This *Rosy Tradition* also incorporates Romantic and Orientalist elements created by imperial propaganda. For instance all books analysed mention the crowning of Queen Victoria as Empress of India and this territory as the '*jewel in the crown*', more or less in the words of Benjamin Disraeli.

Textbooks implicitly assume Western exceptionalism. As Wolf (1982) puts it, an historical interpretation is promoted based on the myth of a chain of progress linking Ur to New York, surrounded by extensions devoid of history that were lost at the different stages of an evolutionary line that leads to the present of the West. A significant example could be the section on the 'Triumph of Europe' in the book by SM 02 (p. 106), which includes a text entitled 'Europe, Queen of the World'.

The asymmetry in the presentation of colonial history may be appreciated in the limitation of the time frame for colonialism to the conquest phase. There is no mention either that the role of Europe in the history of the world prior to the Age of Imperialism was but secondary, or that only the Industrial Revolution granted Europe the supremacy.

The West is identified with the idea of progress and freedom, as for instance in lesson 22 in the Rodeira book, and it is connected to the Enlightenment, the American Declaration of Independence, The Bill of Rights of 1689 and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, overlooking the struggles elsewhere in the planet against European domination, slavery or extermination. Furthermore, the Enlightenment may also be related to the origins of the prejudice of white supremacy (Bowden, 2009; Todorov, 2006), and the 19th century educational ideals of Ferry and Sarmiento are directly related to extermination and colonial domination.

European aggression is sometimes concealed under bizarre justifications. For example, when discussing the Opium Wars, it is stated that '**opium and *tea* were *products** especially valued* by Westerners and were at the origin of various confrontations' (Anaya, p. 132; bold type in original). No party is singled out as being responsible for such '*confrontations*' and by using bold type the drug trade is equated to that of a soft, invigorating drink. In summary, textbooks do not question old colonial mythical and stereotypical representations of colonialism, reproducing propaganda versions of colonisation.

Asymmetrical treatment: Images of non-Western countries associated with poverty and opposition to progress

Is there symmetrical or asymmetrical treatment of colonisers and colonised societies? How are non-Western countries, formerly colonized, presented and which associations are established between them and dimensions as wealth–poverty or progress–backwardness? In the textbooks the colonies are framed in the Third World, either when addressing the Age of Imperialism or decolonisation processes, which we interpret as a manifestation of cultural bias. Thus, current underdevelopment is presented as an unsolvable, apparently eternal problem, omitting the evolution of countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, Brazil, India or China. Textbooks do not mention modernisation processes in non-Western societies, with the exception of Japan. There are no references to Muhammad Ali, Li Hongzhang, Prince Gong or King Mongkut, for instance, and the Ottoman Tanzimat is only mentioned in one textbook (Anaya, p. 136). The image usually transmitted is one of societies reluctant to change and modernize, which only yield when confronted with violence.

Textbooks treat colonised societies and territories in an unequal and asymmetric way compared with Western ones in these five dimensions:

a. *Borders*: The artificial nature of the borders in those areas subjected to colonial domination is highlighted, overlooking the fact that borders of the metropolis are artificial too.

b. *Traditional cultures*: No parallelism is established between the disappearance of the traditional cultures in Europe (Weber, 1993) and those of the colonies.

c. *Bourgeoisie and nationalism*: There is no mention of the parallelism between the development of the bourgeoisie and nationalism in the colonies and in the metropolis.

d. *Forced labour laws*: The similarity between metropolitan legislation, such as the British *Poor Laws*, and other legislation that forced colonised peoples to undertake forced or underpaid labour is overlooked (Fieldhouse, 1981).

e. *Conquests versus colonies*: Different terms are used for similar situations, such as referring to European territories as conquests and non-European territories as colonies.

In summary, the textbooks deal in an asymmetrical way with Western colonisers, associated with freedom and progress, and colonised people, associated with poverty and backwardness.

Colonialism and non-European history
How do textbooks deal with the non-European history of countries colonised and those not colonised?

