



10

The School Uses of History: The Tangled Portrayal of the Spanish Civil War in History Textbooks (1970–98)

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1 Introduction: War, Identity and Textbooks

In recent years, research concerned with the analysis of textbooks has increased considerably (Foster 2011; Fuchs 2011). In Spain, there have been notable initiatives such as the MANES Project (Puelles Benítez and Tiana Ferrer 2003; Somoza 2006; Valls Montés 1999, 2007a; Beas 2013; Ossenbach 2014). At an international level, consolidated proposals for research have also been made, including by the Georg Eckert Institute (Radkau 2000; Fuchs 2011), and studies carried out by independent researchers (Apple and Christian-Smith 1991; Johnsen 1996; Foster 2011, 9–14). Textbooks are, without doubt, a key source for the analysis of curriculum content and, above all, of the kind of knowledge transmitted to pupils over different periods.

Historians of Spanish education have paid particular attention to the portrayal of the Spanish Civil War in Baccalaureate textbooks (Álvarez

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Osés et al. 2000; Boyd 2006; Valls Montés 2007a, b; Marina Carranza 2012). The importance of this period in twentieth-century Spanish history has certainly not gone unnoticed in the majority of school textbooks. The main reason for this is that the Spanish Civil War formed the transition between two key historical periods, the Second Republic and Franco's dictatorship, which "has meant that it is also one of the most sensitive subjects to be dealt with in history textbooks" (Valls Montés 2007b, 155). In fact, the one-sided view that textbooks have offered for a long time on this topic has led various eminent historians to complain about their historical inaccuracies (Casanova 2014; Bel Martínez and Colomer Rubio 2017).

The need to carry out research into history textbooks has been more than justified: they are not neutral objects, as many of their explanations are not exclusively oriented towards "true history" or "real history" (Foster 2011, 5). School textbooks have been influenced by a variety of power relations, meaning that the selection or omission of content is not just the result of academic considerations (Foster 2005).¹ Textbooks contain values, ideas and knowledge influenced by different social elements; the intention is that their content will be absorbed and legitimized by the students who use them. As a result, the selection of textbook content is an intensely political activity in which tension, controversy and heated debate often arise over the definition of "which knowledge is the most valuable" (Foster 2011, 5).

However, it is not just the will to untangle ideological messages transmitted about the Spanish Civil War per se that has led researchers to focus on this topic. Traditionally, the teaching of history in schools has suffered constant political intervention, as this subject is one of the most effective ways to reinforce certain narratives about a nation and its identity (Montgomery 2005; Janmaat 2006; Terra 2014; Williams and Bokhorst-Heng 2016). In the historical content of school textbooks, concepts are defined that can determine the kind of nation a country is, the relationships produced among its citizens and what the core identity is that unites everyone (Boyd 2000; Ferraz Lorenzo 1996).

For this reason, the primary objective of this chapter is to analyze the explicit messages about the Civil War that a sample of social science textbooks² presented to their readers from the transition to democracy

(the Transition) until after the introduction of the *Ley Orgánica de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo* (LOGSE, or the Organic Law of the General Organization of the Education System) in 1990. The novel feature of this paper is that it presents research based on study of the actual textbooks used in *Educación General Básica* (EGB, or General Basic Education, for six- to fourteen-year-olds) under the General Education Law (*Ley General de Educación*, 1970) and in compulsory secondary education for twelve to sixteen year-olds under the LOGSE law.

As Boyd has indicated, insofar as in modern societies schools have become one of the main institutions to reproduce political socialization and the memory of the nation, school textbooks have been subjected to a number of interventions that allow us to observe their complex and tangled development (2006, 80). Numerous scholars have noted that, given the social function of teaching, school textbooks, and above all those of history and literature, are oriented towards showing “norms of civic behavior” (Boyd 2006, 80; unless otherwise specified, all translations ours. See also Foster 1999, 2005; Crawford and Foster 2007; Aamotsbakken 2010; Troch 2012; Darr 2012). In fact, school textbooks attempt to transmit a combination of symbols, narratives and historical perspectives to legitimize certain demands of politics and national identity. Consequently, nation-states have attempted to control the content of history curricula. In building their education systems, governments have implemented study plans and programmes, official questionnaires and textbook regulations with the aim of trying to control what is taught in classrooms (Boyd 2000; Carreras Ares and Forcadell 2003; Ortiz de Orruño 1998; Groves 2014).

