Multiperspectivity in history teaching: a guide for teachers

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The Council of Europe was founded in 1949 to achieve greater unity between European parliamentary democracies. It is the oldest of the European political institutions and has 45 member states,[1] including the 15 members of the European Union. It is the widest intergovernmental and interparliamentary organisation in Europe, and has its headquarters in Strasbourg.

With only questions relating to national defence excluded from the Council of Europe's work, the Organisation has activities in the following areas: democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms; media and communication; social and economic affairs; education, culture, heritage and sport; youth; health; environment and regional planning; local democracy; and legal co-operation.

The **European Cultural Convention** was opened for signature in 1954. This international treaty is also open to European countries that are not members of the Council of Europe, and enables them to take part in the Council's programmes on education, culture, sport and youth. So far, 48 states have acceded to the European Cultural Convention: the Council of Europe's full member states plus Belarus, the Holy See and Monaco.

Four steering committees – the Steering Committee for Education, the Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research, the Steering Committee for Culture and the Steering Committee for Cultural Heritage – carry out tasks pertaining to education and culture under the European Cultural Convention. They also maintain a close working relationship with the conferences of specialised European ministers for education, culture and the cultural heritage.

The programmes of these four committees are an integral part of the Council of Europe's work and, like the programmes in other sectors, they contribute to the Organisation's three main policy objectives:

– the protection, reinforcement and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and pluralist democracy;

– the promotion of an awareness of European identity;

– the search for common responses to the great challenges facing European society.

The education programme of the Steering Committee for Education and the Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research currently covers school, out-of-school and higher education. At present, there are projects on education for democratic citizenship, history, modern languages, school links and exchanges, educational reform strategies, inter-religious and intercultural dialogue, training for educational staff, the recognition of qualifications, lifelong learning for equity and social cohesion, universities as sites of citizenship, learning and teaching in

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1. Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

the communication society, education for Roma/Gypsy children in Europe, the teaching of the Holocaust and the heritage of European universities. The Council of Europe also contributes to the Bologna Process of higher education reform, which aims to establish a European Higher Education Area by 2010.

These multilateral activities are complemented by targeted assistance to the newer member states in bringing their education systems in tune with European norms and best practice. Co-ordinated under a strategy of "partnerships for educational renewal" projects are carried out, in particular on education legislation and structures, citizenship and history teaching. The priority regions are south-east Europe and the countries sprung from the former Soviet Union.

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FOREWORD

The Council of Europe was invited to coordinate the Working Group on History and History Teaching in South East Europe within the framework of the Stability Pact. In addition, the Council of Europe received financing from some member States for financing its own activities on history teaching in South East Europe.

Switzerland gave a financial contribution towards the work on the in-service training of history teachers and with the remaining financing agreed that the Council of Europe could commission the present publication "Multiperspectivity in history teaching: a guide for teachers". It will also be translated into the languages of the countries of South East Europe and it will be widely distributed to history teachers.

The present Guide took as its inspiration the discussions at the Regional training seminars on "The beginnings of World War II in South East Europe" (Bled, Slovenia, October 2001) and "The challenges facing history teachers in the 21st Century in a regional context" (Budapest, November 2001). The teachers and the teacher trainers from all the countries of South East Europe expressed their need for examples of dealing with multiperspectivity which they could use in the classrooms.

However, they indicated that they needed examples which did not directly relate to the situations in their countries. The examples provided can be adapted to the situations in the countries of South East Europe. Some of the examples are well known but the manner of dealing with them is innovative and the question of multiperspectivity has been dealt with in some of the regional training seminars both in the Stability Pact countries and in the republics of the former Soviet Union. The Guide will provide the basis for any future training seminars for teachers.

The author of the Guide, Dr Robert Stradling, was the author of the Handbook on Teaching 20th Century European History and has followed the work on history and history teaching in South East Europe carried out within the framework of the Stability Pact. He has been rapporteur of many Council of Europe symposia and seminars and will be the Project Adviser for the new Steering Committee for Education Project on the European Dimension in History Teaching which will begin in 2003.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The term "multiperspectivity" was rarely used within the context of school-based history education before the 1990s, although Professor Bodo von Borries has observed that the concept was being discussed and actively promoted by some German historians, including himself, as early as the 1970s.[1] The term began to be used more widely in Europe in the early 1990s, particularly at history conferences, seminars and in-service teacher training workshops organised by the Council of Europe and EUROCLIO, the European Standing Conference of History Teachers' Associations.[3] Nevertheless, the ideas behind "multiperspectivity". if not the term itself, have a longer pedigree and are firmly rooted in three distinct but clearly-related developments within school-based education.

The first of these developments was the so-called "new history" approach which had emerged originally in western and northern Europe in the 1970s and early '80s and has had a growing influence on history education in the rest of Europe since that time, initially in southern Europe and then in much of central and eastern Europe after the events of 1989-90. The "new history" approach reflected dissatis-faction with the more traditional approach to history education in schools, with its emphasis on:

– knowledge transmission;

– the weighting of course content heavily in favour of political and constitutional history;

– a focus predominantly on events and personalities;

– the construction of the syllabus around a content-rich, chronological survey of national history;

– and the underlying assumption that the national historical narrative mainly coincided with the history of the largest national grouping and the dominant lin-guistic and cultural community.

By contrast, the "new history" approach, whilst not denying the importance of chronology and historical knowledge, aimed to establish a better balance within history teaching between teaching students about the past and providing them with

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1. Bodo von Borries, (2001) *"Multiperspectivity" – Utopian Pretensions or Feasible Fundament of Historical Learning in Europe?*, in Joke van der Leeuw-Roord (ed.), *History for Today and Tomorrow: What does Europe mean for School History?* Hamburg, Körber Stiftung.
2. The Council of Europe project, *Learning and Teaching about the history of Europe in the 20th Century*, also promoted the idea of multiperspectivity, and a chapter on it was included in the resulting teacher handbook. See, Robert Stradling, (2000), *Teaching 20th-Century European history,* Strasbourg, Council of Europe Publishing.

the means to think historically about it. Consequently, there was a greater emphasis in the history classroom on students learning how to analyse, interpret and synthesise evidence obtained from a variety of primary and secondary sources.

Learning to think historically has also meant learning that historians and others seeking to reconstruct the past, including museum curators, film makers, television producers and journalists, will be constrained by the range of sources they can access, will interpret and use the same evidence in different ways and will select and put emphasis on different aspects of the evidence. In other words, that most, if not all, historical phenomena can be interpreted and reconstructed from a variety of perspectives, reflecting the limitations of the evidence, the subjective interests of those who are interpreting and reconstructing it, and the shifting cultural influences which determine to some degree what each new generation regards as significant in the past.

The second broad educational development that has contributed to the recent interest in multiperspectivity has been the growing recognition that, in the past, history education has all too often been taught from a perspective that was mono-cultural, ethnocentric, exclusive rather than inclusive and based on the assumption that the national narrative coincided with the history of the largest national grouping and dominant linguistic and cultural community. The same tendency was often apparent in approaches to academic history as well. Nevertheless, academic developments over the last 25 years or so, particularly in social and anthropological history, cultural history and gender studies, have led to a clearer focus on the history of social categories and groups who had previously been largely ignored: women, the poor, ethnic minorities, children, families and migrants. There are now signs that this interest is gradually filtering down into school-based history education.

For example, in recent times, the Council of Europe and some non-governmental organisations, such as EUROCLIO, the Georg Eckert Institute and the Körber Stiftung, have organised conferences, workshops and in-service training seminars for history teachers around such themes as women's history, the history of everyday life and the position of minorities within the teaching of national history. The Council of Europe has also produced a teaching pack on women's history.[1] However, the question of how to introduce into the school curriculum the history of groups and social categories who have previously been marginalised or ignored remains an issue. Including a few topics or themes on personalities or events which are significant for the group, such as the struggle for women's suffrage, may only serve to further marginalise them. Fully integrating such groups into the history curriculum by, for example, acknowledging that they may each have a distinctive perspective on the events and developments that are central to national history, an approach sometimes known as "mainstreaming" but which could also be described as multiperspectival, could prove very difficult in circumstances where the history syllabus is already overcrowded with content to be covered in a relatively short time.[1]

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1. Ruth Tudor, (2000) *Teaching 20th Century women's history: a classroom approach,* Strasbourg, Council of Europe Publishing.

The third of these broad educational developments arose out of a growing concern that schools needed to do more to prepare young people for life in a world characterised by ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity. Again, this concern emerged initially in the 1970s in western and northern Europe, particularly in those countries with a colonial past or a recent history of employing "guest workers" in some industries and unskilled occupations. Further concerns emerged as populations in the member states of the European Union became more culturally and ethnically diverse due to the increased mobility of labour.

Early educational responses to increased cultural diversity tended to emphasise assimilation and integration, with schools concentrating on teaching the indigenous language, customs and cultural "norms" to the children of immigrant families so that they could be easily absorbed into the host community. By the early 1980s, this policy was being increasingly questioned as evidence emerged of increasing inter-cultural tensions (inside and outside school) combined with systematic low achievement amongst many ethnic minority children. At the same time, there was increasing recognition that minorities, including migrant minorities, had the right to maintain their own cultural heritages.[2]

Newer educational approaches began to present cultural diversity as something to be celebrated by all pupils and not just those from cultural, linguistic, ethnic and national minorities. Terms like "multiculturalism" and "inter-cultural education" began to be used more widely and curriculum specialists started to explore ways in which different subjects and curriculum areas could develop a multicultural dimension. As a result, in some history curricula in western Europe, the content of certain well-established topics and themes were revised so that, for example, pupils studying the Crusades would learn something about the Islamic as well as the Christian perspectives, and when looking at the voyages of discovery, their nation's imperial past and the era of de-colonisation, they would also learn something about the peoples who had been *"discovered"*, colonised or *"given"* independence.

This trend also had implications for teaching global and European history. Prior to 1989, discussions within international organisations such as the Council of Europe about how to teach European history had been dominated by participants from western Europe. Perhaps, not surprisingly, the emphasis had been on a Europe defined by its common history and shared cultural heritage. That is, the Greco-Roman and Judaeo-Christian traditions, the common artistic and architectural heritage, the emergence of the nation state and such shared historical experiences as feudalism, the Crusades, the Renaissance, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, the Enlightenment, the industrial revolution, nationalism and the global wars, and political and economic crises of the 20th Century. After 1989, the recent and ongoing developments in central and eastern Europe and the former

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1. For a more detailed discussion of some of these issues in relation to women's history, see Tudor, (2000) op. cit.
2. For one account of the issues, see M. Craft (1984), *Education and Cultural Pluralism,* Brighton, Falmer Press.

USSR highlighted the importance of broadening the range of perspectives that could inform the teaching of European history. This also led to a growing recognition that the wider Europe was characterised more by its diversity (ethnic, linguistic, religious, social and cultural) than by its shared history and cultural heritage.[1]

All of those countries, which were in a state of political and economic transition in the 1990s, were reforming their school history curricula. In some countries, such as the Russian Federation, it was necessary to develop new history curricula and textbooks which would reflect the complexity of cultures, ethnic groups and religions to be found within their borders. It was recognised that this would entail more than just changes in curriculum content. Priority would also need to be given to teaching approaches: how to incorporate source material reflecting different perspectives, how to present contrasting interpretations of the same events and developments and how to handle topics and issues that were likely to be controversial and sensitive in a multi-national and multicultural society.[2] In some other countries, with long histories of annexation and occupation, the reformers were seeking to recover or even rediscover their national histories, particularly those "white spots" in their historical narratives which had been blanked out by successive generations of historians who had been more concerned with promoting first the imperial then the Soviet perspective.[3]

Whilst the emphasis in most of these countries was on the development of national history curricula and textbooks, there was also considerable interest in, and concern about how to handle in a balanced and sensitive way the history of relations between national, ethnic and religious majorities and minorities and the history of relations with neighbouring countries. The conflicts in parts of south-east and eastern Europe during the 1990s, between the republics of the former Yugoslavia, between Serbia and Albania over Kosovo, between Russians and Chechens, the border disputes and tensions between Armenia and Georgia, and between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh, also highlighted the importance of not using history education to reinforce animosities and xenophobia.

In this context, it is not surprising that international institutions and organisations such as the Council of Europe, UNESCO, the European Union and the Stability Pact for South East Europe all acknowledged the potentially important role that history education had to play in encouraging mutual understanding and reconciliation in eastern and south-eastern Europe. At a Council of Europe seminar in 1994, one of the leading advocates of multiperspectivity in history teaching, Professor Gita Steiner-Khamsi observed that "social cohesion, peace and democracy presume a shared vision of the past, present and future". Not in itself a controversial statement. It is probably something that most history educators would agree with, including those who argue that history teaching has an important role

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1. For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see R. Stradling, (2000) *Teaching 20th-Century European history,* Chapter 2.
2. *For further discussion of these issues, see Robert Stradling, (1999) The Secretary General's New Initiative: The reform of history teaching and the preparation of new history textbooks,* Strasbourg, Council of Europe publishing.
3. Op. cit. pp.31ff

to play in forging a public sense of national identity and national loyalty. However, there was a "sting in the tail" because Professor Steiner-Khamsi went on to assert that a shared vision of this kind cannot be imposed by those in power who also represent the majority (or dominant) ethnic, linguistic or religious group in society. It emerges from an emphasis on multiculturalism and multiperspectivity rather than from universalism and that, in turn, involves an evaluation of existing history curricula to see "whose history is being told and whose left out".[1] Elsewhere, she has argued that the need to "fill in the gaps and break the silences in history textbooks by promoting a counter narrative that is not ethnically exclusive, and that does not scapegoat minorities" is as important in those West European states where there are immigrant minorities as it is in those countries of Eastern Europe where there are indigenous and long-established minorities – a point which seems to have particular resonance in the opening decade of the 21st Century.[2]

Presented in this way, multiperspectivity, multiculturalism and pluralist approaches to history teaching constitute a significant challenge to the status quo in most European countries. As Robert Phillips has pointed out, to argue for the inclusion of a plurality of voices and viewpoints in the national historical narrative usually leads to political controversy. In his book, he documents the fierce debates on this issue amongst politicians, the mass media, historians, educationalists and history teachers when it was proposed in the 1990s to introduce a more multicultural approach to history into the National Curriculum for England and Wales.[3]

It would seem that terms like "multiperspectivity" and other concepts often associated with it, such as "multiculturalism", can mean very different things to different people and are frequently subjected to re-definition in order to fit particular political and ideological positions. Therefore, before looking at practical issues associated with implementing multiperspectival approaches in the history classroom, it is worth spending some time examining what the term means and what such approaches are trying to achieve.

What is multiperspectivity?