There is no room in textbooks for the history of non-European countries that were not colonised. This way students cannot adequately comprehend the causes and consequences of the independence or conquest of one territory or another.

When addressing Africa, the clichés of tribalism and Africa's immense wealth are overstated; and when approaching India's past the caste system is stressed, a stereotype linked to the idea of the immutability of non-Western societies, despite their being rather dynamic before the onset of the British Raj (Bayly, 1993). The absence of any mention of pre-colonial African history is partly due to the predominantly oral nature of the sources (Flint, 1994), towards which historians have shown certain mistrust.

Eurocentric views are perceived in the treatment given to religious beliefs. The emphasis is almost exclusively on the role of Christianity, and often only that of Catholicism. The role of missionaries as active agents of colonialism is minimised, whereas their influence in decolonisation processes is overstated.

In summary, textbooks adopt an ethnocentric perspective that implies disregard for non-European history.

Relationships among colonisation, science and technology
Are the connections among imperial expansions and scientific and technological development addressed?

The history of science and technology is used to further enhance Europe's image. Advances and discoveries are presented in isolation from society. They are usually limited to a couple of sections enumerating scientists, theories, inventions and dates. A perspective prevails in the historiography that is hardly concerned about technological factors (Headrick, 1981). The importance of technical progress in imperialist expansion is ignored. For the textbooks technology is only equivalent to material progress.

None of the textbooks relates the Industrial Revolution to imperialist expansion, despite the fact that historiography usually considers it, together with nationalisms, to be one of its major causal factors (Doyle, 1986; Cain and Hopkins, 1993). There are no more than mentions of the origin of a supposedly scientific type of racism, popularised as a distortion of Darwin's theories (the so-called social Darwinism). Racist theories were part of mainstream science until the 1940s (Puig and Jiménez-Aleixandre, 2011).

During the 19th century, changes to armaments and military organization influenced European politics and societies (McNeill, 1993) contributing to the European expansion (Christian, 2007; Hobsbawm 2005; Akehurst, 1970). However, none of the textbooks mentions the evolution of weaponry that supported the idea of a superior race by turning war into a 'sport' (Fernández-Armesto, 2000; Ferguson, 2001; Lindqvist, 1996; Wilmer, 1993).

In summary in all the dimensions examined, the representations of different aspects of colonialism are combined in an image that downplays or disregards the violence exerted on the colonised peoples. This bias is supported in an asymmetric representation that casts Western colonisers as the embodiment of freedom and progress, while colonised peoples are represented as deprived of history and lacking the will to rebel and resist foreign conquest. Such prejudice may hinder an appropriate comprehension of the historical dimension of colonialism. The ethnocentric perspective may also induce students to establish hierarchies among societies based exclusively on their levels of wealth and power. Besides, it creates a tendency to underestimate the achievements and contributions of non-Western societies. Fig. 1 summarises the dimensions analysed in written content.
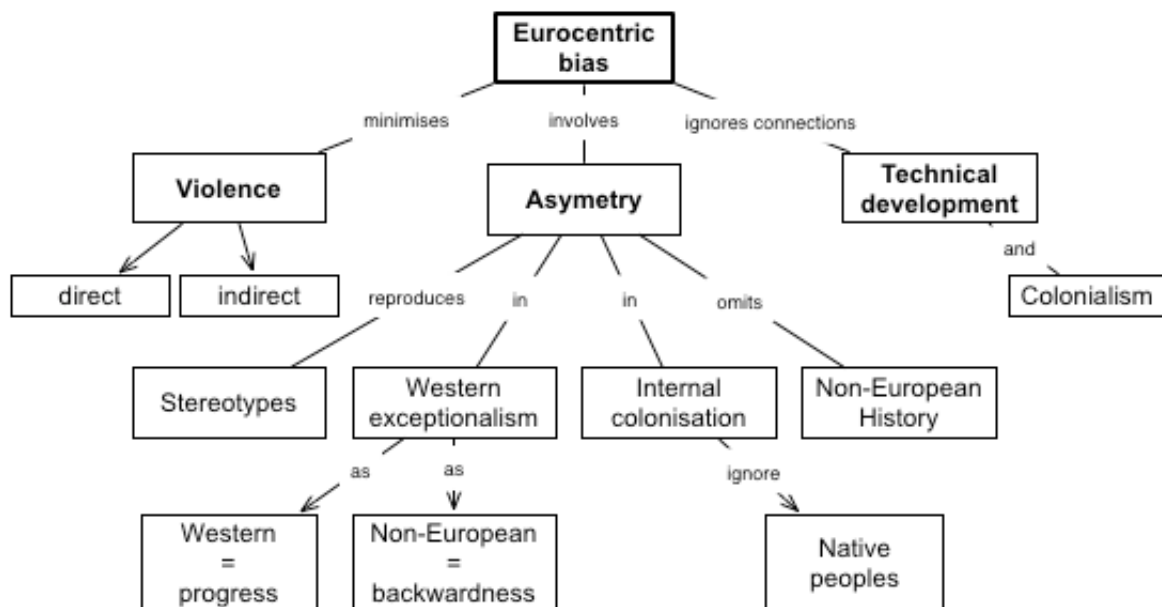

