

Chapter 3

The National Curriculum and History School Textbooks in Australia and the Russian Federation

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Introduction

History has special significance in decision making about what should be emphasised in a national curriculum for whilst it is concerned with phenomena that no longer exist, in another sense “the past is not dead at all; it exists through the ways in which we understand the past, and in the personal, cultural and intellectual inheritance we each have” (Portal 1987, p. 13). In analysing the new content of the national curriculum in history in Australia and in the Russian Federation, we examine how the new curricula position new representations of the nation and historiography and how this is foregrounded in history school textbooks. We are mindful of the ways in which curriculum documents are indicative of efforts of governments at particular times to secure the nation’s past in the present with an eye to securing the future (Attwood 2005) and the curriculum’s officially defined status as an instrument in the process of ideological transformation and nation-building. The chapter also examines how history texts are both implicit and instrumental in this process in terms of what content and skills should be selected and emphasised. It is structured in two parts with a focus on the history curriculum in Australia and the Russian Federation, respectively. The chapter concludes with an identification of some of the features of nation-building discursively positioned in history curricula and textbooks in both nation-states.

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Globalisation and National Curriculum Reform in Australia: The Re-emergence of History

In Australia, education policy reform aimed at aligning educational outcomes with the national interest, and delivered through a national curriculum, is one of the strategies by which the national government is responding to global shifts and increased regional interaction. Education policy making is especially complex in Australia as under the nation's constitution, the States and Territories have autonomy over education, and this autonomy has prevented previous federal governments from succeeding in developing and implementing a national curriculum. However, by 2010, Australian State and Territory ministers meeting at the nation's peak body for policy making at the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA), agreed to the development of a national curriculum. This decision was indicative of desire to have greater consistency in education matters across the nation as much as it was to do with linking education policy with national economic policy.

The development of a national curriculum in Australia also reflects those policy decisions about what version of the nation's past should be afforded historical significance, and what should be transmitted to future generations of young Australians. As Rizvi and Lingard (2010) put it, national curriculum reform is "central to the imagined community the nation wishes to construct through schooling" (p. 96). History is positioned in the new Australian Curriculum as a compulsory learning area. This is the first time history will be taught nationally as a stand-alone subject from kindergarten to year 10 and concludes a period of neglect in which history was taught in some States as a component, or strand, of an integrated social education subject referred to as Studies of Society and Environment, or Social Education. Indeed, one prominent Australian historian contended that the teaching of history in Australia had been impoverished because of this integrated curriculum approach (Macintyre 2010). Given its new status in the curriculum as a compulsory subject, non-specialist teachers, many of whom have not studied history, are now expected to teach the new curriculum as there are not enough specialist history teachers. With little or no understanding of the discipline of history, these teachers often rely on commercially produced school textbooks to provide knowledge and skills for themselves and their students. It must be noted that teachers in Australia, as in the United Kingdom, are able to select the textbooks they wish to purchase for use in classrooms, unlike systems in some nations whereby approved or government-produced texts are prescribed. In effect, these textual representations of the past and historiography become the *de facto* voice of authority in classrooms.

The Australian History Curriculum: Conflicting Discourses

Prior to examining the problematical aspects of teacher reliance on history textbook narratives, the debates about how this new history curriculum was developed, what it emphasises and what should be represented in school history textbooks are briefly traversed with reference to two conflicting discourses:

One is the ideological world of politicians and journalists whose chief concerns are which history should be taught in schools and whether the agenda to construct the curriculum has been set by the radical-socialist left or the ultra-conservative right. The other is the world of professional curriculum developers and practising classroom teachers who are faced with the everyday challenges of how to teach history in an engaging way to Australian school children in the compulsory years of schooling. While those in the “first world” are busy arguing ideology and wrangling for media bites, those in the parallel world of curriculum development are quietly going about the business of carefully selecting topics and pedagogies that best suit the interests and needs of Australian students aged five- to sixteen-years who come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and have varying levels of literacy, cognition and behavioural capabilities (Zarmati 2012, np).