Multiperspectivity is a term more often used than defined. Nevertheless, there have been some attempts to describe its main characteristics. K. Peter Fritzsche has emphasised that it is a process, *"a strategy of understanding",* in which we take into account another's perspective (or others' perspectives) in addition to our own.[4] That process entails understanding that we too have a perspective which has been filtered through our own cultural context, reflects our own standpoint and interpretation of what has happened and why, our own view of what is and is not

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1. Reported in D. Harkness, (1994), *History teaching and European awareness,* Strasbourg, Council of Europe.
2. Gita Steiner-Khamsi, (1994) *"History, democratic values and tolerance in Europe: the experience of countries in democratic transition",* Council of Europe Symposium, Sofia.
3. R. Phillips, (1998), *History Teaching, Nationhood and the State: A Study in Educational Politics,* London.
4. K. Peter Fritzsche, Unable to be tolerant? In Farnen, R. et al (2001), Tolerance in Transition, Oldenburg.

relevant, and may also reflect other prejudices and biases. In this respect, multiperspectivity is not just a process or strategy, it is also a predisposition, *"[it] means to be able and willing to regard a situation from different perspectives"*.[1] The preconditions for this are, first, a willingness to accept that there are other possible ways of viewing the world than one's own and that these may be equally valid and equally partial; and, second, a willingness to put oneself in someone else's shoes and try and see the world as they see it, that is, to exercise empathy.

Multiperspectivity in history and history education has been described by Ann Low-Beer as the process of *"viewing historical events from several perspectives"*.[2] Elsewhere, in her historical review of the work of the Council of Europe on school history, she has also asserted that "multiperspectivity" is firmly rooted in historical method:

> Essentially it stems from the basic discipline of history and the need to assess historical events from different perspectives. All historians do this...……In history, multiple perspectives are usual and have to be tested against evidence, and accounted for in judgements and conclusions.1

Gita Steiner-Khamsi, whilst also associating multiperspectivity with historical method, does not seem to be quite as convinced as Ann Low-Beer that all historians necessarily or usually do this.[2] She reminds us that history as practised and taught is often mono-cultural, ethnocratic, universalistic rather than pluralist, and exclusive rather than inclusive.

Broadly speaking, then, it would appear that the main defining characteristics of multiperspectivity in history and history teaching are that it is a way of viewing, and a predisposition to view, historical events, personalities, developments, cultures and societies from different perspectives through drawing on procedures and processes which are fundamental to history as a discipline.

A straightforward, apparently un-problematic and self-evident definition. However, as definitions go it probably raises more questions than it answers. For example:

– What is meant by perspectives in this context?

– Is the historian or history teacher expected to include all perspectives or just a selection?

– If a selection, then what criteria does he or she apply when deciding what to include and what to leave out?

– Does multiperspectivity apply just to the selection and interpretation of sources or does it permeate all levels of historical analysis, including, for instance, the

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1. Ann Low-Beer, (1997), *The Council of Europe and School History*, Strasbourg, Council of Europe, pp. 54-55.
2. Quoted in D. Harkness, (1994), *History teaching and European awareness,* Strasbourg, Council of Europe

construction of the narrative, the explanation, the conclusions and the judgment of historical significance?

– What do the historian and the teacher do when the different perspectives contradict each other?

– Does a multiperspectival approach ensure a more truthful or a fairer historical account, or both?

– Does it ensure a more complete and comprehensive account or a more complex one, or both?

– Is it simply part of the process or set of procedures which every competent historian applies or is it a skill which some employ more effectively than others?

A perspective is a view which is limited by the standpoint of the person expressing it. This, of course, applies as much to the "producers" of source material (the participants in past events, the eye-witnesses, the chroniclers, the officials and collators of information) as it does to the historian.

Just as the figurative artist's perspective is constrained by practical considerations such as technique and the position from which he or she chooses to draw a particular subject, so there are clearly a number of practical limitations facing historians. Their perspective on a particular historical event or development will be restricted by the range of relevant languages in which they are fluent, their familiarity with the kinds of script employed by those who wrote the documents which they need to use, the volume of information and evidence available, the range of sources which they can use (a particular problem when trying to determine and understand the views and experiences of people who are illiterate or semi-literate), and the accessibility of those sources. These are all practical constraints and to a large degree they ensure that most historical accounts depend upon a *selection of evidence* from the potential mass of information that might conceivably be relevant.

Similar constraints of time and space affect the sources which the historian uses and school students learning to work with a combination of primary and secondary sources are taught to take into account:

> how close the source was to the events being studied: a participant, an eye-witness, a journalist interviewing participants and witnesses soon afterwards, a newspaper photographer, a television reporter, an official collating evidence from a variety of sources, an historian writing about it subsequently, etc.

and

> how soon after the event the observations in the source were recorded.

Hopefully, they also learn that proximity to events, both in time and space, does not necessarily guarantee a more reliable and valid account of what happened. As Example A shows, reliable witnesses can still differ in their account of what happened. Here, a modern historian, Harvey Pitcher, has compared the accounts of several American and British eye-witnesses who were present at the meeting of the Second Congress of Soviets on 25 October 1917 in the Smolny Palace in what was then Petrograd, when the gunfire which signalled the Bolshevik coup d'état

and the taking of the Winter Palace led to the walk-out of numerous delegates from other parties. It shows very clearly that even trained observers in the same place and at the same time can still differ widely in their observations. It also highlights another potentially valuable lesson for the student, namely, that a source based on firsthand evidence produced at the time is not necessarily more reliable than an account produced at a much later date by an historian who has had the opportunity to compare and cross-reference various sources. As Pitcher himself observes:

> "Clearly, no one witness, however well-informed and energetic, however privileged his or her vantage-point, could see more than a small part of what was going on; but by drawing on a pool of witnesses with different vantage-points, a much fuller picture could be obtained".[1]

The use of the term "vantage-point" is helpful here. It describes one way in which a perspective on a particular historical event or development can be limited by the standpoint of the person expressing it. The limits are physical and related to time and space.

However the term "standpoint" also has a second meaning as "a point of view" both limited by and reflecting one's own expectations, preconceptions and preoccupations.

Example A

"How many delegates left the Congress at this point varies according to each witness: "fifty" (Reed), "about eighty" (Rhys Williams), "a hundred or more of the conservative revolutionists" (Bryant), "about twenty percent of the whole Congress". i.e. over a hundred (Philips Price)".

Harvey Pitcher, (2001) *Witnesses of the Russian Revolution,* London, Pimlico, p.201.

NOTES:

John Reed, American journalist and author of *Ten Days that Shook the World,* first published in 1919.

Albert Rhys Williams, a Congregational Minister from Boston, USA, visiting Russia at that time.

Louise Bryant, also American and the wife of John Reed. Author of two books on the events in Russia at that time, *Six Red Months in Russia* (1918) and Through the Russian Revolution (1923).

Morgan Philips Price, a British journalist who reported for the Manchester Guardian. Also author of *My Reminiscences of the Russian Revolution,* published in 1921.

To quote Pitcher once more:

> "what you see matters less than how you see it. One witness sees a rabble of unkempt individuals making a nuisance of themselves in the streets; another sees a heroic popular demonstration; while a third is impressed most of all by the colour and spectacle…..Different witnesses approach a scene with different expectations and preoccupations. The young American witnesses brought with them the expectation that an entirely new kind of human society was about to come into being, whereas most British witnesses were preoccupied not so much with the Revolution itself, as with its implications for the First World War".[2]

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1. Pitcher, op. cit. p.xiii
2. Ibid. p.xiii

As witnesses to history then, they are not just describing what they see, they are interpreting it as well; that is, they are assigning a particular meaning to what they have seen and that meaning reflects their personal framework of assumptions, pre-conceived ideas, prejudices, stereotypes and expectations.

Historians also have their preconceptions and preoccupations. Their perspectives are not just shaped by the evidence in the sources to which they have access. Sometimes these preconceptions and preoccupations are personal and professional. A historian who seeks to offer a political perspective of events is likely to present what happened in a different way, emphasise different factors, assign greater significance to certain consequences and developments than, say, the economic or social historian.

Similarly, the personal and professional expectations and preconceptions of other interpreters of history, such as television producers making documentaries about specific events will reflect a concern not just to tell the audience what happened and why but to do so in ways which may reflect current thinking about what makes a good history documentary with the emphasis sometimes being more on what makes good television rather than good history.[1]

At the same time, as historiographical surveys usually reveal, historians and other commentators on the past, like the rest of us, are children of their times. Their perspective is influenced by the generation to which they belong and they will tend to interpret the past through contemporary lenses.

As Example B demonstrates, historians also employ conceptual schemes and frameworks which to some degree have been culturally determined and might not be used in the same way (or not used at all) by the participants in the events they are seeking to describe and explain.

Example B

The Lausanne Protocol, 30 January 1923 provided for the compulsory exchange of minorities between Greece and Turkey. Some west European and American history textbooks (and indeed some historians too) when they refer to the Protocol describe the people concerned in ethnic or national terms. That is, they refer to the transfer of Greeks from Turkey to Greece and Turks from Greece to Turkey. In fact that is not how the people concerned are described in the Protocol. There it refers to the persons to be exchanged very specifically as: "Turkish subjects of the Greek orthodox religion residing in Turkey" and "Greek subjects of the Muslim religion residing in Greece".

In other words, the individuals to be transferred were not identified as national minorities but as adherents of a particular religion and subjects of a particular state.

So far, then, three related dimensions have been identified which have potential relevance to multiperspectivity:

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1. One historian with considerable experience of contributing to telehistory has concluded from his experiences that *"television cares passionately about the logistics of programme making and almost not at all about the content"*. Felipe Fernández-Armesto in D. Cannadine (2002), *What is History Now?*, London, Palgrave Macmillan.

1. We can view historical events and developments from a multiplicity of vantage-points. To do this, we need to know what was heard, seen or felt. We also need to know how reliable each source is, partly by comparing and cross-referencing the evidence they provide but also by evaluating contextual information on each source: who they were, what role they played, where they were at the time, what they were doing at the time, how they obtained the information, and so on. Above all, this process of evaluation needs to take into account the conditions which may have imposed constraints on what each source saw, heard or felt, whether these be physical, technical or self-imposed.

2. We can view historical events and developments from a multiplicity of points of view. To do this, we need to understand the motives underpinning these various points of view, whether they be the perspectives of the authors of the various sources or of the person or persons referred to in those sources. Broadly speaking, there are three constituent elements to this process. First, it involves trying to understand the logic behind the view being expressed. Why would they think this? On what grounds have they based this view? Why might they have believed some bits of information and not others? Why did they see some information as relevant and discard the rest? What options were open to them? What led them to choose this particular course of action out of all the possibilities open to them? etc. Second, it involves de-constructing the language of the text (differentiating, for example, between verifiable facts, expert opinion, unsubstantiated opinion and hearsay, noting what is omitted from the account, noting the use of emotive language, the use of false analogies and stereotypes). The same process of de-construction applies as much to other sources, such as oral testimony, photographs, films, posters and cartoons as it does to documents. Third, it also involves collating and analysing contextual information about each source since this enables us to understand more fully where the person stating a point of view "is coming from", their background, their associates, allegiances and affiliations.

3. We can also view historical events and developments through a multiplicity of historical accounts and interpretations (including accounts produced at different times, for different purposes and for different audiences). This tends to involve noting the similarities and differences in focus, narrative structure, interpretation and emphasis and the key points of consensus and disagreement, i.e. historio-graphical analysis.[1]

Does this mean then that multiperspectivity is just a word to describe, as Ann Low-Beer suggests, what every historian (or at least every good historian) does anyway? I think there is another dimension to multiperspectivity which we have not yet considered. Valid and reliable historical study can be carried out at a number of different levels. For example, an historian of the Spanish Civil War could choose to write a narrative history of the military campaigns, or focus on one particular campaign such as the defence of Madrid, or look at one group such as

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1. For another perspective on multiperspectivity in history education, see Bodo von Borries, (2001) op. cit. Our views coincide on some matters and diverge on others, and, to some degree, the differences are terminological, reflecting our different educational traditions.

the Falangists or the Communists, carry out a comparative study of the use of terror by each side, or look at what happened in one region of Spain, such as the Basque country, or write a biography of one of the key figures or even concentrate on the history of one incident. Each historian is going to have to make a selection from all of the possible bits of information available about the Civil War. We would only have reason to express concern if it could be demonstrated that the historian has omitted relevant evidence or systematically ignored relevant sources because they would not have supported his or her conclusions.

Multiperspectivity is not simply the application of historical method. It aims to extend the breadth and scope of the historical analysis of a particular topic or phenomenon. This can be done in a variety of ways.

For instance, it can be done by questioning the conventional notions of which perspectives are and are not relevant to our historical understanding of a particular event or development. Increasingly this has involved incorporating into accounts the perspectives of groups and social categories that have tended to be ignored except when they have stirred up trouble for the elite or the dominant group – the perspectives of the invisible groups and social categories, such as women, the poor, the slaves, the immigrants, the linguistic, religious and ethnic minorities. The argument has not been that the mono-cultural or mono-ethnic history has been invalid but more that it has lacked "balance". McCullagh explains this distinction very well when he argues that:

> "If I say that my dog has an ear, an eye, a leg and a tail, that statement would be literally true. It has got all of those things. But the statement does not give a fair description of my dog, which has two ears, two eyes, four legs and one tail".[1]

The issue here is not so much one of truth as of fairness.

Multiperspectivity can also extend the scope of the historical account by examining how the different perspectives relate to each other; how they have shaped and been shaped by each other. This is a dimension of multiperspectivity which focuses specifically on the dynamics of historical events and processes: how those representing different perspectives have interacted with each other, the mutual influences, connections and inter-dependencies that produce a more complex account of what happened and why. There are four potential benefits to adopting this kind of multilateral, dynamic approach to examining the evidence relating to a particular event or development.

First, it adds an extra dimension to historical narrative. In a sense, the narrative form could be described as a sequence of *"and thens"* (i.e. this happened …and then...this happened and then). Multiperspectivity supplements this linear process with a sequence of *"meanwhiles"* which convey the reactions and subsequent actions of "significant others". The result is a richer and more complex account based on interlocking narratives which would show how the perspectives of the various parties not only changed or crystallised in response to circumstances but were also shaped by lack of information of where the others stood or what the

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1. C.B. McCullagh, (1999), *The Truth of History,* London, Routledge p.58.

others were doing. A good example of this might be the negotiation of the armistice to end the First World War. To understand the negotiations, it is necessary to recognise that the various governments and military commands were not always consulting each other or keeping each other informed of what they were doing and that their own positions were shifting as events changed. These include Wilson's unwillingness to consult his allies over the terms of the armistice, the different concerns and priorities of each government, the growing tension between the German High Command in Spa and the civil government in Berlin regarding the necessity of an armistice, the hardening of public opinion in the United States and Britain after the sinking of the Leinster by German torpedoes; the increasing political tensions within Germany, and so on. The narrative is not straightfor-wardly linear (the *"meanwhiles"* are as integral to an understanding of what happened as the *"and thens"*).