In fact, not without reason, Marsden wrote that history and geography textbooks are oriented by “propaganda” (2000, 31), more than by history in its true sense. In different periods, these textbooks reflect specific views or “poisoned” perspectives at the service of particular ideologies (29) due to the need to try to build a national identity through them. In some cases, these textbooks even present a clearly conflictive nature in the way they present historical disputes between nations for the control of territories or over international politics.³

This does not, however, mean that textbooks mechanically reflect the thinking of a government at a particular time. Textbooks are not exclusively developed through political intervention or the influence of dominant ideas. Rather, they express the complex influences of society itself and its ideas about politics, culture and citizenship. They are subject to constant change and continuities: a considerable variety of factors can influence their production, but they can also remain unchanged over time when dealing with certain themes, or introduce explanations that could surprise readers at home and abroad (Issitt 2004; Foster 1999).

The aim of this chapter is to attempt to explain why social science textbooks during the period 1970–90 represented the Spanish Civil War the way they did.⁴ The first part of the chapter outlines the background to this period, to act as a guide and a basis for our findings. These general considerations on the complexity and contradictions of textbooks are then used to help us draw conclusions on the portrayal of the Civil War in Spanish textbooks. The ten textbooks analyzed in this study were published by Santillana, Anaya and SM between 1978 and 1998 (see list below). They were chosen because they have been the most widely used in the Spanish context: these three publishers account for 83% of total textbook sales in Spain (González and Montero 2013, 95). The textbooks were selected according to the following criteria: they were designed for the subject of social sciences in Basic Secondary Education; they all devoted a topic or section to the Spanish Civil War; and they were used at different levels in Spanish public and private schools.

This study employs content analysis of the sample of textbooks. Previous studies of the presentation of war in textbooks have been taken into account (Álvarez Osés et al. 2000; Marsden 2000; Nicholls and Foster 2005; Foster and Nicholls 2005; Boyd 2006; Valls Montés 2007a, b), as well as methodological considerations developed in studies in the field of the history of education (Steedman 2001; McCulloch 2004) and in textbook research (Apple and Christian-Smith 1991; Johnsen 1996; Foster and Crawford 2006). First, we analyze the textbooks through close reading, identifying the main arguments selected to explain the Civil War. Second, we undertake a comparative analysis to examine any similarities and differences in their presentation of the Civil War.

2 “Confusion and Disorder” Versus Social Modernization: The Civil War in Basic Secondary Education (1970–90)

As studies of the presentation of the Civil War in Baccalaureate textbooks have indicated, during the dictatorship of Franco explanations of the conflict served the interests of the regime (Álvarez Osés et al. 2000; Boyd 2006; Valls Montés 2007a, b; Marina Carranza 2012). In this period, there were hardly “any changes” (Valls Montés 2007a, 157) in topics, didactics or historiography. Only from the 1970s onwards did textbooks begin to show some “subtle but real differences” (Boyd 2006, 89) in their representations of the conflict. It was during the Transition that textbooks started to modify their explanations of the origins of the war. As theoretical and methodological approaches changed, textbooks began to get rid of triumphalist justifications of Franco’s dictatorship and move away from the “traditional model” of historiography on which they were based (Álvarez Osés et al. 2000, 129). The 1978 constitution opened up society, providing a more flexible framework for the development of textbooks and allowing them to be updated in various ways.

Secondary school textbooks were subject to a range of modifications. Narratives developed about the Civil War in the early years of the Transition attempted to move away from characterizations of the war as the “War of Liberation”, “War of Salvation” or “National Crusade” (Valls Montés 2007a, 157). Nevertheless, secondary school textbooks of the end of the 1970s continued to include triumphalist comments about the *sublevados* (the military rebels)⁵ in their discussions of the Second Republic and the origins of the Civil War (Ramos et al. 1978). Generalized perspectives on the war feature repeatedly. This is due not just to ministerial censorship but to a certain degree of self-censorship, the result of “agreement between Spanish political and cultural elites” (Boyd 2006, 91). Portrayals of the Civil War still contain messages inherited from Franco’s dictatorship. The Second Republic is described as an uncertain period of conflict, full of political extremes. The origin of the Civil War is attributed to “the situation of constant anarchy and

social subversion in which the country was submerged between 1931 and 1936” (Pérez 1979, 207), the lack of understanding “between the extreme right and left wing” (Ramos et al. 1978, 316), and “the social tensions that had built up during the Second Republic” (Monedo et al. 1978, 139).