The contention surrounding the teaching of history, evident in an address by a past Prime Minister, John Howard in 2012, is indicative of the conservative critique that new *Australian Curriculum: History v0.3* (ACARA 2012) was unbalanced. Specifically, Howard claimed that the curriculum did not “properly reflect the undoubted fact that Australia is part of western civilisation; in the process it further marginalises the historical influence of the Judeo-Christian ethic in shaping Australian society and virtually purges British history from any meaningful role” (Howard 2012, p. 4). In critiquing the national history curriculum, Howard’s comments reignited the history and the culture wars concerning how different Australian historians represented the clash between white settlers and Indigenous Aborigines (Blainey 1993; Macintyre and Clark 2003). Assertions that the new history curriculum was “written by an ex-communist” (Pyne 2012) and the implication it was drafted by one individual, were also made in 2012 by the (then) Opposition Spokesperson for Education, providing further evidence of the ideological contestation surrounding the curriculum. This was despite the fact that the statutory authority established to develop the curriculum, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), involved a range of educational stakeholders in the curriculum development process. These stakeholders included teachers, principals, governments, state and territory education authorities, teacher educators, professional education associations, community groups and the general public.

School History and Nation Building

At once level, such debates are indicative of the robust nature of Australian democracy and federalism; at another level, they are indicative of the history curriculum’s role in the process of ideological transformation, nation-building and citizenship education. Teachers are key players in the debates about the nature of narrative and the role of the history curriculum in nation-building. According to Guyver:

They are at the cutting edge, indeed agents at the interface between the nation’s children as they are now and those children as future citizens. The very process of teaching can model aspects of citizenship – a model that has implications for life-long attitudes and relationships, and no one aspect of teaching history has more potential for shaping mindsets than narrative (Guyver 2011, p. 38).

Prior to exploring how history texts are both implicit and instrumental in this process, it must be noted that contention about what content should be selected and emphasised in a national history curriculum is not limited to Australia and has played out in other nations (Curthoys and Docker 2006). Moreover, given the wide ranging breadth of any nation's past and the public imaginary of what might be valued from this past, it is questionable as to whether consensus will ever be achieved on what should be emphasised in curricula and textbooks. In fact, such contention about what should be afforded importance goes to the heart of the studying the past, history's construction as a subject in the school curriculum and its representation in textbooks.

The History Curriculum: Design and Emphases

The *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: History* (ACARA 2009), which established the parameters for the drafting of the new history curriculum, drew from international research on historical pedagogy and focused on those components of historical understanding based on 'core' concepts to be addressed in the history curriculum. In the current curriculum, these are identified as seven concepts, namely, evidence; continuity and change; cause and effect; perspective; empathy; significance; and contestability. This focus reflected the work of Peter Lee who described core understandings as organising ideas that "give meaning and structure to our ideas of the discipline of history" (Lee 2006, p.131) and Peter Seixas' (2006) model of how students learn to think historically. The most recent version of *The Australian Curriculum: History v7.2* (ACARA 2014) presents history as a disciplined process of inquiry into the past and positions the nation's history in a world history context. Whilst a world history approach can encompass a range of theoretical approaches and is often considered to be a sub-discipline of history, in broad terms its usage infers a rejection of 'the nation' as the sole focus of historical analysis. According to one of the writers of the framing paper for this new curriculum, the decision to embrace a world history perspective was made with the view that students would be better placed to understand Australian history if they appreciated "the long history of other places and other peoples" (Macintyre 2009, p. 11).

Currently, the national history curriculum is organised into the two interrelated strands of historical knowledge and understanding, and historical skills. Significant content is presented in 2 year bands from a broadly thematic expanding horizons and semi-chronological approach to Australian history in the early and primary years, to a more overtly chronological focus from years 7 to 10. This chronological focus is designed so that students will not encounter the repetition of topics for investigation. Key questions are posed at each year level to foreground inquiry approaches to those topics considered to be significant. Statements of Achievements Standards, indicating the quality of learning students should typically demonstrate at the end of each year, describe the quality of learning in terms of the extent and depth of knowledge and understanding as well as the sophistication of skills.

Students study the history of the modern world and Australia from 1918 to the present, with an emphasis on Australia in its global context in year 10 (Henderson 2015).