Second, it can highlight the mutual influences between different groups within a country, neighbouring countries, alliances, rivalries or occupiers and occupied. For example, over the last two millennia of European history, there have been many examples of regional, continental, and inter-continental empires, territorial occupations, border disputes, civil wars and the subjugation of all kinds of minorities. Many historians have charted the impact of the imperial and occupying powers on the peoples and lands they have invaded. Many historians, particularly from countries which have been colonised and occupied, have produced accounts from the perspectives of the peoples who have been defeated and invaded. There are far fewer examples of multilateral accounts which also investigate the impact of colonisation or occupation on the coloniser or occupier and examine the myriad ways in which circumstances and perspectives in the occupied or colonized territo-ries impacted upon or constrained the options of decision makers in the occupying or colonizing powers.[1]

Third, it can shed more light on conflict situations by helping us to understand that they often arise, persist and are shaped by conflicts of interpretation where each party to the dispute assigns motives and intentions to each other's actions which are not founded on any specific evidence but reflect long-established assumptions, preconceptions, prejudices and stereotypes. The emergence of myths within con-flict situations would be another example of this process and in the Learning Activities section there is an example of this based on the counter-myths which emerged during the First World War about the atrocities committed on both sides (i.e. the activities of the francs-tireurs and the stories of French and Belgian civil-ians having their hands cut off).

Fourth, it can demonstrate that in some historical situations, the perspectives are related in a symbiotic way. This is particularly relevant when studying historical relationships between majorities and minorities, or between different minority

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1. For a more detailed argument for a multilayered, multilateral approach to studying the relations between imperial powers and their colonies, see Linda Colley, *"What is Imperial History Now?"* In D. Cannadine, (2002) op. cit. and Henk Wesseling, *"Overseas History"* in P. Burke (1991) *New Perspectives on Historical Writing,* Cambridge, Polity Press.

groups, or between powerful countries and their less powerful neighbours, allies and satellites. As Gita Steiner-Khamsi points out:

> "Depicting minorities as the "others" that are allegedly culturally and historically aliens often helps people constituting the majority to see themselves as members of one community, and it helps them to feel at home……..Belonging and the feeling of being at home are often created by identifying groups that supposedly should not belong and should not feel at home in the country – immigrants and traditional minorities."[1]

There are also plenty of examples in history where the smaller country in such relationships virtually writes its national history around its relationship with its more powerful and dominant neighbour, while the dominant nation tends to write its national history around its relationship with other powerful countries.

This has been a rather long discussion of what multiperspectivity is and is not, especially for a booklet which is primarily concerned with teaching history rather than writing it. But before looking at classroom practice, it was necessary to understand why having access to a diversity of sources and different perspectives may be an essential prerequisite but does not in itself guarantee that the approach will be multiperspectival. It is also important to understand why multiperspectivity also requires an analysis of how the different perspectives relate to each other and a recognition that each perspective is part of something bigger: a more complex but also more complete picture.

It is also important to recognise that there are a number of practical problems which can constrain the use of multiperspectivity in the history classroom.

Some potential problems with multiperspectivity in history teaching

To begin with, there are a number of practical problems and constraints which can limit the extent to which school-based history education can be multiperspectival. These revolve around issues of time, space, cost, scope and degree of flexibility within the curriculum.

From the point of view of the history teacher, there are the twin problems of time and curriculum flexibility. Making use of a genuine multiplicity of perspectives in one's teaching and ensuring that students have opportunities to analyse and contextualise each of them takes time. A genuinely pluralist approach to national history is difficult in circumstances where the history curriculum is content-rich and the teacher is required to cover a lot of topics in a relatively short time. Multiperspectivity requires a curriculum structure for history which has some flexibility in it. In countries characterised by ethnic, national and cultural diversity, it may be possible to ensure that there is much more coverage of the social categories and minorities that have tended to be marginalised or made invisible in the national narrative, particularly through a curriculum structure which permits a core of national history and optional units on different minorities. This seems to be

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1. Gita Steiner-Khamsi, *"History, democratic values and tolerance in Europe: the experience of countries in democratic transition"*, Council of Europe Symposium, Sofia, October 1994

particularly apposite where specific minorities are geographically concentrated and, for some years now, there have been discussions along these lines in the Russian Federation.[1]

Whilst this more flexible kind of curriculum structure can help to incorporate the histories of minorities, women's history, "history from below" and the history of everyday life into the traditional school history curriculum, it may not get to the heart of the problem which is so central to multiperspectivity: the relationships between these diverse groups with their different perspectives and experiences.

However, in all but the most crowded history syllabus, there should be scope for the inclusion of one or two case studies every year which will serve to help the students to become more familiar with working with a multiplicity of sources, interpretations and points of view to reconstruct as complete an account of an event or development as possible. For the rest of the time, some measure of multiperspectivity can be integrated into history learning but on a smaller and less complete scale. After all, the objective here is to help them to learn how to analyse and interpret different and contrasting perspectives rather than necessarily always offer them as complete a picture of every event as is possible.

From the point of view of textbook publishing, the scope for multiperspectivity is often limited by space and cost. To approach a topic or theme from a multiplicity of perspectives takes far more pages than would normally be the case in a conventional textbook account. This is a real problem when the textbook is structured around a chronological survey. It is easier if it is a learning resource or an auxiliary book on a particular topic or theme. Any textbook author who has attempted a genuinely multiperspectival approach to a topic or theme will also know that it is a very time consuming and labour intensive task.

The prevailing practice in textbook writing is also a potential constraint on multiperspectivity. Extracts from sources are usually quite short. It is still unusual for the author to also provide much contextual information about each selected source. Students may be asked to compare or cross-reference the evidence from different sources although there is still a tradition in textbook design in some parts of Europe which only requires the student to extract information from the sources rather than to analyse them specifically for perspective and interpretation. All too often the "sources A–F approach" in textbooks requires the student to make very wide-ranging judgments and generalisations based on rather limited evidence (usually judgments and generalisations which the textbook author is making anyway based on his or her reading of the relevant historiography). Illustrative material is thereby subtly transposed into "hard evidence". The inclusion of comparative source material from different historians, drawn from different countries and writing at different times with the purpose of introducing the students to some basic historiographical analysis is still rare.

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1. *See the discussion on this in R. Stradling (1999), The Secretary General's New Initiative: the reform of history teaching and the preparation of new history textbooks,* Strasbourg, Council of Europe Publishing, Chapter 2.

The final practical constraint is that when covering topics and themes which have a regional, European or global dimension, the scope for multiperspectivity is also likely to be limited by the number of languages which the history teacher and the pupils can read. A great mass of resource material, especially on the history of the 19th and 20th centuries, is now available on the Internet covering a diversity of perspectives both official and unofficial, contemporaneous and produced with the benefit of hindsight. In addition to primary source material in raw and edited formats, it is also possible to find on the Internet a multiplicity of perspectives from different historians. However, a lot of these web-sites are American, the selection of material reflects American interests and preconceptions and the user needs to be fluent in English. Nevertheless, the situation is gradually improving. There is now a growing number of history websites, particularly those originating in Europe rather than the United States, which can be accessed in several languages and some websites make use of the translation facility provided by the major search engines such as Alta Vista.

In addition to these practical problems, multiperspectivity can also pose a number of potential problems for the learner. As we have seen it demands empathy on the part of the history student. In the late 1990s, a major cross-national survey was undertaken of young people's attitudes to their history education in Europe.[1] In one question, the respondents were asked to put themselves in the shoes of a young man or woman in the 15th Century being forced into marriage with someone who was not of their choice. They were asked to say what they would have done if they had been living at that time and they were given six options:

– Refuse because it is inhuman, immoral and illegitimate to force someone to marry without real love;

– Obey because good economy is more important for a family than passionate love between wife and husband;

– Run away to a nunnery/monastery because religious life is worth more than worldly life;

– Consent because nearly all young people have married in accordance with their father's decisions;

– Resist because it is the natural right of any individual to marry for love;

– Obey because rebellion against the parents" will is a rebellion against the law of God.

Although there were variations between the participating countries, the majority of young people seemed to find it difficult to reconstruct, acknowledge and accept the kinds of reasons for obedience that would have been common in the 15th Century (tradition, paternal power backed by tradition or biblical commandment

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1. M. Angvik & B. von Borries, (1997) *A Comparative European Survey on historical consciousness and political attitudes among adolescents,* Hamburg, Körber Stiftung,.

and economic calculation). Instead, they mostly expressed a modern preference for disobedience and resistance in the name of love and natural rights.

One interpretation of these results, favoured by some of the team who analysed and reported the findings, was that most students were not able to put themselves in the shoes of another person in the past and apply the thought processes that would have been employed then.

That is the pessimistic conclusion. Andreas Körber, for example, drawing on the cognitive development theory of Kohlberg, wonders if secondary school students find it difficult to exercise historical empathy of this kind because they are in the middle of the development of their own morality and are not able or willing to perform cognitive operations which require them to abstract from their own morality.[1]

A more optimistic conclusion by some observers was that it was not surprising to get this response from many young people because the question was presented to them out of context. To have exercised empathy in their answers to this question, they would have needed to have recently studied 15th Century society in some depth, have some insights into medieval mentalities and have been provided with some basic contextual information about what people would have expected at that time.[2] Without this contextual information, it is not surprising if many students fall back on anachronistic thinking by back-projecting on to the past their own contemporary morality, experiences, attitudes, prejudices, feelings and stereotypes.

Problematic or not, and both the pessimists and the optimists agree that empathy (and causal thinking) can be difficult for adolescents, it is clear that when we study history we are attempting to recreate the feelings and experiences of people living in the past and to do this we often have to try to suspend our modern assumptions and perspectives. Empathy is not an option, history teachers have to find ways of helping their students to exercise this skill – an issue to which I will return later in this booklet.[3]

Another problem which multiperspectivity can pose for history learners, particularly the younger secondary-level pupils and also the less able ones, is that it can contribute to a heightened sense of frustration and even scepticism about the

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1. Andreas Körber, *"Can our pupils fit into the shoes of someone else?"*, in Joke van der Leeuw-Roord (1998), *The State of History Education in Europe*, Hamburg, Körber-Stiftung, pp.123-138.
2. Tony McAleavy, commentary on the paper by Andreas Körber, in Joke van der Leeuw-Roord (1998), op. cit pp.139-142.
3. A similar debate has been ongoing between history educators about causal thinking. Some, for example, argue that causal thinking is a skill that is counter-intuitive to many adolescents. Their intuition tells them that the causal factor which impacts most closely to the start of an event or development (e.g. the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914) must be the most important. This fits in with their perception of causation in everyday life. Others argue that to counter this the student has to learn how to organise information about potential causal and contributing factors (e.g. into individual actions, political factors, economic factors, factors relating to social or cultural or religious differences, etc) and then evaluate competing arguments which give priority to one or more of these causes over the others. See, e.g., the discussion on causal thinking in Lee, P., Ashby, R. & Dickinson, A. (1996), *"Progression in children's ideas about history"* in M. Hughes, (ed) *Progression in Learning*, Clevedon, Multilingual Matters.

process of historical enquiry. Indeed, this can be a potential problem with source-based approaches to history teaching and learning in general. This is particularly problematic for some pupils when the available evidence is contradictory and there does not appear to be one correct version of events, or where the same piece of evidence can be interpreted differently by various historians, or where the same apparently clear and unambiguous statement can still have different meanings for people depending on their perspectives and particular situations, or where different selections of evidence about the same event can all be equally relevant and valid.

Those pupils who are seeking certainties in each school subject and see learning in terms of the acquisition of prepositional knowledge that can be "mastered" and recalled will find it very difficult to adjust to this rather different approach to teaching and learning. These problems may also arise when the history teacher is only just beginning to change from a knowledge-transmission approach to history teaching to what was described earlier as the "new history" approach.

A further problem can arise with some students when focusing on the relationships between different perspectives: the connections, interactions and interdependencies. This even applies to those students who have been taught how to analyse and interpret sources and make judgments about their reliability and provenance and their relevance to understanding a particular historical event or development. However, historical understanding requires them to go a stage further and consider how the various bits of evidence they are evaluating fit together. In other words, the process of constructing an historical account by imposing some kind of structure on the evidence. In the traditional knowledge transmission mode of history teaching, the status of the evidence was assumed and the structure was provided by the teacher and textbook. In the source-based approach to history, the student is taught to evaluate the status of each source and then to think about how to construct an account from the evidence (although in practice most history textbooks still provide a ready-made structure).

However, multiperspectivity adds another complication. The more layers and perspectives that are introduced into the historical account the more complex it becomes and the more difficult it becomes for the student to make judgments and draw conclusions, particularly when they are dealing with divergent and contrasting perspectives, interpretations and conclusions. It becomes even more difficult if they are also trying to unravel the various ways in which the different perspectives respond to and interact with each other. The teacher needs to find ways of making the connections and interdependence more tangible and less abstract for the students through, for example, helping them to develop a multilateral timeline and narrative account (the "meanwhiles" as well as the "and thens') or by examining how people's perceptions of each other change during the course of a particular event through examining press releases, propaganda or cartoons, and so on.

The extent to which these various problems can be resolved, particularly the potential learning difficulties associated with multiperspectivity, will depend on the teachers' overall approach to history and on how they prepare the students.

Laying the foundations for multiperspectivity

Multiperspectivity in history teaching does not necessarily presuppose that the students are experienced in analysing sources, interpreting evidence and synthesising information in order to construct their own historical accounts, but it does help.

Students will find it much easier to compare and contrast the perspectives in different sources if they are used to applying a framework of analytical questions to every source they encounter, whether these be documentary, visual or audiovisual. In another publication, the author has outlined a variety of ways of helping students to learn how to analyse different kinds of source material.[1] Fundamental to that approach is a series of questions that could be grouped into five broad analytical processes:

> **Description:** What kind of source is it? Who produced it? What was the producer's involvement in the events (participant, eye-witness, reporter, commentator, official, etc.)? When was it produced? How soon after the event was this? Does it tell us who the intended audience/recipient was? Does it tell us what the intended purpose was? What does it tell us/show us about a particular historical event or development?

> **Interpretation:** If we do not know who the producer was, can we infer anything about him or her from the source itself (level of involvement, closeness to events, standpoint, contacts, role, etc.)? Are there any clues as to how the producer obtained the information? Are there any clues to the reliability of the information? Can we differentiate between verifiable facts, expert opinion and personal opinion? Can we detect a pattern in the source's perspective (e.g. support for a particular position, prejudice against another position, etc.)? Does the producer offer any conclusions? Are they backed up with evidence or opinion?

> **Links to prior knowledge:** Does the information in the source confirm or contradict information available in other relevant sources?

> **Identification of gaps in the evidence:** Are there any missing names, dates or other facts which would help to answer the above questions?

> **Identification of sources of further information:** Where could you go to check the information in this source or the producer's interpretation?

However, although the source-based approach puts historical method and enquiry at the core of history teaching, there are a number of potential risks attached to this emphasis (all of which could have a negative impact on a multiperspectival approach) and steps need to be taken to counter them effectively.

First, the process of extracting verifiable information and describing what the source tells us or shows us is easier to grasp than the processes associated with interpretation, making inferences, drawing conclusions about the reliability of the sources. Some students need help in clarifying and applying these analytical distinctions. History teachers have developed a number of strategies for this.

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1. Robert Stradling (2000), *Teaching 20th Century European history,* especially Chapters 8, 10, 15, 16 and 17.