In addition, some emphasis is given to other explanations of a structural character for the origins of the conflict. “[T]he impact of the Great Depression” is mentioned (Pérez 1979, 207) as well as the “Catalan separatist movement”, “the separation of Church and State” and “[m]ilitary [r]eform” (Martínez et al. 1989, 120). However, these kinds of explanations about the republic lasted quite openly: all the textbooks, in one way or another, offer a critical view of Republican policies. Ideas about the origins of the war tend to be linked to views spread during Franco’s dictatorship, for example that the “Popular Front took power on the wave of a Marxist revolution” (Pérez 1979, 203) or that the Republic was mainly characterized by its “anticlericalism” (Equipo Aula 3, 1984, 174). Generalizations are also made about “setting fire to churches and convents in various Spanish cities” (Ramos et al. 1984, 128).

Other explanations given for the war were also intended to misrepresent the Second Republic. The failure of the republic is often explained as a consequence of the conflicts between different political groups:

[T]he UGT (General Workers’ Union), increasingly radical, and the CNT (National Workers’ Union) did not let up on their demands or strikes aimed at the Government ... communist activists, socialists, anarchists and falangists died daily from bloody duels. (Caja et al. 1979, 137)

The Republican government is also criticized, with claims that there were indications that “government by the latter [Juan Negrín] was marked by its close collaboration with Moscow, thus establishing a communist dictatorship in the final days of the War” (Pérez 1979, 213–14; see also Caja et al. 1979, 145; Ramos et al. 1984, 133).

The causes of the Civil War are subject to a series of constant contradictions in different textbooks. The textbooks vary between providing a sociohistorical explanation of the conflict: “the crisis of 1929” or “a conflict between social classes” (Monedo et al. 1978, 127) and arguing

that it was a result of “escalating violence”, “disorder” and “extreme politics and policies” (Equipo Aula 3, 1984, 175) among different political groups. This variety suggests debate at publishers over whether to reflect modern historiography and report new arguments about the causes of the conflict, or to maintain a static model in which events were determined by the supposed innate extremism of the republic or the traditions of conflict in the working classes. In any case, explanations for the war in secondary textbooks tend to disregard sociohistorical subtleties and instead adduce the constant tension that was a consequence of Republican radicalism. Social events were interpreted through moralizing analyzes that tended to excuse responsibility for historical events: owing to the “confusion and disorder” it was “logical” and “was described as unavoidable: the tragedy of a Civil War between Spaniards” (Caja et al. 1979, 138).

This does not mean that textbooks took a negative view of the republic in all cases. Nor does it mean that Franco’s regime was openly defended. The need to build a new identity of political and national unity during the Transition meant that textbooks were torn between legitimizing a memory inherited from Francoism of the supposed excesses of the republic and supporting the new democratic processes that were beginning to be built. In fact, the arguments given indicate that the failure of Spain to modernize was both the result of “the concentration of political and military power of the [Republican] government of Largo Caballero and Negrín”, as well as “a similar concentration of power in the person of General Franco” (Monedo et al. 1978, 139).

On some occasions, school textbooks also highlight positive aspects of Republican social policies, in particular those that were least radical and converged most with aims of the Transition period. For example, textbooks indicate how Republican governments improved “labor laws, salaries and social security of workers” (Martínez et al. 1989, 121) and even “established national curricula and made social and economic improvements for teachers” (Pérez 1979, 207).