Fig. 1 Summary of dimensions of Eurocentric bias in written content

Ethnocentrism in the pictures in textbooks
This section discusses findings related to the second objective: To analyse how *pictures* represent colonisers and colonised. These paratextual elements are often considered secondary, but their role, especially that of images, is highly relevant for their immediacy and impact. We will discuss first how colonised are pictured, then the images of colonisers.

Images of the colonised: portraits

The analysis shows that the same biases found in written text are also present in images. In the images related to decolonisation there is dominance of political portraits, the image of Gandhi being the most frequent one: his picture is in every single textbook. His portrait is always one from his last years, wearing a *dhoti*, conveying a fake image of a peaceful Third World, and omitting his evolution since his youth: from being a student in Great Britain to a young lawyer who finds his roots. This is a common feature for many pro-independence anti-colonial leaders. Gandhi's cliché image may induce viewers installed in the prejudices of Western culture to agree with the description by Churchill, who referred to him as an 'Indian fakir' (Metcalf and Metcalf, 2002). We have confirmed this stereotype in the classroom research when several students identified the anti-British leader of the film *Gunga Din,* directed by George Stevens in 1939, for wearing 'diapers' (a dhoti). The only picture to defy the stereotype is a photo of Senghor in the book by VV (p. 247), wearing glasses and a suit, in an image that may be associated to that of an intellectual (Fig. 2).

The most common pictures related to colonialism are photographs of natives performing physical tasks or reiterating stereotypes of poverty or exoticism. Their function is not clear, as native labour is neither an issue that is especially addressed in the text nor a concept so difficult to understand that requires visual reinforcement. However, it is remarkable how little attention is directed to plantations, which could be easily associated to colonialism, as well as the absence of harsher, well known images, such as the severed hands from Leopold's Congo, or the human zoos, which raised students' interest during the research carried out in the classroom.

Fig. 2 Photograph of Leopold Senghor (Vicens Vives textbook p. 247)

There is only one photograph representing the degrading treatment suffered by colonised populations, (Fig. 3) with an expressive caption: "*Australian aborigines tied with cattle chains, in 1901*". Despite its interest, the picture is small –5x5 cm–, located in a sidebar and it is not mentioned in the text discourse, only beneath it in a little box about "*The colonisation of Oceania*". This is one of the few mentions of a genocide derived from European colonialism: "*…it meant the extermination of almost the whole of the aboriginal population and the implantation of a European socio-political organization*".

Fig. 3 Image of Australian aborigines (Rodeira textbook, p. 114)

Many pictures reproduce negative clichés that present natives as childish or mentally retarded adults, ridiculed in their reactions to technology and the customs of the 'civilized' man. Because these images have been produced in colonial times for an audience that assumed the superiority of white man, if they are not subjected to a critical reading, they may end up reinforcing the stereotypes that students may have.

Images of the colonisers: explorers and missionaries
There is a prevalence of images of missionaries, in their role of educators, and of explorers, and very few of metropolitan politicians or of the military. They are figures that transmit dignity and positive values: authority, culture, power or goodness. Many of the drawings have been taken uncritically from colonial propaganda.

