

Between coverage and meaning: relevance in world history textbooks

by

Rachel Leann Lewis

B.S., California State University Long Beach, 2016
M.S., University of Southern California, 2018

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

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Department of Curriculum and Instruction
College of Education

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Abstract

This qualitative interpretive textbook analysis examines how secondary world history textbooks present the past in ways that shape historical and cultural relevance. Drawing on scholarship in historical consciousness (e.g., temporality, contingency, change/continuity; Seixas, 2004; Rüsen, 2004; van Straaten et al., 2016; Wilschut, 2012) and culturally relevant education (Banks, 2013; Gay, 2002; Grant, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995), the study develops an integrated analytical foundation that synthesizes these perspectives into a structured rubric. The foundation is applied to eight widely used and alternative world history textbooks to examine how narratives model historical interpretation, represent global diversity and cultural agency, make power and interconnection visible, and invite students to find relevance and meaning in the study of the past.

Analysis revealed consistent cross-textbook patterns in how historical relevance is constructed. While all textbooks demonstrated attention to global diversity, power, and historical complexity, they varied in how explicitly they modeled historical interpretation and cultural agency. This variation was not determined by whether a text followed a chronological or thematic structure, as elements of interpretation, contingency, and agency appeared across all text types. All the textbooks presented multiple perspectives and structural explanations, yet almost always left the interpretive work of how historical knowledge is constructed implicit. Relevance was frequently embedded through enduring human issues (e.g., power, inequality, belief systems, governance, etc.) and contemporary themes (e.g., globalization, human rights, environmental change, etc.), though opportunities for students to connect relevance to modern-day issues or their lived experiences remained implicit.

This study introduces a theory-informed analytical foundation for examining how historical and cultural relevance are constructed within world history textbooks. By making the tension visible between coverage and meaning in textbook narratives, the findings inform textbook selection, curriculum development, and teacher decision-making in world history classrooms.

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Approved by:

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Onward!

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated first to my children, October and Robbie. This work required time and perseverance, and it was completed alongside the responsibilities of motherhood. I dedicate this to them as an example of what it means to pursue meaningful work and to keep moving forward even when the path is demanding. The effort behind this work are offered to them as proof that persistence matters and that their goals, too, are worth sustained commitment.

I also dedicate this work to my mom, Melody. Through her lived example, she has shown me what it means to persist, adapt, and continue forward despite challenges. She reminds me that obstacles are not endpoints, but something to work through.

Finally, this dissertation is dedicated to my grandmother, Carmen. A teacher by profession and by spirit, she instilled in me a lasting respect for education and lifelong learning. She often reminded me that it does not matter how slow you go, as long as you are moving forward. That wisdom has guided me through this process and continues to influence how I understand persistence, purpose, and the value of education itself.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

More than other studies, history shows man in all his abilities and limitations. It is the story of extremes: courage and cowardice, love and jealousy, compassion and bloodlust, pride and shame, survival and self-destruction. The past offers numerous examples of daring and successful entrepreneurship, but also situations in which human beings are at the mercy of forces totally beyond their control. History reveals the limited room for manoeuvre within which people try to realize their ideals and what it is like to have to operate in conditions over which one has no hold. It offers examples of discrepancy between wanting and being able, between planning and realization of plans, between intended and unintended consequences.

Van Straaten et al., *Making history relevant to students by connecting past, present and future: a framework for research* (2016, p. 489)

Background

This research examines the intersection between culturally relevant education (CRE) and the development of historical consciousness that is central to historically relevant education (HRE). Drawing on van Straaten et al.'s (2016) work on relevant history teaching, I recognized that both frameworks, though developed through different educational lenses, share a central goal: making learning personally and socially meaningful for students. Each addresses a related problem in history education: student disengagement with the past and the persistent absence of culturally inclusive narratives within the social studies curriculum. Scholars have long observed that students often fail to perceive history as relevant to their own lives, seeing it as disconnected from their identities and communities (Berg, 2019; Cutrara, 2020; Duraisingh, 2017; Harris & Reynolds, 2014; Haydn & Harris, 2010; Lempert, 2013; Miguel-Revilla, 2022; Rivero et al.,

2022; Stoel et al., 2017; van Straaten et al., 2016, 2018, 2019; VanSickle, 1990; Zaccor, 2022).

This disengagement is not due to simply a lack of curiosity, but rather reflects the limited ways that history has been presented, often as a distant, Eurocentric narrative that privileges dominant perspectives (Araújo, 2015; Foster, 1998, 1999, 2011; Marino, 2011; Keita, 2020; Ross, 2006; Steinmetz-Jenkins, 2022). As Foster and Crawford (2006) explain, these “are narratives and stories that nation-states choose to tell about themselves and their relationships with other nations. Typically, they represent a core of cultural knowledge which future generations are expected both to assimilate and support” (pp. 1-2). In this way, textbooks do more than convey historical information; they define collective memory and reinforce the purposes of education.

In contrast to how contemporary social studies is often taught, van Straaten and colleagues explain that developing historical consciousness requires guiding students to understand that “the course of history does not unfold according to deterministic patterns, but is characterized by change, continuity, and contingency” (2016, p. 644). Much like education itself, historical consciousness should evolve throughout a person’s lifetime. Its purpose, as Ahonen (2005) notes, is to cultivate an awareness of how human beings can assume accountability for their role in shaping the future (p. 706). The history classroom provides an ideal environment for the development of historical consciousness through relevance-focused learning. The framework developed by Van Straaten et al. (2016) offers a means of advancing secondary students’ historical consciousness by establishing relevance-focused objectives that connect historical understanding to instructional practice (pp. 484-497). Through this approach, teachers can design learning experiences that bridge historical content and students’ own lives. In my view, the constructs of historical relevance and cultural relevance are inherently intertwined and should be understood as part of the same discourse.

A pioneer in the field of multicultural education, Geneva Gay defines culturally relevant teaching as “using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (2002, p. 106). Scholars such as Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) have been delineating the benefits of culturally relevant teaching since the late twentieth century. Recognition and understanding of the relationship between historical and cultural relevance is imperative in order to have a holistic understanding of history. Integrating these concepts has the potential to enrich Van Straaten et al.’s (2016) framework for relevant history education by providing students with deeper insight into history through the cultural and personal connections of historical events. When textbook content omits or distorts students’ cultural histories, they may be more inclined to disengage or internalize feelings of marginalization. Conversely, when diverse histories are authentically represented, students can experience validation, curiosity, and ownership of their learning (Gay, 2000).

The aim of this research is to extend the idea that historical and cultural relevance are inherently connected by proposing a foundation that integrates historical consciousness with culturally relevant education and apply it through the analysis of world history textbooks. This research argues that fostering historical understanding requires not only temporal awareness but also the inclusion of students’ cultural and social realities as they are represented in curriculum materials. Through this synthesis, educators can understand how texts may support this inclusion and how students interpret history in ways that may affirm identity, build empathy, and cultivate critical awareness of how narratives of the past influence our perspectives in the present.

Research Problem

Recognizing the Gaps in Global Representation

There is a recognized need for more globally representative world history education. Scholars have long observed that world history curricula, often organized around Western chronology, continue to privilege Eurocentric perspectives and marginalize non-Western societies (Araújo, 2015; Foster, 1998, 1999, 2011; Keita, 2020; Marino, 2011; Ross, 2006; Steinmetz-Jenkins, 2022). Abundant research on textbook content, along with my own experience teaching social studies, demonstrates that these texts continue to present historical narratives that position Europe as the primary driver of global progress while positioning non-European societies as peripheral or as causing friction for European advancement (Fitzgerald, 2012; Foster, 1999; Garcia, 1993; Grever & Van der Vlies, 2017; Hughes, 2007; Wirtenberg et al., 1980). One of the clearest ways this is seen, as any mainstream textbook illustrates, is through the traditional chronological structure that textbooks commonly follow, which emphasizes Western progression as the central narrative and marginalizes other regions' histories unless they connect directly to Europe's story (Foster, 1999; Marino, 2011).

Textbooks are not neutral instructional tools; they are social artifacts that reflect and reproduce the ideological priorities of their time (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). Ferree and Hall (1990) found that even when publishers aim for fair representation in sociology textbooks, visual narratives still reinforce dominant cultural stereotypes, which indicates the persistence of underlying biases. In their study of social studies textbooks, Bromley et al. (2011) analyzed 484 texts from 65 countries and found that the rise of global environmentalism led to increased attention to environmental issues compared to previous decades; this reflects the broader cultural movements toward emphasizing global responsibility. Their study shows that textbooks respond

to global movements and shared values more than to national contexts. In a similar way, Eurocentric ideas have deeply influenced how world history is framed and taught. Foster's (1999) analysis of U.S. history textbooks found that while ethnic groups were more included than in past decades, the dominant narrative remained White and assimilationist. At the curricular and pedagogical levels, Priestley and Biesta (2013) provide insight into why this problem persists. They argue that meaningful curriculum reform depends not only on top-down policy but also on teacher agency. Teachers are not passive implementers of curriculum, rather they interpret and adapt curriculum through their past experiences and judgments in the present. In history education, this means teachers have the opportunity to facilitate how textbook narratives are presented and interpreted. Yet this agency is limited when curricular resources provide narrow cultural perspectives. Wils and Verschaffel (2013) highlight that debates over history education are tied to its perceived usefulness for the present. Their concept of the "longing for the present" captures how history is continually negotiated between what happened and what is deemed meaningful now. This negotiation underscores the importance of historical consciousness in education: helping students understand the past not as a fixed sequence of events but as an interpretive process that informs moral, civic, and cultural understanding in the present.

Within my professional context, the Kansas Vision for Quality Instruction in Social Studies emphasizes real-world relevance, inquiry-based learning, and multiple perspectives. The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) states that students should have "opportunities to apply disciplinary knowledge, skills, and tools to identify and act on problems, issues, or needs in their communities, making connections to their lives outside of the classroom" (KSDE, 2025). The document further specifies that effective social studies instruction is characterized by

“sustained inquiry through compelling questions, including generating and reflecting on their own questions,” and by valuing students’ cultural knowledge, languages, and ways of thinking, which are “incorporated into learning experiences wherever possible” (KSDE, 2025). These priorities mirror the goals of historically and culturally relevant education, which both seek to develop students’ critical thinking, empathy, and awareness of their role in a diverse and interconnected world. Despite this shared vision, much of the curricular content available to teachers continues to privilege Western narratives, creating a disconnect between Kansas’ instructional ideals and the materials used in classrooms. The dominance of Western-centered narratives not only limits whose histories are told but it also frames how students understand the purpose and relevance of studying history. This disconnect between representation and relevance also contributes to another persistent concern in history education: student engagement.

Student Engagement

For many high school students, learning history is perceived as boring or not particularly useful, which may be one of several factors contributing to the persistent trend of low performance on social studies assessments (Fernández et al., 1976; Miguel-Revilla, 2022; National Center for Education Statistics, 2025; van Straaten et al., 2016). In practice, it requires sustained and intentional awareness of current social conditions to bridge historical events and the relevant lessons learned from those events. It is therefore not surprising that students often fail to make these connections unless they are explicitly revealed and emphasized by the teacher. Student engagement and how to cultivate it remain evolving areas of study and practice for educators and educational researchers. From an educator’s perspective, the challenge lies in sustaining meaningful learning under complex and varied classroom circumstances. Engagement can be understood as a multidimensional construct that includes behavioral, emotional, and

cognitive components (Fredricks et al., 2004, p. 60). Some influences on engagement lie beyond the teacher's control and can be difficult to identify. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (McLeod, 2018), a foundational framework in education, reminds us that many students in today's classrooms experience unmet basic or psychological needs, such as food or housing insecurity, physical or mental health difficulties, or feelings of academic inadequacy. Even students whose needs are largely met may struggle to remain consistently engaged if competing obligations or a perceived lack of relevance diminish their motivation. A failure to perceive the value of a particular content area, such as social studies, can affect the engagement of students at any level of Maslow's hierarchy (Floyd et al., 2009).

Engagement is a fundamental condition for meaningful learning (Carini et al., 2006; Kuh, 2016; Parsons & Taylor, 2011). In practice, disengagement is easily observable: students may appear apathetic, distracted, or disruptive, displaying behaviors that teachers are trained to address both proactively and reactively. Within secondary education, however, facilitating consistent engagement presents unique challenges. From the growing concerns surrounding adolescents' excessive technology use (Solecki & Fay-Hillier, 2021) to the learning loss and psychological consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic (Wieczorek et al., 2015), numerous external factors compete for students' attention. One of the most pressing challenges for modern educators is fostering sustained engagement in learning, particularly when teaching historical concepts from the distant past. In today's political and social climate, it is more critical than ever that students systematically develop critical thinking skills, which can be achieved through cultivating historical consciousness in the social studies classroom. Research indicates that student-centered, relevance-focused approaches can address these challenges (Fahrudin et al., 2024; Miguel-Revilla, 2022; Vibert & Shields, 2003; van Straaten et al., 2016, 2019).

As Lowenthal (2000) writes, “the deficiencies of youth noted earlier can best be outgrown by instilling in those who teach the conviction that they are also participants in history” (p. 79). When teachers and students alike recognize that they are “embedded in time” and “destined to shape it,” history becomes an active and shared human experience rather than a stale record of the past (p. 79). This perspective highlights the importance of engagement that extends beyond memorization to connect learners with the lived and evolving nature of historical understanding. When students see themselves and their communities reflected in the study of history, they can also see themselves as active participants. History education should cultivate the skills and perspectives that help students connect what they learn to their own lives, making history both intellectually engaging and personally relevant.

An Emphasis on Critical Thinking and Transferable Skills

An emphasis on the benefits and practical use of critical thinking is now of paramount importance, especially in light of recent advancements in artificial intelligence. Students must see learning history as relevant not only for its content but for the practical and transferable skills it fosters: questioning, analyzing, and organizing complex ideas. From this lens, then, the process of studying history should emphasize practical skill development rather than rote memorization. As Wineburg (2018) argues in *Why Learn History (When It's Already on Your Phone)*, in a world where information is readily available, the purpose of history education is not to memorize facts but to teach students how to think historically, to question sources, explore context, and interpret evidence. He critiques the overreliance on textbooks and standardized testing, noting that history education too often becomes an exercise in passive consumption rather than inquiry. Wineburg further cautions that even well-intentioned efforts to present history as “truth” can limit students’ ability to think critically, as presenting a single narrative deprives them of the

opportunity to engage with genuine inquiry. He writes, “Such a history atrophies our tolerance for complexity. It makes us allergic to exceptions to the rule. Worst of all, it depletes the moral courage we need to revise our beliefs in the face of new evidence. It ensures, ultimately, that tomorrow we will think exactly as we thought yesterday—and the day before, and the day before that” (p. 78). His point reinforces the notion that students must be taught to question, interpret, and analyze historical evidence rather than simply accept predetermined narratives. As history teachers, we recognize that moral perspectives evolve over time, so even our well-intentioned efforts to present a truthful past must leave space for students to engage with multiple narratives and develop their own critical understanding. Jones and Hébert (2012) demonstrate how these objectives can be realized in practice through culturally responsive and inquiry-driven history instruction. Drawing from the Ford and Harris (1999) approach, they merge multicultural and gifted education to promote higher-order thinking through strategies such as examining primary documents, ethnographic research, and service learning. These approaches allow students to ‘think like historians’ by engaging directly with evidence, exploring multiple perspectives, and constructing interpretations that require both reasoning and empathy. In doing so, they connect the discipline of history to transferable cognitive and social skills that extend beyond the classroom; this reinforces the idea that critical inquiry and cultural relevance are mutually important aspects of meaningful history education.

Ultimately, the current issues of global representation, student engagement, and the perception of the usefulness of learning history illustrate a meaningful research problem: that history education often fails to provide students with both cultural and practical relevance. In the same way that life culminates in more than simply dying, studying history offers more than

learning facts; it is about developing the skills and understanding gained through the process itself.

Purpose of the Study

This study explores how world history textbooks reflect or overlook the principles of historically and culturally relevant education. Building on the work of van Straaten et al. (2016) and scholars of historical consciousness and culturally relevant education, I developed an analytical foundation that merges Culturally Relevant Education (CRE) and Historically Relevant Education (HRE) to examine how textbooks construct and represent global history (see Appendix A and Chapter 3 for a detailed description of this foundation). The purpose of this research is to understand how these materials represent cultural diversity, human agency, and global interconnection, and to consider how they may support students' development of historical thinking and cultural awareness.

Foster and Crawford (2006) emphasize the significance of textbooks in shaping collective memory. They explain that “the history curriculum is traditionally regarded as the vehicle through which nations seek to store, transmit, and disseminate narratives that define conceptions of nationhood and national culture; as such they are crucial sites for investigation” (p. 5). They devote an entire chapter to establishing the critical importance of history textbook research, arguing that textbooks must be examined as cultural artifacts that contribute to collective memory and national identity. This connection matters because the narratives and perspectives embedded in textbooks influence the extent to which students can find personal and cultural relevance in the study of history. Van Straaten et al.'s (2016) study sought to “create a base for more concrete attainment targets in this [education] field, connected to concrete teaching strategies which may serve to make history teaching more relevant” (p. 481). They identified

three dimensions of relevance in history teaching: building a personal identity, becoming a citizen, and understanding the human condition. Through the development of the Relevance of History Measurement Scale (RHMS), they found that building a personal identity ranked lowest among the three. I propose that this lower score could be attributed to missing cultural considerations on the notion of relevance within textbook content itself. More recently, Miguel-Revilla (2022) expanded upon this framework by examining how secondary students, pre-service teachers, and undergraduate history majors conceive of historical relevance using the RHMS. His findings revealed meaningful differences among these groups and “a potential lack of awareness, providing a path to reinforce initial teacher training to make prospective teachers more aware of the nature and potential of this discipline” (p. 81). These studies underscore the gap between how history is taught and how its relevance is perceived.

Research Questions

This study shifts the focus from measuring students’ perceptions of relevance to examining the curricular foundation itself: the textbooks. Using a qualitative, interpretive approach, I applied a synthesized foundation grounded in both HRE and CRE to examine how world history textbooks portray global diversity, agency, and interconnection (see Chapter 3 and Appendix A for a detailed description of this framework). In doing so, this study aims to bridge the space between theory, conception, and practice, offering an analytical schema that educators and curriculum designers can use to make world history instruction more inclusive, meaningful, and intellectually engaging. Guiding this inquiry are the following research questions:

1. How can a framework grounded in historical consciousness and cultural relevance be used to evaluate and inform the development of a historically balanced and globally inclusive world history curriculum?

- a. How do world history textbooks reflect or distort global interconnectivity, diversity, and mutual influence when analyzed through the integrated framework?
- b. In what ways do alternative world history textbooks differ from traditional chronological textbooks in supporting historical consciousness and global inclusivity?
- c. What features of this framework might make it more adaptable or politically viable across varied state educational contexts, particularly where culturally relevant approaches face resistance?