The Production Use of History Textbooks

The development of the history curriculum in Australia prompted a flurry of publication efforts by commercial publishing houses eager to produce textbooks for sale. History textbooks play a significant role in the social construction of knowledge about what is significant in classrooms and frequently serve as vehicles for constructing particular ideological standpoints about the nation's past. As Seixas (1997) reflected of earlier texts: "both historical monographs and school textbooks carried the message, implicitly, that historical significance lay with powerful white men and their decisions and activities" (p. 22). The current generation of textbooks produced in Australia in response to the focus on inquiry-based learning and increasing emphasis on social history has challenged this notion of significance. However, history textbooks continue to play a role in shaping the development of historical consciousness, that process by which particular events and viewpoints are included or omitted into the collective memory as public history. According to Jörn Rüsen (2005), historical consciousness can be conceptualized as 'historical sense-generation' or a process through which individuals make sense of the past and this involves "a mental procedure by which the past is interpreted for the sake of understanding the present and anticipating the future" (p. 47). Given that teachers interpret and implement curriculum documents and select textbooks, much depends on the choices they make. This is because History textbooks are powerful in shaping how history is encountered and learnt in a disciplinary sense, how young people come to 'think historically' (Stearns et al. 2000; Wineburg 2001; Sandwell 2006) as well in relation to the content emphasised. Recent research in Australia suggests that history teachers rely heavily on textbooks. For example, Anna Clark (2008) noted that many teachers continued to rely on and teach the same material simply because they did not have access to other resources or the possibilities for professional development to do any different.

Indigenous history is the most obvious example that came up in the interviews—because it is such a contentious and difficult topic to teach, teachers end up offering what they're familiar with. Yet teachers also talked more generally about the problems of feeling equipped to teach original and engaging units of work year after year. David was one teacher who wished he could be more original in history at his public school in central Australia: I tend to use textbooks but I don't think it's the best way. I think personal experience for the kids—you know, excursions and role-plays – I think that's the best way to do it. But we're a little bit resource restricted here, plus for us to go to any of the wartime sites for example, we have to travel to Darwin and that's two days, extremely expensive, it's a thousand kilometres each way (Clark 2008 p. 6).

Research in the United States and Canada found that textbooks are also significant in shaping students' developing notions of historical significance by ascrib-

ing importance to events on the basis of history, as told to them by ‘objective’ authorities, such as teachers and textbooks (Rosenzweig and Thelen 1998; Seixas 1997). However, as with any source of information, textbooks need to be interrogated for their standpoint and accuracy. In her examination of history textbooks written specifically for the new Australian history curriculum in years 7–10 from major education publishers, Forrest (2014), a critic of the national history curriculum, contended that:

What we found was a selection of books which contained so many outrageous statements and factual errors that they were worthy of a critique on their own. The errors and distortions found in these textbooks are not just problematic for their own sake: they reveal the fundamental ideological biases of the national curriculum itself. Most schools across Australia are now using at least one of them for Year 7 to 10 history classes. To be clear, not everything about these textbooks is bad. The best of them are glossy, colourful, filled with bright and interesting images, and also very pleasant to leaf through. And some are much better than others. The content and quality of some sections is also excellent. Usually, they provide very good – if somewhat superficial – introductions to World War One and World War Two, and generally they provide some excellent content on technological advances and changes in the economy during the Industrial Revolution. Nevertheless, these history books often appear to be filled with factual errors, controversial statements, and unwarranted generalisations ... In all cases, the historical content in the textbooks essentially cuts off at the end of the unit on the Second World War, which varies in quality depending on the publisher but is usually more-or-less adequate. One would expect these chapters to be followed by another on the post-war world and the Cold War. This is not the case. (Forrest 2014, nd)

However, some textbooks written prior to the development of the national history curriculum continue to be used and adapted by teachers. These texts offer students opportunities to inquire in depth into issues related to national identity and to redefine and enlarge traditional notions of historical significance such as Hennessey’s (2009) chapter which explores the significance of Australia’s involvement in the Gallipoli Campaign of the First World War and the Kokoda Campaign during the Second World War. During their investigation of primary and secondary sources, students are encouraged to consider how war can play a role in building a nation and forging a national identity and how history and legend become intertwined through remembrance. Henderson’s (2009) chapter in the same textbook explores the impact of migration on Australian identity. The chapter is structured to prompt students to inquire into the different ways in which waves of migration changed the composition of Australian society and forged a more cosmopolitan national identity. Students are encouraged to consider how Australia is distinct from other societies; that it is a multicultural immigrant society created by public policy and direct state action over a period of 200 years.

As noted earlier, history textbooks are produced and sold in Australia by commercial publishers for profit. Such textbooks vary enormously in quality and emphases. Some texts reduce significant periods of history into glossy double-page spreads with a survey approach and scant attention to detail. Others present extracts from primary and secondary sources for students to investigate but provide little introductory narrative to contextualise these sources. Furthermore, history texts are expensive and because of this sometimes texts of lesser quality are purchased simply because they are less costly. Ideally, history teachers should have a variety of sets of textbooks to use in their classrooms so students are exposed to a wide ranging inter-

pretation of their national history and not be blinkered by the way a nation's past is discursively positioned through one textbook.