In a typical example, the most frequent image in textbooks of the birth of the United States of America represents the triumph of liberalism: John Trumbull's painting about the draft of the Declaration of Independence. There are very few pictures, however, addressing the expansion towards the West, or portraying events such as the battle of Little Big Horn or the meeting at Promontory Point. The latter is not even located on any map.

Cartel de propaganda xaponesa contra os británicos na India, 1944.

• Describe o cartel e analiza a súa intencionalidade.

There are some images with an anti-colonial perspective when addressing colonialism. However, they are almost non-existent concerning decolonisation processes. One interesting exception in one textbook shows a picture of a Japanese propaganda poster during World War II (Fig. 4), in which the British appear as ridiculous characters who are humiliated by the Indians (VV, p. 246). It is an unusual representation for several reasons: for being infrequent, for the message it conveys and for the use of a non-formal work of art.

Fig. 4 Picture of a World War II Japanese propaganda poster (Vicens Vives textbook. p. 246). Caption: Japanese propaganda poster against the British in India, 1944. Task: Describe the poster and analyse its intentions

Images of colonised territories in maps
This section discusses findings related to the third objective: to analyse the images of colonised territories carried out by *maps*. The analysis of maps shows that they reproduce similar stereotypes: little attention is paid to continental empires and even less to non-European ones. The Rosy tradition is expressed by the absence of battles, killings and forced displacement of populations. European migratory movements towards the colonies have little relative importance. Maps convey thus an aseptic image that misrepresents history.

Africa is the focus of most colonial world maps, while colonisation of other continents is almost absent from them. The most frequent maps of Africa depict the colonial partition. They show which territories belonged to each empire, and include many place names that are hardly significant to students. It is the representation of a *fait accompli*, a triumph. There is no room for the social and human consequences. Only four of the maps of Africa show the situation prior to the conquest, and out of these only in two are there mentions of the main ethnic groups and political entities as the Mandinga, Ashanti or Zulú Empires. In all books, the number of maps of Africa does not correspond to the extent of the information written in the text: there are many maps of Africa, contrasted with very little information about it. This leads students to connect colonialism mainly to the African continent.

In some of the maps of Africa, and also of the US, imperialism is connected to raw materials and the colonial conquest in search of wealth that Atkinson (1995) states as being characteristic of Fascist Italy (Figs. 5 and 6). This economic idea is reasserted in the written discourse. It also reflects the concept of *terra nullius* that justified the Conquest of the Desert in Argentinian historiography: no man's land waiting for someone to come along and occupy it to exploit its wealth. Some maps of the US take recourse to euphemism, such as mentioning each territory that 'joins' the Union, the use of the term 'expansion'; not representing the process of conquest nor representing the Indian Wars. In the best of cases some further data is added at the margin of the main text or in the captions.
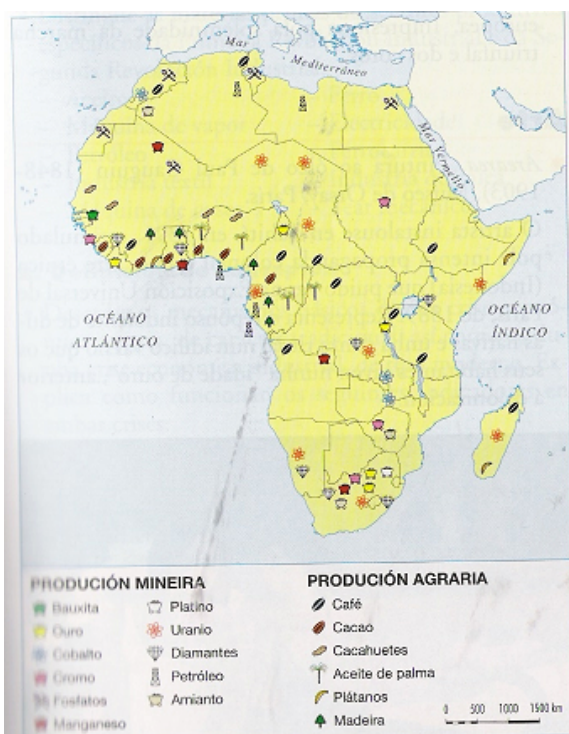

Fig. 5 Economical map of Africa

Fig. 6 Africa as a rich land full of raw materials, over which there would be conflicts (SM 08 textbook, p 349). Caption 'A loita polos recursos en Africa' means 'Fight for resources in Africa'.