Methodology

As outlined in Chapter 3, this study used a qualitative interpretive research design to investigate how nationally adopted world history textbooks, including both mainstream and alternative, align with an analytical foundation developed for this research. This foundation combines the principles of Historically Relevant Education (HRE), grounded in historical consciousness, and Culturally Relevant Education (CRE), which together provide a lens for examining how textbook narratives represent cultural diversity, human agency, and global interconnection, and to consider how they may support students' development of historical thinking and cultural awareness. Within this interpretive framework, a constructivist perspective guides the analysis, recognizing that textbooks are cultural artifacts that define rather than merely record historical knowledge. Using critical textual analysis, I examined eight secondary world history textbooks (i.e., four widely adapted mainstream texts and four alternative texts) to explore how their narratives represent global diversity, agency, and interdependence. A coding rubric was employed, which is derived from the integrated HRE-CRE foundation, and is organized into six categories. Each chapter analyzed was coded according to the rubric and

analytic memos were used to identify recurring themes and patterns across the texts. This summary provided only a brief overview of the methodological approach used in this study. A full discussion of the research design, theoretical foundation, coding procedures, and strategies for trustworthiness is in Chapter 3.

Understanding History as an Interpretive Discipline

History is not simply a record of past events; it is an interpretive discipline rooted in evidence, argumentation, and meaning-making. While history is often imagined as a fixed narrative to be memorized, historians emphasize that the past does not speak for itself. Its significance is defined through interpretation (Carr, 2018, pp. 31, 50). Historical accounts are constructed through evidence-based reasoning, and are deeply influenced by the historian's theoretical lens, cultural context, and purpose (Carr, 2018, pp. 31, 73-74). This understanding positions history neither as wholly objective nor wholly subjective, but as a discipline grounded in interpretation.

Classic historiographical scholarship reinforces the interpretive nature of history as a discipline. Marc Bloch (1964) argues that while the past itself is fixed, historical knowledge is continually revised as historians develop new techniques for investigation and analytical tools (p. 58).

Historical understanding can therefore be viewed as transitional and evolving rather than final. Bloch also emphasizes contingency, and warns against narratives that pose historical outcomes as inevitable simply because they happened. He argues that historians must resist being “hypnotized by his own choice” and instead acknowledge that alternative paths were possible at the time (p. 141). Seeing the past as open and uncertain helps preserve historical complexity and prevents oversimplified narratives.

E. H. Carr (2018) similarly rejects the notion that history consists of neutral facts waiting to be collected. He defines history as “a process of interaction, a dialogue between the historian in the present and the facts of the past” (p. 31), emphasizing that historical meaning emerges through interpretation. This ‘dialogue’ is determined by social context on both sides: the historian is not a detached observer but “both the product and the conscious or unconscious spokesman of the society to which he belongs” (p. 31). As a result, historians determine significance through selection, choosing which facts matter and how they fit into broader explanations drawn from present concerns (p. 100). For Carr, this interpretive process is inseparable from judgment; he argues that historical interpretations inevitably involve “moral judgments – or, if you prefer a more neutral-sounding term, value judgments” (p. 74). History, therefore, cannot be written from a position outside society, rather, it is produced through an ongoing negotiation between evidence and the place and time of the historian.

These debates over interpretation and judgment also help explain why objectivity emerged as a central concern early within the historical profession. Peter Novick’s analysis of the American historical profession helps explain why objectivity should be understood as a professional ideal rather than a fixed standard. Novick shows that late nineteenth and early twentieth-century historians adopted scientific language and methods in an effort to establish history as a legitimate academic discipline (Novick, 1988, pp. 33, 42–43). Claims of objectivity were central to this effort, because it emphasized rigor and credibility within the discipline. Over time, however, objectivity became less about personal neutrality and more of a shared agreement within the profession itself. What counted as reliable historical knowledge depended on shared norms and judgments within what Novick describes as “communities of the competent” or trained historians (Novick, 1988, pp. 51–52). By the late twentieth century, challenges from

marginalized perspectives exposed the limits of objectivity as a professional goal. Over time, objectivity increasingly appeared as being more of a professional consensus that was determined by norms and social context (Novick, 1988, pp. 321, 348–349, 520–521).

Once historians began questioning objectivity, they also began questioning the idea that history could ever tell the full story of the past. This shift led to greater attention to how historians choose what to include, what to omit, and why those choices matter. In *Historian's Fallacies*, David Hackett Fischer clarifies the interpretive nature of history by rejecting the pursuit of the “whole truth,” which he declares is both impossible and methodologically misguided. Fischer argues that “the whole truth, at any stage of an inquiry, is an ideal that ought to be abolished from historiography” because it cannot be attained (Fischer, 1970, p. 66). He contends that historians are obligated to tell the “best and biggest truths they can discover,” even though these interpretations are necessarily partial and selective (Fischer, 1970, p. 66). He identifies attempts to produce universal histories as the holist fallacy, where historians mistake breadth for explanatory power and, in such, explains everything so thinly that they actually explain very little (Fischer, 1970, pp. 66–67). Selection, in this sense, is not a flaw but a defining condition of good historical inquiry.

Because interpretations vary, historians must evaluate which accounts are more compelling and well supported. The discipline provides criteria for assessing historical interpretations, including the reliability and diversity of sources, how causation and context is acknowledged, and how it relates to existing historiographical debates (Bloch, 1953; Carr, 2018; Fischer, 1970). These evaluative practices explain why some interpretations become dominant, others remain marginalized, and many evolve over time as new evidence changes understanding. Importantly, historians also determine which voices, events, and cultures are included in

historical narratives; these are decisions that reflect not only scholarly developments but also the broader social, political, and institutional priorities. In K–12 education, similar interpretive processes influence what history is considered worth teaching. State standards, high-stakes assessments, textbook adoptions, and teachers’ curricular decisions all act as gatekeepers of the past, reinforcing what Apple (2018) describes as “official knowledge.” These gatekeepers highlight particular interpretations while marginalizing others, which ultimately contribute to the development of students’ historical understanding. Recognizing this dynamic underscores the need for the HRE–CRE analytical foundation developed in this study. If historical narratives are inherently interpretive, then history education must support students in understanding how interpretations are constructed, whose perspectives are centered or omitted, and how evidence is used to justify particular accounts. A historically and culturally relevant framework thus aligns with the disciplinary nature of history itself, emphasizing that learning history involves analyzing interpretations, evaluating evidence, and critically examining how historical authority is produced.

Definition of Terms

Student Engagement

The idea of student engagement has appeared in educational literature since the early twentieth century, though it has gained increasing attention in research during the twenty-first century. At its core, student engagement refers to a learner’s involvement, connection, sustained attention, and positive emotional investment in a learning experience (Groccia, 2018). In the simplest sense, it is the act of being genuinely present in learning. Engagement matters because research consistently shows that the degree to which students are engaged reflects the degree to which they value and care about what they are learning (Reschly & Christenson, 2022). The

construct of engagement is multifaceted and is typically studied through distinct lenses of how engagement is related to the diverse human experience. A holistic definition of engagement by Fredricks and colleagues (2004) classifies student engagement into three parts:

Behavioural engagement' draws on the idea of participation; it includes involvement in academic and social or extracurricular activities and is considered crucial for achieving positive academic outcomes and preventing dropping out. 'Emotional engagement' encompasses positive and negative reactions to teachers, classmates, academics, and school and is presumed to create ties to an institution and influence willingness to do the work. Finally, 'cognitive engagement' draws on the idea of investment; it incorporates thoughtfulness and willingness to exert the effort necessary to comprehend complex ideas and master difficult skills (p. 60).

Although definitions of engagement vary, a shared understanding emerges across the literature: meaningful learning depends on the extent to which educators can connect instruction to students' needs, interests, and goals (Kuh, 2016; McKeithan et al., 2021; Milne & Wotherspoon, 2025; Parsons & Taylor, 2011). Engagement, then, becomes not only a measure of participation but also a reflection of whether students perceive value in what they are learning. Researchers and practitioners alike agree that fostering engagement involves addressing learners' psychological needs while providing structured opportunities for intellectual challenge and personal growth (Benlahcene et al., 2021; Chiu, 2022; Fredricks et al., 2004).

Historical Consciousness

While there are elaborate and sometimes elusive delineations of historical consciousness, for the purposes of this research, it can be described as a relationship between understanding the past as a means to construct meaning in the present and to make assessments about potential

future outcomes (Ahonen, 2006). This view aligns with Seixas's (2004) framing of historical consciousness as "individual and collective understandings of the past, the cognitive and cultural factors that shape those understandings, as well as the relations of historical understandings to those of the present and the future" (p. 10). Seixas adapts this concept for education, emphasizing how students' interpretations of history are not fixed but are actively constructed through interaction with cultural narratives, collective memory, and disciplinary history. Within this view, history education becomes not only a process of acquiring knowledge but also a means of orienting oneself in time.

Historical consciousness is foundational to van Straaten et al.'s (2016) three objectives for relevant history education, which are holistic in nature. These objectives—building a personal identity, becoming a citizen, and understanding the human condition—speak to both the academic and humanistic purposes of historical study. They also connect to the development of agency and ethical reflection within the broader goals of social studies education. Drawing from an empirical study on students' conceptions of time by Arie Wilschut (2012), van Straaten et al. explain:

"Developing historical consciousness implies that students learn that the course of history does not unfold according to deterministic patterns, but is characterized by change, continuity, and contingency. By learning that the past has constantly been subject to change, students may realize that the present is transitory and one day will become the past, just as the future one day will become the present, not in a fixed way, but as a result of open-ended processes that can be influenced to a certain extent. This awareness may stimulate taking a reflective position towards things as they are, providing room for

thinking about alternatives, which are important assets in a democratic society and as such to active citizenship” (Wilschut, 2012, as cited in van Straaten et al., 2019, p. 644). Together, Ahonen’s, Seixas’s, and van Straaten’s work situates historical consciousness as both a cognitive and ethical concept; an ongoing dialogue between past, present, and future that enables students to interpret change and continuity in human experience. Within this study, historical consciousness functions as a central theoretical lens through which the relevance, inclusivity, and moral dimensions of history education are examined.

Historically Relevant Education

Van Straaten et. al. (2016) defines relevance within the context of history education as “allowing students to recognize and experience what history has to do with themselves, with today’s society and their general understanding of human existence” (p. 482). Historically relevant teaching refers to the intentional planning and pedagogical choices made by the educator to facilitate learning that students can make connections to; apply to modern issues; use as one relative aspect in constructing their own identity; use to understand their role as a citizen in a democratic society; and gain insights to the ‘human condition’ (Van Straaten, et. al., 2016).

Culturally Relevant Education

Culturally relevant teaching (used interchangeably with culturally relevant/responsive teaching/pedagogy) was termed in the early 1990s by Gloria Ladson-Billings, a pioneer in the field of educational equity (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Ladson-Billings (1995) describes culturally relevant pedagogy as “...a theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate” (p. 469). The asset-based framework was developed as a departure from the traditionally accepted deficit-based

views about the capabilities of children of color, held by educators and reflected by society at large. Ladson-Billings (1995) explains that culturally relevant pedagogy must include the following: “an ability to develop students academically, a willingness to nurture and support cultural competence, and the development of a sociopolitical or critical consciousness” (p. 483). Finally, culturally responsive teaching is defined by three key principles—self and other, social relations, and knowledge—which, will be further explained in the literature review section.

Standards Alignment and Context

The HRE–CRE analytical foundation developed in this study aligns closely with both national expectations for social studies education and the specific goals articulated in the Kansas History, Government, and Social Studies (HGSS) Standards. At the national level, the NCSS National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies emphasize preparing students for civic competence through engagement with multiple perspectives, inquiry, cultural understanding, and the ability to make reasoned decisions for the public good (NCSS, 2010). These national standards emphasize core ideas that mirror the purposes of historically and culturally relevant education as described by Seixas (2004), Ahonen (2006), and van Straaten et al. (2016), whose contributions will be elaborated further in my discussion of historical consciousness in the literature review. For example, the NCSS thematic strand Time, Continuity, and Change calls for students to interpret the past and connect it to the present and future, which parallels historical consciousness as a grounding toward understanding change, continuity, and contingency (Seixas, 2004; van Straaten et al., 2019). Likewise, NCSS’s emphasis on Culture, Global Connections, and Individual Development & Identity affirms the need for students to see themselves and diverse groups represented in the social studies curriculum, which is an aim foundational to Ladson-Billings’ (1995) conception of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Although grounded in nationally recognized standards, this study is conducted within Kansas, making alignment with state standards important as well. The Kansas HGSS Standards emphasize inquiry-driven learning that prepares students to become informed, thoughtful, and engaged citizens. The standards highlight that such citizenship requires the ability to “innovate, analyze complex problems, ask cogent questions, assemble and evaluate critical data, and seek creative solutions,” moving beyond memorization toward authentic disciplinary thinking (Kansas State Department of Education, 2020, p. 9). This emphasis reflects the core aims of the HRE–CRE framework, which similarly prioritizes critical analysis, multiple perspectives, and meaningful engagement with both historical narratives and contemporary social issues. Kansas also identifies culturally relevant pedagogy as “a vital part of the instructional design process,” noting that teachers must consider power dynamics, explore diverse perspectives, and empower students to understand the world through multiple cultural lenses (p. 51). These aims align with the HRE–CRE rubric categories of interpretive plurality, contextual power dynamics, cultural agency, and epistemic diversity.

By synthesizing these theoretical perspectives and aligning them with both NCSS and Kansas HGSS expectations, the HRE–CRE foundation developed in this study provides a standards-aligned basis for evaluating the historical and cultural relevance of world history textbooks. This alignment ensures that the rubric not only reflects the scholarly literature on historical consciousness and culturally relevant education but also operationalizes the disciplinary, civic, and culturally responsive aims embedded within both national and Kansas state standards.

Limitations of the Study

While this study offers important insights, it is constrained by several limitations that inform how the findings should be understood. First, the scope of the analysis is limited to textbooks. No classroom observations, student artifacts, or interviews were conducted; therefore, the findings reflect how content is presented in the textbooks rather than how it is presented by teachers or experienced by students. While textbooks are central curricular artifacts, they represent only one aspect of how history education transpires in schools. Foster and Crawford (2006) assert that textbooks are produced through educational policy and practice, drawing on Bowe, Ball, and Gold's (1992) framework that identifies the context of influence, the context of text production, and the context of practice. As they note, "this framework provides a useful model from within which to mount studies of textbook construction both within individual contexts and, crucially, in terms of structural, ideological and political interrelationships, between different contexts" (Foster & Crawford, 2006, p. 12). While this study focuses on the context of text production, I aim to also be attentive to how these narratives are influenced by political forces and how they may be interpreted when enacted in the classroom.

Second, as with any interpretive analysis, there is a possibility of researcher bias. My background as a classroom teacher and my investment in equitable history education may influence how I read and interpret texts. To mitigate this, I have focused on transparency in documenting analytic choices and grounding my interpretations in existing scholarship, but complete objectivity is neither assumed nor possible. Third, the foundation developed for this study is emergent. While it draws from established theories of historical consciousness and culturally relevant education, it has not been externally validated. As such, the findings should be understood as exploratory. In addition, this study does not address the call for increased

involvement of disciplinary experts in K–12 social studies education. Journell (2015) argues that collaboration with political scientists and other academic specialists can strengthen civic learning through more authentic engagement within specialized foci. While this study shares the broader aim of supporting meaningful civic and historical understanding, its focus remains on textbook content. Finally, the sample of textbooks analyzed may not capture every variation in adoption or use. Because publishing decisions and state-level adoptions often reflect local political and cultural priorities, the narratives present in other contexts may differ.

Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for the field of history education, teacher preparation programs, and educational research. Its significance reflects a broader scholarly consensus that textbooks are not merely informational resources, but produce particular understandings of global history and its relevance (Apple, 2013, 2018; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Foster, 1999; Foster & Crawford, 2006; Gay, 2000). When the narratives in these materials are narrow or incomplete, students may struggle to see history as meaningful, relevant, or connected to their own lives (Floyd et al., 2009; Gay, 2000). As Loewen (2018) explains:

While textbook authors tend to include most of the trees and all too many twigs, they neglect to give readers even a glimpse of what they might find memorable: the forests.

Textbooks stifle meaning by suppressing causation. Students exit history textbooks without having developed the ability to think coherently about social life. (pp. 6–7)

This study responds to this concern by examining how world history textbooks present cultural diversity, human agency, and global interconnection, and by considering how these representations may influence students' development of historical consciousness. Many teachers also struggle to take up issues of race, identity, and power in meaningful ways, in part because

social studies curriculum and teacher preparation programs have historically framed history as raceless and neutral, leaving teachers without the conceptual understanding needed to engage in these topics critically (Chandler, 2009). By synthesizing Historically Relevant Education (HRE) and Culturally Relevant Education (CRE), this study offers an analytical foundation that can support curriculum developers and teacher education programs in developing more inclusive curricular approaches.

This research contributes to teacher education by illustrating how relevance-centered history instruction can be analyzed and supported through curriculum materials. The findings may inform the design of teacher preparation coursework, particularly in courses focused on social studies methods, curriculum analysis, or multicultural education. Additionally, this study contributes to ongoing scholarly conversations about how students come to understand history as an interconnected narrative, and how instructional materials can either support or constrain their ability to recognize relationships between past and present. Overall, this study addresses a documented need for guidance on how world history curricula can better support students in developing a sense of relevance, connection, and agency in their study of the past.

Researcher Positionality

My positionality as a researcher is inseparable from my identity and experiences as an educator. I began my teaching career in the greater Los Angeles area, in schools serving students labeled as “exceptionally high-needs.” Many of my students faced challenges such as food insecurity, homelessness, and gang-related trauma. As a new teacher, I quickly realized that traditional approaches to teaching history would not suffice. I could never fully know what it meant to live the realities my students faced, but I could listen, learn, and honor the strengths they brought with them into the classroom. It was in this context that I first understood teaching

as both a professional practice and an act of advocacy. These formative years cemented my belief that relationships built on mutual respect and authentic care are the foundation of learning, and that teaching requires an attentiveness to students' lived experiences beyond the curriculum.

My academic trajectory reinforced this conviction. I chose to pursue my master's degree at the University of Southern California's Rossier School of Education because of its explicit mission to prepare educators to confront inequities and pursue educational justice. This program, along with my subsequent doctoral study, encouraged me to interrogate my own assumptions about curriculum and pedagogy while also giving me language and theoretical grounding to frame my experiences. Later, when I relocated to the Midwest, I entered a very different teaching context; one less diverse, more politically conservative, and marked by its own histories of community and tradition. This shift forced me to reflect on the universality of my commitments to culturally relevant teaching, and to consider how these commitments must adapt to context while still remaining grounded in a philosophy of equity and inclusion. My current role as a practicing social studies teacher continues to anchor this perspective, as I navigate the tensions between mandated curricular expectations and my commitment to culturally inclusive and historically grounded teaching.