The National Curriculum in the Russian Federation

The chapter now focuses on the national history curriculum, standards, and history school textbooks in the Russian Federation. Some scholars have examined structural forces and processes exerted by the state and other major stakeholders in defining a 'new direction for history education' (Erokhina and Shevyrev 2006, p. 11). This chapter examines the complex, and ideologically and culturally saturated landscape of Russian school textbooks, which is grounded in a new approach to comparative historiography and context-specific processes (Aleksashkina 2010; Zajda 2013; Zajda and Zajda 2005). Some Western scholars of Russian school textbooks note that they pay little attention to the Soviet repressions and mass deportations of ethnic groups. Furthermore, many Russians do not like to know of the Red Army's wartime atrocities and about complete indifference to human life by the Soviet high command.

The Russian Federation is a vivid and unique example of ideological repositioning of historical narratives, blending certain Soviet and Russian historiography. According to President Vladimir Putin (2012), the curriculum should focus on the formation of 'common civic values, to consolidate the Russian nation', and avoiding, in his opinion, 'biased interpretations' of history:

We have to develop common approaches and views...especially in Russian history, and the history of the people of the Russian Federation...there should be no distortion of facts, and biased interpretations of the history of our country. (http://www.edu.ru/index.php?page_id=5&topic_id=3&date=&sid=20188&ntype=nuke).

Furthermore, Putin (2012) said that that quality education is impossible without values education:

I am asking the government to prepare a programme for the development of the values education components. In the first place, it should be contemporary... (http://www.edu.ru/index.php?page_id=5&topic_id=3&date=&sid=27068&ntype=nuke)

Consequently, the new textbooks portray, as part of values education, a re-invented national identity and patriotism, thus signalling a radical ideological transformation, towards Russian pluralist democracy, and redefinition of what are seen a 'legitimate' culture and values in Russia.

The National Curriculum in History

As a result of radical reforms in education, curriculum and pedagogy, history education in Russian secondary schools changed significantly. The structure and content of history curriculum were radically changed from the 'traditional linear

one, starting from objectives and ending with assessment/evaluation (in Grades 5–11) – to a cyclic one, where curriculum is a continuous cycle, responding to the changes within education, where any new information or practice will bring desirable pedagogical changes’ (Aleksashkina 2011, p. 63). In addition, Liudmila Aleksashkina (2011) defines the following major qualities of effective modern history textbooks:

- presentation of history at different levels from the history of civilisations and states to that of an individual;
- use of different sources of historical information (documents, illustrations, etc.) alongside an author’s text;
- inclusion of information on different forms of historical perception;
- dialogue between pupils and those who participated in the events under discussion and the historians who wrote about them, etc.;
- use of more emotive information which enables pupils to form their own attitudes to peoples and events portrayed in their history textbooks (Aleksashkina 2011, p. 66).

Earlier, Aleksashkina (2006) singled out the following major qualities of modern history textbooks:

presentation of history at different levels from the history of civilisations and states to that of an individual; use of different sources of historical information (documents, illustrations, etc.) alongside an author’s text; inclusion of information on different forms of historical perception; dialogue between pupils and those who participated in the events under discussion and the historians who wrote about them, etc.; use of more emotive information which enables pupils to form their own attitudes to peoples and events portrayed in their history textbooks History Education in Europe: Ten Year Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Council of Europe (2006) (Aleksashkina (2006, pp. 47–48).

National Standards in History Education

Aleksashkina (2006) stressed that standards in history education should ‘contribute to universal concepts of the past and the present, analytical thinking, research skills, and the ability to discuss historical and current issues, which is crucial for today’s democracy’ (Aleksashkina 2006, p. 25).

The first generation of national history standards for Russian schools was approved by the Ministry of Science and Education and introduced in 1993 (see Federalny component gosudarstvennogo standarta obshchevo obrzovaniia 2004; Zajda and Zajda 2005) [1]. Since then, according to Aleksashkina (2010), three new models of history standards ‘were approved by the Ministry of Science and Education of the Russian Federation: the 1998, 2003–2004 and 2009–2010 national standards’ Fundamentalnoe iadro sodержaniia obshchego obrazovaniia (Fundamental core of contents of general education) (2009) Aleksashkina (2011, p. 64). Aleksashkina was the main author of the latest second generation standards of National curriculum in history policy document.