Example C

Extract from source:		
This source tells me:	**This source suggests that:**	**It does not mention:**

One approach is to provide the students with a grid, Example C, which requires them to distinguish between what a source tells them, what it suggests (what can be inferred from it) and what the source does not mention.[1] Once they get used to this kind of approach they can then move on to a more sophisticated analysis which, for example, helps them to compare and contrast different sources including those which use the same evidential base to draw different interpretations and conclusions.

Example D: Writing frames for source-based analysis

Source A was written by _____ who was a US diplomat in Moscow in 1946. It is a report about _____.

His report was sent to _____.

He explains that the Soviet Government wanted to _____

He suggests that the reasons behind this policy are_____

He recommends that the US Government should _____.

Another strategy is to get the students to mark-up the factual and descriptive statements and the inferences using different coloured highlighter pens or underlining them using coloured pens or pencils.

A further strategy to help the students to make these key evidential distinctions is to provide them with writing frames that model the analytical process (see Example D). Again, this is a strategy which is primarily designed as a means of introducing the student to source-based analysis which can be abandoned as they become more experienced at doing it.

A second potential risk with the extensive use of source-based learning, as some history teachers have discovered, is that some students, particularly the less able

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1. This is based on approaches developed by C. Riley (1999), *"Evidential understanding, period knowledge and the development of literacy"*, Teaching History, 99 and T. Wiltshire, (2000), *"Telling and suggesting in the Conwy Valley"*, in Teaching History, vol.100.

ones and the ones who are not particularly interested in history, tend to see this process in a task-oriented way as an end in itself rather than as a means to an end: historical understanding. For example, some students adopt a kind of pseudo-evidential approach to the task of analysing sources in which they use the technical language (evidence, bias, primary and secondary sources, etc) but with limited understanding. Consequently, they do not think a source is useful or valid if there are some grounds for assuming that certain statements within it might be "biased'; they automatically assume that a primary source is "better" because it was written at the time; and so forth. In such circumstances, it is probably preferable to discourage the use of terms such as "biased" and think in terms of motives, purposes, intentions, points of view and perspectives.

Thirdly, some teachers have observed that although, with practice, the students learn how to analyse sources, they find it more difficult when it comes to making connections between the pieces of information they have extracted from different sources and relating them to their existing knowledge in order to produce a coherent historical account. As one researcher has observed, there is a real risk with the "new history approach" that the students are being taught how to obtain information to answer questions that they have not yet considered or learned to ask.[1] So initially they also need help with organising and structuring their enquiries.

This especially applies in two particular circumstances:

– where students need help with making connections between the theme or topic they are studying and the specific and detailed pieces of evidence they are examining; and

– where the sources being used offer contrasting or conflicting views and interpretations of events.

In the former instance, the students can be helped to become more adept at doing this if they are encouraged to use topic webs and network diagrams or they are provided with flow charts that take them through a topic with either/or or yes/no questions at strategic points to establish whether or not they think that the evidence available substantiates a particular assertion about the past. This can help them to see how information is transformed into evidence. Card sorting exercises can also help here, where different pieces of evidence (or different points of view or interpretations by historians, etc.) are written on to separate cards and the students explore ways of sorting the cards and relating them to each other to construct an argument or a coherent account of what happened. When the topic lends itself to a narrative form, students can also be helped to make connections through parallel timelines and "plotting exercises". For example, they could be encouraged to think in terms of plotting the outline of a film or television script based on a particular historical event. This not only helps them (like the parallel timelines) to use evidence from different sources to understand the sequence of events; it also provides an opportunity for them to look at how key players were reacting to each other and to events.

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1. D. Shemilt, (1987) *"Adolescent ideas about evidence and methodology in History"* in C. Portal (ed) *The History Curriculum for Teachers,* Lewes, Falmer Press.

There are also several strategies that can be adopted when looking to prepare students for the first time to cope with circumstances where the sources are offering contrasting or conflicting perspectives. One possibility is to use the example of a well-known contemporary or historical criminal court case (perhaps a film or television drama) and get the students to examine how:

– Witnesses have different functions (eye-witnesses, character witnesses, expert witnesses, and witnesses for the prosecution and for the defence);

– Witnesses contradict themselves;

– Their evidence may contradict and/or confirm the statements of the other witnesses;

– The counsel for the defence and prosecution use evidence selectively or use the same evidence to construct opposing arguments; and

– The jury responds to conflicting evidence and arguments based on that evidence.

Another possibility is to start doing some multiperspectival work after they have been looking at oral testimony and subjecting that to detailed analysis. This will have given them some firsthand experience of how memory affects oral testimony and how people talking about the same happenings can describe and interpret them very differently.

Once students are familiar with, and have developed the skills necessary for, source-based approaches to history learning and have applied those skills to an understanding of increasingly complex events and developments then they will have the confidence to work effectively with a multiplicity of perspectives using a combination of sources, contrasting interpretations and competing historical accounts. The final section of this booklet introduces a variety of learning activities designed with multiperspectivity in mind.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

In a relatively short booklet such as this, it is only possible to offer a few examples of learning activities and teaching approaches that could help to develop the students' understanding of multiple historical perspectives. For the reasons outlined earlier, and because I believe that multiperspectivity in history teaching and learning means more than just "good history teaching". there is not yet "a body of good practice" which can be identified and incorporated into the initial and in-service training of history teachers. Consequently, what follows should be regarded as a stimulus for discussion and debate rather than as a proposed blueprint for classroom practice.

Being opportunistic

Given that there are major constraints on many teachers in terms of how extensively and how frequently they can look at historical events and developments in a multiperspectival way, there is a strong case for being opportunistic.

Many history teachers around the world probably experienced the same kinds of impromptu questioning from their students after the events of 11 September 2001. They needed to know not only how and why something like this could happen but also they needed to make sense of the reasons and motives behind the actions of those who hi-jacked planes and flew them into the twin towers of the World Trade building and the Pentagon. These are the moments when some history teachers choose to step outside the confines of the chronological syllabus and try to make connections across time and space, and seek ways of showing their pupils how developments and processes that were examined a term, a year or several years earlier have helped to shape and influence contemporary events. This is very difficult to do without adopting a multiperspectival approach.

The television coverage, the public reactions, the attempts by commentators to make sense of what had happened were all full of historical references to relations between the west and the Middle East in the near and more distant past. Also the language in which these references were couched was also full of historical resonances. So, for example, just a few days afterwards, President Bush made his first reference to "a crusade" against terrorism which, after pressure from some of his advisers and diplomats and other countries, was changed to "the war against terrorism". The term "crusade" was thought not just to be inappropriate but also politically and diplomatically unwise. However, there were opportunities here for history classes to discuss the use of the word in this context and to explore the different connotations which the word might have for all concerned. This also raised opportunities for looking at how the word "crusade" has been appropriated in other historical contexts.

For instance, in the modern era the term "crusade" was used by propagandists on all sides in both the First and Second World Wars. The British Prime Minister during the First World War described it as "a great crusade". and General Eisenhower entitled his memoirs of the Second World War, *Crusade in Europe*. The word was also widely used by the British in the context of the campaigns in Palestine and Syria in 1917-18, during which Jerusalem and Damascus were captured from the Turkish army. The Falangists in Spain talked of a "crusade" or holy war against the republican government in 1936 and some members of the pro-Republican International Brigade also said that they were fighting a crusade against fascism. In the 1980s, the Libyan leader, Colonel Gadaffi, invoked a holy war or jihad against the U.S. "crusaders". Most recently, during the Gulf War in 1991, U.S. strategists referred to a moral crusade against Saddam Hussein who, in turn, openly identified himself with a modern Saladin who would drive them out of the Middle East.

There are other historical terms which also generate this kind of resonance and may need to be explored from a variety of different perspectives when contemporary events raise issues and questions. The mass killings in Rwanda and elsewhere in the world have led some observers to use the term "holocaust" whilst others, such as Professor Lipstadt, have argued that the Holocaust or the Shoah was a unique event with universal significance.[1] In this respect, terms like "genocide" and "diaspora" also raise issues which require a multiperspectival approach in order to help our students understand how they are used in different contexts. In each case, they are terms used by one group to describe their treatment at the hands of another group or plurality of groups who usually deny the appropriateness of the term to what has happened. As noted earlier, an important dimension of any multiperspectival analysis is the meaning of words and how they are used in particular historical contexts.

Anniversaries, centenaries and other public celebrations also present ad hoc opportunities for practising historical multiperspectivity. The bi-centenaries of the American Revolution and then the French Revolution provided good opportunities for this kind of analysis. They were major global anniversaries when many people, and not just the Americans or the French, looked again at the long-term significance of such developments for themselves and the world at large. These occasions can provide fascinating opportunities for some historiographical analysis by students looking, for example, at how historians 50, 100, 150 and 200 years afterwards reappraised the historical significance of such events.

Most countries, and many ethnic and cultural minorities, will have events in their past which have this kind of resonance for them. Example E offers one illustration, fairly localised, but of some particular interest to the author who is part-Irish and studied Irish history as a postgraduate.

A third kind of opportunistic way into multiperspectivity can be provided through access to old textbooks which are no longer in use in schools. Some teachers may

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1. D. Lipstadt (1993), *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory,* Free Press.

be fortunate enough to find such books in the school library or resource centre or on their own bookshelves. Others may find copies in public libraries and in the libraries of Universities which train teachers. Failing this, it may be possible to elicit the help of the Georg Eckert Institute for Textbook Analysis. A comparison of the treatment of a particular event in national or international history in a modern textbook and in textbooks produced at different times in the 20th Century is a useful starting point for introducing students to historiographical analysis. The scope for multiperspectival analysis becomes even greater if it is also possible to set up an exchange with colleagues teaching in neighbouring countries. Then there will be opportunities for comparing perspectives across time and space.

Example E: The Irish Rebellion of 1798

In Ireland, news of the French Revolution radicalised movements such as the Society of United Irishmen, which drew members from the Presbyterian community in Belfast and from Protestants and Catholics in Dublin. Its leader, Wolfe Tone (1763-1798), a Protestant from Dublin, seeking to end British domination, went to Paris and secured the commitment of the French Directory to mount an expedition to support an uprising in Ireland. However, the ships of the first expedition were wrecked by a storm off the Irish coast in December 1796. A smaller expedition, commanded by General Humbert, landed on the north-western coast of Ireland in August 1798 with an army of just 1000 men. Humbert had expected an organised Irish army to be waiting for him. In fact he barely doubled his army with Irish volunteers. In less than a month, he was defeated by a larger British force. Wolfe Tone was later captured in a French uniform and committed suicide while waiting for execution. The uprising and the French invasion led to an Act of Union in 1800 through which Ireland became a part of the British State which changed its name to "the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland".

The events of 1798 were remembered and celebrated by Irish nationalists a century later and then by the Irish Republic in 1998. The Irish writer, Colm Tóibín, and the historian, Diarmaid Ferriter, [The Irish Famine, A Documentary, London, Profile Books (2001) p.41] noted how the events of 1798 were differently interpreted on the two anniversaries:

"Part of the strangeness of Irish history is the way in which events remain wide open to interpretation. In 1898 for example, nationalist Ireland needed 1798 as a Catholic nationalist rebellion against the English led by priests. In 1998, Europhile and semi-pluralist Ireland needed 1798 as a peasant rebellion led by Protestant intellectuals which had its roots in European rationalism. Each time the rebellion of 1798 lay down and let the waters of current politics wash over it".

Introducing students to historiography

As noted earlier, historiographic analysis is a central element in multiperspectivity. What follows looks at several ways in which this could be done both through introducing the students to the writings of historians and also through introducing them to the perspectives of those who produce public history: museum curators, film makers, television producers, journalists and novelists.

The first such example focuses on controversy between historians. Contrasting interpretations of the so-called Hossbach Memorandum have been the source of one of the most controversial debates between historians regarding Hitler's intentions and foreign policy. The Memorandum was written by Colonel Hossbach, who

took the minutes of a meeting in the Reich Chancellery in Berlin on 5 November 1937. The meeting was attended by Hitler, Goering, Neurath, Raeder, Blomberg and Fritsch. During the proceedings, Hitler outlined his position on foreign affairs, particularly his determination to acquire living space (Lebensraum) for the German people. Some of the key points are summarised in Example F.

Now, it is possible to download the Hossbach Memorandum in full off the web site of the Avalon Project[1] and the debate between historians is covered in many text-books now. The main issue is how to address it effectively in the classroom. One possibility is to get the students to read the material and then do a comparison of the various positions adopted by the historians and then draw on the knowledge they have already acquired and any relevant primary and secondary sources to reach their own conclusions.

Another possibility, however, is to ask a colleague to present the case from the per-spective of one of the opposing camps of historians while you present the alterna-tive position, either in open debate or with one teacher presenting a case and answering questions in one lessons and the other teacher presenting an alternative case in a subsequent lesson. In either case, the teachers would need to be prepared to be in "the hot seat" and ready also to "stay in character". The overall learning objective here is not so much to reach a firm conclusion in favour of one position or the other but to have a much clearer understanding of why the question is con-tested, the nature of the dispute, how the document in question is open to alterna-tive interpretations, the basis for each interpretation, and its relative strengths and weaknesses. An evaluation of each position could be done in pairs or small groups, possibly with "hot seating" of each other's appraisal of the arguments.

Example F: The Hossbach Memorandum

The Führer [stated that]
The aim of a German policy was to make secure and to preserve the racial community and to enlarge it. It was therefore a question of space. The German racial community comprised over 85 million people and, because of their number and the narrow limits of habitable space in Europe, constitute a tightly packed racial core such as was not to be met in any other country and such as implied the right to a greater living space than in the case of other peoples….

With the general rise in the standard of living compared with that of 30 to 40 years ago, there has gone hand in hand an increased demand and an increased home consumption even on the part of the producers, the farmers……It was not possible over the long run, in a continent enjoying a practically common standard of living, to meet the food supply difficulties by lowering that standard and by rationalization….

There was a pronounced military weakness in those states which depended for their existence on foreign trade. As our foreign trade was carried on over the sea routes dominated by Britain, it was more a question of security of transport than one of foreign exchange, which revealed, in time of war, the full weakness of our food situation. The only remedy, and one which might appear to us as visionary, lay in the acquisition of greater living space…. It is not a matter of acquiring population but of gaining space for agricultural use. Moreover, areas producing raw materials can be more use-fully sought in Europe in immediate proximity to the Reich, than overseas… The question for Germany ran: where could she achieve the greatest gain at the lowest

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1. The memorandum and other useful material are available on the Avalon Project: Nuremberg War Crimes Trial page.

cost. German policy had to reckon with two hate-inspired antagonists, Britain and France, to whom a German colossus in the centre of Europe was a thorn in the flesh, and both countries were opposed to any further strengthening of Germany's position either in Europe or overseas…

Germany's problem could only be solved by means of force and this was never without attendant risk….If one accepts as the basis of the following exposition the resort to force with its attendant risks, then there remain still to be answered the questions "when" and "how"…There were three cases to be dealt with:

Case 1: period 1943-1945
After this date only a change for the worse, from our point of view, could be expected….Our relative strength would decrease in relation to the rearmament which would by then have been carried out by the rest of the world. If we did not act by 1943-45 any year could, in consequence of a lack of reserves, produce the food crisis, to cope with which the necessary foreign exchange was not available, and this must be regarded as a "waning point of the regime"….Nobody knew today what the situation would be in the years 1943-45. One thing only was certain, that we could not wait any longer.