Thus, textbooks characterized the origins of the Civil War in this way because they felt the need to support the political pact made during the Transition. According to these textbooks, the Civil War was rooted in

left- and right-wing extremism that had led to the failure of peaceful coexistence among Spanish people: their objective was to look for joint responsibility. The political “disorder” of the 1930s first led to military intervention and then to the Civil War. The representations of the war in textbooks of this period, then, were intended to respond to what was needed at the time. This need was to find a political and social consensus during Spain’s transition to democracy that could stimulate the country’s modernization, an aim that successive Republican governments had not achieved. This explains something of the contradictory character of the textbooks’ treatment of this topic. There was a desire to delegitimize Marxism, communism and the social protests or conflicts of the republic along the lines of the historical arguments of Franco’s regime, but also to implement a new social regime based on a political, cultural and economic modernization.

For this reason, the textbooks’ representations of the Civil War tend to be dominated by explanations that clearly try to avoid any value judgments: the narratives focus exclusively on military events and issues. The aim was to keep silent about events that despite seeming distant were still controversial and the object of political struggle during the Transition, as they are even today. Except for the few cases in which textbooks describe the situation behind the battle fronts, it is rarely mentioned that “in Nationalist areas, Republican laws were revoked and political parties and trade unions were prohibited” or that “the principles of corporatism and a revolution involving a national union with Fascist characteristics were implemented” (Martínez et al. 1989, 127). In general, the textbooks display a “voluntary forgetfulness” in an attempt to legitimize “the shared commitment to a new Spanish identity that is compatible with the central political values of tolerance, coexistence and democracy” and with the “balance of power during the Transition, in favor of the right” (Boyd 2006, 92). The victory of the Nationalists tends to be attributed to “the unity of command ... of Franco’s Spain that contrasted with the disunity that predominated in Republican Spain” (Caja et al. 1979, 144).

It is true that all the textbooks show some degree of increasing openness to contemporary historiography in their explanations about the Civil War. For example, unlike textbooks of the Franco period, they

speak about international “assistance” but in no case do they judge whether that assistance was decisive in the final outcome of the conflict. It is simply mentioned that “from the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, Nationalists had the support and assistance of Germany and Italy” and that “Russia helped the Popular Front Government by sending material by air and organized training in Europe and other countries of the International Brigades” (Ramos et al. 1978, 327, 330). Political prudence surrounds the explanations given to students: controversial issues appear in non-critical tones, or are omitted altogether. This voluntary forgetfulness can also be seen in textbooks produced after the introduction of the LOGSE.

3 Historiographical Overhaul Versus the Search for Political Consensus: The Civil War in Compulsory Secondary School (ESO) Textbooks Since 1990

The introduction of the Organic Law of General Secondary Education (LOGSE) in 1990 led to an important overhaul of social science textbooks. As Boyd has remarked, “judging them in terms of content, presentation and pedagogy, their quality is very high” (2006, 96; see also Valls Montés 2007a, 160). The most popular publishers usually consider the latest research on the Civil War. The data of the textbooks of this period are up to date and they present a wide range of visual content including photographs, tables and maps. Furthermore, they have all reorganized the structure of this topic, no longer basing their content exclusively on a chronological description of the battles. The war is viewed as part of the wider social framework of the interwar period and linked to the Second Republic and Franco’s dictatorship. The difficulties that existed both in the international context of the 1930s and the specific Spanish political context are the threads that run through textbook explanations. These books respond to a historical model that tries to evaluate this period critically and analyze it in terms of social processes. In fact, there is clear evidence of an effort to improve historical and causal explanations.

In addition, and as a result of the LOGSE framework, a proportion of the curriculum is now developed by Spain's Autonomous Regions. Thus, textbooks have introduced themes related to territorial history. The rapid advance during the Transition of territorial historiography, together with the regional ambitions of local politicians, led to an intensive reorganization of the history curriculum. All the textbooks analyzed for this period make an effort to assess the "Civil War in the Canary Islands" (Tusell et al. 1995, 246). They include, for example, the problems related to the "[p]olitical dispute with mainland Spain" and the "struggle for regional hegemony" (Tusell et al. 1995, 247), or the "brutal repression" that the Canary Islands suffered at the beginning of the war (Prats et al. 1998, 258).