The main goal of history education in schools is the development and the cultivation of student's identity, to instil the ability for the self to determine values and priorities, based on the historical understanding of one's country and the world. The *History curriculum program for secondary schools: Grades 5–9 (2010)*, which defines second generation standards in history education [2]. The core objectives of teaching history in secondary school include:

- Development of the younger generation of civil, ethnic and national, social, and cultural identity;
- Mastery of the historical knowledge about the main stages of development of human society from ancient times to the present day in the social, economic, political, spiritual, and moral spheres, with particular attention to the place and role of Russia in the world-historical process;
- Educating the students in the spirit of patriotism and respect for the Fatherland – the multinational Russian state, in accordance with the ideas of understanding, of tolerance and peace among people and nations, in the spirit of democratic values of modern society;
- Developing the ability of students to analyse various sources of historical information about events and phenomena of the past and the present, and the principle of historicism;
- Formation in the students the ability to apply historical knowledge to understand the nature of modern social phenomena, and communicating with other people in a modern, multicultural, multiethnic, and multi-religious society (History curriculum program for secondary schools: Grades 5–9, 2010, pp. 5–6)

The History curriculum is a compulsory subject in grades 5–9. It has 374 h in total: in grades 5–8, 2 h per week, and in grade 9, 3 h per week. The History of Russia course combines the history of the state and its peoples. This course provides an overview of the main stages of the historical evolution of the Motherland, with emphasis on holistic and expressive characteristics of major historical periods and processes. The most important 'ideological objective' of the course 'History of Russia' is the 'realization of both originality and uniqueness of Russian history and its relation to the ongoing process of world history'.

When studying the history of Russia it is expected that students learn the handling of regional history, which provides a reservoir of historical knowledge, a rich visual and vibrant information and therefore meaningful and interesting for students. An important 'ideological objective' of the course 'History of Russia' is the realization of 'both originality and uniqueness of Russian history and its relation to the ongoing process of world history':

When studying the history of Russia it is expected of students to demonstrate the handling of sources covering regional history, which provides a reservoir of historical knowledge, a rich visual and vibrant information and therefore meaningful and interesting for students. It is assumed that in the course 'History of Russia' a portion of the training time is devoted to the study of regional and local history (the number of hours in specific subjects varies, as determined by the individual regions, in connection with the most important steps in their local history).

It should be emphasised that in general, the new history curriculum is a ‘multi-level review of the history of the state and its peoples, history, region, city, village, and family’. It responds to the priorities of education and educational objectives:

the development of interest of pupils for the past and present of their country, the realization of their civil and social identity, in a broad spectrum, that includes ethno-national, religious, and other components, and the development of memory and patriotism, and citizenship.

History classroom pedagogy requires knowledge of dates, facts, and names. They are used as a basis for any activity in the study of history:

This course plays an important role in recognizing student’s historical (understanding and knowledge implications) concerning diversity of the world, which is a prerequisite for understanding and respect of other people and cultures.

Relevant curricular activities in history classes, include excursions, dealing with the cultural history of towns and cities, such as architectural complexes of the Kremlin, castles and palaces, of urban areas, as well as places of historical events, historical and cultural monuments, war memorials, and monuments (Standards in history Russia 10, 2010 [3]).

History Curriculum: Grades 10–11(12)

History curriculum for Grades 10–11(12) has the following five pedagogical aims:

- Development of civic and national identity...on the basis of historical knowledge of cultural, religious, and ethno-national traditions, moral values and social structures, ideological doctrines, and the expansion of social experience of students, using their analysis of the forms of human interaction in history.
- Development of capacities to understand historical limitations of events and processes, and critically analyse received historical knowledge, and established a personal position towards surrounding reality, and historically created world views systems.
- Mastery of systematic knowledge of the history of humanity and elements of philosophical and historical and methodological knowledge of the historical process.
- Mastery of skills and approaches towards a complex approach to work with a variety of historical sources, researching and systemising of historical information, as the basis for research activities.
- Developing historical thinking—the ability to perceive events and phenomena from a perspective of historical context, and the ability to find historical context of various versions and evaluations of the events in the past and contemporary events. Be able to define and argue one’s own position towards contested historical problems.

The History of Russia curriculum for Grades 10–11(12) covers the following topics:

1. The people and ancient states on the territory of Russia (from the Kingdom of Rus in the ninth century to Russian kingdoms in the twelfth to mod fifteenth centuries)
2. The Russian state during the second half of fifteenth and twentieth centuries (from the unification of Russian kingdoms to the formation of the Russian state, to World War 1, the revolution and the civil war, the USSR: 1922–1991, the Russian Federation: 1991–2007) (Standards in History Curriculum for Complete Secondary Schools: Grades 10–11/12 2010).