Case 2:
If internal strife in France should develop into such a domestic crisis as to absorb the French army completely and render it incapable of use for war against Germany then the time for action against the Czechs had come.

Case 3:
If France is so embroiled by a war with another state that she cannot "proceed" against Germany. Our first objective, in the event of our being embroiled in war, must be to overthrow Czechoslovakia and Austria simultaneously in order to remove the threat to our flank in any possible operation against the West….If Germany made use of this war to settle the Czech and Austrian questions, it was to be assumed that Britain – herself at war with Italy – would decide not to act against Germany. Without British support, a warlike action by France against Germany was not to be expected.

The debate between the historians

The Memorandum was subsequently presented by the Allied prosecutors at the Nuremberg Trials as evidence of the defendants involvement in planning the Second World War. The controversy between historians has focused on the problem of whether or not the Memorandum provides clear and direct evidence of Hitler's thinking in 1937 and, in particular, whether it demonstrates that the broad aims outlined thirteen years earlier in Mein Kampf had been formulated into a definite plan of action.

Some historians (e.g. the German historian, Hildebrand, and the British historian, Trevor Roper) have argued that there is consistency between Hitler's expansionist aims in Mein Kampf, his actions from the early days of National Socialism and the foreign policy outlined in the Hossbach Memorandum. As evidence to support their position they noted that in mid-December 1937 the German army's directives were changed to cover military aggression against Austria and Czechoslovakia.

Other historians, particularly the British historian, A. J. P. Taylor, have argued that Hitler's career revealed him to be an opportunist who waited on events and then exploited them rather than someone who had a pre-determined programme that shaped all his actions and policies:

Hitler's exposition was in large part day-dreaming…He did not reveal his innermost thoughts…The memorandum tells us what we know already, that Hitler (like every other German statesman) intended to become the dominant power in Europe. It also tells us that he speculated how this might happen. His speculations were mistaken. They bear hardly any relation to the actual outbreak of war in 1939.

Norman Davies, writing 30 years later, noted that all of the participants, including Taylor, confined themselves to a discussion of Germany's intentions and did not look at the intentions of the USSR and how the actions of both countries depended to some degree on their assumptions about the other's aims and plans.

The Thirty Years War is another possibility for introducing students to historiographical debates. It is a subject which is not confined to one state, it helps the student to look at the 17th Century as a whole and over the last 300 years different generations of historians have approached it and interpreted it in very different ways. To some historians, it has been part of a prolonged German conflict between the princes and the Emperor. To others, it has been an extension of the wars of religion between Catholics and Protestants. To others, it has been an important stage in the Continental struggle for supremacy amongst the great powers of Europe. And to others, it has been all of these.

Example G comprises the views of five historians, writing at different times over the last 150 years. With older students who may have already done one cycle of the chronology of national or European history and have therefore covered the 17th Century once before and the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries as well, it should be possible to get them to think about the context behind these five different positions. That is, to be able with support from the teacher and some back up material to consider such questions as:

> What contemporary events and developments might have some influence on a German historian writing in the 1860s such as to possibly influence his thinking about the 17th Century? Brainstorming in the group might throw up such factors as the unification of Germany, the Schleswig-Holstein question, Prussian expansionism and relations with Austria, nationalism, regional power politics, etc.

> What contemporary events and developments might have some influence on a British historian writing in the early 1950s such as to possibly influence her thinking about the 17th Century? Again brainstorming might throw up such contemporary concerns as the end of a major world war that had had devastating effects on most of Europe, 50 years of conflict and crisis, the early phase of the Cold War, and so on.

> What contemporary events and developments might have some influence on an historian writing in the 1960s such as to possibly influence his thinking about the 17th Century? Here the brainstorming might identify the emergence of two super powers and two power blocs, a struggle for hegemony, particularly in central Europe, etc.

With younger students, particularly if they have not previously studied the 19th and 20th centuries, it may be necessary to provide some contextual information to help them understand the political, social and economic context which may have influenced or coloured the perspectives of these different historians. One possibility is to present them in pairs or small groups with five cards, each with an extract from one of the historians and get them to note the similarities and differences in their views. Their conclusions should then be discussed by the class in order to establish some agreed conclusions.

Then, still working in pairs or small groups, they should examine a second set of cards, similar to those in Example H, which highlight key European events and developments which occurred around the time that each historian was writing. It is useful to present them with both relevant and less relevant contextual information. Teachers should decide whether or not the students need some extra help here by including dates as well as descriptors. The task here is to select those cards which might relate to the period in which each historian is writing and put them in small

piles alongside each of the cards representing the viewpoint of a historian. The third task is to sift through each pile of descriptor cards and decide which, if any, might have had some indirect influence on the historian's thinking. They should then be asked to discuss and justify their choices within the larger group or class.

It is critically important that students understand that this process involves interpreting an historian's views rather than explaining them. What do students learn from an exercise such as this? First, that historians are children of their times whose thinking is, to some degree, filtered through contemporary concerns and issues. But, second, that they have also inherited frameworks for interpreting the past from previous generations of historians as well and these too influence their thinking. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, they also learn that the work of recent historians is not necessarily "better". "more valid". "more reliable" or "more complete" than the work of earlier historians, it is different. It applies different frameworks and criteria for deciding what is important or relevant for understanding a particular historical event or era.

Example G: The Thirty Years War

> Gustav Freytag, a 19th Century German historian, described the war as a conflict between local rulers in Germany and the imperial house of Hapsburg and also a conflict between Protestants and Catholics: "The opposition between the interests of the house of Hapsburg and of the German nation, and between the old and new faith, led to a bloody catastrophe.
> G. Freytag, (1862), Pictures of German Life in the XVth, XVIth and XVIIth Centuries, (2nd edn)

> In the late 19th Century, Gardiner interpreted events as a struggle for religious toleration within the states of Europe: those rulers, like the Hapsburgs, who refused to tolerate religious dissent had their kingdoms broken, whereas those, like France, where Richelieu promised religious liberty to dissidents, kept their kingdoms intact. In other words, he did not focus on the war as such but on the processes at work at that time which gave meaning to the conflict.
> S.R. Gardiner, (1889), The Thirty Years War, 1618-1648 (8th edn) London, Longman.

> In the 1950s, C.V. Wedgwood was writing that almost all of the combatants "were actuated by fear rather than by lust of conquest or passion of faith. They wanted peace and they fought for thirty years to be sure of it. They did not learn then, and have not learned since, that war only breeds war".
> C.V. Wedgwood, The Thirty Years War, London 1957, p.460.

> S.H. Steinberg, took issue with Freytag, and presented the Thirty Years War as a stage in "the larger struggle for European hegemony between Bourbon and Hapsburg" which lasted from 1609 to 1659. The Bourbon government of France fought to break Hapsburg encirclement of their country.
> S. H. Steinberg, (1966) The "Thirty Years War" and the Conflict for European Hegemony 1600-1660, London, Edward Arnold.

> More recently a number of historians have suggested that the Thirty Years War was part of a "general crisis" across much of Europe during the first half of the 17th Century. This crisis was characterised by a series of poor harvests, economic inflation, population stagnation and decline, resentment over increased taxation and public spending, large standing armies, bureaucratic corruption leading to political uprisings and major tensions within the European political system.
> See, for example, G. Parker, (1979) Europe in Crisis, 1589-1648, Glasgow, Fontana.

Example H: Context Cards for the historiography of the Thirty Years War

The Crimean War 1854	Unification of Italy
Rise of nationalism in the C19th	Unification of Germany
Growth of Parliamentary Assemblies in most of Europe	Austro-Prussian War of 1866
Growth of industrialisation in C19th	Growth of towns and cities in C19th
Growth of the railways in C19th	Franco-Prussian War of 1870
The scramble for African colonies in the 1880s	World War I
World War II	The atom bomb
Formation of the United Nations	Beginning of the Cold War
Marshall Plan to provide aid to assist European economic recovery	Beginning of the Cold War
Marshall Plan to provide aid to assist European economic recovery	Formation of NATO and Warsaw Pact
Korean War 1950-53	De-colonisation in the 1940s-60s
Formation and expansion of the European Economic Community	Growth of discontent within the Communist bloc
The emergence of détente between the superpowers	Break-up of the Soviet Union and democratic transition

It should be emphasised that the context cards in Example H are just illustrative. They are not meant to be comprehensive and different history teachers are likely to want to vary them according to their syllabus and the country they are teaching in. They have been included here to demonstrate the approach rather than to provide "off-the-shelf" material ready to be used in the classroom. However, a similar approach would also work well with other topics and themes which have an interesting historiography that you want your students to understand, e.g. the Crusades, the Renaissance or the French Revolution.

My third example is "the Storming of the Winter Palace" in Petrograd on the night of 25 October and the early hours of 26 October in 1917. I have included it primarily for two reasons. First, there are quite a lot of eye-witness accounts of the events from observers, including foreign observers, and from participants, and there are some interesting discrepancies between them. Second, journalists were reporting events, sometimes as eye-witnesses but also through talking to people soon after the Palace had been taken. Third, diplomats were also reporting back to their Foreign Ministries and providing their own "spin" on events. Fourth, public knowledge of the events was also shaped (and to some extent still is) by films such as October by Sergei Eisenstein; the romanticised image of the event by the Socialist realist painter, Tamara Danilenko, and the designs of Yuri Annenkov for the massive commemorative theatrical spectacle which took place in the square outside the Winter Palace on the third anniversary in 1920.

The learning activities outlined below assume that the students are about to, or have just started to, look at the Russian Revolution of 1917, or have just completed their coverage of the February Revolution and are now looking at events leading up to the Bolshevik coup d'état in October of the same year, or are looking at developments in Russia as part of their study of the Great War. If carried out in sequence, they help the student to understand how new information will change the way we look at a particular historical event, test our assumptions about a particular source, bring in new layers of meaning and interpretation and provide them with an opportunity to reflect on the process of historical enquiry itself. The process begins with a photograph [see Appendix page 63 Example I]. At this stage, the students are told absolutely nothing about this photograph, not even that it purports to show the storming of the Winter Palace in October 1917. If resources permit, they should work in small groups, each with a sheet of paper which has the photograph on the right-hand side of the page and the "question boxes" on the left-hand side. These boxes ask the students to describe what they can see, to suggest what they think is taking place, who might be involved and to guess whether it is a photograph or a clip from a film (it is in fact a photograph of the commemoration in 1920).

This process should take about 20 minutes. Once completed, there should be some time for comparing observations to see if they have identified enough clues in the photograph to make a good guess about what was happening. If a teacher has access to Eisenstein's film on video or DVD, then it would be useful at this stage to show the 10 to 15 minutes in the film which deal with the period of waiting leading up to the signal shots fired from the Aurora and the Peter and Paul Fortress, the Red Guards together with some sailors exchanging shots with the cadets and the women's "death" battalion, followed by the breaching of the barricades, the forcing of the main gates and entry to the Palace.

Example J: Eye witness accounts of the Storming of the Winter Palace

"There was a moment of silence; then three rifle shots shattered the quiet. We stood speechless, awaiting a return volley; but the only sound was the crunching of broken glass spread like a carpet over the cobblestones. The windows of the Winter Palace had been broken into bits. Suddenly a sailor emerged from the black. "It's all over!" he said "They have surrendered."."

"Like a black river, filling all the street, without song or cheer we poured through the Red Arch, when the man just ahead of me said in a low voice: "Look out comrades! Don't trust them. They will fire, surely!" In the open we began to run, stooping low and bunching together, and jammed up suddenly behind the pedestal of the Alexander Column. "How many of you did they kill?! I asked. "I don't know. About ten…"."

"At six in the evening a message was sent to the ministers of the Provisional Government calling on them to surrender immediately, but as no answer received the attack on the Palace was opened by a few blank rounds being fired from the Fortress as a preliminary warning. This was followed by a mass onslaught from all sides, armoured cars and machine guns firing at the Palace from under the archway on the square, while now and then the guns of the Fortress or the cruiser Aurora thundered and crashed above the general din."

Volodya Averbakh was walking home by Gogol Street, not a 100 yards from Palace Square at about 11 pm, just at the time of the final assault on the Winter Palace. "The street was completely deserted. The night was quiet and the city seemed dead. We could even hear the echo of our own footsteps on the pavement."

Parties of the attackers penetrated by side entrances in search of loot. At first these parties were small and were disarmed, but they were succeeded by larger bands of sailors, the Pavlovksy Regiment…..armed workmen, and these turned the tables by disarming the garrison. The garrison fired little and is said to have only three yunkers wounded. At 2.30am…the Palace was taken.

"About 11 o'clock we broke in the doors and we filtered up different stairways one by one, or in little bunches. When we got to the top of the stairs the officer cadets took away our guns; still our fellows kept coming up, little by little, until we had a majority. Then we turned around and we took away the cadets' guns."

The next activity, Example J, requires the students to examine some reported accounts of what happened. Four of them are eye-witness accounts, three by people who were actually in the square outside the Winter Palace as events unfolded. Two of these eye-witness were American journalists, a third was a sailor from the Kronstadt naval base who was part of the assault party. The fourth eye-witness, Volodya Averbakh was not in the square but was an eye-witness to what it was like in the area around the Winter Palace. The fifth account, by Meriel Buchanan, was based on hearsay. At the time that the Palace was being attacked, she was inside the British Embassy listening to the reports coming in from British diplomatic staff, military observers and others. The sixth eye-witness was an officer sent by the army commander of the District to report on the Palace defences, gives an account "from the other side".

Sources for Example J:

1. Bessie Beatty, an American journalist with the San Francisco Bulletin and eye witness.

2. John Reed, American journalist and eye witness.

3. Meriel Buchanan, daughter of the British Ambassador in Petrograd.

4. Volodya Averbakh quoted in Orlando Figes, A People's Tragedy, p.493

5. A sailor who took part in the storming of the Winter Palace.

6. A Russian officer, Ragosin, who was in the Palace at the time of the attack.

Perhaps the best way of approaching these eye-witness accounts is to initially cover them up using "post-it" notes. Then line the sheet up alongside the sheet with the students' own thoughts and reveal each quote one at a time and examine it before moving on to the next.[1] Once they have categorised the source (e.g. eye witness, participant, hearsay, etc), they should determine what light this "new" information sheds on the events depicted in the photograph. Once they have revealed and examined all six sources, they need to compare them. For example, Beatty and Reed were both virtually in the same place at the same time but there are minor discrepancies in their accounts. But perhaps the main difference is one of style and language. Reed's account is more dramatic. There are clearer discrepancies between Meriel Buchanan's account and those of Reed and Beatty, although her account, interestingly is quite similar to that of Trotsky [see Example K]. It is also difficult to relate her account to that of Volodya Averbakh, who, though close to the Square, does not hear the machine guns or see the armoured cars or the masses of people. The sailor and the garrison officer, though on opposite sides, seem to corroborate each other's evidence.

The third and final activity, Example K, provides the students with an opportunity to compare their conclusions with those of Trotsky and Kerensky, writing soon after these events, and historians writing decades later but, like the students, drawing on very similar sources and pieces of evidence.