Epistemologically, I situate myself within social constructivism and critical theory. From a constructivist stance, I view learning as a social process in which meaning is co-constructed through dialogue, context, and relationships. This orientation aligns with my daily practice of centering students' funds of knowledge, encouraging collaborative inquiry, and fostering classrooms where multiple perspectives are valued. Critical theory has supported my commitment to social justice in education by offering tools to interrogate how inequities in race, class, and power manifest in schools and in the curriculum. My experiences teaching in high-

needs schools has confirmed my recognition that education cannot be neutral; it either reproduces inequities or serves as a site for transformation. My commitment is to the latter. The theoretical principles that most directly inform this study are those of Culturally Relevant Education (CRE) and historical consciousness. CRE, as articulated by Ladson-Billings, Banks, Gay, and others, emphasizes affirming students' cultural identities while promoting academic excellence and critical consciousness. Historical consciousness, as theorized by Rüsen, Seixas, van Straaten, and Barton & Levstik, highlights the ways in which individuals and societies make sense of the past, connect it to the present, and envision possible futures. My positionality reflects the interconnections of CRE and historical consciousness. I believe that history education must not only be intellectually rigorous but also personally and culturally meaningful, equipping students to understand themselves within historical narratives and to imagine their role in shaping a more just future.

At the same time, I approach my research pragmatically. I recognize the political realities of curriculum work: teachers, including myself, operate within systems of standards, textbooks, and testing that cannot be ignored. My aim is not only to critique Eurocentric curricula but also to consider how educators can work within, not just against, existing systems to carve out spaces for culturally inclusive and historically conscious learning. This study therefore reflects both my advocacy for change and my recognition of institutional constraints. Finally, I acknowledge the role of bias and interpretive stance in shaping my work. My teaching philosophy and research commitments push me to emphasize cultural inclusion, equity, and critical pedagogy, and I do not approach curriculum analysis as a neutral observer. Instead, I position myself transparently as a researcher whose analysis is informed by both my scholarly experiences and lived classroom practice. Ultimately, my positionality is best described as that of a critical practitioner-scholar:

someone who values theory but is committed to practice, who seeks to critique but also to create, and who understands education as a space for both intellectual development and social transformation.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation is organized into five chapters, each of which addresses a specific aspect of the research. Chapter 1 introduces the study, outlining its background, research problem, and purpose. It situates the work within ongoing discussion of historical consciousness and culturally relevant education, articulates the significance of analyzing world history textbooks, and presents the guiding research questions. The defined key terms and methodological approach is also provided. This chapter establishes the conceptual foundation for the research and sets the stage for the chapters that follow.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature relevant to this study. It examines historical and contemporary aims of social studies education in the United States, and traces how civic competence, historical consciousness, and cultural relevance have defined key priorities in the social studies curriculum. The chapter synthesizes the scholarship on historical consciousness as it relates to education (Ahonen, Rüsen, Seixas, van Straaten, Wilschut) and culturally relevant education (Ladson-Billings, Gay, Banks, Grant), highlighting their conceptual overlap. Finally, the chapter ends by identifying a gap in existing research: the lack of an integrated foundation for analyzing how textbooks reflect both historical and cultural aspects of relevance.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology employed in this study. It explains the interpretive qualitative design and constructivist framework, and explains the rationale for using critical textual analysis to examine world history textbooks. The chapters outlines text selection criteria, coding procedures, and the development of the synthesized foundation that merges Historically

Relevant Education (HRE) and Culturally Relevant Education (CRE). It also discusses steps taken to ensure trustworthiness, rigor, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 presents the analysis and findings derived from applying the HRE-CRE foundation to both mainstream and alternative world history textbooks. Differences between traditional chronological and thematic textbook structure will be examined to understand how textbook design may influence the potential for culturally and historically relevant learning. Finally, Chapter 5 discusses the broader implications for curriculum design, teacher education, and the field of history education.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Introduction

The question of how to make history meaningful to students has long shaped discourse in education. While history education has traditionally emphasized chronological content, there is increasing recognition that students often fail to see its relevance to their lives (Berg, 2019; Cutrara, 2020; Duraisingh, 2017; Harris & Reynolds, 2014; Haydn & Harris, 2010; Lempert, 2013; Miguel-Revilla, 2022; Rivero et al., 2022; Stoel et al., 2017; van Straaten et al., 2016, 2018, 2019; VanSickle, 1990; Zaccor, 2022). In response, scholars have called for approaches that cultivate historical consciousness and connect this understanding to students' own experiences.

My initial interest in this research was sparked by the work of Dick van Straaten, a historian and teacher educator at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences. His research centers on historical relevance and the development of historical consciousness, proposing clear pedagogical objectives and strategies that connect past, present, and future. In *Making history relevant to students by connecting past, present and future: A framework for research* (2016), van Straaten et al. identified three objectives for relevant history teaching: (1) building personal identity, (2) becoming a citizen, and (3) understanding the human condition. His later work introduced the Relevance of History Measurement Scale (RHMS) to evaluate students' appraisals of the relevance of history (van Straaten et al., 2018), and demonstrated the feasibility of this framework through case-comparison studies (van Straaten et al., 2019). While my research builds on these foundational ideas, it extends the conversation by emphasizing the integration of cultural relevance. My professional experience in culturally diverse schools has reinforced the idea that relevance cannot be fully understood apart from students' cultural

identities. Culturally responsive educational theory has further influenced my perspective, underscoring that students' appraisals of relevance are rooted in their personal and cultural contexts. As Geneva Gay (2000) notes, when students encounter textbook content that is inaccurate or absent of their own cultures, they often feel insulted or devalued. However, when given the opportunity to learn about the histories and contributions of diverse ethnic groups, many respond with excitement and a stronger sense of connection (p. 116).

The urgency of making history relevant is especially evident in today's educational climate. Teachers face the compounded challenges of post-pandemic learning gaps, rising student disengagement, and a digital landscape currently being redefined by artificial intelligence (AI). As students question the value of critical thinking in the age of AI, helping them find personal and cultural relevance in history is more important than ever. In a qualitative study by Camposano et al. (2021), 25 middle school students from a public school in the Philippines identified history's relevance in its ability to encourage community participation, enhance critical and creative thinking, foster cultural sensitivity, broaden global perspectives, and promote the formation of values. These concepts demonstrate the enduring value of relevant history education from the students' perspectives.

This study argues that historically relevant education, when intentionally integrated with culturally relevant education (CRE), can enhance students' development of historical consciousness and make history education more meaningful. While the initial focus centered on evaluating the feasibility of applying van Straaten's historically relevant teaching framework within existing curricula, my research has evolved to propose a new, integrated framework that connects van Straaten's work on historical consciousness with the principles of culturally relevant teaching. This framework illustrates the inherent connection between historical and

cultural relevance and provides a tool for analyzing textbooks to identify content that supports both approaches.

An important context for this analysis is the significant role of textbooks in shaping history instruction. Textbooks guide 70% to 95% of classroom instruction and are often regarded by students as sources of indisputable truth (Gay, 2000, p. 113). As Apple (2013, 2018) argues, textbooks play a central role in constructing what becomes official knowledge; they are not neutral artifacts, rather tools that reflect the dominant power structures by legitimizing certain forms of knowledge while marginalizing others. This influence is especially strong in subjects like history and social studies, where students tend to accept textbook narratives without question. Most mainstream textbooks reflect the perspectives and experiences of the dominant group, often presenting Western viewpoints as objective truth while minimizing or omitting the histories of marginalized communities. These omissions reinforce cultural hierarchies and produce particular understandings of whose histories matter. By analyzing both mainstream and lesser-known textbooks through the lens of this newly developed framework, this research shows how educators can foster historical consciousness and cultural relevance using resources that already exist but may be underutilized.

Historical and Contemporary Social Studies Education Aims in the U.S.

According to the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), social studies is defined as “the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence” in order to prepare young people to participate as informed individuals in our diverse democratic society and on a global scale (National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment | Social Studies, 2025.). Civic competence is and has historically been a central aim of social studies education in the United

States, and the values of democracy are emphasized as a core constituent of what it means to be a competent citizen. The NCSS explains “Civic competence rests on this commitment to democratic values, and requires the abilities to use knowledge about one’s community, nation, and world; apply inquiry processes; and employ skills of data collection and analysis, collaboration, decision-making, and problem-solving” (National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment | Social Studies, 2025, para. 3). Thus, social studies education serves not only to inform students about the world around them, but also to actively cultivate thoughtful, capable participants in democratic life.

From the birth of our nation, the founding fathers knew that, were our young democracy to survive, they would need to promote “moral training, training for citizenship, the judgement, and the imagination” (Hooper & Smith, 1993, p. 14). Early on, social studies was recognized for its importance, and several history textbooks were published by the early 19th century (Hooper & Smith, 1993). The idea to designate history as a distinct subject was first proposed in the 1893 Report of the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies by the National Education Association (Report of the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies, 1894). This recommendation was prompted by concerns from principals who struggled to prepare students for college entrance exams due to inconsistent requirements across post-secondary institutions (Kliebard, 2004, pp. 29-31). Although the American understanding of civic education has existed since the founding of the United States, the roots of social studies as a formal curriculum was established with the release of the National Education Association’s Committee on Social Studies report in 1916 (National Education Association, 1916). Together, these developments reflect the longstanding commitment to preparing students for active citizenship through affirming social studies as a formal and essential part of education.

However, the historical evolution of social studies is rooted in the broader power dynamics of American society. In critically examining the formation of social studies in the United States, Michael Lybarger (1983) offers an in-depth exploration of the ideologies held by participants on the Committee on Social Studies, using their publications, which were underscored by the widely accepted eugenics beliefs of the time. Lybarger establishes that the Committee's discriminatory beliefs about eugenics informed the curriculum offered at the Hampton Institute, a curriculum heavily influenced by Thomas Jesse Jones, who played a direct role in its development. In his doctoral dissertation, *The Sociology of a New York City Block* (1904), Jones makes clear his ideology of scientific racism (Watkins, 2001, pp. 102–104). Jones authored the *Hampton Social Studies* (HSS), which, as Watkins (2001) argues, “taught Negroes their place in society in transition from agricultural slavery to mechanical industrialization” (p. 106). As Watkins (2001) explains in *The White Architects of Black Education*, the educational program at Hampton was designed intentionally within the “context of power and vested interests” (p. 3), embedding ideas of white supremacy and social control. This curriculum perpetuated the racist ideology that Black and Native individuals were less evolved than those of European descent, ensuring they remained in a lower social and economic status. Through their critical analyses of the Committee's work and the Hampton educational program, scholars like Lybarger and Watkins demonstrate that early social studies education was deeply rooted in civic ideals intertwined with the power structures of American society. Recognizing that early curricula were explicitly designed to uphold systems of oppression that limited opportunities for people of color is crucial today because widely adopted curricula continue to influence education.

The notion that formal education, including the realm of social studies, should function to prepare young people to be productive members of society and advocate for social change gained significant momentum during the Progressive Era at the turn of the twentieth century.

Progressivism, pioneered by theorists like John Dewey and Harold Rugg, emphasized relevance in education. It was in the first half of the twentieth century that civics education and experiential service learning were integrated into the existing chronological history curriculum (Beddow, 2011). Content history as chronological history, a subject that was already being taught in schools across the U.S., was later incorporated into ‘social studies’ during the 1930s, along with material from geography and civics. This accounts for why social studies in various educational settings have been significantly influenced by content history as a subject (Coleman, 2021). I would not go as far as to say that chronological history and social studies are antithetical, but they do require intentional diligence to be harmonized with the aims of social studies (e.g. civic competence, democratic values, and multiple perspectives, etc.) as laid out by the NCSS.

Despite there being curriculum standards for at least seven of the areas of social studies and a consensus that civic competence should be central, social studies curricula generally do not reflect this consensus (Ross, 2006). Today, social studies standards focus on general themes such as those laid out in the NCSS (e.g., Theme 1: time, continuity, and change). Some states, such as California, lay out specific intellectual, reasoning, reflection, and research skills that align with the objectives of civic education, and are expected to be taught “only in conjunction with the content standards” (Klingensmith, 2000, p. 1). It is implied that by aligning specific objectives (i.e., each standard begins with words like describe, analyze, compare, discuss, etc.) to each of its content standards, students are simultaneously learning historical content and skills to develop their civic competence. The issue is that there lacks explicit connections to civic development

across the curriculum; this is problematic because people's ideas of what it means to be a good citizen vary (Ross, 2006). This is also problematic because history textbooks are generally a collection of facts, and are often taught as such. Look at the mission statement of the History, Government, and Social Studies (HGSS) standards for the State of Kansas, where I currently serve as an educator: it is to “prepare students to be informed, thoughtful, engaged citizens as they enrich their communities, state, nation, world, and themselves” (History, Government, and Social Studies (HGSS), 2010). The State of Kansas has five generalized standards that can be applied across the grade levels. The assumption is that the standards align with the mission statement, but there is a discrepancy between these standards and the content of textbooks. If the mission is to create engaged citizens, then the textbooks should reflect this in both content and learning experiences. Historical efforts to reform the social studies curriculum, such as the New Social Studies (NSS) movement of the 1950s–1970s, similarly fell short in aligning instructional goals with curriculum content. Byford and Russell (2007) highlight how more than 50 projects emerged to promote inquiry-based and civic learning, but even these ultimately made little difference. They point to the lack of teacher preparation and advanced content that was difficult for the students to understand as the reason for the failure (p. 46). Although the NSS movement introduced innovative teaching methods, it ultimately failed to create lasting change in the structure and content of the social studies curriculum. This is just one example that shows how even ambitious reform movements have struggled to create systemic change in social studies education at the content and textbook level.

The formal social studies curriculum has been a contentious issue since its debut, particularly throughout the Progressive movement, the Civil Rights movement, and in today's polarized political landscape. While the purpose of and content included—and explicitly not

included—in social studies continues to be debated, the idea that social studies should be made relevant to students is less contested (Bittman & Russell, 2016; Lempert, 2013; Miguel-Revilla, 2022; Van Straaten et al., 2016; van Straaten et al., 2018, 2019; Van Straaten et al., 2019; VanSickle, 1990; Zaccor, 2022). More specifically, the positive implications of cultural relevance are increasingly recognized and more widely operationalized in the field of education than ever before. Understanding the relationship between historical and cultural relevance is integral to the development of historical consciousness because culture is inseparable from history; this will enrich Van Straaten et al.'s (2016) framework for relevant history education, providing students with deeper insight into history by emphasizing cultural connections of historical events. The very concept of history and social studies is inherently linked to cultural relevance; history cannot be separated from culture. Relevant history teaching and culturally relevant teaching are inherently intertwined and should be reflected in social studies textbooks and curricula. However, personal and professional experiences in American schools indicate that social studies textbooks do not distinctly reflect cultural relevance, despite its consistent prevalence in educational discourse over the last several decades.

Educators are faced with the challenge of creating learning objectives that align with the aim of civic competence because existing curricula lack explicit instruction on civic development. Van Straaten and colleagues (2016) laid the groundwork for educators to make history relevant while attaining the goal of civic competence through his objectives grounded in the development of historical consciousness.

Historical Consciousness: Theoretical Foundation

Historical consciousness can be described as the relationship between understanding the past as a means to construct meaning in the present and make assessments of potential future

outcomes (Ahonen, 2006). This concept is foundational to van Straaten et al.'s (2016) framework for relevant history education, which identifies three holistic objectives that apply to both students' academic development and their growth as individuals within society. Central to this framework is the work of Arie Wilschut (2012), whose book *Images of Time: The Role of a Historical Consciousness of Time in Learning History* provides both the philosophical underpinnings and empirical evidence supporting the development of historical consciousness.

Wilschut's research, detailed in chapter four of his book, involved a quasi-experimental design comparing two parallel groups of secondary school students in the Netherlands, consisting of 135 and 132 students respectively. Each group was taught identical historical content through different instructional methods: the chronological approach, emphasizing numbered years and centuries, and the imaginative-associative approach, emphasizing image-linked memory associations. Wilschut's (2012) empirical research supports the idea that students better retain and contextualize historical events when time is presented through imaginative-associative contexts, such as pictures and narratives, rather than abstract numerical references (pp. 143–182). His findings show that this approach not only aids memory, but also enhances students' ability to situate and interpret unfamiliar historical events. As Wilschut (2012) notes, “the imaginative-associative approach was not only better at helping students to remember events presented in the lesson, but also in locating ‘new’ events” (p. 178). Wilschut's findings, while focused on temporal understanding, open the door to considering how imaginative-associative approaches might intersect with a culturally responsive approach, especially in their mutual emphasis on relevance and context. Van Straaten et al. (2016) draw directly on Wilschut's explanations of time and contingency to emphasize that history is not deterministic, but instead guided by change, continuity, and contingency.

Van Straaten et al.'s (2016) framework for relevant history education is grounded in the theory of historical consciousness, particularly the work of Peter Seixas and Jörn Rüsen. Peter Seixas is known for having revised the initial conceptions of historical consciousness, adapting them for application in post-colonial North American education. As he notes, the term "is relatively unfamiliar in English," yet it engages with "historiography, collective memory, and history education," signaling its relevance for rethinking how the past is taught in changing societies (Seixas, 2004, p. 4). Seixas (2004) defines historical consciousness as "individual and collective understandings of the past, the cognitive and cultural factors that shape those understandings, as well as the relations of historical understandings to those of the present and the future" (p. 10). More and more researchers are now affirming that students' personal and pre-existing historical narratives are the building blocks through which they orient themselves in the world. Scholars in the field are emphasizing the importance of not only the factual data available to students, but also "the shapes of [students'] narratives, the sense they make of them, and the tools they have ... for assessing their truth and significance" (Seixas, 2004, p. 104). These individual story-lines, guided by students' lived experiences and cultural influence, are treated as more than background knowledge; they are the framework students already use to decide what matters and why. Seixas (2004) shows a growing consensus among scholars that students' own historical narratives are essential to history education, not just as content to be supplemented, but as meaningful structures through which they make sense of the past. At the same time, he emphasizes that a critical approach to history enables deeper civic engagement and personal transformation (p. 106). These understandings underpin van Straaten et al.'s (2016) objectives of historically relevant teaching, where the ultimate aim is to foster purposeful engagement with history. Furthermore, this growing recognition confirms that students' understanding of history

are inseparable from their lived and cultural experiences, which shows that cultural and historical relevance should be viewed as intertwined as opposed to parallel ideas. In his chapter in Seixas' *Theorizing Historical Consciousness*, Rüsen (2004) extends this idea by framing historical consciousness as “temporal orientation,” meaning the ability to understand historical narratives in ways that help orient individuals in daily life and make meaning through temporal understanding (p. 68). He explains that historical consciousness serves as “temporal orientation” by guiding action through historical memory and operating on both “external practical life” and “the internal subjectivity of the actors” (p. 68). He argues that this “gives self-understanding and awareness a temporal feature within which they take on the form of historical identity” (p. 68). This framing makes clear that historical consciousness is not only about understanding the past, but also about shaping one’s sense of self in relation to time, culture, and community. Therefore, even in Rüsen’s foundational work, historical consciousness is inseparable from cultural identity. While van Straaten and others may not articulate this connection directly, their emphasis on relevance and personal meaning in history education points to the underlying role of cultural identity in historical consciousness.