Conclusions and educational implications
This paper analyses how the relationships between Europe and colonised populations are presented in Spanish history textbooks. Our findings point out to some deficiencies and omissions in history school textbooks. There is an ethnocentric bias found in written text, pictures and maps that, by minimising or ignoring colonial violence, dealing asymmetrically with colonised territories and metropolis, or disregarding non-European history, combine to draw a view of colonisation and decolonisation processes at odds with current bibliography.

In general, representations of colonialism correspond to a naïve, Eurocentric historiography model that uses the nation-state and the myth of continued progress (Citron, 1984) as the sole framework for explanation. Textbooks also include models and approaches about colonialism, which contradict the very democratic values that they formally proclaim (López-Facal, 2000). They have not incorporated elements from historiographical currents that started in the 1980s, such as the so-called New Cultural History that opened up new perspectives: for example, giving voice to groups such as the colonised peoples. By pointing out such deficiencies, our aim is not to demand more content, but to reveal the paradigm reflected in them.

Some educational implications that we bring forward may be able to offer a different perspective: one developing a critical history education. To this purpose, other viewpoints would have to be incorporated and conflictive or controversial issues addressed. Reformulating the content and activities relating to colonialism could take into account issues as the following:

Relating metropolis and colonies and not addressing them as separate topics. Relating some forced homogenization process in a nation-state to the indirect debate of assimilation-domination that is typical of colonial mentality. Discuss similarities between anti-colonial and European resistance to conquest. It is also important to relate colonialism and decolonization and to explain the effects of colonialism in the changes of mentality, both in the metropolis as in the colonies.

a. Discussing the consequences of colonialism in the present. For instance, relating colonial domination to the dissemination of racial prejudice and showing the perception towards Western societies in the formerly dominated countries. On the other hand, explaining the effects of colonialism in the change of mentality, both in the metropolis as in the colonies.

b. Including content from the pre-colonial history of the dominated societies.

c. Discussing the birth, development and decline of some powers, going from being a dominant to a dominated country.

d. Explaining the relationship between scientific discoveries, technological innovation and imperialist policies.

e. Highlighting the relationship of imperialisms to the processes of miscegenation and multiculturalism.

f. Questioning the interpretation of decolonisation as the failure of the 'civilizer ideal' in formerly colonised societies. Analysing and comparing colonial and anti-colonialist propaganda.

g. Revisiting cartography associating the creation of infrastructures, migratory movements and exploitation of wealth with its human and environmental costs; reflecting the consequences of the conquests and using original place names and not westernized ones.

A teaching sequence incorporating this approach has been implemented in the classroom, as part of the doctoral dissertation of the first author, and is discussed in other papers.

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Appendix: list of textbooks examined

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RODEIRA: González Fernández, X. (2002). *Historia do mundo contemporáneo [History of the contemporary world]*, A Coruña: Rodeira-Edebé.

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SM02: Tussell, J.,Sepúlveda, I., Tussell, S., Sueiro, S. & Mateos, A. (2002) *Historia del mundo contemporáneo [History of the contemporary world]*, Madrid: SM.

SM08: Otero Carvajal, L.E., Fernández Bulete, V. & Gómez Bravo, G. (2008) *Historia do mundo contemporáneo [History of the contemporary world]*, Madrid: SM.

VV: Aróstegui, J., García, S., Gatell Arimont, M., Palafox Gamir, J. & Risques Corbella, M. (2008) *Historia do mundo contemporáneo [History of the contemporary world]*, Barcelona, Vicens Vives.

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