By familiarizing students with this new regional information, textbook publishers have made the study of the Civil War much more historiographically detailed. Moreover, there is no hesitation in indicating that the coup was carried out by a group with a clear "dictatorial" character close to "Fascism and the extreme right" (Prats et al. 1998, 260). Treatment of the conflict is more factual than judgmental. More attention is given to the development of issues such as events behind the battle fronts in these textbooks. Several highlight that during the war "a key part of Spain's economic structure was destroyed; the population suffered greatly; there were numerous refugees on both sides and large numbers of Spaniards, among whom were many intellectuals and artists, fled Spain for fear of the repression of Franco's regime" (Prats et al. 1998, 256). Despite these examples, in general there is still a cautious silence in these textbooks. Most prefer to calculate the human costs of the war overall to avoid any polemical interpretations. Implicitly, the explanation that the war was a collective tragedy for which the blame is equally shared is reinforced.

Something similar can be observed in the textbooks' treatment of the foreign aid received by both sides during the conflict. This subject is described as an "open debate" in which historians cannot decide whether "the aid that Franco received from abroad was decisive or not in leading to the defeat of the Republicans in the War" (Santacana and Zaragoza 1998, 190). Textbooks display data from different studies on this question: the numerical tables on military equipment and

arms received by both sides clearly show how important these were. Consequently, some books end up recognizing that though “the aid to each side may have been comparable, at certain times when it was received, it was more decisive and benefited the military uprising more” (Tusell et al. 1995, 252).

However, the textbooks’ continuity in their explanations of the origin of the conflict is also worth noting. For a long time, Spanish EGB (Basic General Education) textbooks continued to offer explanations that were not based on confirmed facts. The origin of the Civil War was often again given as the result of “the division between the Spanish right and left, which became wider and more radicalized” (Prats et al. 1998, 254). On this view, the war was a consequence of “the political life that was dominated by radicalism and confrontation between the conservative right and the revolutionary left: violence and intransigence had taken over the society” (Prats et al. 1998, 256). The intention of these explanations is again to highlight shared responsibility for the war and implicitly undermine political extremism in order to try to legitimize democracy based on consensus and political pacts. At the same time as trying to delegitimize Franco’s regime owing to its “dictatorial” position, they also attempt to distance readers from the more widely-known policies of the Republic, citing “serious public disorder and the illegal occupation of land combined with government passivity” (Tusell et al. 1995, 241). The attempt to establish a democratic regime during the Transition and the use of the Civil War as a building block for a new national identity gave rise to explanations of the origins of the war based on equal responsibility for its occurrence.

Explanations of the Civil War often focus on representing the need to build a “central position” that was “unfeasible” in the 1930s (Tusell et al. 1995, 240). The idea that is implicitly proposed is to avoid repeating past errors. The textbooks analyzed suggest that the democratic model built during the Transition should not adopt either identity, Republican or dictatorial. Both are seen as extreme political standpoints, despite the legality and democratic legitimacy of the Republican government. Neither is considered an appropriate historical period on which to build a model for peace to overcome the still deeply-rooted “two Spains”. As Marsden has commented, in many cases schoolbooks

have a contradictory and propagandistic nature. In the end, they use explanations of military events to build political identities. Viewing knowledge through the lens of the search for peace and the need to accept shared responsibility is necessarily a “propandistic position” influenced by political positions at a particular historical moment (2000, 45–47). Although textbooks from the 1990s onward offer more detailed and balanced coverage of the Civil War, their representations of the war still contain conflicting and contradictory elements in the interests of the construction of identity around historical facts. Clearly, the search for a shared identity and a peaceful future has affected the representation, selection and explanation of different topics in school textbooks.

4 Why Is the Civil War Used in This Way in Textbooks? A Possible Explanation

Previous studies that have analyzed the portrayal of the Civil War in school textbooks have identified specific explanations for the views expressed. The continuities and changes observed in textbook content may well be due to the subject having been and still being a “conflictive problem” from a political perspective (Álvarez Osés et al. 2000, 135). On the one hand, the political environment of the Transition made it “necessary to reconstruct the official memory of the Civil War” (Boyd 2006, 88). From then on, the position that the war was a “crusade” to save Spain from communism, which was widespread during Franco’s regime, mutated considerably as the view that it was a collective tragedy was constructed. The search for reconciliation and social peace and the construction of democracy led to the establishment of a framework through which the origin and development of the conflict could be explained (Angulo et al. 2016). Along these lines, the republic and its government began to be seen in terms of a historical process in which left- and right-wing political extremism metaphorically broke or hijacked the modernization process and democracy. The official record of the war was thus adjusted to meet the need to create a new

socialization of the political community and the citizen that would lead to social harmony and build a new national identity for a still-conflicted Spain.