A Framework for Relevant Social Studies Education

As a practicing secondary social studies teacher, the concept of relevance is a particularly significant lens through which to frame learning experiences for students. Based on my professional experiences and the observed impact of connecting content to students’ lives, relevance emerged as a natural theme for deeper exploration. After reading the works of van Straaten et al., it became clear their research would be foundational to my study. Their work centers on relevance-focused history education and aims to establish clear attainment targets linked to specific teaching strategies. In their article *Making History Relevant to Students by*

Connecting Past, Present, and Future: A Framework for Research, van Straaten et al. (2016) outline the development of the framework that grounds my research. They introduce the concept of historical consciousness and present objectives that should be central to historically relevant teaching, along with strategies that support those goals. Van Straaten et al. (2016) define historically relevant teaching as allowing students to “recognize and experience what history has to do with themselves, with today’s society and their general understanding of human existence” (p. 482). Their framework not only offers a structured approach to engaging students meaningfully with the past, but also lays the groundwork for rethinking how relevance can guide more impactful social studies instruction.

Van Straaten et al.’s work seems to be motivated by the recognition that students often fail to see the usefulness and purpose of learning history. In response, they developed a framework for relevant history teaching grounded in the educational philosophy of Gert Biesta (2015). Recognizing the wide range of existing views on the purpose of education, as is appropriate in democratic societies, Biesta (2015) does not attempt to define a singular aim. Instead, he proposes framing the discussion in terms of the functions that education typically performs within society. He identifies three broad, interrelated functions: qualification, which prepares individuals for civic and professional participation; socialization, which supports integration into social and cultural norms; and subjectification, which fosters individuality, autonomy, and the development of personal values (pp. 19-22). As van Straaten et al. (2016) assert, “If history is to contribute to these functions, knowledge about the past should be explicitly linked to the lives of students and the society of which they are part” (p. 483). Although they do not explicitly reference cultural relevance, their emphasis on connecting historical knowledge to students’ lived experiences and social realities aligns closely with its

core principles. This connection underscores the importance of offering a wide range of historical narratives that students can relate to. Their objectives are also grounded in the philosophical understanding of the human condition, or what it means to be human. This refers to exploring universal aspects of the human experience (e.g., morality, agency, relationships, the pursuit of meaning, ect.), which is expressed through difference cultural lenses. In short, van Straaten et al.'s three aims for historically relevant teaching (i.e., building a personal identity, becoming a citizen, and understanding the human condition) emerge from both philosophical and constructivist learning theory (pp. 483–485). Their framework offers an approach to history education that affirms personal meaning and civic growth while also prompting further reflection on how relevance is defined and whose histories are centered in the classroom.

Historically relevant teaching refers to the intentional planning and pedagogical choices made by the educator to facilitate learning that students can make connections to; apply to modern issues; use as one aspect in constructing their own identity; use to understand their role as a citizen in a democratic society; and gain insights to the human condition (Van Straaten et al., 2016). A commonality identified by researchers is that students generally perceive history to be irrelevant; it could be that students find history unimportant and uninteresting because they do not recognize how it relates to them or see it as useful, which is a pattern reflected across a string of research (Berg, 2019; Cutrara, 2020; Duraisingh, 2017; Harris & Reynolds, 2014; Haydn & Harris, 2010; Lempert, 2013; Miguel-Revilla, 2022; Rivero et al., 2022; Stoel et al., 2017; van Straaten et al., 2016, 2018, 2019; VanSickle, 1990; Zaccor, 2022). Through utilizing Van Straaten et al.'s objectives for relevant history teaching, teachers can help students make connections to modern issues, develop their unique identity and stance, be prepared to make informed decisions in society, and develop a broader understanding of human existence.

However, for these objectives to be fully realized, the stories we teach should reflect the full spectrum of our divergent pasts, which may present a challenge for students whose identities are not reflected in dominant historical narratives.

Building a Personal Identity, Becoming a Citizen, and Understanding the Human Condition

Because the objectives outlined by van Straaten et al. (2016) are foundational to the framework I aim to develop, it is essential to briefly describe each one as I interpret it, to illustrate the inherent overlap between historically relevant teaching and culturally relevant teaching. The first objective, building a personal identity, is characterized by two ideas. First is that people form their unique identity based on their histories or the environment and community in which they are a part. The other part of building a personal identity is value development, or the idea that people can develop their own set of values to allow them to create their individual stance on how they perceive their environment (van Straaten et al., 2016, p. 486). Van Straaten et al. explain that by studying history, students can “develop new insights that may give them a certain autonomy with respect to their environment” (2016, p. 486). Value development equips students to critically engage with their surroundings, and contribute to the world around them with a sense of self, formed through both personal and collective histories.

The next objective, becoming a citizen, refers to the social and political features of wisdom that history imparts. van Straaten et al. argue that history “...qualif[ies] through the transfer of knowledge and ways of thinking that promote political literacy and a democratic disposition; socialize[s] by creating insight into the origin and meaning of social institutions, traditions, values and norms” (2016, p. 487). The idea is that students can use historical narratives to better understand pertinent real-life concepts like the evolving nature of democracy

or the complexities of the driving forces behind changes in society. While the objective of becoming a citizen offers valuable insight into the social and political functions of history education, it is important to approach the concept of citizenship with caution. Educators must be wary of promoting a singular vision of citizenship, as it can marginalize students whose cultural identities challenge dominant narratives, much like the early civic education programs critiqued by Watkins (2001), which aimed to assimilate Black Americans into a narrow and flawed idea of national identity (p. 107). Paulo Freire (2018) cautions educators against the "banking" concept of education, in which students are merely filled with information for passive consumption; information that does not necessarily equip them for inquiry, creativity, or transformative action in society (p. 72). When students are encouraged to interpret history and connect it to their lived experiences and contemporary challenges, citizenship becomes less about conformity and more about active participation.

Van Straaten et al. (2016) regard the last objective, understanding the human condition based on the temporality of existence, as central to relevant history education (pp. 488–490). Van Straaten et al. draw on Rüsen's (2004) theory of *genetic historical consciousness*, which emphasizes that historical understanding develops when learners recognize the past as a dynamic process that directs and redirects human existence over time. This perspective helps students see their own lives as part of an ongoing historical flow, deepening their insight into the changing and temporal nature of human life (pp. 63–85). The other aspect of the theory is what van Straaten et al. call enduring human issues (2016, p. 489). Enduring human issues refer to the themes that humans face across time (e.g., conflict, family, survival, governance, nature, etc.); these issues are inherent to being human, or the human condition. Engaging with enduring

human issues allows students to reflect on how recurring moral, social, and political dilemmas have been dealt with in the past.

In the paragraph above, I summarized van Straaten et al.'s three objectives that serve to make history education more relevant. Parallel to these objectives, van Straaten et al. propose four teaching strategies that can help teachers exemplify the connections between the past, present, and future, or help students develop their historical consciousness. The strategies are: longitudinal lines, enduring questions, historical analogies, and decision-making and scenario thinking (2016, p. 491). Rather than summarize each one, I will share the graphic pulled from van Straaten et al.'s framework: *Figure 3. Possible connections between objectives of relevant history teaching and four teaching strategies* (2016, p. 492) as in Figure 2.1. Teachers can utilize these strategies within an existing curriculum to achieve the objectives for relevant-focused history education. In doing so, they aid students in developing their historical consciousness, making history, and the task of learning history, more relevant to their lives.

Figure 2.1. Possible connections between objectives of relevant history teaching and four teaching strategies.

TEACHING STRATEGIES		OBJECTIVES OF RELEVANT HISTORY TEACHING		
	Key pedagogical transactions	Building a personal identity	Becoming a citizen	Understanding the human condition
Longitudinal lines	Describe long term developments in relevant domains of human existence (e.g. labour, religion, food, protection, etc.).		x	x
Enduring questions	Study and evaluate issues common to all humans by means of various historical examples from different periods, e.g. about paying taxes, dealing with criminals, resolving conflicts.	x	x	x
Historical analogies	Compare two or more historical situations or developments from different periods or the present to study differences and similarities		x	x
Decision making and scenario thinking	Use historical knowledge to assess the probability of developments in the future to be able to anticipate on them.	x	x	x

Note. From *Making history relevant to students by connecting past, present and future: A framework for research*, by D. van Straaten, A. Wilschut, & R. Oostdam, 2016, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 48(4), p. 492 (<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2015.1089938>). Copyright 2016 by Taylor & Francis. Reprinted with permission.

Cultural Relevance in Education

Culturally relevant education should not be absent from the conversation around relevant history education. If history is to be made relevant to students, then cultural relevance and students' funds of knowledge should be integral in both content and practices. For many years,

culturally relevant teaching has been a central topic among education stakeholders; however, in the context of social studies education, students often struggle to find history relevant or articulate why it matters in their lives (van Straaten et al., 2016). Allowing students to draw from their own funds of knowledge to make personal connections to the past is more powerful than being told why history matters. This approach aligns with van Straaten et al.'s (2016) framework for relevant history education, which emphasizes building a personal identity, becoming a citizen, and understanding the human condition. When teachers make the relevance of history explicit, particularly by integrating students' cultural identities and lived realities, students are more likely to see its value. Creating space for students to form their own initial connections, rather than relying on fact-based instruction alone, is enriched by students' funds of knowledge as it positions them as knowledgeable participants in the learning process (González, 1995).

Culturally relevant education (CRE) encompasses many related aspects and terminology reflecting its underlying purpose of representation, equity, and social justice in institutional education settings. Each of these names and topics have specific distinctions that set them apart from one another such as philosophy or practice, or teacher-focused, student-focused, or curriculum-focused. I appreciate Dover's (2013) delineations of CRE because, while not all-encompassing, her framework for Teaching for Social Justice demonstrates the interconnectedness of related concepts such as democratic education, critical pedagogy, social justice, and multicultural education. In my work, I adopt a fluidity in the terminology, and draw on multiple perspectives to capture different approaches to CRE while highlighting their interconnectedness.

Culturally relevant education (CRE), used interchangeably with culturally relevant pedagogy, was termed in the early 1990s by Gloria Ladson-Billings, a central scholar of shaping

the discourse of educational equity (Ladson-Billings, 1995). However, ideas about multicultural education developed alongside movements for civil rights and ethnic studies in the mid-to-later twentieth century. James Banks is one of the most prominent figures in multicultural education and is often referred to as “the father of multicultural education” (Banks, 2020). He has written widely in the fields of social studies and multicultural education since the 1960s. Banks and Banks (2013) defined multicultural education as:

A philosophical position and movement that deems that the gender, ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity of a pluralistic society should be reflected in all of the institutionalized structures of educational institutions, including the staff, the norms, the values, the curriculum, and the student body. (p. 355)

This definition reflects the necessary response to harmful ideologies and practices within education that perpetuate educational inequity. Banks explains that the goal of multicultural education is to establish and implement school curricula in such a way that allows students to critically examine knowledge so they may develop the skills to construct their own interpretations of events. Banks (2020) delineates the types of knowledge students acquire through a holistic approach:

I describe a typology that consists of five types of knowledge that exist in society and in educational institutions: (1) personal/cultural knowledge; (2) popular knowledge; (3) mainstream academic knowledge; (4) transformative academic knowledge; and (5) school knowledge. I maintain that students should be provided opportunities, within transformative social studies and civic education curriculum, to learn all types of knowledge, to create knowledge themselves, and to identify ways in which the

knowledge they construct is influenced and limited by their personal assumptions, positions, and experiences. (pp. 33-34)

He asserts that teaching students about these different types of knowledge will allow them to recognize the various perspectives of racial and cultural groups (p. 22). By presenting five types of knowledge in life and education, Banks illustrates the richness of knowledge that exists outside institutional education. Personal and cultural knowledge may not be identifiable to educators, unless it is intentionally sought, but its significance in and out of the classroom is foundational to the frameworks of CRE and movement toward educational equity. Another pioneer and prominent scholar in the field of multicultural education and CRE is Carl A. Grant. Since the 1970s, Grant has contributed extensively to the development of multicultural education and CRE. In one of his first notable works, in collaboration with Christine Sleeter (1987), they reviewed nearly 130 books and articles to clarify the varied uses of multicultural education at the time and identify gaps and limited viewpoints on the concept of multicultural education. (pp. 421–422). In that study, they found that multicultural education was often used inconsistently and addressed only parts of what it could mean. To resolve this, they developed a taxonomy of five distinct approaches (i.e., Teaching the Culturally Different, Human Relations, Single Group Studies, Multicultural Education, and Education That Is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist) to help educators differentiate these different goals and practices and think critically about their implementation (p. 422). In another of his seminal works, Grant (2012) argues “the real standards of multicultural education are those that continuously disavow dominance and monological thought... In this way, multicultural education conceives knowledge as fluid and evolving...” (p. 40). One of the underlying themes across the research is the purpose of multicultural education and CRE is to engage students in critical thinking that enables them to

seek their own knowledge and understanding of the world around them. In *Cultivating Flourishing Lives: A Robust Social Justice Vision of Education* (2012), Grant calls into question the purpose of public education in relation to societal norms versus what will cultivate well-rounded human beings that are prepared to flourish in a globalized world. Culturally Relevant Education is holistic education that emphasizes “personal autonomy, critical and analytical thinking, ethical judgment, learning how to function as a diverse society, learning to forge relationships across differences, and to respect one another's perspectives, experiences, and world views” (Grant, p. 911). Despite conflicting ideas on what the purpose of education should be, a less contested notion that has stood the test of time is that education is key to maintaining a democratic government. Reducing education to merely preparing students for jobs is a dangerous mistake because it fails to equip young people with the critical thinking skills needed to understand and navigate their roles in society. Grant (2012) proposes an education that prepares young people for more than just a job, and to have “flourishing lives” through meaningful participation in society and that reflects their identity and culture (pp. 913-916).

Ladson-Billings (1995) describes culturally relevant pedagogy as “...a theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate” (p. 469). The asset-based framework was developed as a departure from the traditionally accepted deficit-based views about the capabilities of children of color, held by educators and reflected by society at large. Ladson-Billings (1995) explains that culturally relevant pedagogy must include the following: “an ability to develop students academically, a willingness to nurture and support cultural competence, and the development of a sociopolitical or critical consciousness” (p. 483). Like Grant (2012), Ladson-Billings (2014)

asserts that both scholarship and culture are fluid and changing to reflect the natural evolution of culture, thus educators' approach to CRE should align with that fluidity. Having an understanding of the dynamics of current cultural shifts and characteristics is, therefore, essential to CRE, which also may explain why CRE is not widely adopted despite the prevailing discourse on the topic. This suggests that teachers must keep up with shifting cultural dynamics, which requires willingness, intentionality, and dedicated training in culturally responsive teaching theory and methods. Furthermore, this challenge is compounded by the constraints imposed by initiatives and curricula designed for standardized testing.

Another leading scholar in multicultural education, Geneva Gay, defines culturally responsive teaching as “using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (2002, p. 106). Gay (2012) discusses the harms of “cultural blindness,” which refers to teachers' lack of awareness of how the content and their practices strictly focus on European-American values (p.22). According to Gay, the most effective teaching reflects the principles of CRE, taking into account students' and teachers' cultural and ecological factors such as their identities, community values, family dynamics, etc. However, this approach first requires educators to challenge their perspectives, including any unconscious biases or discriminatory beliefs and practices they may hold (pp. 22-26). This emphasis on critical consciousness invites a broader reflection on how students relate not only to their direct environments, but also to a wider human community, which is a connection that aligns with the concept of educational cosmopolitanism.

Generally understood as a moral and political philosophy that emphasizes global belonging and responsibility, cosmopolitanism has historically been interpreted in vastly dissimilar ways. Although the concept dates back centuries, Immanuel Kant is widely credited

with bringing cosmopolitanism into modern philosophical discourse, particularly through his emphasis on global citizenship (Cheah, 2006). As cited in Cheah (2006), Kant refers to cosmopolitanism as “a perfect civil union of mankind,” in which people coexist as citizens of a universal human community (p. 487). While some contemporary philosophers critique cosmopolitanism for its failure to account for global inequalities and national barriers (Ostby, 2018), the concept is applicable in education. In more recent years, educational scholars have begun to explore the ways in which cosmopolitanism can explain and address sociological issues in the world. David Hansen refers to his philosophy of educational cosmopolitanism as ‘cosmopolitanism on the ground’ (Hansen, 2010). Cosmopolitanism on the ground relates to the way people live in a cosmopolitan manner, meaning they engage with cultural diversity in their daily lives, navigate multiple perspectives with openness, and act with a sense of ethical responsibility toward others in a shared world. Hansen (2016) explains “...cosmopolitanism on the ground... often emerges spontaneously and organically... It is neither an elite nor aestheticized posture... but rather as a way of living, or way of being, that answers to life’s unimagined possibilities and its all-too-determinant predicaments” (p. 11). Hansen is suggesting that cosmopolitanism is not something solely for advanced philosophers to contemplate, rather, something ordinary people do naturally in response to everyday situations. Within an educational context, this might include learning to listen with intention and articulate perspectives in a discussion; maintaining values while being critically receptive to influence; learning within and outside one's culture; participating in social justice; and integrating one’s own experience into the learning environment. Therefore, cosmopolitanism, understood as an everyday practice of engaging openly with diverse perspectives, aligns with an educational vision that emphasizes critical inquiry, multiculturalism, and the development of practical skills such as active listening,

collaborative problem-solving, civic engagement, and the ability to navigate complex social contexts (Hansen, 2016, pp. 6-22). While van Straaten et al. (2016) do not directly address cosmopolitanism in their theoretical framework, their ideas are closely connected, especially in the objective of *understanding the human condition*. Moreover, the concept becomes more poignant considering that students are living in, and should be preparing for, an increasingly globalized world, and more directly, a polarized nation. Cosmopolitanism is a philosophical and sociopolitical concept that emphasizes global citizenship, which not only aligns with the longstanding goal of social studies education to promote civic competence, but also expands that aim on a broader scale. Cosmopolitanism is worth including in this dialogue because it aligns with the objectives of historically relevant teaching, the aim of promoting civic competence, and perhaps most significantly, it is interrelated with culturally relevant education. Both cosmopolitanism and culturally relevant education value cultural diversity, promote inclusivity and empathy, and encourage critical thinking.