The National Education Standards in History (2010) define the following six essential skills in history education:

1. Development of the foundations of civic, ethno-national, social and cultural self-identity of the student...mastery of national treasures of the Russian society...
2. Mastery of historical knowledge from the ancient times to present... [the use] of cultural approach in the analysis of social events and global processes.
3. Developing skills in the use of historical knowledge for thinking about contemporary events...
4. Developing significant cultural and historical perspectives for understanding civic...identity and understanding the historical legacy of Russia and the world.
5. Developing skills for searching, analysis and comparisons and evaluation of various historical sources concerning the past and present events and define and argue a personal stand towards them.
6. The cultivation of respect towards the historical heritage of Russia and understanding of traditions in historical dialogue (Source: National Education Standards 2010, Appendix [4]).

Conclusion

In evaluating the new history curriculum in Australia and the Russian Federation, especially the interpretation of social and political change, significant events (looking for possible new biases and omissions), leadership (the contribution of key individuals), and continuities, as demonstrated by the above, we can draw the following five tentative conclusions:

1. The notion of *continuities* or how people in the past tried to preserve social, cultural, and economic aspects of the society, especially between 1917 and 1945, especially the importance of cultural heritage, and traditional values (e.g. religious revival during World War II and since the 1990s) occupies a very important place in current history texts.
2. *Leadership*, or the contribution of key individuals in politics, war and the arts continues to be a significant theme in all history texts. Students now have a

greater access to primary sources, particularly documents, which are used during classroom discussion of the events, and key leaders.

3. *Change*, especially political, economic, and social transformations, and the impact of change on people's lives is also addressed. The text and other material used in schools attempt to compare different perspectives about a significant event, or a key participant.
4. *New Ideology*, or the transformation from communism to democracy, and the impact of political events on people, their values and attitudes is also given a far greater prominence. The notions of patriotism and nationalism, as before, continue to occupy a central part in the new consciousness.
5. *Ideological Reproduction*, or an ideological re-positioning of post-Soviet representation of the historical narrative with the emphasis on cultural heritage, tradition, and patriotism is an attempt to create a new hegemonic synthesis, and a new form of the control of meaning through Foucauldian 'discipline' and the 'regime of truth'. The new ruling class, as Marx had predicted in *The German Ideology*, has given its ideas the form of universality and authenticity.

Given that the students are exposed to so many heroes and role models—from Aleksandr Nevsky (who defeated the Swedes in 1240), Peter the Great, to Vladimir Putin, which values are they to internalise on their journey of discovering democracy and citizenship in the Russian Federation in the twenty-first century? (Zajda and Smith 2013; Zajda 2014). Russia is not alone in discovering a moral vacuum, and the current absence of a sense of cohesion or a sense of belonging to the civic culture. Similar discoveries have been made in other societies (Torney-Putra et al. 1999, p. 14).

As above analysis of the national history curriculum shows that there has been a definite ideological shift in interpretation and emphasis of historical narratives. It signals a pronounced exercise in forging a new identity, nation-building and a positive re-affirmation of the greatness of the present Russian state (Zajda 2015). It also represents a clear denial, or another form of 'characteristic amnesia'. In general, the national history curriculum in the RF continues to emphasise the historical greatness of the Russian State—from the ancient *Rus*, the Imperial Russia, to the Soviet Union, as a super power, during the period between 1950s and 1980s. Added to this nostalgia for the past is the new concern for teaching the values of active citizenship, human rights and social justice—a new way of looking at the state and society.

Notes

1. *Otsenka kachestva podgotovki bypusnikov osnovnoi shkoloy po istorii* (The assessment of quality of preparation of middle school history students).(2000). Moscow: Prosveshchenie.

2. *Primernye programmy po uchebnym predmetam. Istoriia. 5–9 klassy (2010)* (Samples of Syllabuses for School Subjects. History: Grades 5–9). (p. 9). Moscow: Prosveshchenie.
3. Interview with Aleksandr Shubin, an author of numerous history textbooks in Russia, 6 September, 2011, the Russian Academy of Education, Moscow.
4. Interview with two history teachers: Yulia Trushinskaia and Irina Burikova, 7 September, 2011, the Russian Academy of Education, Moscow.

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