However, the development of this new identity was not exempt from other political influences. Once the democratic period was established, there was still ample margin for government authorities to mediate the memories of the war and the history curriculum. A series of “conditional influences” on the school system led to partial modification of the content taught. One reason why explanations for the war tend to be contradictory, with omissions and changes, is that political groups have made attempts to influence the content of textbooks and curricula through legislation. The *Decreto sobre las Humanidades* (humanities decree) of October 1996 proposed by Spain’s Partido Popular was a clear attempt at modifying the historical content taught in schools and introducing a different version once again. The curriculum project of “La vuelta a la básico” (Back to Basics) was also accused on various occasions of promoting a kind of traditional history, based on memorizing facts; certainly it was a step back in historiographical terms (Ortiz de Orruño 1998). Great historical figures were brought back at the expense of historical data and a focus on social processes (Valls Montés 2004). As such, governments and legislation can influence textbook development. Although, as Ball has argued, this kind of interference operates from outside the community of history experts, it can be still be embraced by some teachers in schools (1988, 18). However, such controversy is not exclusive to Spain. In other European countries (Foster 2005), a dynamic relationship between education and society can also be observed. This can help us understand how textbooks are developed and why different topics are explained in the way they are.

Other factors, outside the political arena, can also help us understand why history in schools is used in a particular way. The selection of content is not exclusively determined by the construction of a political identity. Textbooks are also mediated by historiographical debate. It is true that the portrayal of the Civil War improved substantially during the years under study. The introduction of perspectives such as those of the *Annales* School or Marxist historiography led to notable changes in the organization of material and in explanations of the conflict. That

said, insofar as the Civil War has been subject to “a lack of agreement among those who have written about the conflict” in the historiographical arena (Pérez Ledesma 2006, 101), a complex view of the war has also developed in the school subject of history. Although textbooks introduced innovative topics, they also retained conservative explanations. As such, a variety of explanations for the war have arisen, depending on the shifting ideological positions of the publishing sector. In contrast to the broad consensus found on other topics, such as the “European dimension” and the development of this identity (Valls Montés 2007a, 173), the topic of the Civil War has been marked by historiographical, political, social and cultural turmoil and contradictions.

Along these lines, the nature of the Spanish publishing sector can also help explain why textbooks maintain this analysis of the Civil War. Textbook publishers could frequently have included important historiographical innovations. However, editors tend to avoid such innovations for fear of a reduction in sales because of the controversy these may entail and the complexity of implementing new approaches in the processes of learning and studying. Foster (1999) has highlighted an aspect of this phenomenon of particular interest. In an analysis of the portrayal of ethnic groups in history textbooks in schools in the United States, he found clear evidence of continuity in their content. The textbooks’ portrayal of ethnic minorities was partial and decontextualized. The reason for this continuity, he argued, was the peculiar nature of the textbook publishing sector in the United States. The aim of publishing houses is to reach the largest audience possible to improve their revenue. This means that the content they produce is shaped by a centralist, uniform view of ethnic relations (Foster 1999, 273, 274). This may explain why the Spanish publishing sector has only incorporated limited innovations in the inclusion of new historiography that could contradict the construction of a national identity. The conflicts over control of curricula between central government and the autonomous regions can also be viewed in these terms. The publishers’ concerns for sales may have delayed the incorporation of territorial history, as well as other specific information about topics.

This discussion demonstrates that the development of textbooks is determined by multiple factors. In some historical periods, the

most influential factors are often political ones (Stoddard et al. 2011; Baranovic 2001); in others, textbooks are influenced by research or by the academic concerns of teachers (Prytz 2012). The portrayal of the Civil War in textbooks, as we have seen, is mediated both by political concerns of the past and present and by debates over history in the academic arena. The development of this topic is characterized by the influence of social, economic and institutional factors that can make it vary even within the same textbook. In this sense, textbooks cannot be considered to present univocal visions of the past. Because of the interconnection of these multiple relationships with other social factors, textbook narratives can be internally inconsistent, with conflicting positions recorded and little ideological cohesion.