Constructing Official Knowledge: The Influence of Publishers

In the early twentieth century, American society was undergoing rapid change. Mandatory schooling was becoming more widespread across the states, resulting in more students attending school than ever before in the nation's history. By the 1880s, public high school, often called "the people's college," was becoming the norm, and the growth of universities following the Morrill Act of 1862 created a need for a common curriculum (Foster, 1999; Hertzberg, 1981; Thelin, 2019). Recognizing this expanding market, textbook publishing companies seized the opportunity to increase profits and adapted their materials to appeal to this growing base (Watt, 2007). This marked the beginning of publishers' influential role in constructing the "official knowledge" students encountered in schools. Apple (2013, 2018)

argues that official knowledge is not imposed, rather it is developed through ideological conflict, compromise, and the interests of dominant social groups. The curriculum content itself reflects ongoing power struggles in which dominant narratives are preserved while marginalized perspectives are selectively included to appease efforts for curricular reform, a process facilitated through publishing gatekeeping. As Apple explains:

Curricula aren't imposed in countries like the United States. Rather, they are products of often intense conflicts, negotiations, and attempts at rebuilding hegemonic control by actually incorporating the knowledge and perspectives of the less powerful under the umbrella of the discourse of the dominant groups. This is clear in the case of the textbook. As disenfranchised groups have fought to have their knowledge take center stage in the debates over cultural legitimacy, one trend has dominated in text production... Dominance is partly maintained here through compromise and the process of 'mentioning'. (p. 53)

Apple's analysis of curricular compromise demonstrates how sociopolitical power not only influences what is included in textbooks, but also how and why certain histories are only partially or marginally included. While textbooks gradually evolved in style and presentation over the years, they consistently maintained themes that reinforced notions of white racial superiority and a general Western perspective, a pattern that clearly persisted well into the 1960s (Foster, 1999, pp. 252–259). Abundant research on textbook content, along with my own experience teaching social studies, demonstrates that these texts continue to present historical narratives that positions Europe as the primary driver of global progress while positioning non-European societies as peripheral or as causing friction for European advancement (Araújo, 2015; Foster, 1999; Marino, 2011; Keita, 2020; Ross, 2006; Steinmetz-Jenkins, 2022). One of the

clearest ways this is seen, as any mainstream textbook illustrates, is through the traditional chronological structure these textbooks follow, which emphasizes Western progression as the central narrative and marginalizes other regions' histories unless they connect directly to Europe's story (Foster, 1999; Marino, 2011). In his comparison of Howard Zinn's approach to 'people's history' with more traditional textbook narratives, Lempert (2013) points out that history education remains largely "undemocratic" and "doctrinal," which may discourage communities from fully understanding their own diverse historical narratives (pp. 2-5). Segall (1999) similarly explains that history textbooks present themselves as neutral, but in reality, textbook authors choose histories that privilege the dominant perspective. This is problematic because it not only limits students' opportunities to understand how "official knowledge" is produced in the first place, but it also undermines the diverse perspectives representing most students in American public schools. As Tsyrlina-Spady and Lovorn (2015) argue:

Study of the past cannot be divorced from examinations of virtues, nor should it be.

However, when the values and moral exemplars being conveyed to students are presented with the primary purpose of augmenting the political or patriotic agendas of the state, history education becomes more about the pursuit of a common ideology and national identity than about the development of critical or historical thinking skills. (p. 162)

Tsyrlina-Spady and Lovorn's argument does not necessarily call for a full critical approach to history education, but it does highlight the need to be forthcoming about the complexities of the past and to present multiple perspectives so that students can develop the skills to think critically for themselves. If the purpose of social studies, as defined by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS, 2025), is to help students examine human experiences through inquiry, evidence, and multiple perspectives so they can become informed, engaged citizens who work toward a

more just and democratic world, then diverse global perspectives must be part of the narrative. How else can students work toward a more just and democratic world if they are not encouraged to analyze past injustices and use that understanding to make better choices for the future?

Textbooks continue to serve as the primary instructional resource in history and social studies classrooms across the country. Despite the rise of digital tools and supplementary materials, textbooks continue to provide the dominant narrative through which students learn about historical content (Apple, 1999; Foster, 1999; Foster & Crawford, 2006). As Juel Janis (1970) observed, “To the students so unaware of a concern so esoteric as ‘historical truth,’ a textbook is history. And because he [sic] regards it as such, his [sic] view of the past and present is influenced by the positions espoused by textbook authors” (p. 289). Because textbooks continue to play a powerful role in shaping students’ understanding of which histories matter, it is critical to examine how these materials prioritize certain histories over others. Furthermore, Platt (1992) shows that historical narratives presented through multicultural perspectives have long faced backlash and reveals how the traditional curriculum, or textbook canon, as he refers to it, actively preserves a Eurocentric approach through gatekeeping. While it is easy to oversimplify where the blame lies for the stagnation of textbook narratives, it is now clear that multiple levels of influence, including colleges, state policies, school boards, publishers, etc., all play a role in maintaining the status quo. However, because textbook publishers ultimately profit from these materials and supposedly employ teams of historical experts, they should bear significant responsibility for the content they produce.

In Watt’s (2007) comprehensive study on the history of the textbook publishing industry in the United States, he explains that only a few companies now dominate the textbook market due to globalization and reduced competition resulting from mergers among larger companies

(pp. 11-15). Watt explains that publishers maintain control by lobbying big state adoption committees and aligning textbook content to meet the demands of large adoption states: “They use the School Division of the Association of American Publishers to lobby state selection committees... They attempt to satisfy the preferences of pressure groups, thereby homogenizing the content of textbooks” (Watt, 2007, pp. 14-15). In 19 of the U.S. states plus Washington D.C., educational materials must be vetted and approved at the state level; this means districts are required to choose from that approved list unless they secure a waiver (Doan & Kaufman, 2025). Most notably, heavily populated states like California, Florida, and Texas not only adopt these materials but also influence national publishing trends. Due to the significant buying power of states with large student populations, publishers design textbooks to meet the approval of these adoption systems. As a result, content decisions are heavily influenced by economic considerations, since textbook publishing is a for-profit industry influenced by market demands. A more concerning way that textbook publishing companies maintain control is through writing/working for hire. Historically, textbooks have been written by historians or teachers who brought their experiential and academic expertise to the text. But, the rise of large for-profit publishers led to them streamlining costs and standardizing content by using writers for hire. Since this leads to the company owning the copyright, the content can be more easily adapted to meet the market demands of large adoption states or to avoid controversy. Instead of an expert author being the primary decision-maker, the publisher’s editors and sales teams now have greater control over what goes in, what stays out, and how the narrative is framed (Watt, 2007, pp. 14-15). Ultimately, publishers do far more than produce instructional materials; they act as gatekeepers of official knowledge, deciding which histories receive the spotlight, which are marginalized, and which are excluded all together. In doing so, they play a central role in

forming students' historical consciousness by determining what versions of the past they will encounter through their adopted curriculum.

Gaps in the Research

Although historical and culturally relevant education share overlapping goals (e.g., affirming student identity, promoting civic engagement, critical thinking, etc.) they are often treated as separate pedagogical approaches. While there may be work that engages both culturally and historically relevant approaches to curriculum content, I have not encountered a framework that explicitly synthesizes these principles to evaluate textbook materials. For example, Chouinard and Cram (2019) offer a culturally responsive evaluation framework that draws attention to the interconnectedness of culture, history, and context, however, their work is based in program evaluation. Furthermore, much of the discourse around fostering an inclusive, global perspective remains at the theoretical or classroom-strategy level, and while some scholarship addresses textbook reform, it tends to focus on critique rather than offering foundational guidance for making better curricular choices. Aronson and Laughter (2016) compiled an extensive synthesis of over 40 studies across content areas that highlights numerous examples of teachers successfully implementing CRE. In one case, they describe how one teacher participant, Mr. Varga's social studies curriculum included institutional racism and activism to broaden students' understanding of history and their contributions to society (p. 186). Although Aronson and Laughter present compelling evidence that CRE promotes positive outcomes across content areas, they ultimately acknowledge that the success of these efforts still depends on individual teachers' willingness to adopt and implement these practices. As they state, their synthesis "is only as important as those who would seek to replicate these examples in their own contexts" (p. 200). This reveals a significant gap: while the theoretical and practical

benefits of CRE are well-documented, the broader structural and curricular supports for widespread adoption remain underdeveloped. Gay (2000) similarly points out that culturally responsive teaching cannot rely solely on classroom practices; she calls for “sustained, substantive, and comprehensive” changes that extend beyond instruction to include curriculum and assessment reforms (p. 202). She also points to insufficient infrastructure to support such efforts, and notes the need for systems that guide curriculum design, provide appropriate instructional materials, and support implementation beyond teacher initiative (pp. 210–211). These observations reinforce the need for a content-level foundation that moves culturally relevant principles from relying heavily on teacher-initiated practice into curriculum, including textbooks.

Edmondson (2023) conducted a qualitative study with 12 pre-service social studies teachers who analyzed and revised Eurocentric world history standards. The study took place in an upper-level introductory course for secondary education at a university in the southern United States as part of a five-year teacher preparation program. Most participants were traditional undergraduate juniors or seniors pursuing social studies licensure. While the study showed that pre-service teachers could identify bias and begin to address it, their revisions made only limited progress in challenging the Eurocentric bias embedded in the standards (p. 213). Although Edmondson ultimately calls for stronger preparation for teachers to act as curricular gatekeepers, the responsibility then remains on individual teacher agency rather than providing practical, content-level frameworks. If, as the NCSS suggest, the purpose of history education is to prepare all students for informed and engaged citizenship, then we need clear frameworks to help educators evaluate and adopt content that reflects both historical consciousness and culturally relevant principles. However, Harris (2013) argues, meaningful content reform requires not only

structural tools, but also a clearer consensus on the purpose of history education itself; he explains that selecting historical content is only possible once there is a shared understanding of what history education is meant to achieve (pp. 415-416). This argument offers insight into why curricular reform has proven to be so difficult to achieve: if the purpose of history is ideological in nature, as Harris suggests, then efforts to revise content are inevitably rooted in broader political conflicts, which is particularly challenging to navigate in today's polarized educational climate.

Merryfield and Subedi (2006) suggest preparing students for meaningful citizenship in a global age requires “moving the centre” of the curriculum from the traditional European focus to include knowledge and voices from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East (pp. 290-291). This is a major shift because it requires not only rethinking whose perspectives create the historical narrative, but also reconstructing content (not just critiquing) and the textbooks themselves. In his content analysis of five widely used high school world history textbooks, Marino (2011) examined how structure, themes, and chronology reflect the work of modern world historians. While these textbooks incorporate global themes and diverse visual content, Marino found that they still prioritize European history, especially from 1500 to 1945, with more than half of the content devoted to European developments (p. 441). Although textbooks show some progress in including global themes, Marino points out that a clear imbalance remains: their content continues to privilege Europe, which shows the tension between the appearance of inclusivity and the persistence of Eurocentric narratives. Despite its prominence in academic discourse, the issue of Eurocentrism in world history education remains unresolved, and guidance for meaningful curricular change is still needed (p. 442). Bromley, Meyer, and Ramirez (2011) add to this concern by showing that progressive, student-centered features as they define

them (i.e., open-ended questions, child-focused content, rights-based framing, student-relevant images, assignments, project activities, role-playing exercises, and expanding environment structures) have spread globally in social science textbooks, which reflects a global shift of valuing individual empowerment (pp. 553-554). While these shifts are moving toward student empowerment, the authors do not assess whether the changes also relate to global content. This reveals a disconnect between student-centeredness and content, and raises questions about whether global-focused or student-focused curricula are meaningfully reshaping historical narratives or merely rebranding traditional content.

Within the context of education, historical consciousness has primarily been examined through pedagogical strategies or as philosophical underpinnings to existing frameworks. While van Straaten et al. (2016) offer a clear framework (rooted in historical consciousness) for making history education more relevant through specific pedagogical objectives and strategies, their focus remains on instruction rather than curriculum content. The framework emphasizes classroom strategies such as longitudinal lines, enduring questions, historical analogies, and scenario thinking (pp. 491–497). However, as the authors acknowledge, these strategies may require significant adaptation to fit within a traditional curriculum. They explain that “working with longitudinal lines or enduring questions requires a much larger amount of adaptation than the use of historical analogies or working with future scenarios, which can be easily added to historical topics as they occur in traditional curricula” (van Straaten et al., 2016, p. 497). They further question the compatibility of these strategies with existing curriculum materials, suggesting that “perhaps it may appear necessary to escape from the straight-jacket of existing school books and curricula which focus predominantly on the study of the past as an aim in itself” (p. 498). The framework does not directly analyze or critique textbook content, nor does it

offer guidance for evaluating curricular materials that may align with its objectives. This study addresses that gap by proposing a new theoretical foundation that synthesizes the principles of historically relevant education and culturally relevant education, with a specific focus on curriculum content.

Ahonen (2005) offers valuable insight on the role of cultural context in relation to developing historical consciousness. He positions *Theorizing Historical Consciousness* (2004) by Peter Seixas (referenced earlier in this literature review) as “the most rewarding book about history education since the early 1990s” (p. 705). He argues that Seixas challenges traditional assumptions about what constitutes history, and that the role of collective memory and informal learning experiences are central. In Ahonen’s view, Seixas moves beyond treating memory as inconsequential and instead frames it as “history itself, as experience and presentations” (p. 706). This perspective affirms that historical consciousness develops not only through formal schooling but through cultural engagement and in everyday life. Importantly, Ahonen calls for greater scholarly attention to what he terms the culture of history, defined as “the different forms of production and consumption of history in public and in everyday life” (p. 706). He contends that cultural aspects strongly frame how people experience and understand history, yet remain underexplored. This critique reveals a critical gap in the field: while historical consciousness is often discussed as an educational aim, its inherent overlap with culture and collective memory is less frequently examined in curriculum analysis or textbook content. Ahonen’s call suggests that textbook reform must attend not only to factual accuracy or chronological coverage, but also to how narratives reflect the broader cultural production of history. Addressing this gap is essential for building content-level foundations that support both historical and cultural relevance in education.

Despite the fact that rethinking historical narratives has long been underway, scholars have consistently shown that disrupting the dominant narratives embedded in textbooks remains a challenge (Edmondson, 2023; Foster, 1999; Lempert, 2013; Marino, 2011; Platt, 1992; Ross, 2006; Steinmetz-Jenkins, 2022; Watt, 2007). This study fills that gap by offering a practical framework that enables educators and policymakers to evaluate and select world history materials that are not only more inclusive, but that also reflect a genuinely global perspective.

Criticism of Relevance and Cultural Responsiveness

While relevance-focused history education aligns with civic aims and student engagement, critics warn that it can marginalize the past as merely a tool for present-day moral or ideological ends (Vakhovskiy et al., 2021; Wineburg, 1999). Or, from a philosophical standpoint, it's argued that presentism may be seen as a commonsense view grounded in the reality of the present (Guillon, 2024), and its legitimacy depends on a strictly defined ontological perspective; that is, only present things exist (Torrengo, 2016). However, from an educational perspective, I argue that the fact that the past no longer exists is irreverent to the purpose of studying history. Studying history allows students to develop historical consciousness, gain a deeper understanding of the past, make informed and empathetic judgments about it, and recognize that evidence of the past is part of our present world and should not be ignored. In their comprehensive study, Miles and Gibson (2022) draw on a review of historical literature, philosophical arguments, and educational practices in order to distinguish between different forms of presentism and analyze how teachers engage with it in classrooms. Rather than viewing it as a flaw, they argue that presentism, when thoughtfully implemented, helps make history more relevant to students, fosters ethical understanding, and can be useful for examining the past. Similarly, Steinmetz-Jenkins (2022) observes that historians are increasingly turning to the

past as a meaningful frame for inquiry in response to contemporary political and global issues, especially as they relate to increasing authoritarianism (p. 2-4). While Steinmetz-Jenkins acknowledges the risks of narrow or over-simplified perspectives rooted in presentism, he ultimately calls for a thoughtful engagement with the past that represents global awareness and the complexities of history. Ultimately, despite legitimate concerns, a responsible approach to presentism in history education appears to offer meaningful benefits that outweigh its potential concerns, particularly in fostering students' historical consciousness and ethical judgment.

In addition to philosophical critiques of presentism, culturally responsive approaches to education, especially history education, have become increasingly entangled in broader political and cultural debates in our nation (Apple, 2013, 2018; Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Epstein et al., 2011; Giroux, 2004; Giroux & McLaren, 2011; Sleeter, 2011; Vass, 2018). Over the last several years, especially in light of the most recent civil rights movement, national discourse around race, identity, and education has intensified, and efforts to make curricula more inclusive is facing heightened resistance. These critiques reflect deeper ideological perspectives, and are at the root of peoples' opposing ideas about the purpose of education, national identity, and whose histories are deemed legitimate in the classroom (Giroux, 2004). Not everyone agrees that frameworks grounded in cultural relevance are necessary, or even desirable. Groups such as Moms for Liberty and The Heritage Foundation, along with some conservative policymakers and others, have publicly criticized such approaches, often framing them as politically motivated, harmful to traditional values, or framed as stripping away parental rights in education (Cooter et al., 2025; Moms for Liberty, 2025; The Heritage Foundation, 2025; Williams, 2022). These disagreements underscore the ideological tensions surrounding curricular reform and the contested nature of history education. My proposed foundation, however, is rooted in historical

consciousness, with the primary goal to help students think historically. Because developing historical consciousness inherently involves connecting the past and present, affirming multiple perspectives, and cultivating ethical reflection (Löfström et al., 2021; Pandan, 2024; Silfver & Myyry, 2022; Southworth, 2022), it naturally aligns with principles of CRE; in this sense, CRE is embedded within the foundation. By emphasizing disciplinary thinking and historical reasoning, my foundation may prove viable across political and ideological divides, even amid ongoing debates about the role of history education.

Summary

In summary, the research reviewed here demonstrates that the importance of making history relevant to students cannot be overstated. Although many students do not perceive history as useful or connected to their lives, several scholars argue that increasing its relevance can enhance engagement and help students form stronger connections to their identities and communities (Berg, 2019; Cutrara, 2020; Duraisingh, 2017; Harris & Reynolds, 2014; Haydn & Harris, 2010; Lempert, 2013; Miguel-Revilla, 2022; Rivero et al., 2022; Stoel et al., 2017; van Straaten et al., 2016, 2018, 2019; VanSickle, 1990; Zaccor, 2022). Van Straaten et al. (2016) aim to provide clear, relevance-focused objectives that can develop students' historical consciousness through specific pedagogical strategies. While the focus here is not specifically on instructional strategies, there is a natural alignment between historically relevant and culturally relevant educational aims. Identifying curricular materials that reflect this intersection may offer meaningful alternatives to the chronological structures and dominant historical narratives that continue to define much of the textbook publishing industry.