As it stands, this is essentially an exercise in distinguishing between three kinds of perspective outlined earlier: the vantage point, the point of view and the historical interpretation. It would be possible to add other dimensions to introduce an even wider range of perspectives. For example, it would be possible to add to Example K some extracts from commentaries written by historians from different countries, the reactions of political leaders from other countries who were contemporaries of Kerensky, Trotsky, Lenin et al; and some extracts from historians writing at different times. It would also be possible to introduce a further layer of interpretation by providing more detail about the eye-witnesses, their reasons for being there, their political sympathies, etc. John Reed's sympathies, for example, were very much with the Bolsheviks as can be seen in the film, Reds, which was about him and his wife Louise Bryant. Bessie Beatty, on the other hand, though a supporter

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1. This activity is based on an approach developed by Suzie Bunyan and Anna Marshall, *"Let's see what's under the blue square"*, Teaching History, 102 (2001).

of the Russian Revolution, was less committed to the Bolshevik cause. Miss Buchanan, as might be expected given her background, had little or no sympathy for the Bolshevik cause.[1]

Example K: Other perspectives on the Storming of the Winter Palace

There were so many entrances to the Winter Palace that the Red Guard forced their way in quite easily; and there were no scuffles – no shooting in the corridors and picture galleries. When they occupied the Winter Palace there were only six fatal casualties.
Norman Stone, British historian, writing in The Times, 24 October 1987.

In the three days that it took for the city to fall under Bolshevik control, there was remarkably little fighting. There appears to have been no more than five fatalities during the whole episode. The simple fact was that the Provisional Government had hardly any military resources on which it could call. Desertions had reduced the Petrograd garrison to a few loyal officer-cadets, a small group of Cossacks, and a battalion of women soldiers (known as the "Amazons') whom Kerensky had specially recruited earlier in the year as an example of the fighting spirit of the Russian people. Faced by the Red Guards, the Cossacks deserted, while the cadets and the Amazons were persuaded that an attempt to resist would be futile. When the Red Guards approached the Winter Palace, they met with minimal resistance. The sounding of its guns by the cruiser Aurora, moored in the river Neva, whose crew had declared their support for the Soviet, convinced the remaining members of the government that their position was hopeless. As many as were able escaped unnoticed out of the building.
Michael Lynch, (1992) Reaction and revolutions: Russia 1881 – 1924. p.94

The few surviving photographs of the October Days clearly show the small size of the insurgent force. They depict a handful of Red Guards and sailors standing around in half-deserted streets. None of the familiar images of a people's revolution – crowds on the street, barricades and fighting – were in evidence. …The immediate vicinity of the Winter Palace was the only part of the city to be seriously disrupted during 25 October. Elsewhere the life of Petrograd carried on as normal. Streetcars and taxis ran as usual; the Nevsky was full of the normal crowds; and during the evening shops, restaurants, theatres and cinemas even remained open.
Orlando Figes, (1997), A People's Tragedy

The Ministers who had sought refuge in the Winter Palace…were guarded only by a company of the Women's Battalion and a few of the cadets from the Military Schools…a message was sent in to them calling on them to surrender immediately, but as no answer was received the attack on the Palace was opened by a few blank rounds being fired from the Fortress as a preliminary warning. This was followed by a massed onslaught from all sides, armoured cars and machine guns firing at the Palace from under the archway on the square, while now and then the guns of the Fortress or of the cruiser Aurora thundered and crashed above the general din…Both the women soldiers and the cadets had put up a brave defence, but they were greatly outnumbered and when the Bolsheviks gained an entrance…the Ministers, gathered in one of the inner rooms, knew that their only hope lay in surrender.
L.D. Trotsky, The History of the Russian Revolution

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1. For more details, see the opening chapter of Harvey Pitcher, *Witnesses of the Russian Revolution*, London, Pimlico (2001).

The night was a time of tense expectation. We were waiting for troops to arrive from the front. They had been summoned by me in good time and were due in Petrograd in the morning. But instead of the troops, all we got were telegrams and telephone messages saying that the railways were being sabotaged. The hours of the night dragged on painfully. From everywhere we expected rein-forcements, but none appeared. There were endless telephone negotiations with the Cossack regiments. Under various excuses, the Cossacks stubbornly stuck to their barracks'.

Aleksandr Kerensky, (leader of the Social Revolutionary Party and Prime Minister of the Coalition Government overthrown by the Bolsheviks in October 1917).

By the time the students have completed this sequence of activities, they should have a clearer idea of the processes through which the student of history needs to work in order to corroborate evidence and, ultimately, to determine whether a particular perspective on a specific historical event (in this case the popular conception of what happened on the night of 25 October 1917 as represented in Soviet films, paintings and photographs in textbooks) can or cannot be sub-stantiated.

Incorporating multiperspectivity into historical narrative

Earlier in this booklet, it was suggested that a multiperspectival narrative would be one that added a series of "meanwhiles" to the usual sequence of "and thens" in a particular historical account. That suggests a comparative approach, but there is yet another dimension to consider in any multiperspectival approach to narrative: the context within which decisions are taken and acted upon and the motives of the decision makers. This necessitates the introduction of two other important components of multiperspectivity. The first of these is empathy. The second is the relational dimension. That is, how people's decisions and actions are influenced not just by the objective circumstances but also by their understanding of and assumptions about the likely reactions and intentions of "the other" – whether they be allies or enemies, supporters or opponents, colleagues or strangers, one's own people or foreigners.

This involves helping the pupils to see that the process of historical interpreta-tion involves critically examining a number of layers of evidence and source material in order to understand what was happening over a period of time. As with any narrative, the first layer is chronological: what happened and when and what happened next. This is illustrated in Example L. This deals with the sequence of events leading to the signing of the armistice that brought to an end the Great War on 11 November 1918. School textbooks often sketch over the armistice preferring to get on to the deliberations of the Paris Peace Conference

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1. Details of a simulation by Sean Lang on the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 can be downloaded from one of the Council of Europe's own websites (http://culture.coe.fr/hist20).

in January 1919. There is certainly plenty of scope for engaging students in role play activities or even a full-scale simulation of the Peace Conference.[1] However, for a simulation or role play of this kind to work effectively, it is essential that the pupils have acquired sufficient background and contextual information not just about what happened and when but also about the perspectives of the different parties represented at the Conference. A focus on the diplomatic correspondence and the negotiations which led to the Armistice provide that contextual background.

A flow chart, of the kind illustrated in Example L, can be a useful way of highlighting the chronology of events or, in this case, the decisions taken and also a way of demonstrating the linkages between the various parties involved in the decision-making process. It is also a series of parallel timelines reflecting what was happening at this time in Berlin, Paris, London and Washington. This could be made a more enquiry-based activity if the pupils use textbooks, the Internet or other resources to add dates to the sequence of actions on the chart.

The second stage involves a card sorting exercise in which the pupils use contextual information written on cards to help them understand (a) why specific actions were taken, (b) what those actions were and (c) the factors which influenced the decision makers. Some cards are included in Example M to illustrate the approach. As with Example H, these are not meant to be comprehensive. They are drawn from textbooks and the recent works of various historians specialising in the Great War and its aftermath. Much of this material can also be downloaded from various Internet websites. The objective here is to gain insight into the thinking and logic of the various decision makers at this time: their assumptions, expectations, aims and motives. Card sorting activities like this give the pupil a sense of ownership of their historical knowledge so that they have the freedom to explore alternative ways of looking at a particular event or development, classify the information in terms of its significance and think critically about the sources which have provided that evidence.

The final learning activity in this sequence provides the pupils with an opportunity to draw on this chronological and contextual information in order to "step into the shoes" of the various key actors in the process leading up to the signing of the Armistice. The approach proposed is often known as "hot seating". Working in small groups, the individual pupils take it in turns to assume the role of one of the key actors and then answer questions directed at them by the other members of the group. If pupils are not used to this approach, it is advisable that teachers first model it by taking the "hot seat" themselves. The pupils may also need help in preparing for the role and in deciding on the questions to ask the person sitting in the "hot seat". As a general pedagogic approach, it helps students to learn how to organise their historical knowledge into an argument or case and how to formulate good questions to ask of the sources they are using.

Example L: Negotiating the Armistice of 1918: a chronology

Developments	Washington	Berlin	Paris	London
26.9.18 Joint Allied offensive . launched. Z Day				
		28.9.18 Ludendorff recommends a demand for immediate peace		
		4.10.18 German Govt. sends a note to Pres. Wilson formally accepting his programme for negotiating a peace and requesting him to arrange an immediate armistice.		
5.10.18 British troops enter Cambrai				
	6.10.18 Wilson receives German Note. Drafts a reply asking 3 questions: Does Germany agree to negotiations based on his 14 Points? Would Germany withdraw from Allied territories immediately? Did the German Chancellor speak for the constituted authorities in Germany?		6.10.18 Prime Ministers of Britain, France & Italy were meeting in Paris when news of the German Note to Wilson and his response without consultation with them was announced. They drafted a Note to Wilson pointing out that an armistice was a military agreement that required military experts to fix the conditions. They also did not think that the evacuation of occupied territory would guarantee that Germany did not renew hostilities later.	
10.10.18 The *Leinster*, a ship carrying many Americans and Britons is sunk by two German torpedoes with 527 lives lost. This has a big effect on public opinion in the USA and Britain.				
		12.10.18 Berlin responds with a "Yes" to all 3 of Wilson's questions, even though not happy that his 14 Points should be a condition of negotiations rather than a basis for them.		

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Developments	Washington	Berlin	Paris	London
	14.10.18 Wilson drafts a response to the 2nd German Note warning that the Allies would not consider an armistice if any more ships were sunk and that armistice conditions would be set by military experts "to maintain the present military supremacy of the US and Allies in the field".			
17.10.18 British forces enter Lille and Douai.				
		20.10.18 German Government sends a 3rd Note announcing the end of torpedo attacks on passenger vessels and accepting the principle that Allied military advisers should decide the terms of the armistice.		
	23.10.18 Wilson drafts a third Note to the German Govt. demanding surrender, constitutional changes in Germany, peace on the basis of the 14 Points, and the terms of the armistice to be set by Allied military. All his correspondence with the German govt. to be forwarded to the Allied govts.		Clemenceau asks the generals to begin drawing up terms for an armistice	Lloyd George and his government express concern about the 14 Points being the basis of the negotiated peace, especially Point 2 about the freedom of the seas and no mention in Wilson's note about Alsace-Lorraine.
		27.10.18 German govt. accepts Wilson's terms and announces that it "awaits proposals for an armistice which shall be the first step towards a just peace'.	25.10.18 Foch brings together the Allied commanders-in-chief to discuss a plan to occupy the left bank of the Rhine to prevent Germany from renewing hostilities and to make sure that war reparations are paid to France. Terms for the armistice are drawn up. Terms are cabled to Wilson.	
	5.11.18 Wilson sends terms for armistice to Berlin.			

Example M: Aims and intentions for the post-war settlement

President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points:

1. There should be no secret deals or treaties between states.

2. There should be freedom of the seas in peace or war.

3. There should be free trade between countries.

4. Armaments should be reduced to a level appropriate only for domestic security.

5. The same weight must be given to the claims of colonial peoples in determining their future as is given to the colonial governments.

6. All countries with forces occupying Russian territory should evacuate it.

7. The German occupying forces should leave Belgium.

8. The German forces occupying France should leave and Alsace-Lorraine should be returned to France.

9. The Italian borders should be adjusted along national lines.

10. Self-determination for the peoples of Austria-Hungary.

11. Occupying forces should leave the Balkans.

12. Self-determination for the non-Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire.

13. An independent Poland should be set up with access to the sea.

14. A League of Nations should be formed to guarantee peace and the political independence of all states.

The British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, spelled out his aims in a speech on 5 January 1918:

We are not fighting a war of aggression against the German people. Nor are we fighting to destroy Austria-Hungary or to deprive Turkey of its capital, or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace….We mean to stand by the French democracy to the death in the demand they make for a reconsideration of the great wrong of 1871…..Nor did we enter this war merely to alter or destroy the imperial constitution of Germany, much as we consider that military, autocratic constitution a dangerous anachronism in the Twentieth Century. Our point of view is that the adoption of a really democratic constitution by Germany would be the most convincing evidence that in her the old spirit of military domination had indeed died in this war, and would make it much easier for us to conclude a broad democratic peace with her. But, after all, that is a question for the German people to decide.
The first requirement… has been the complete restoration, political, territorial and economic, of the independence of Belgium, and such reparation as can be made for the devastation of its towns and provinces. Next comes the restoration of Serbia, Montenegro and the occupied parts of France, Italy and Roumania. The complete withdrawal of the alien armies and the reparation for injustice done is a fundamental condition of permanent peace. We mean to stand by the French Democracy to the death in the demand they make for a reconsideration of the great wrong of 1871 [i.e. the restoration to France of Alsace-Lorraine].
We believe, however, that an independent Poland comprising all those genuinely Polish elements who desire to form part of it, is an urgent necessity for the stability of Western Europe. …
We are confident that a great attempt must be made to establish by some international organization an alternative to war as a means of settling international disputes.

Germany's war aims were set out in a memorandum written on 2 September 1914 after Belgium had been invaded. According to the German historian, Fritz Fischer, Germany's war aims remained virtually unchanged from 1914 until the autumn of 1918:

A Confederation of European States would be created, governed from Berlin. England's power over world affairs would come to an end. Poland and the Baltic States would be annexed by Germany, Belorussia and the Ukraine would be granted their independence. Germany would retain military control over Belgium, Luxembourg and the French coast as far as Boulogne. French colonies would be transferred to Germany.

> **The French Premier, Georges Clemenceau, made his intentions for the peace very clear in a speech to the French Senate on 17 September 1918:**
>
> I hear it said that peace cannot be brought by a military decision….That is not what the Germans said when they launched upon the peace of Europe the horrors of war….The most terrible accounting of people to people is opened. It will be paid.

Example M: Reactions and responses to proposals for an armistice

> On 28 September, General Ludendorff informed the German Chancellor, Count Hertling, that the military situation was so bad that it required an immediate demand for peace. He concluded: "I want to keep my army intact, the army requires a breathing space". Hertling informed the Kaiser and then resigned as Chancellor. Later, on 1 October, Ludendorff gave a much fuller account of his reasons to his senior officers and this was reported by Colonel von Thaer. Ludendorff had explained that "the war could no longer be won, but rather an unavoidable and conclusive defeat awaited. Bulgaria had already been lost. Austria and Turkey, both at the end of their powers, would also soon fall. Our own Army had unfortunately also been heavily contaminated with the poison of Spartacus-socialist ideas, and the troops were, he said, no longer reliable. Since the 8th of August the situation had rapidly worsened. As a result, some troops had proven themselves so unreliable that they had had to be quickly pulled from the front…. He said he could not operate with divisions that were no longer reliable….It was thus foreseeable, he went on to say, that the enemy in the near future…would succeed in a great victory, a breakthrough in grand fashion. As a result, the West Army would lose its last hold and retreat in full disbandment across the Rhine and carry the revolution back to Germany. Three days later the new German Chancellor, Prince Max von Baden sent the first German Note to President Wilson seeking an armistice.