5 Conclusions

The Spanish Civil War and related social processes such as the Second Republic and Franco's dictatorship have been subject to a series of continuities and changes in their representations in secondary school textbooks. On the whole, a series of historiographical, didactic and thematic modifications was an evolving feature of EGB and ESO textbooks from the end of the 1970s until the beginning of 1998. Many of the explanations for the war given during Franco's regime were eliminated. However, major continuities remained in pejorative explanations of the end of the Second Republic and the beginning of the Civil War. Textbooks openly criticize both the Second Republic and the dictatorship for hampering the development of peaceful democratic coexistence, and in so doing seek to construct a national identity for the transition to democracy. Instead of looking for the causes of the war using explanations from modern historiography, school textbooks repeatedly cite the supposed political extremism of the republic, as well as its violence and daily intransigence, as explanations of the origins of the war. In addition, other factors relating to struggles over identity between the central government and the autonomous regions, the lack of cohesion in Spanish historiography about the Civil War, and the economic needs

of the publishing industry have also helped maintain certain continuities in explanations of this topic in textbooks.

In conclusion, the development of the portrayal of the Civil War has been influenced by the need to promote a transition towards democracy. In this way, the representation of the conflict in textbooks has been “poisoned” (Marsden 2000). As such, this chapter has attempted to highlight that the social construction of school textbooks is often the result of multi-causal influences; it is important that the variables that may have influenced the portrayal of historical topics in textbooks be determined for each specific case. In short, textbooks are, without doubt, complex phenomena that reflect how school subjects, curriculum policy and even education policy itself have been influenced over time.

Notes

1. Academic knowledge is not constructed in isolation from social pressures. Fields of knowledge are influenced by multiple groups that try to modify and indicate what is necessary to know and what is not. However, the development of textbooks shows patterns that are slightly different from the development of academic fields. On the debate on the construction of academic knowledge and its relative limits of autonomy, it is worth consulting Martín Criado (2008). For school subjects and textbooks, the works of Issitt (2004) and González Delgado (2014) are very useful.
2. Social science textbooks are chosen for this analysis because of the change in school subjects in the final period of Franco’s dictatorship. The educational reform that took place in 1970 (*Ley General de Educación*) changed the way curricular knowledge was organized in compulsory education. For the first time in Spain, school subjects were organized by subject areas; history was integrated into the area of social sciences. This change was related, in part, to the new ideas emerging in the 1960s and 1970s about the need to create globalized curricula. UNESCO recommendations for the implementation of the General Education Law made these ideas increasingly influential in Spain (González Delgado and Groves 2016). During the Transition, these ideas coalesced and were

eventually embodied in the 1990 Education Law. Further information on this issue can be consulted in Valls Montés (2007a) or Luis Gómez and Romero Morante (2006).

3. The Georg Eckert Institute in Germany, for example, has attempted to modify the way textbooks represent neighboring states or topics such as war and peace. On various occasions, researchers from this institute have spoken out against the specific nationalist view that German textbooks took of French society and French of German. See Repoussi and Tutiaux-Guillon (2010), Bromley et al. (2011), Fuchs (2011) and Foster (2011).
4. There are several reasons why this historical period has been chosen for study. First, textbook analysis in Spain, and especially analysis of social science textbooks in compulsory education, has focused little on this historical period. Second, the Transition was a social, cultural and political transformation that generated, among other things, a new school culture. However, attempts to develop different views on the teaching of historical knowledge in schools still met with resistance. Third, during the Transition period there was also a complete transformation of the publishing industry. The 1970s saw the birth of new publishing houses that were not attached to the ideas of the dictatorship. Nevertheless, it will become clear that the publishing industry was also affected by socio-political and historiographical conditions that limited or redirected some intentions to break with established ideas.
5. *Sublevados* is the term generally used in Spanish historiography to refer to the military and political organizations that instigated the coup against the Second Republic in July 1936 and subsequently fought against the Republican forces in the Civil War.

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