By making history more relevant, teachers can create a more accessible and engaging learning environment, gaining student buy-in and encouraging perseverance through difficult

tasks. At the same time, this review reveals that economic and political forces, particularly the gatekeeping power of the textbook publishing industry and the influence of political polarization, play a significant role in shaping what content students encounter in the first place. As Apple (1999) and Watt (2007) illustrate, publishers act as gatekeepers of official knowledge, deciding which histories are central to the narrative and therefore deemed more important, and which remain marginalized. The forces of economic, political, and state processes have coincided to allow Eurocentric narratives to endure in mainstream textbooks, despite decades of research revealing their persistence.

These insights point to a significant gap. Although substantial research demonstrates the importance of historical relevance and cultural connections in education, few studies move beyond critiquing curriculum content, particularly at the textbook level. There is a clear need for practical guidance that supports gatekeepers at all levels, including policymakers, teachers, and the publishing industry, in evaluating and selecting resources that meaningfully integrate historical consciousness and cultural relevance. This need persists even as debates over what constitutes “appropriate” historical content remain politicized. This study addresses that gap by proposing a new theoretical foundation that merges the principles of historically and culturally relevant education to support more intentional curriculum decisions. Rather than calling for a complete overhaul, this foundation aims to demonstrate how educators can leverage existing materials to help students find personal, cultural, and civic meaning in the histories they study.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology used to investigate how nationally adopted world history textbooks, including widely used mainstream texts and lesser-used alternatives, align with the aims of an original analytical foundation developed for this study. This foundation combines van Straaten et al.'s (2016) framework for historically relevant education (HRE), grounded in historical consciousness, with culturally relevant education (CRE) to assess how textbook narratives foster global interconnectivity, cultural inclusion, and historically and culturally responsive learning. Building on the literature review in Chapter 2, this study employs a qualitative interpretive design to analyze how historical narratives are framed, with attention to inclusion, omission, representation, and interaction, and how these patterns reflect the principles of the integrated foundation.

This study is grounded in the theoretical principles of Culturally Relevant Education (CRE) and historical consciousness as it applies to Historically Relevant Education (HRE) as the primary approaches guiding its analysis. As outlined in Chapter 2, CRE is understood here through the collective work of scholars such as Ladson-Billings (1995), Banks (2008, 2013, 2020), Grant (1987, 2012), and Gay (2000, 2002), while historical consciousness is grounded in the work of Rüsen (2004), van Straaten (2016, 2019), Seixas (2004, 2013), and Barton and Levstik (2004). Together, these approaches emphasize affirming students' cultural identities, promoting academic excellence, fostering critical consciousness, and developing temporal understanding and engagement with multiple perspectives in history.

As demonstrated in the literature review, there is a need for an evaluative foundation to determine the extent to which modern world history textbooks support culturally and historically

relevant approaches to learning. The purpose of this study is not to advocate for replacing the existing curriculum but to examine whether certain textbook options, particularly those outside the mainstream, align more closely with these principles. To address this need, I have developed an analytical foundation that integrates CRE and HRE to analyze how textbook narratives and organizational structures align with this combined approach, with particular attention to their potential to cultivate students' historical thinking, cultural awareness, and global perspective.

Purpose and Structure of Methodology Chapter

The central research question and supporting sub-questions guiding this study are as follows:

R1: How can a framework grounded in historical consciousness and cultural relevance be used to evaluate and inform the development of a historically balanced and globally inclusive world history curriculum?

R1(a): How do world history textbooks reflect or distort global interconnectivity, diversity, and mutual influence when analyzed through the integrated framework?

R1(b): In what ways do alternative world history textbooks differ from traditional chronological textbooks in supporting historical consciousness and global inclusivity?

R1(c): What features of this framework might make it more adaptable or politically viable across varied state educational contexts, particularly where culturally relevant approaches face resistance?

This methodology chapter provides a detailed account of the research design, theoretical lens, data sources, analytical procedures, researcher positionality, and strategies for establishing trustworthiness. It also addresses the ethical considerations and limitations of the study, ensuring a transparent and rigorous research process. Specifically, this chapter includes: (1) an overview

of the research design, (2) a description of the theoretical lens guiding the study, (3) an explanation of the textbook selection, (4) a detailed account of the analytical procedures used to apply the framework, (5) a discussion of the researcher's positionality, and (6) consideration of trustworthiness, ethics, and limitations.

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative, interpretive design to examine how world history textbooks align with a framework that integrates historical consciousness and culturally relevant education. Qualitative inquiry is particularly appropriate here because it emphasizes interpretation of meaning within texts and contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Within this interpretivist paradigm, I use an exploratory design because the issue at hand, how textbooks support or limit the development of historical consciousness and culturally relevant education, has not, to the best of my knowledge, been previously examined in this way. As Butin (2009) explains,

an exploratory dissertation design is best used when an issue is not well understood in the literature or previously unexamined in a particular fashion ... [and] is best suited to qualitative research methods that allow for in-depth analysis of complex and layered issues and flexible enough to account for highly open-ended research questions, data collection protocols, and analyses. (p. 80)

This description captures the intent of this research, which applies an original framework to the study of modern world history textbooks. In this sense, the interpretivist paradigm, paired with an exploratory qualitative design (Butin, 2009, pp. 77–82), provides the most appropriate foundation for addressing the research questions in this study.

While interpretivism provides the broader paradigm for the study, I also draw on constructivism, which emphasizes that meanings are actively constructed through cultural, historical, and social processes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Because I take the stance that textbooks are not neutral repositories of facts but are constructed narratives, constructivism further informs the analytical foundation. This position is consistent with Apple's analysis of the construction of official knowledge (2013, 2018). This stance also reflects my experience as a researcher and a classroom teacher, where, over the last decade, I have observed how curricular materials privilege certain narratives while minimizing or excluding others. By acknowledging this perspective, I make explicit the interpretive lens I bring to the analysis and the ways in which my professional background informs how I engage with the texts. Constructivism, positioned here as a theoretical lens within interpretivism, is discussed in greater detail in the next section.

Constructivist Lens

This study is grounded in a constructivist perspective that recognizes learning as an active process of meaning-making. Piaget (1999) asserted that children construct knowledge through interaction with their environment, and that they naturally move self-centered reasoning to more logical and socialized forms. This idea, that knowledge is actively built rather than passively absorbed, provides a foundation for social constructivism. Building on Piaget, social constructivism extends the focus to the ways learning is situated not only in a person's regular activities, but also through cultural, historical, and social contexts (Palincsar, 1998). This resonates with my philosophy as an educator because it reflects the complexity of perspectives students and stakeholders bring to education. Creswell and Poth (2018) explain that individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences through interaction with others and the cultural and historical norms that influence their lives (p. 60). Piaget (1999) similarly underscored that

children construct knowledge actively, a view consistent with Adams' (2006) observation that social constructivism is not a single theory but a way of thinking about knowledge and pedagogy that positions learning as contextual. Together, these perspectives inform my practice of emphasizing multiple perspectives and fostering collaborative inquiry so students engage with history as an evolving narrative rather than an unchanging truth.

Through this lens, textbooks are not neutral repositories of facts, rather they are artifacts that establish what counts as historical knowledge (Apple, 2013, 2018; Foster, 2011; Issitt, 2004), reflecting current cultural and curricular priorities. Students often lose interest in history when it is reduced to a fixed list of names and dates. The problem isn't that the past is unimportant, but that this approach removes the sense of inquiry and relevance that makes history meaningful (VanSledright, 2008). Adams (2006) points out that many practices now promoted as "good teaching" align with social constructivist principles, though he also emphasizes the need for continued discussion on how these ideas translate into pedagogy. Constructivist perspectives offer an alternative: they position students as investigators who interpret sources, grapple with multiple perspectives, and construct their own historical understandings.

Constructivism, then, is not only about classroom practice but also about curriculum design. History textbooks that include primary sources, invite questioning, and connect past events to students' present lives aligns with this, while those that reinforce predetermined narratives limit engagement (Hoagland, 2000). This recognition is central to my research. By analyzing textbooks through a foundation that integrates historical consciousness with culturally relevant education, I aim to evaluate how curricular materials create or limit opportunities for students to engage with history as an active process of inquiry, interpretation, and meaning-

making. Constructivism provides the foundation for determining whether textbooks foster inclusive and critical engagement with the past or reduce history to merely a collection of facts.

Critical Textual Analysis

Textbooks are often regarded by students as objective repositories of truth, yet decades of scholarship have shown they are socially constructed artifacts that privilege dominant cultural perspectives. As Apple (2013, 2018) explains, textbooks represent “official knowledge,” negotiated through compromise but ultimately reflective of dominant power structures. In social studies, this pattern is particularly pronounced, as narratives of the past are presented as undisputed fact rather than as interpretation grounded in subjective and often competing perspectives. In this study, textbooks are therefore treated not as neutral resources but as cultural texts that reflect particular values, identities, and ideologies. To analyze textbooks through this lens requires a critical approach, one that questions whose voices are included, whose are marginalized, and what cultural assumptions are embedded within the narrative. This study is not concerned necessarily with accuracy or coverage of content, but with how knowledge is framed and legitimized. As Segall (1999) and Lempert (2013) argue, history education often conveys a singular, “undemocratic” storyline that does not lend itself to students’ recognizing diverse perspectives or constructing their own historical understandings. Thus, a critical textual analysis asks how textbooks contribute to maintaining or questioning such narratives.

This critical stance is integral to the integrated foundation of CRE and HRE that grounds this dissertation. Historical consciousness as it relates to HRE emphasizes contingency and the interpretive nature of history (van Straaten et al., 2016), while culturally relevant education highlights the need for representation, equity, and affirming students’ identities (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2002). To situate this approach more broadly, it is worth noting that discourse around

critical theory in education, particularly how it is articulated through Critical Race Theory (CRT), has long underscored the ways in which narratives of knowledge are intertwined with race, power, and inequity. Delgado and Stefancic (2017) define CRT as a movement for studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power; Ladson-Billings (1995) extends this insight to education by theorizing race as central to understanding systemic inequities; Kozol (2005) documents how these inequities manifest in disparities between schools; and bell hooks (1994) reminds us that education is never politically neutral but should be thought about as sustaining or disrupting inequality. Rather than serving as an additional framework, CRT is noted here as part of the broader field of critical scholarship that underscores this approach. The work of CRT scholars highlights the simple but crucial point that what is presented as “official knowledge” in textbooks is inseparable from relations of race, power, and inequity.

Text Selection and Scope

Criteria for Inclusion

The textbooks analyzed in this study were selected according to several criteria. First, all textbooks had to be accessible to use in secondary classrooms, either through major educational publishers, online distributors, or another reliable source. Second, all texts were written for high school world history instruction, providing the appropriate scope for secondary-level learners. Third, the selection sought to represent both mainstream and alternative textbooks. For the mainstream sample, textbooks were chosen from the most widely distributed publishers in the U.S. textbook market, with the aim that they reflect the primary materials most often encountered by high school students. Specifically, these publishers (i.e., Pearson, McGraw-Hill, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and Holt McDougal, an imprint of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) are

consistently recognized as market leaders in U.S. education publishing. Pearson alone controls approximately 40% of educational publishing revenue (Ivey Business Review, 2023), McGraw-Hill holds around 22% of the K–12 segment and serves 99% of U.S. public school districts (SPARC, 2019), and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt generated over \$1 billion in K–12 revenues as of 2021 (PR Newswire, 2023; Simba Information, 2023). In total, eight textbooks were selected for analysis: four widely distributed mainstream texts and four alternative texts. This balanced selection was made to allow for meaningful comparison between the dominant narratives students are most likely to encounter in classrooms and alternative approaches that may better support the development of historical consciousness and culturally relevant education.

For the alternative sample, textbooks were selected to represent thematic, comparative, or global approaches that deviate from the traditional Eurocentric and chronological models most commonly seen in mainstream texts. Notably, two of these alternative texts are published by major education publishers, McGraw-Hill and Wiley, respectively, but they were chosen because of their distinctive organizational and thematic characteristics, which sets them apart from traditional social studies textbooks. Based on my years of experience teaching social studies, I had already encountered several modern world history texts that stood out as distinctive in either structure or content. I obtained a range of these alternative texts and ultimately chose four that demonstrated notable differences in the organizational approach, layout, and content, while remaining appropriate for a standard ninth-grade modern world history course in the state of Kansas.

Textbooks Selected for Analysis

The following list identifies the eight textbooks that form the basis of this study. They are grouped into two categories: mainstream and alternative. The textbooks are listed by author when available, and by publisher when no individual author is identified.

Mainstream Textbooks:

1. *World Civilizations: The Global Experience, Since 1200* (Stearns et al., 2021)
2. *World History: Patterns of Interaction* (Beck et al., 2012)
3. *World History: Modern Times* (Spielvogel, 2023)
4. *World Civilizations* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)

Alternative Textbooks:

5. *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: Volume 2, From 1000 CE to the Present* (Adelman, Tignor, & Pollard, 2021)
6. *World History: A Concise Thematic Analysis, Volume 2* (Wallech et al., 2013)
7. *Panorama: A World History, Volume 2, From 1300* (Dunn & Mitchell, 2021)
8. *Teaching World History Thematically* (Metro, 2020)

Data Analysis Procedures

Foundation Overview

This study developed and applied a synthesized foundation that integrates Historically Relevant Education (HRE), rooted in historical consciousness (e.g., temporality, contingency, change/continuity; Seixas, 2004; Rüsen, 2004; van Straaten et al., 2016; Wilschut, 2012), with Culturally Relevant Education (CRE), which emphasizes academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness (Banks, 2013; Gay, 2002; Grant, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995). As outlined in Chapter 2, HRE and CRE are inherently aligned, which established the theoretical

grounding for this study. The foundation was operationalized at the textbook level, focusing on how historical narratives structure time, highlight continuity and change, acknowledge contingency, and include or exclude multiple perspectives. At the same time, it explored the extent in which these narratives affirm cultural identities and invite critical reflection. By emphasizing historical consciousness while demonstrating its overlap with culturally relevant tenets, the foundation provides a lens for examining how world history textbooks construct understandings of both the past and its connection to diverse learners in the present. As Butin (2009) explains, “Good document analysis, just like surveys and interviews, has to be linked back to your research questions and the literature review that supported it...your theoretical framework may be especially relevant here” (p. 99). In this case, the foundation is directly tied to the central research question of this study: how a lens grounded in historical consciousness and cultural relevance can be used to evaluate and inform the development of a historically balanced and globally inclusive modern world history curriculum. The following section introduces the rubric and coding procedures that operationalize the theoretical framework within the textbook analysis.

Coding Instrument: Textbook Analysis Rubric

To guide the textbook analysis, I developed a rubric grounded in the integrated foundation of Historically Relevant Education (HRE) and Culturally Relevant Education (CRE) described earlier in this chapter. The idea of creating a structured coding instrument emerged in part from my prior experience using Grant and Sleeter’s (2003) Storyline Analysis rubric, which demonstrated the value of systematic tools for examining representation in textbooks. In this study, however, the rubric was newly constructed to reflect the combined principles of HRE and CRE, functioning as a coding method that translates these theoretical categories into observable

criteria for systematic analysis. As Saldaña (2021) explains, coding is a researcher-defined construct that “symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p. 5). The rubric applied seven categories drawn from the principles of HRE and CRE outlined in Chapter 2: Historical Complexity, Interpretive Plurality, Contextual Power Dynamics, Cultural Agency, Epistemic Diversity, Personal Relevance, and Historiographical Awareness.

Selected chapters were examined across all eight textbooks, and each category was evaluated using a rating scale: 0 = Absent; 1 = Minimal/Implicit; 2 = Developing/Partial; and 3 = Strong/Explicit. In the rubric, the “Notes” column were used to document the evidence and rationale for each rating. In addition to ratings, reflections were noted using memo prompts based on the definitions deducted from the research in my literature review. Saldaña (2021) emphasizes that a researcher should “Think of a code not just as a significant word or phrase you applied to datum, but as a symbolic prompt or trigger for written reflection on the deeper and complex meanings it evokes” (p. 58). Together, the rubric and coding memos provided the method to systematically analyze the textbooks. See the coding rubric used below; the completed rubric for all analyzed chapters are included in the appendices.

Table 3-1.1: Textbook Analysis Rubric

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	
	Notes:			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	
	Notes:			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians' interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	constructed nature of “official knowledge”?			
	Notes:			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	
	Notes:			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	
	Notes:			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	relevance to contemporary social issues?			
	Notes:			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations	
	Notes:			

Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric:

- How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity?
- What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations?
- How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told?
- What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students’ sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative?
- How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students’ recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing?

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	• In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? • What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past?			

Coding Procedures

The process of coding followed a concept coding approach, which assigns meso- or macro-level meanings to data to connect excerpts to broader theoretical constructs (Saldaña, 2021, pp. 152–157). The seven rubric categories served as the primary deductive codes, developed from the theoretical framework in Chapter 2. To account for differences in textbook structure, I established a consistent sampling strategy: For the four chronological textbooks, three chapters were selected to represent the early modern, middle modern, and contemporary periods. For the four thematic textbooks, three chapters were selected that emphasize cultural representation, global interconnectivity, or major processes such as conflict, revolutions, or colonialism. This strategy produced a balanced dataset of twenty-four chapters across the eight textbooks.

The primary unit of analysis for this study was the full textbook chapter, rather than individual lessons. Although chapters varied in length and internal structure, many chapters consisted of multiple lessons or topics serving distinct instructional purposes (e.g., narrative or story-telling, thematic exploration, skill development, etc.). Treating the chapter as a single interpretive unit allowed for analysis of overarching narrative structure, patterns of representation, and the ways historical and cultural relevance were constructed across lessons and topics, rather than fragmenting meaning through lesson-by-lesson coding. Each chapter was read closely, with the chapter treated as the primary unit of analysis, and at least six to eight excerpts were identified and recorded as representative evidence drawn from across the chapter, ensuring that all rubric categories were represented. Rather than coding every lesson or page exhaustively, excerpts were selected to illustrate how each rubric category was addressed within the chapter as a whole, including narrative passages, lesson framing, visuals, and thematic

features. These excerpts were not treated as independent units of analysis but are used to inform holistic, chapter-level observations. For each excerpt, I assigned a rating from zero to three using the scale as part of an overall evaluation of how the chapter addressed each rubric category. The “Notes” column was used to document the evidence and rationale for each rating. Within these notes, and in the coding memos, I incorporated concept coding to identify the broader meanings represented in the text. For example, based on my professional experience with traditional world history textbooks, I know that descriptions of enslaved peoples’ uprisings often appear but are framed in limited ways. In such a case, under Cultural Agency, a passage like this could be rated as “2” for partial representation, with notes explaining that agency is acknowledged but narrowly presented across the chapter as a whole. The note might also identify the broader concept of resistance, showing how the passage reflected a larger theme within the category. This example is hypothetical but reflects common patterns I have observed as a history teacher working with current textbooks. Finally, the coding memos for each chapter included brief reflections on patterns in the text, framed as guiding questions that connect directly to the definitions I drew from the theoretical framework and the scholarly work described in Chapter 2. Using a combination of ratings, notes, memos, and concept coding at the chapter level aimed to keep the process systematic while also allowing for deeper interpretation.