> When President Wilson received the first German Note his personal adviser, Colonel House, advised him to refuse the German request, saying: "With [Marshall] Foch hammering in the west and you driving the diplomatic wedge deeper, it is within the range of possibilities that the war may be over by the end of the year". House also advised him to reply to just acknowledge receipt of the note and then confer with his Allies before any further response. Wilson, however, replied that the German Note was too vague to justify consultation with the Allies and that he would respond to the Note with a series of questions. "It is not a reply", he said " but an enquiry".

> When Lloyd George and his government advisers heard of the German Note and Wilson's reply they were said to be angry. They regarded the German Note as a device to enable the German army to buy time and to fall back to a new more defensible line, they resented the lack of consultation by Wilson and they were concerned about some of the 14 Points being the basis of a negotiated peace, especially the one about the freedom of the seas. Clemenceau was happier with the tone of Wilson's response because it committed the allies to nothing while Germany would have to evacuate the territory it currently occupied. However, they jointly sent a note to Wilson that was critical that there would be no military safeguards to prevent the Germans from re-forming in new positions to continue with the war. They also asked Wilson to send a personal envoy to participate in their discussions in Paris. They also pointed out that an armistice required military experts to fix the conditions. The Commanders-in-chief under Marshall Foch were asked to begin drawing up terms for an armistice.

> Wilson was reported to be "very shocked" by the Allied leaders' decision to begin drawing up terms for an armistice and complained to Colonel House that they had not consulted him. In the meantime, having released his own reply to the German Note to the US press, he was being criticised by the Republican opposition for being too soft on the Germans. They wanted unconditional surrender, or, as ex-President Theodore Roosevelt put it, "an armistice must be obtained by machine guns and not typewriters".

In Berlin there was some satisfaction and relief when they received Wilson's reply. They saw the 14 Points as negotiable, a basis for discussion and there was no proposed timetable for the evacuation of occupied territory so it seemed to buy them time. They were therefore content to respond positively in a second Note, although some of the German High Command were now beginning to wonder if the request for an armistice might have been premature as German lines were holding. In the meantime fighting continued on every front.

The sinking of the Leinster with the loss of so many American and British civilian lives created outrage in America and the President's Republican opponents became even more critical of his approach. With Congressional elections coming up on 5 November, Wilson was not in a position to ignore domestic opinion. He was also under pressure from his Allies who wanted the armistice terms to be settled by their military experts and were not satisfied solely with evacuation of occupied territory without guarantees. For these reasons, his reply to the second German note took a tougher line. He also decided to improve relations with his allies by sending Colonel House to Paris to act as his personal representative. However, in drafting his second Note to Berlin, he still did not consult with his Allies.

Wilson's second reply caused dismay in Berlin. Political advisers felt there was little or no room for manoeuvre, while the senior military staff were divided. Ludendorff was becoming more optimistic as the autumn drew on and the changing weather was slowing down the Allied offensive. His advice was to "keep the armistice negotiations going…and not accept terms that make a resumption of hostilities impossible". Generals closer to the front reported that there were no grounds for such optimism and German troops were surrendering in large numbers. The pessimistic view prevailed and the third German Note was drafted and sent to Wilson.

Wilson drafted his third response to Berlin after a meeting with his Cabinet – the first time he had consulted them over the issue of the armistice. An instant response was called for because his Republican opponents were publicly criticising him for not imposing terms on Germany and the election was getting even closer. In the Note, he proposed to pass on all his correspondence with Germany to the allied governments and make it public, stating that if they were ready to negotiate peace on the basis of the 14 Points then their military advisers would be asked to submit terms for an armistice. A member of his Cabinet suggested that publishing his correspondence without the consent of his Allies might be interpreted by them as coercion. Wilson replied that they needed to be coerced.

In Berlin, Ludendorff and Hindenburg released a memorandum to the German press stating that Wilson's latest message was "unacceptable to any soldier…" [and that] "the fight must continue with all our strength". The Kaiser demanded Ludendorff's resignation, Hindenburg remained in office. Meanwhile the German Chancellor proposed a response to Wilson that "The German Government awaits proposals for an armistice, not suggestions of surrender". However, the German government would not accept this. The Social Democrat, Philipp Scheidemann (later to be Chancellor of Germany in the Weimar Republic) made it very clear that such a response was not acceptable because Wilson would break off the negotiations if he received such a reply.

In Paris at the meeting of the Allied Supreme War Council, the discussions focused on reparations for the destruction caused by Germany and on diluting some of the 14 Points, particularly on the freedom of the seas. Eventually Colonel House, on behalf of the President, accepted a compromise in which the principle of freedom of the seas was accepted but it was recognised that there were certain circumstances in which it could not apply, such as blockades in times of war.

As can be seen from Example M, there are two levels of contextual information being provided here. First, there is the information which outlines the aims and intentions of each government: Wilson's Fourteen Points, the German government's

overall war aims, the British government's concern with settling territorial claims, the French government's concern with reparations and preventing Germany from renewing hostilities at some later date. However, it is also important that students understand that the various governments involved were also responding to a dynamic and changing situation, often with limited and incomplete information about each other's intentions and plans. For example, Wilson's position changed in response to domestic political pressure and pressure from the Allies. The German government's position was changing in response to developments at the front and in domestic politics. One of the benefits of a multiperspectival approach is that it helps to counter the sense of inevitability which a textbook author may present when writing about events which occurred 50, 100 or 150 years ago.

The information supplied on context cards such as these is quite detailed. If time allows, it may be possible to make the activity more enquiry-based either by providing students with some complete documents from which they could extract information about aims and intentions or by getting them to find the documents themselves on relevant Internet websites. If time does not permit an enquiry-based approach then students, working in pairs or small groups, should be asked to link the "Aims and Intentions" cards and the "Responses and Reactions" cards to specific decisions and actions outlined in the timeline in Example L.

Extending the breadth and scope of historical interpretation

Earlier, it was observed that multiperspectivity aims at both a more complete and fairer picture. Here there are two topics which have been chosen to illustrate how this might be done. The first is a theme which can be found in most history curricula and textbooks in Europe: The Crusades.

Generally speaking, this is a topic which is usually covered almost exclusively from the point of view of the Crusaders, perhaps with occasional references to leaders such as Saladin (Salah al-Din Yūsuf) or Zangī (Imād al-Din Zangī) and possibly a short section in the textbook on the origins and beliefs of Islam. However, a number of works by Arab chroniclers of that period have now been translated into various European languages and several books have also emerged which draw heavily on their accounts.[1] It is possible using these resources, and the more traditional material which draws mainly on Christian sources, to take a number of key events during the Crusades and compare how they were perceived by both the Christian and Arab chroniclers. For example, the recapture of Jerusalem in 1099, the Battle of Hattin in 1187, the siege of Acre in 1189-91 or the fall of Tripoli in 1289.

However, rather than beginning with comparing Frankish and Muslim accounts of specific events, there is a strong case for beginning the coverage of this topic by looking at how both sides saw each other and how these perceptions varied according to direct experience and changing events. The works of the leading

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1. See, e.g., Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes,* (1984), London, Al Saqi Books [translated by Jon Rothschild].

Arab chroniclers offer interesting and even contrasting insights into Muslim perspectives of the Christian invaders or Franks, as they usually referred to them (see Example N). Many modern textbooks include some examples of Christian perceptions of Islam and the Muslim peoples so, for reasons of space, I have only reproduced a few here, taken from British texts. I am sure readers from other countries will have their own favourite examples to add to this cluster. It would be useful to include some quotations here which reflect some of the misconceptions of each other that were rife at that time even amongst well-educated observers who had direct experience of living side-by-side with Christians or Muslims. For example, the anonymous author of the Gesta Francorum, who came from southern Italy where communication with Muslims was common and who fought for three years against the Turks, describes the Muslims as "Christ's enemies" in spite of Christ being revered as a prophet in Islam, and imagines the Seljuk leader Kerbogha swearing by Mohammed and all the Gods as if he was a polytheist. Similarly, as can be seen from Source K, Fulcher of Chartres who lived amongst Muslims in Jerusalem for many years wrongly assumes that Muslims worshipped Muhammed and worshipped idols created in his likeness.

In addition, I have also included three sources (Sources N, O and P), one from the Syrian Emir, Usãma Ibn Munqidh, one from the modern British historian, J.M. Roberts, and the third from Fulcher of Chartres, who fought in the First Crusade and subsequently lived in Jerusalem for 27 years, which provide some insight into the ways in which some Crusaders, particularly after the re-taking of Jerusalem in 1099, settled and, to some extent, took on local lifestyles and attitudes. In this respect, it is particularly interesting to contrast the two quotes from Fulcher of Chartres (Sources K and L) which reflect the changing views of a Crusader who had been there at the re-taking of Jerusalem in 1099 and then lived there for the next 27 years.

The approach suggested here is to have three sets of cards: sources illustrating Muslim perceptions of Crusaders, sources illustrating Crusader perceptions of Muslims and sources offering evidence of interactions between them, mutual influences and even integration (as in Sources I and J). Working individually or in pairs, the pupils should use "active reading strategies" not to collate information but to build up a picture of how each group saw the others, to identify differences of perspective between the individual sources from each community, and, using the approximate dates when the sources were written, to analyse how perceptions may have changed over time.

This process entails not only analysing the specific content of each source but also the language employed, i.e. looking for examples of stereotypes, generalisations about the whole community based on hearsay or single instances, and so on. "Active reading" here means using different coloured highlighter pens or underlining phrases and words using coloured pencils or pens to identify: statements capable of being verified by evidence, examples of stereotypical thinking and generalisations based on hearsay, and examples of the writer trying to be fair to "the other".

Example N: Introducing a unit on The Crusades

Muslim perceptions of the Crusaders:

Source A:
"As regards the people of the northern quadrant, they are the ones for whom the sun is distant from the zenith, as they penetrate to the north, such as the Slavs, the Franks, and those nations that are their neighbours. The power of the sun is weakened among them, because of its distance from them; cold and damp prevail in their regions, and snow and ice follow one another in endless succession. The warm humour is lacking among them; their bodies are large, their natures are gross, their manners harsh, their understanding dull, and their tongues heavy. Their colour is so excessively white that they look blue…Their eyes, too, are blue, matching their colouring; their hair is lank and reddish because of the damp mists. Their religious beliefs lack solidity, and this is because of the nature of cold and the lack of warmth. The farther they are to the north the more stupid, gross and brutish they are."
Al-Mas'ūdī, a scholar writing in the C10th translated into French by C. Pellat, Paris 1971)

Source B:
All those who were well-informed about the Franj saw them as beasts superior in courage and fighting ardour but in nothing else, just as animals are superior in strength and aggression.
Emir Usāma Ibn Munqidh, writer and diplomat living in the C12th taken from *An Arab-Syrian Gentleman and Warrior in the Period of the Crusades,* translated by P.K. Hitti, New York, 1929

Source C:
Frankland: Its people are Christians and they have a king possessing courage, great numbers and power to rule. He has two or three cities on our shore of the sea in the midst of the lands of Islam and he protects them from his side. Whenever the Muslims send forces to them, he sends forces from his side to defend them, and his soldiers are of mighty courage and in the hour of combat do not even think of flight, rather preferring death.
Zakariyā ibn Muhammad al-Qazvīnī, writing in the C13th. Quoted in Bernard Lewis, The Muslim Discovery of Europe.

Source D:
The Franks have no sense of honour. If one of them is walking in the street with his wife and he encounters another man, that man will take his wife's hand and draw her aside and speak to her, while the husband stands waiting for them to finish their conversation….Imagine this contradiction! These people possess neither jealousy nor honour, whereas they are so courageous. Courage, however, comes only from one's sense of honour and from contempt for that which is evil!.
Emir Usāma Ibn Munqidh, quoted in Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes,* p.39

Source E:
It is one of the misfortunes that befall the Muslims that the Islamic common people complain of the oppression of their own rulers, and praise the conduct of their opponents and enemies, the Franks, who have conquered them and who tamed them with their justice. It is to God that they should complain of these things.
Ibn Jubayr writing in 1184. [R.C.J. Broadhurst, (Eng. trans) The Travels of Ibn Jubayr, London 1953]

Source F:

You shall see none more filthy than they. They are a people of perfidy and mean character. They do not cleanse or bathe themselves more than once or twice a year, and then in cold water, and they do not wash their garments from the time they put them on until they fall to pieces. They shave their beards, and after shaving they sprout only a revolting stubble.

Probably Ibrahim ibn Ya'qubh, a Jew, who may have been a physician who travelled in France, Holland, Germany and central Europe in the mid-C10th.

Source G:

Regard the Frank! Behold with what obstinacy they fight for their religion, while we, the Muslims, show no enthusiasm for waging holy war.

Saladin, quoted by Malouf, p.v

Source H:

After the fall of Jerusalem, the Franks dressed in black, and they journeyed beyond the seas to seek aid and succour in all their lands, especially Rome the Great. To incite people to vengeance, they carried with them a painting of the Messiah, peace be upon him, bloodied by an Arab who was striking him. They would say: "Look, here is the Messiah and here is Muhammad, the Prophet of the Muslims, beating him to death!" The Franks were moved and gathered together, women included; those who could not come along would pay the expenses of those who went to fight in their place. One of the enemy prisoners told me that he was an only son and that his mother had sold her house to buy his equipment for him.

Ibn al-Athir writing at the time of the siege of Acre in 1189. A chronicler and author of The Perfect History.

Crusaders' perceptions of the Muslims:

Source I:

The view of Islam expressed in early Crusade writings was utterly negative, with the Muslims portrayed as enemies of god and servants of the devil.

J. Riley-Smith, *The Atlas of the Crusades,* 1991.

Source J:

The successes of Saladin were so shocking to the Franks that they searched desperately for explanations. What they came up with was the idea that anyone so successful must have Frankish blood in him.

S. Lambert, Medieval World, 1991.

Source K:

All the Saracens held the Temple of the Lord in great veneration. Here rather than elsewhere, they preferred to say the prayers of their faith although such prayers were wasted because offered to an idol set up in the name of Mohammed.

Fulcher of Chartres, A history of the expedition to Jerusalem 1095-1127 (translated by F.R. Ryan, 1969), writing around 1130.

Source L:

Oh day so ardently desired! Oh time of times the most memorable! Oh deed before all other deeds!…They desired that this place, so long contaminated by the superstition of the pagan inhabitants, should be cleansed from their contagion.

Fulcher of Chartres, *A history of the expedition to Jerusalem 1095-1127* (translated by F.R. Ryan, 1969), writing around 1130.

Source M:

They are not afraid of dying to conquer Jerusalem. They are helped by those of Babylon with the Africans and those of Ethiopia…..Now, because of our sins the dark day has brought the Moorish hordes….The Christians are few, fewer than sheep. The Moors are many, more than the starts.

E. Asensio, *Ay Iherusalem!,* Nueva Revista de Filologia Hispánica, 14, pp.247-270 (transl. 1960), Spanish song written in the 13th Century.