As part of the analytic process, MAXQDA was used as a qualitative data management tool to support data organization. In addition, MAXQDA’s built-in AI-assisted analysis tool was used to help manage the large data set by summarizing and describing existing rubric-based observations and analytic notes (see Appendix J). These AI-assisted summaries were used to highlight recurring tendencies and similarities within the data but did not generate analytic categories, evaluate significance, or make interpretive judgments. All analytic decisions,

categorizations, and findings were produced by the researcher. Following this process, two cross-textbook tables were constructed to synthesize data and identify patterns across the textbooks. The first table was created as an initial step and presents rubric-based numerical indicators (0-3) across textbooks to support cross-comparison and the identification of broad patterns (see Table 4.1). Although the rubric includes numerical indicators, these values do not represent quantitative data or statistics. Rather, they act as qualitative descriptors showing the degree to which the respective rubric categories were present within a given chapter, based on interpretive judgment and supporting evidence recorded within the rubric. Building on these comparisons, a second table (see Table 4.2) was constructed using the completed rubrics in combination with the MAXQDA-generated summaries to provide a condensed overview of cross-textbook patterns, emphasis, and comparisons.

Trustworthiness and Rigor

Trustworthy qualitative studies employ strategies such as credibility, dependability, and transferability to ensure rigor, and these strategies were incorporated into this study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Whittemore et al., 2001). Credibility refers to the degree of trust in both the data and the interpretations drawn from it (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility was supported through prolonged engagement with the textbooks. Each text was read closely and coded in detail, with multiple passes ensuring accuracy and consistency. Dependability was established by maintaining a clear audit trail of coding decisions. A rubric was completed and saved for each chapter, with reflexivity notes included, so the entire process can be retraced (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1999). Transferability was supported by describing the textbook sample in detail, including publisher, edition, recent adoption numbers, and organizational structure. As Lincoln

and Guba (1985) explain, a detailed description allows readers to judge whether the findings apply to their own contexts.

Ethical Considerations

This study aims to analyze world history textbooks through the lenses of historical consciousness and culturally relevant education, while maintaining integrity and transparency throughout the process. While this research does not involve human subjects, ethical responsibility remains central to the process of data collection, interpretation, and reporting.

IRB Approval

In accordance with Kansas State University policy, this study was submitted for review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to commencing research activities. Formal IRB review and determination ensured the study complies with established ethical standards and that research integrity is maintained without undue risk.

Use of Textbook Materials

According to the U.S. Copyright Office (2025), fair use permits limited reproduction of copyrighted material for purposes such as research and scholarship. In this study, the primary data sources are published textbooks, and only limited excerpts were reproduced for analysis under fair use. All materials are properly cited, and no content was distributed beyond what is necessary for scholarly purposes, ensuring respect for intellectual property and compliance with academic publishing standards.

Accuracy and Representation

An ethical aim in this study is to represent textbook content fairly and accurately. In keeping with Whittemore et al.'s (2001) criteria of credibility and authenticity, I ensured that direct quotations are reproduced verbatim and that summaries convey the authors' intended

meanings without distortion. The analysis focused on identifying patterns of inclusion, omission, and representation within the texts, as the goal is not to mischaracterize the work of authors or publishers. I also acknowledge the interpretive stance I brought to this work. As discussed in Chapter 2, a substantial body of research has shown that world history textbooks often privilege Eurocentric perspectives (Araújo & Maeso, 2012; Marino, 2011). While not everyone shares this critique and some maintain that the current emphasis is appropriate, I approached this study with the belief that a broader representation of world histories is both possible and necessary. Such attention to representation also aligns with Whittemore et al.'s (2001) notion of sensitivity, which calls for research to be conducted and presented in ways that respect diverse cultural and social contexts. This stance does not seek to diminish Europe's historical significance, but to situate it within a more inclusive global narrative that aligns with the realities of teaching in classrooms that increasingly reflect a globalized world.

Constructive Critique

The intent of this research is to contribute to ongoing scholarly and pedagogical conversations about curriculum design and inclusivity. While critiques of mainstream textbook narratives are included, they are framed constructively, with the purpose of highlighting opportunities for strengthening cultural relevance and historical consciousness in history education. It is already well established that world history textbooks often privilege Eurocentric perspectives, and this study does not aim to re-prove that claim. Rather, the critique here focuses on how such texts may limit or foster the development of cultural relevance and historical consciousness. In line with Bachmann and Moisiu's (2020) call for critical scholarship that "create[s] rather than just dissipate[s]" (p. 256), this study identifies examples of how cultural relevance and historical consciousness can be advanced within existing textbooks. At the same

time, I hypothesize that alternative or less mainstream texts may already demonstrate ways these two aims can overlap. As Bachmann and Moio (2020) emphasize, constructive critique requires moving beyond viewing social phenomena as absolutely regressive or oppressive, since most can be both limiting and enabling (pp. 259-260). For this research, it means acknowledging the Eurocentric constraints of textbooks while also recognizing their potential to support inclusivity and historical consciousness. By identifying such examples, this study seeks to open possibilities for how classroom resources and teacher preparation programs might incorporate materials that support more meaningful and globally inclusive aspects.

Artificial Intelligence Statement

This study made limited use of AI-assisted features embedded within qualitative data analysis software (MAXQDA) to support the organization and descriptive management of coded text segments during the analytic process. These tools were used to assist with pattern identification and data organization within the dataset. However, all research design decisions, coding procedures, analytic categorization, interpretation of findings, and written analysis were conducted solely by the researcher. AI tools were not used to generate interpretations, conclusions, or substantive written content for this dissertation. The researcher maintained full responsibility for all analytic judgments and the presentation of the study's findings. Documentation of the AI-assisted inputs and outputs generated within MAXQDA is provided in Appendix I for transparency and reference.

Summary

This chapter outlined the methodology that guided this study of mainstream and alternative modern world history textbooks through an integrated lens of Historically Relevant Education (HRE) and Culturally Relevant Education (CRE). Grounded in interpretivism and

informed by a constructivist perspective, the study employed a qualitative, exploratory design to examine how textbook narratives frame historical knowledge and whether they create space for global interconnectivity, cultural inclusion, and critical engagement with the past.

The chapter described the interpretive stance, the selection of texts, and the coding instrument that operationalized the HRE–CRE foundation into six categories. The analysis will be supported by ratings, notes, and reflective memos. Attention was also given to researcher positionality, trustworthiness, and ethics, highlighting both the transparency and the limitations of the study. Informed by historical consciousness as it applies to relevant history education and by culturally relevant education scholarship, this study creates an integrated foundation that merges HRE and CRE into categories for textbook analysis, recognizing their overlap and potential to advance inclusive history education. By centering students’ cultural identities and civic development, the foundation bridges research and practice, directly responding to Wade’s (1993) and Roberts’ (2014) call for methodological rigor and practical application.

This chapter detailed the methodological design guiding the research, including how the research was conceptualized and how it will be conducted, including the design, theoretical grounding, and analytic process. Chapter 4 will apply this methodology to the selected textbooks and present the insights that emerged from examining them through the merged HRE-CRE lens.

Chapter 4 - Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the research conducted to examine how modern world history textbooks structure historical understanding and the extent to which they support historically and culturally relevant education. This study employed an original foundation grounded in culturally and historically relevant education to analyze how textbooks model historical complexity, interpretive plurality, power relations, cultural agency, epistemic diversity, personal relevance, and historiographical awareness.

In Chapter 1, the rationale of this study was established, identifying persistent problems of practice in world history education, including gaps in global representation, concerns around student engagement, and limited emphasis on critical thinking and transferable skills, which are increasingly essential in our ‘information age’ where content is more readily available and students are more inclined to question the purpose of learning history. The research questions guiding this research were also introduced, focusing on how an integrated HRE–CRE foundation could be used to evaluate world history textbooks and how textbook design choices expand or constrain opportunities for inclusive and meaningful historical learning.

Chapter 2 provided a review of relevant literature on historical consciousness, culturally relevant education, and the interpretive nature of history as a discipline. This review emphasized that history textbooks function as constructed curricular artifacts that reflect particular epistemic, cultural, and political assumptions rather than neutral accounts of the past. The literature also highlighted the importance of making historical interpretation, agency, and global interconnection visible to students in order to support the development of historical consciousness and make learning history more relevant.

Chapter 3 outlined the qualitative methodology employed in this study. This chapter described the selection of mainstream and alternative world history textbooks, the development of an analytic rubric grounded in historical consciousness and culturally relevant education, and the procedures used for data organization, memoing, and cross-textbook comparison. Qualitative data analysis software, MAXQDA, was used to support the organization and management of the dataset. AI-assisted analytic tools embedded within MAXQDA were used to support descriptive data organization (see Appendix I); however, all analytic categorization, pattern identification, and interpretation were conducted by the researcher. The chapter also addressed issues of trustworthiness, transparency, and researcher positionality.

Building on this foundation, Chapter 4 presents the findings derived from applying the integrated HRE–CRE framework to the selected textbooks. The chapter is organized to highlight recurring patterns observed across texts, as well as differences between traditional chronological textbooks and alternative thematic approaches. Analytic summaries and cross-textbook comparisons are provided (Table 4.1 and Table 4.2) to support transparency and illustrate the progression from descriptive observations to interpretive findings. Together, these findings address the study’s research questions by demonstrating how textbook structure and design do or do not influence the visibility of historical interpretation, cultural perspectives, and relevance. Chapter 5 will further interpret these findings and discuss their implications for curriculum design, teacher practice, and future research in world history education.

Overview of Cross-Textbook Analytic Tables

To show transparency in how the findings were generated, the analysis in this chapter is organized around two cross-textbook analytic tables that synthesize the rubric-based data prior to presenting the major findings. These tables are used to show recurring patterns across textbooks and to clarify how differences in textbook structure influence the presentation of historical relevance, interpretation, and agency. The first display, Table 4.1, presents cross-textbook patterns by rubric category. This table organizes the results according to the seven categories of the HRE–CRE framework: Historical Complexity, Interpretive Plurality, Power Dynamics, Cultural Agency, Epistemic Diversity, Personal Relevance, and Historiographical Awareness. The rubric scores shown in this table are analytic indicators, not quantitative nor statistical measures; they reflect the degree to which each concept was present and visible within analyzed chapters. For each textbook, scores from multiple analyzed chapters are summarized using descriptive labels (e.g., consistently, mostly, mixed) to indicate the degree of consistency observed within each category. The purpose of this table is not to rank or evaluate textbooks, but to show patterns, similarities, or inconsistency across the texts.

Table 4-1. Cross-Textbook Patterns by Rubric Category

Textbook	Historical Complexity	Interpretive Plurality	Power Dynamics	Cultural Agency	Epistemic Diversity	Personal Relevance	Historiographical Awareness
Stearns et al., 2021	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 2 → Mostly 3	3, 3, 2 → Mostly 3	2.5, 2, 3 → Mixed	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3
Beck et al., 2012	2, 1.5, 2.5 → Mixed	1, 2, 2 → Mostly 2	2, 2, 2 → Consistently 2	1, 2, 2 → Mostly 2	2, 2, 2 → Consistently 2	1.5, 2, 2 → Mostly 2	1, 2, 1.5 → Mixed
Spielvogel, 2023	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 2.5, 3 → Mostly 3
HMH, 2018	2, 2, 2 → Consistently 2	2, 1, 2 → Mostly 2	2, 2, 2 → Consistently 2	2, 1.5, 1.5 → Mostly 1.5	2, 2, 2 → Consistently 2	3, 2, 2 → Mostly 2	2, 1, 1 → Mostly 1
Adelman, Tignor, & Pollard, 2021	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	2, 3, 3 → Mostly 3	2, 3, 3 → Mostly 3	3, 2, 3 → Mostly 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	2, 3, 3 → Mostly 3	1, 2, 3 → Mixed
Wallech et al., 2013	2.5, 3, 3 → Mostly 3	2, 2, 3 → Mostly 2	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 1.5, 3 → Mostly 3	2, 2, 2 → Consistently 2	2, 1.5, 2.5 → Mixed	2.5, 3, 2 → Mixed
Dunn & Mitchell, 2021	2, 2.5, 3 → Mostly 2	2, 2.5, 2 → Mostly 2	2, 2.5, 2 → Mostly 2	2, 2, 2 → Mostly 2	2, 1.5, 2 → Mostly 2	2, 2, 2 → Consistently 2	1, 1.5, 1 → Consistently 1
Metro, 2020	3, 2.5, 3 → Mostly 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 3, 3 → Consistently 3	3, 2, 3 → Mostly 3

Overall Pattern	Generally strong and consistent	Moderate–strong, uneven	Moderate, often descriptive	Moderate, context-dependent	Moderate–strong, uneven depth	Moderate, often implicit	Weakest and most uneven

Table 4.2 compresses my analytic findings for each textbook into a single, concise display organized by the rubric categories. Using my completed rubrics alongside the AI-generated pattern summaries from MAXQDA, I wrote brief assessments describing how each textbook presents each category. These entries represent my analytic judgments and interpretations as the researcher. By summarizing each textbook across the full set of rubric categories, the table provides an overall view of how each text presents history. This overview helped me identify the broader patterns across the textbooks and informs the analysis of textbook structure in the findings section, even though the table itself is focused on summarizing rubric-based assessments rather than analyzing structure directly.

Table 4-2. Cross-Textbook Analytic Comparison Based on Rubric Categories

Textbook	Historical Complexity	Interpretive Plurality	Power Dynamics	Cultural Agency	Epistemic Diversity	Personal Relevance	Historiographical Awareness
Stearns et al., 2021	Change framed as contingent, multiple causes, and not shown as inevitable	Competing interpretations explicitly presented and compared	Power and perspective shown; Western narratives openly questioned	Regions and societies shown making choices under constraint	Non-European sources included; knowledge treated as constructed	Contemporary connections present but mostly implied	Historiography explicitly named; interpretation and bias directly addressed
Beck et al., 2012	Linear causation	Limited debate;	Power described	Agency centered on	Visual and textual sources used;	Contemporary connections	Interpretation present in stand-

Textbook	Historical Complexity	Interpretive Plurality	Power Dynamics	Cultural Agency	Epistemic Diversity	Personal Relevance	Historiographical Awareness
	emphasized; contingency unevenly acknowledged	dominant narratives primarily presented as settled	structurally opposed to human experiences; enforcement often understated	states and political movements	framing sources that initiates inquiry is minimal	implicit rather than scaffolded	alone moments; construction of narratives rarely named
Spielvogel, 2023	Explanations w/ multiple causes presented; change and continuity balanced	Multiple perspectives engaged through inquiry activities	Power and conflict addressed; critique of systems in power is inconsistent	Ordinary people shown as agents, especially in modern contexts	Primary and secondary sources analyzed; how sources are selected is implicit	Explicit links to contemporary issues and civic identity	Interpretation practiced; historiographical debate rarely named
HMH, 2018	Multi-causal framing present; turning points often oversimplified	Multiple voices minimal	Power described as structural; framing choices rarely interrogated	Agency visible but uneven; marginalized voices summarized	Primary sources and visuals used; supports narrative, rather than question it	Personal connections embedded; contemporary links mostly implied	Construction not acknowledged
Adelman, Tignor, & Pollard, 2021	Change framed as uneven, contingent, and interconnected	Multiple perspectives present; comparison unevenly scaffolded	Power structures explicit; inequality and coercion present	Diverse groups shown as active historical agents	Varied evidence types used; epistemic framing implicit	Contemporary relevance thematically embedded	Interpretation modeled; historiographical process mostly implicit

Textbook	Historical Complexity	Interpretive Plurality	Power Dynamics	Cultural Agency	Epistemic Diversity	Personal Relevance	Historiographical Awareness
Wallech et al., 2013	Change from multiple causes is emphasized; linear progress subtly reinforced	Competing theories referenced; comparison largely implicit	Structural power explicit; European dominance normalized	Agency framed through systems; non-European voices limited	Evidence largely political/economic; Western epistemic lens	Contemporary relevance present; teacher mediation assumed	Interpretation implicit; historiographical process not visible
Dunn & Mitchell, 2021	Change emphasized; continuity and unevenness less developed	Limited perspectives; interpretation presented as primarily settled	Power described structurally; coercion seen as neutral	Agency centered on states and systems	Heavy reliance on economic data; interpretive framing limited	Contemporary relevance implicit	Historical knowledge presented as uncontested and explanatory
Metro, 2020	Change framed as contingent, non-linear, and choice-driven	Contrasting interpretations intentionally compared	Power analyzed through ideology, conflict, and structural inequality	Ordinary people shown as agents of change	Multiple evidence types used; methods implicit	Ethical and contemporary relevance explicitly scaffolded	Interpretation and debate explicitly modeled

The major findings that follow draw from these tables and from the full set of rubric scores and analytic memos generated during the reading of each textbook. In addition, AI-assisted pattern identification within MAXQDA (Appendix J) was used to help organize the large set of data and identify recurring tendencies across the dataset; however, all interpretations and findings reflect my review and synthesis of the full qualitative dataset.

Finding 1: Emphasis on Global Interconnection Exceeds Cultural Agency

In addressing RQ1A, this finding examines how world history textbooks represent global interconnection and mutual influence when analyzed through the HRE–CRE foundation. This emphasis often highlights global systems and interactions more than the cultural agency of the societies involved. Given the focus of world history textbooks, the presence of global interconnection is neither unexpected nor a finding itself. What is significant for this research is how global connection is framed and what features of historical understanding are emphasized. Across the completed rubrics (Appendix B-I), categories related to historical complexity, power dynamics, and interpretive plurality consistently positioned societies within interconnected global systems. However, it is important to note that attention to mutual influence and cultural agency varied considerably across the textbooks and even across chapters within the same text. Given these considerations, global interconnection is discussed in this section not as a finding, but to show how multiple rubric categories work together to portray narratives. Across the eight textbooks, global connections are regularly highlighted through trade networks, imperial expansion, migration, and economic systems just to name a few. For example, in *World History: A Concise Thematic Analysis, Volume 2* (Wallech et al., 2013), European expansion is explained through the connection of disease, navigation, military technology, and state power rather than reducing expansion to one single cause (pp. 415–427). The text also compares Africa and the

Americas to show how geography and immunity contributed to different outcomes of conquest (pp. 422–429). Later chapters in the same textbook connect ideology, medicine, and advances in technology as contributing to Europe’s rise as opposed to an inevitable trajectory that would otherwise imply inherent European superiority (pp. 497–511). In each case, societies are situated within broader global systems that emphasize interdependence and different levels of exchange across regions. These big-picture topics position societies within a shared global context and frame historical change as the result of interactions across regions and cultures rather than as isolated developments, a pattern reflected in Table 4.1 through the consistently strong presence of historical complexity across all the textbooks.