Evidence of interaction and mutual influences:

Source N:

Among the Franks there are some who have settled down in this country and associated with Muslims. These are better than the new-comers, but they are exceptions to the rule, and no inference can be drawn from them. Here is an example. Once I sent a man to Antioch on business. At that time, Chief Theodore Sophianos was there, and he and I were friends. He was then all-powerful in Antioch. One day he said to my man: "One of my Frankish friends has invited me. Come with me and see how they live". My man told me: So I went with him, and we came to the house of one of the old knights, those who had come with the first Frankish expedition. He had already retired from state and military service, and has a property in Antioch from which he lived. He produced a fine table, with food both tasty and cleanly served. He saw that I was reluctant to eat, and said: "Eat to your heart's content, for I do not eat Frankish food. I have Egyptian women cooks, and eat nothing but what they prepare, nor does pig flesh ever enter my house". So I ate, but with some caution, and we took our leave.

Usāma ibn Munqidh

Source 0:

For we, who were Occidentals, have now become Orientals. He who was Roman or a Frank has in this land become a Galilean or Palestinian. He who was of Rheims or Chartres has become a citizen of Tyre or Antioch. We have already forgotten our native lands; already these are unknown to many of us or not mentioned any more….Some men have taken as wives Syrian or Armenian women, or even Saracens if they have been baptised…one cultivates his vines, another his fields; they speak different tongues, and have already managed to understand each other…races utterly unlike each other live together in trust.

Fulcher of Chartres, writing around 1130.

Source P:

Wherever contact occurred with Islam, in the crusading lands, Sicily or Spain, western Europeans found things to admire: silk clothes, the use of perfumes, more frequent baths.

J. Roberts, History of the World, 1980.

In a sense, the approach suggested above seeks to introduce pupils to a study of contrasting mentalités at a particular time in history. A similar card-sorting analysis could also be used to understand relationships between neighbouring nations, or between groups within nations or between majorities and minorities, perhaps as a preliminary exercise before analysing a specific event or conflict.

My second example is also a study of mentalités. It is an attempt to show how a multiperspectival approach can help to illustrate the ways in which people's different assumptions and expectations, which often have their roots in earlier historical events and relations as well as being influenced by contemporary propaganda and media coverage, can shape their reactions to events. It relates to the contrasting perspectives on the reported atrocities on both sides in 1914 in the early days of the Great War: The Case of the Missing Hands (see Appendix photograph page 65).

Just a few days after German troops invaded Belgium on 4 August 1914, rumours of guerrilla activities by French and Belgian civilians, referred to as "francs-tireurs" (or "free-shooters') circulated amongst the German troops (see Appendix photograph page 67). This was soon followed by stories in German newspapers about troops being ambushed and then mutilated by these civilians. The references usually emphasised that the "rules of war" were not being observed: troops shot in the back, blinded, castrated or otherwise mutilated when wounded and unable to defend themselves. Fairly soon after, stories also began to emerge on the Allied side of atrocities committed against Belgian and French civilians by German soldiers. These stories were quickly picked up by newspapers in Belgium, France and Britain. Journalists not interested in being "fair" to the enemy, and, in any case, unable to verify such rumours during wartime printed these stories and claims as if they were confirmed factual accounts (see Appendix photograph page 69). A common theme here was of atrocities committed against women and children, particularly of their hands being cut off by German troops. Some examples of the kinds of accounts that were being collected are reproduced in Example O.

According to the evidence collected by Horne and Kramer, German fears of the "francs-tireurs" had their roots in the Franco-Prussian War when, after the defeat of Napoleon III, French irregular troops, fighting for the new Republic, fought a guerrilla campaign against the Prussian army.[1] So the expectation was already there when German troops crossed the Belgian border. Opposition from retreating troops was quickly interpreted as guerrilla activity. Reports which went back to Germany from wounded soldiers and diaries taken off captured or dead soldiers illustrated how a certain kind of mentalité quickly emerged. Houses on fire were no longer regarded as the inevitable collateral damage in wartime but as signals to betray German positions. Exchanges with retreating troops led to civilians being captured and executed and villages burned down as reprisals. There were also instances of civilians being used as human shields to protect troops from guerrilla fire. Within 10 days of the outbreak of war, the German High Command were convinced of the truth of these civilian actions and the Kaiser explained in a note to President Wilson on 7 September 1914 that: "My generals were finally compelled to take the most drastic measures in order to punish the guilty and to frighten the bloodthirsty population from continuing their work of vile murder and horror". In the meantime, the press in France and Britain were also using extracts from the diaries of captured German soldiers as evidence of German atrocities committed against civilians.

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1. John Horne & Alan Kramer, *German Atrocities, 1914: A History of Denial,* Yale University Press 2001.

By September 1914, the French government had already banned the circulation of atrocity stories in the French newspapers because they were concerned that these would cause panic amongst the civilian population. Official inquiries were instigated by the Belgian, British, French and German governments which seemed to agree that reprisals against civilians had occurred but disagreed about their legitimacy. However, none of the inquiries corroborated the widespread stories of mutilation of German troops by civilians or mutilation of Belgian and French women and children by German troops. The accounts nearly all proved to be hearsay and officials failed to find any trace of mutilated children or blinded or castrated soldiers.

In the Allied countries after the war, the public focus shifted from atrocities as a justification for fighting a "just war" to horror at the cost of the war in terms of overall loss of life. Governments were blamed for using propaganda to whip up public support for the war. In Germany there was also a widespread tendency to present the atrocities as propaganda as part of the process of denying guilt and responsibility for the war and repudiating the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. Historians writing in the inter-war years also tended to focus on the propaganda war of 1914-15.

The whole issue lends itself to a multiperspectival approach because, in addition to the works of modern historians such as Horne and Kramer, there are so many sources available that present the perspectives of troops and civilians, the different governments, the reports of the official inquiries, the official and unofficial propaganda, and the various political and national interpretations of events in the newspapers in each country. However, it is a minor element in the prosecution of the Great War and probably very few history teachers would have the time within the constraints of their syllabus to be able to look at this in any detail.

Example O: Alleged evidence of atrocities in the early days of World War I

Source 1:
In September 1914 a policeman based in Paris reported that he had been told by "an eye-witness" that he had seen *"a little Belgian girl, aged six, she was with one of her relatives who is a butcher on the rue de la Flandre; when the German soldiers arrived in her village, they cut off her two hands.. with a hatchet"*.

Source 2:
A refugee from the Pas-de-Calais reported that gendarmes in that region had captured some German soldiers who, when searched, had severed hands in the pockets of their greatcoats.

Source 3:
The French newspaper, Le Matin, published a story on 20 September 1914, that two severed hands, one of a woman and one of a young girl, had been found in the greatcoat pockets of two wounded German soldiers being treated in a Paris hospital.

Source 4:
A medical officer in a German regiment reported how troops had begun to fire wildly when they heard a salvo of shots being fired by a burial party at the funeral of a German soldier. They assumed that they were being fired on – an early example of "friendly fire'?

> **Source 5:**
> The diary of a German officer from the 178th Infantry Regiment, which was found by the French, painted a telling portrait of the soldiers' feelings as they crossed Belgium in August 1914. The initial reception was amicable, with one old woman telling the diarist: "you are not barbarians; you have spared our crops". Sixty kilometres on the men became fearful of ambush and took hostages as a security measure….the following day he was convinced that stiff opposition encountered on entering Dinant came from francs-tireurs, 250 to 200 of whom were captured and executed. The diarist also notes that they set fire to the first village they entered in France because a German soldier had fired a shot by accident and they had reacted as if under attack.
> Horne & Kramer, German Atrocities 1914, A History of Denial.

I would suggest instead that it might be worth looking at one aspect of this story as a way into beginning a unit or module on the First World War – the "hook" which captures the pupils' interest and imagination before they move on to examine the causes and contributing factors, the process of the war, the treaties and the longer-term consequences. It demonstrates a number of interesting aspects of war which apply equally well to the analysis of the other major global and more localised conflicts of the 20th Century:

– That the way in which a war proceeds will reflect to some extent not just military but also public expectations and assumptions about the conduct of the enemy which are rooted in past conflicts (in this case the Franco-Prussian war of 1870). French and Belgian civilians and troops expected "Prussian militarism". the German High Command expected civilian and "irregular" resistance of the kind experienced in 1870, German troops in the early days of the war found themselves moving through enemy territory more quickly than expected and sometimes leaving them feeling cut-off from military support.

– That propaganda is not just about mobilising public support for war aims, persuading men to enlist in the army and persuading potential allies to also come into the war on your side (in this case the United States and Italy), it is also about the need to explain events in ways which correspond with public expectations and assumptions, values and stereotypical ideas about the enemy and one's own side – processes which were also apparent in propaganda at the outbreak of the Second World War, the Cold War, the Korean War and, more recently, the Gulf War.

– That propaganda which focuses on a particular event will often be more concerned with the meaning attributed to "the facts" than with the facts themselves. In this case the whole issue about atrocities focused on myths which reinforced particular expectations, assumptions and values. In many ways they were counter-productive as propaganda because, rather than mobilising people into action and support for the cause, they encouraged panic and fear, even hysteria, followed by cynicism.

Most textbooks usually include some propaganda posters produced in the weeks leading up to the outbreak of war and it is possible now to download examples

from reputable websites that reflect the approaches adopted in all of the countries involved. Making use of these and posters and postcards of the kind reproduced in the following pages would permit a comparative approach at two levels: a comparison across countries and between the pre-war "official" propaganda and the "unofficial" response to "the atrocities" in the first weeks of the War. This could be a useful multiperspectival way of helping pupils to understand how representations of prevailing mentalités can influence public, governmental and military reactions as much as events and strategic and tactical developments.

Such an approach is also relevant to the study of most kinds of social and cultural conflicts within countries as well as between them. It helps the student to better understand that within any conflict situation long-established assumptions, not always firmly based in fact or direct experience, continue to influence each party's expectations of the other, their interpretations of each other's statements, and the motives and intentions which they assign to each other's actions. In such circumstances, it is fruitless to try to work out who is right and who is wrong, which actions may be justifiable and which are not. The objective is to try to understand where each party "is coming from" and why they think and act as they do.

Concluding thoughts

It was not my intention, in this short booklet, to attempt to produce a set of classroom materials on specific historical events and themes which the teacher or teacher trainer could then take down "off-the-shelf". translate into an appropriate language, adjust to specific curricula and then use them in their history teaching. The examples presented here were heuristic devices meant to illustrate key points in the text and various ways of introducing more multiperspectivity into history education.

Essentially this was a booklet about multiperspectivity in history education rather than a demonstration of multiperspectivity in action. I therefore want to conclude by reiterating a few points which I think need to be kept in mind by teachers or textbook authors who may be planning to adopt a more multiperspectival approach to history.

Multiperspectivity is intended to be more pluralistic, inclusive, integrative and comprehensive than the more traditional approaches to history education which have been characterized by Gita Steiner-Khamsi as "mono-cultural, ethnocratic and universalistic". That means that historians, history teachers and pupils need to consider whether an account which draws on a wider range of sources, including sources which may have been ignored by most historians, is fair (i.e. does more justice to the perspectives of all of those involved in and affected by a given event) and more complete.

But this does not necessarily mean that the more multiperspectival the historical account is the more objective it will therefore be. First, it is unlikely that all of the perspectives incorporated into a particular account will be of equal weight and value. Second, we need to keep in mind the meaning of the term "perspective". here, i.e. a view limited by the standpoint of the person expressing it, whether that person is a participant, an eye-witness, a journalist or an historian, and regardless of whether these limits are physical, attitudinal, cultural, technical or professional. These limitations or constraints on the views expressed will not disappear just because one particular historical account incorporates more perspectives than another. We cannot assume that through examining evidence from a multiplicity of perspectives on the same historical event or phenomenon that we will therefore be able to offer a more complete description or a more thorough explanation of what happened. On the contrary, a multiperspectival approach, particularly to political and social conflicts, may well demonstrate how difficult it is to reach firm conclusions when the different parties to the conflict perceive each other's actions, objectives, motives and responses in very different, even contradictory ways based on different interpretations, assumptions, preconceptions and prejudices.

This brings us to the crux of the matter. History teaching can be made more multiperspectival and less mono-cultural, exclusive and universalistic by making the content more diverse, using a wider range of sources, ensuring that students have

opportunities to read contrasting accounts of historical events. But multiperspectivity is not just about possible changes in the content of history curricula, and the use of a wider range of sources, it is also about helping students to think historically about the past.

Within the specific context of history education, multiperspectivity entails introducing students to a process; a way of analysing evidence or interpretations of evidence relevant to a particular historical event or development in terms of how they have been constrained by physical factors, the allegiances of the sources of the evidence, their attitudes and prejudices, their motives, the logic they apply in trying to explain events and decide what they should do, their expectations of, and prejudices about each other, the cultural frameworks and traditions which influence their perceptions and interpretations, and so forth. As we have also seen in the examples presented earlier in this booklet, multiperspectivity also involves trying to relate these different interpretations to each other.

This raises several implications for history teachers, curriculum planners and textbook authors and publishers. First, opportunities need to be provided for practising the analytical skills that are central to any multiperspectival approach if they are to gain the confidence and know-how to enable them to work effectively with a multiplicity of perspectives. To this end, a number of teaching and learning approaches have been described here, including card-sorting exercises, hot-seating, using flow charts and timelines, comparing perceptions of each other in conflict situations, and analysing propaganda and news coverage as means of understanding and interpreting contrasting mentalités.

Second, multiperspectivity requires an opportunity for in-depth studies of particular topics; something which can be very difficult within the constraints imposed by a curriculum framework designed to present students with a content-rich chronological survey of history. Nevertheless, even in circumstances where teachers are faced by this kind of curriculum framework, it should still be possible to introduce a multiperspectival approach to the treatment of one or two topics every year in order to provide opportunities for students to become familiar with the analytical processes involved. Similarly, it is not essential to ensure that the range of perspectives presented to the student is comprehensive.

Finally, many textbook authors and publishers and, indeed, some of the history teachers who express a commitment to source-based teaching, may need to re-think their approach. All too often the students are presented with a series of short extracts from different sources but then asked questions designed to elicit factual information, or to substantiate those conclusions which the author or teacher wants the students to reach, or to differentiate between those sources which are "objective" and those which are "biased". Multiperspectivity is underpinned by the fundamental assumption that students need to understand that anyone who is studying the past must come to terms with and tolerate discrepancies, contradictions, ambiguities, dissenting voices, half-truths and partial points of view, biases and preconceptions. This assumption should guide our thinking about the kinds of questions and exercises that should accompany any source material representing a multiplicity of perspectives.

APPENDIX : PHOTOGRAPHS

The Storming of the Winter Palace, 25 October 1917

> Describe exactly what you can see here:

> What do you think is happening?

> Who do you think the people are?

> When do you think the photo was taken?

> Do you think this is a photograph or a clip from a film?

 A French postcard of October 1914 presenting the myth of "The severed hands".

A German artist's impression of a *"franc-tireur"* attack
on German soldiers produced in August 1914.

A propaganda postcard produced some time in 1914
listing alleged German atrocities.