At the same time, when global connections are presented, there is less focus on mutual influence or cultural agency. Review of the completed rubrics show that societies are often positioned within broader global systems, but more frequently as responding to external forces rather than as actively shaping those systems or influencing outcomes beyond their immediate circumstances. For example, in the completed rubric for *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: Volume 2, From 1000 CE to the Present*, chapters addressing industrialism and imperialism show that non-European actors were “shown making strategic choices,” including Egyptian reforms under Muhammad Ali (pp. 633–634), resistance in India (pp. 634–635), Qing policies in response to European pressure (pp. 637–639), and revolutionary action in Haiti (pp. 647–648). However, across these examples, actions were most often framed as reactions to European interference rather than those groups independently contributing to global outcomes beyond those encounters. In these cases, agency was present but described in the rubric as “reactive and driven through elites,” rather than embedded across a group’s own cultural contexts (Appendix B). In fact, across the textbooks, the rubric notes references to trade, industrialization, imperialism, and

colonization without maintaining attention to the perspectives, lived experiences, or first-hand accounts of non-Western groups. In practice, this creates a kind of narrative gatekeeping. Non-Western actors are included, but their influence is limited by a storyline that privileges European expansion as the central force in global change. However, this tendency exists with strong counterexamples, which suggests that the way the narrative is framed may be the key factor that determines how agency is portrayed.

Analysis of the completed rubrics reveals an important difference between recognizing global interconnection and how cultural agency is made visible within those connections. References to broad global systems (e.g., colonialism, trade networks, industrialism, etc.) appeared most consistently within rubric categories related to historical complexity and power dynamics. However, an emphasis on global systems did not automatically correspond with cultural agency. When agency was most clearly developed, it was typically in chapters that intentionally highlighted perspectives of everyday people, social movements, and non-elite decision-making. *Teaching World History Thematically* (Appendix C), *World History, Modern Times* (Appendix H), and *World Civilizations: The Global Experience, Since 1200* (Appendix I) provide examples where cultural agency is consistently presented across the text, positioning non-European and marginalized groups as decision-makers and innovators rather than as peripheral actors. At the same time, both the rubrics and the AI-assisted summaries generated within the coding software MAXQDA pointed to differences across chapters, showing how societies were clearly situated within larger systems but where agency was only briefly addressed or implied. As a result, students may encounter narratives that strongly emphasize interaction and exchange but are inconsistent in providing opportunities to see how diverse groups contributed to, challenged, or redirected those interactions. This demonstrates that in

some chapters, agency becomes most visible at moments of European contact or global change, while less space is given to how societies developed their own political systems, cultural traditions, and intellectual ideas apart from those encounters. Yet some of the textbooks discussed above do make room for that fuller perspective, presenting societies not only in relation to Europe, but also in ways that recognize their own internal histories, identities, and developments. In a world history classroom, that difference matters because students should be able to see cultures as more than participants in global exchanges; this will be further discussed in the next chapter.

Finding 2: Historiographical Awareness Is Inconsistent and Minimally Developed Across Texts

Looking at how textbooks model disciplinary practices (RQ1B), Finding 2 highlights historiographical awareness as the weakest and most inconsistent rubric category across the eight textbooks. While historical narratives consistently reflect interpretive choices, those choices are rarely made visible to students in terms of how evidence is selected, interpreted, or debated. Instead, historical accounts are most often presented as settled narratives with little to no attention to the methodology or even processes involved in how historians construct, revise, or contest explanations of the past. As summarized in Table 4.1, patterns related to historiographical awareness show more variability and lower overall consistency than any other rubric category. In contrast to historical complexity, which was consistently strong across all the textbooks, historiographical awareness varied by text and even within individual chapters. For example, in *World Civilizations* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018), Chapter 25, “Industry and Imperialism” (pp. 854–883), events such as the Berlin Conference, the Boxer Rebellion, and the Spanish-American War are presented as factual developments rather than as interpretations

informed by perspective or debate (pp. 867–878). First-person voices are largely absent, and students are given little guidance in understanding how these narratives were constructed or why certain viewpoints were given more weight. Consistently across the data, references to interpretation were implicit, which limits opportunities for students to recognize history as an interpretive discipline rather than a fixed body of knowledge. In another example, in *World History: Patterns of Interaction* (Appendix F), Chapter 29, “The Great War, 1914–1918,” the rubric identifies strong historiographical awareness in some sections and weak awareness in others. The chapter explicitly presents debate over war guilt, responsibility, and the Treaty of Versailles (pp. 858–861), which makes interpretive disagreement visible for students to see. At the same time, much of the chapter presents events in a linear and settled way, with limited attention to how historical explanations were constructed or why certain interpretations were prioritized. As the rubric notes, “overall, the explanations are presented as settled rather than historically contested,” showing how historiographical awareness can vary even in a single chapter. A similar pattern appears in Chapter 35, “Struggles for Democracy, 1945–Present,” from the same textbook. The chapter emphasizes democracy as contested and includes examples of protest and reform. However, the narrative ultimately settles on outcomes rather than emphasizing ongoing struggle, and first-person perspectives, especially those challenging dominant definitions of democracy, are not as developed. As the memo notes, students might better understand democracy as a debated topic if the narrative focused more on ground-up perspectives and unresolved consequences. These observations reinforce the finding that historiographical awareness is not consistent even within otherwise strong chapters.

By limiting attention to historiographical debate, textbooks present history as an authoritative story instead of a field characterized by disagreement and revision. Students are

given the conclusions historians have reached, the ‘what’, but they are rarely shown the ‘how’ behind those conclusions. As a result, textbooks tend to prioritize coverage of information while giving less attention to the thinking skills students would need to evaluate evidence or make sense of competing interpretations on their own. The completed rubrics show that even when textbooks modeled complex historical thinking, they often did so without making the interpretive process visible. For example, in *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: Volume 2*, Chapter 11, “Crises and Recovery in Afro-Eurasia, 1300–1500” (pp. 433–473), the narrative presents multiple explanations for the Black Death and its uneven regional consequences. The rubric notes that while the chapter includes medical, religious, and social interpretations, it “doesn’t really explain how historians consider evidence or debate different interpretations,” and that “history is presented as a narrative, but it’s not clear how the interpretation of that narrative takes place” (Appendix B). In this stronger case, interpretation is embedded within the narrative, but the process of historical reasoning is not articulated for students. A similar pattern appears in Chapter 15 of the same textbook, “Reordering the World, 1750–1850” (pp. 607–651). Although the chapter compares competing ideological claims and emphasizes contingency, the rubric notes that “the interpretive process is implicit rather than explained,” as how historians select or debate knowledge is not at all addressed (Appendix B). This pattern appears again in *Panorama: A World History, Volume 2, From 1300* (Dunn & Mitchell, 2021), Chapter 26, “World War II and Its Aftermath, 1933–1950” (pp. 756–787). While the chapter hints at historiographical thinking in discussions of appeasement and propaganda (pp. 760–765, 776), it reads primarily as a presentation of information (Appendix D). Students are exposed to multiple perspectives, yet it’s not made clear how historians evaluate evidence or why interpretations differ.

On the other hand, *Teaching World History Thematically* (Metro, 2020) represents a notable exception. In Chapter 4, “Conflict: What Is Worth Fighting For?” (pp. 107–138), historiographical awareness is explicitly embedded throughout the unit. The rubric shows consistent attention to perspective, bias, and interpretation, noting that “every unit and lesson includes teacher-facing explanations about document selection and framing” and that “explicit comparison of competing narratives and interpretations is present throughout” (Appendix C). Here, students are repeatedly invited to evaluate sources, compare interpretations, and recognize that historical meaning depends on selection and perspective rather than on a single authoritative account. Additional chapters reinforce this. In Chapter 6, “Economics, Technology, and the Environment: How Should People Get the Resources They Need?” (pp. 165–194), historiographical awareness is again made visible through intentional comparisons of competing interpretations. For example, Lesson 6.11 presents Adam Smith and Karl Marx as advocating for distinct economic interpretations rather than facts (pp. 187–189); Lesson 6.12 introduces conflicting explanations of Mao’s “Great Leap Forward,” contrasting intention and outcome rather than offering a single storyline (pp. 189–192); And, finally, Lesson 6.13 places official Soviet documents on Chernobyl alongside later historical analysis (pp. 192–194), showing how interpretations can shift over time. As noted in the rubric, while the chapter implies historiographical debate, it could be strengthened by including more explicit examples of historians directly disagreeing. Even so, the chapter consistently presents interpretation as being grounded in perspective and competing evidence, and is a good example of how historiographical awareness can be embedded within the text without getting into actual methodology, which may or may not be appropriate for secondary learners.

This exception helps clarify what is often missing in more traditional texts and demonstrates that making historiographical thinking visible is a deliberate curricular choice rather than an automatic feature of history instruction. A similar, though less consistent, pattern appears in *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart*, Chapter 21, “Globalization, 1970–2000” (pp. 877–921), which demonstrates stronger historiographical awareness than earlier chapters in the same text. The rubric notes that interpretive processes are visible through structured primary-source analysis and explicit comparison of competing viewpoints related to democracy, development, famine, and human rights (Appendix B). However, even in this stronger example, the rubric memo prompt on historiographical awareness notes that “historian methodology itself is not really explicit,” suggesting that while interpretation is modeled, the disciplinary work of historiography remains partially hidden.

Across the dataset, analytic memos and AI-assisted descriptive summaries within MAXQDA reinforced these observations. The summaries repeatedly noted that textbooks acknowledge multiple explanations but requires teacher guidance to be made explicit, and that interpretive work is often implicit rather than explained (Appendix J). These patterns appeared across both mainstream chronological textbooks and alternative texts, though thematic designs were more likely to intentionally bring attention to the interpretive work that historians engage in. These findings highlight an important distinction between encountering interpretation and understanding how interpretation functions as a disciplinary practice. Historiographical awareness was not absent from the textbooks analyzed, but it was inconsistently embedded and often confined to isolated chapters or teacher-mediated features. As a result, students are more likely to encounter interpretation as something that exists within historical narratives rather than as a process that they may also participate in. From an HRE–CRE perspective, this pattern has

important implications for global inclusivity: when textbooks do not make clear how evidence is selected or why certain sources are included, students have limited opportunities to notice whose voices are missing or how particular narratives become emphasized. These implications will be explored further in the Discussion chapter.

Finding 3: Relevance Is Most Commonly Embedded Through Enduring Human Issues Rather Than Explicit Connections to Students' Lives

Addressing RQ1, applying the HRE-CRE foundation to the eight textbooks revealed that while relevance is present, it is most often embedded through enduring human issues rather than through explicit connections to students' lives. What becomes clear through examining the completed rubrics is not whether relevance exists, but how it is communicated to students. In most cases, relevance is embedded through broad themes connected to the human condition or enduring human issues rather than through direct prompts that ask students to connect historical content to their own lives or to contemporary issues. As a result, students are positioned to recognize familiar human struggles in the past, but are less likely to be guided to reflect on why those struggles matter to them today.

While the majority of texts rely on these implicit connections, there are instances where explicit relevance is built directly into the textbook. In *World History: Modern Times* (Spielvogel, 2023), Chapter 3, "Asian Empires, 1450–1800," inquiry activities regularly ask students to evaluate turning points, cause and effect, and comparisons across societies (pp. 88, 95, 107, 111), and the final activities encourage students to apply historical understanding to modern concepts (pp. 123–124). Chapter 6, "Nationalism, 1815–1900," includes a "Making Connections to Today" feature that directly links nationalism to contemporary debates about identity and citizenship (p. 260), along with discussion prompts asking students to reflect on

rights, responsibilities, and national identity (pp. 238, 259–260). This type of relevance can also be seen in *World Civilizations: The Global Experience, Since 1200* (Stearns et al., 2021), Chapter 29, “Rebirth and Revolution: Nation-Building in East Asia and the Pacific Rim,” where the text shows how societies rebuild after a crisis, the impacts of foreign influence, and formation of national identity, which are framed in ways that clearly connect to contemporary global issues. The narrative specifically invites students to reflect on the consequences of rapid change, particularly when economic success is prioritized over well-being (pp. 866–868, 875–877), and explicitly links the rise of the Pacific Rim to East Asia’s central role in today’s global economy and politics (pp. 877–878).

However, the MAXQDA summaries and overall rubric data suggest that, despite these examples, relevance is most commonly communicated through enduring human issues rather than through explicit connections to students’ present-day lives. These issues appear across time periods and regions, which reflects the continuity in enduring human issues that have driven social change over time. In many chapters, historical content is organized around these in ways that make relevance intuitive, as students encounter stories of survival, resistance, conflict, and social change. However, these issues are most often described within the narrative without helping students draw explicit connections between historical experiences and present-day concerns. For instance, in the *Teaching World History Thematically* (Metro, 2020), chapters such as “Conflict: What Is Worth Fighting For?” and “Economics, Technology, and the Environment,” issues of power, inequality, and ethical considerations are consistently present (Appendix C). At the same time, these notes indicate that explicit prompts asking students to connect these issues to their own lives or to contemporary events are less consistent and are left to teachers to make explicit rather than being articulated in the textbook itself. A similar pattern

appears in *Panorama: A World History, Volume 2* (Dunn & Mitchell, 2021), where relevance is embedded through enduring human issues, but is rarely extended to students' present-day lives. In Chapter 18, "The Expanding Global Economy: Expectations and Inequalities, 1550–1700" (pp. 514–541), the narrative includes issues of inequality, economic survival, and displacement as global trade expanded. The chapter describes the growth of Atlantic trade, plantation labor systems, and areas of trade as forces that determined what daily life looked like for merchants, laborers, and enslaved people across regions. This chapter shows how issues of globalization, inequality, and labor systems "offer strong potential connections to modern issues," yet these connections are "not explicitly developed for students" (Appendix D). Similarly, rubric notes emphasize that non-European groups are largely framed in relation to European trade and labor needs, which puts the focus on economic matters rather than on lived experiences that students might recognize today (Appendix D). Another example of this pattern can be seen in *World Civilizations: The Global Experience, Since 1200* (Stearns et al., 2021), Chapter 20, "Civilizations in Crisis: The Ottoman Empire, the Islamic Heartlands, and Qing China," where topics such as reform versus tradition and the role of foreign influence, for example, offer clear potential connections to contemporary debates about globalization and cultural identity. Furthermore, the narrative highlights the human experience of instability through reform movements with connections to fear, resistance, and hope. However, these connections are implicit, which reinforces the broader tendency for relevance to be embedded within themes rather than articulated through direct or explicit instruction. This pattern reflects how relevance is most often communicated across the textbooks examined in this study.

Finding 4: Visibility of Contingency, Interpretation, and Cultural Agency Is Inconsistent Across Textbooks and Not Determined by Structure

In response to RQ1B, which asks how different textbook structures support historical consciousness and global inclusivity, this finding shows that the visibility of contingency, interpretation, and cultural agency varies widely and cannot be explained by textbook structure alone. While the textbooks differ in organization (i.e., traditional chronological formats, thematic, hybrid, or other), no single structure consistently supports or limits students' opportunities to encounter history as contingent, interpretive, or shaped by human choice. Instead, these features are inconsistent across both traditional and alternative textbooks, and are more closely tied to author choice and what is emphasized in the narrative.

The patterns summarized in Table 4.1 show that historical complexity, which includes attention to change, continuity, and contingency, is present across all of the textbooks. This means that chapters regularly present history as having multiple causes with different consequences across regions. For instance, the rubric for *World Civilizations: The Global Experience* (Stearns et al., 2021) notes that Chapter 9 explicitly frames the year 1450 as a "moment of transition rather than inevitability," emphasizing that global outcomes were the result of specific shifts, such as China's internally driven decision to abandon maritime expeditions, rather than a predetermined rise of the West (Appendix I). Similarly, *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart* (Adelman et al., 2021) portrays the emergence of political power in the Ottoman, Ming, and Western monarchies as contingent from their recoveries from the Black Death (Appendix B). In another example, in *Panorama: A World History, Volume 2, From 1300* (Dunn & Mitchell, 2021) the chapter on World War II presents the conflict as emerging from intertwined causes rather than a single trigger, including economic instability, continued imperial

ambitions, fascism, and failed diplomacy (pp. 756–762). The war’s outcome is framed as uncertain until late turning points, particularly in discussions of early Axis victories and shifting alliances (pp. 763–770). Postwar developments such as the Cold War and decolonization are also presented as contingent rather than inevitable results of Allied victory (pp. 777–786). These narrative choices explicitly model change, continuity, and contingency rather than linear progress. However, the table also shows that interpretive plurality, cultural agency, and historiographical awareness are less consistently present across the dataset.

As seen in both Tables 4.1 and 4.2, these inconsistent patterns appear within both chronological and alternative texts, which suggests that structure does not account for how visible historical complexity, interpretation, or agency is for students. For example, in *World History: Patterns of Interaction* (Beck et al., 2012), the narrative of the Atlantic World is presented through a linear progression that makes economic motives and the rise of the plantation economy feel "inevitable," leaving little room for students to consider alternative historical paths (Appendix F). Similarly, in *World Civilizations* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018), moments of resistance such as African opposition to imperial rule or the Boxer Rebellion are included, but they are framed as disruptions that caused more problems for the Europeans (pp. 867–868, 873), which minimizes their experiences by positioning them as brief exceptions rather than part of long-term struggles to defend their land and sovereignty (Appendix G). In these cases, contingency is present but embedded within explanatory narratives rather than examined as a series of choices made under constraint.

Cultural agency also appears most often through powerful figures or institutions, such as political leaders, elites, or governments, while everyday people and marginalized groups are, for the most part, shown as responding to more powerful and often external forces rather than

shaping outcomes across contexts. Even in a text that emphasizes global connection like *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: Volume 2, From 1000 CE to the Present* (Adelman, Tignor, & Pollard, 2021) the narrative primarily centers the agency of elites and state innovators, while the voices of everyday people are minimal (Appendix B). This is also seen in *World History: Patterns of Interaction* (Beck et al., 2012), where the agency of Indigenous and African peoples is summarized primarily through the lens of "resistance or exploitation" in response to European expansion (Appendix F). The MAXQDA summaries help clarify this mixed picture by describing patterns already evident in the rubric data. Across the summaries, the software repeatedly identified an emphasis on large-scale topics such as empire, inequality, trade, labor, power, and globalization across all of the textbooks reviewed (Appendix J). While students are consistently exposed to a global narrative, they are less often guided to notice how choices were made or how different perspectives influenced both historical developments and how those developments are retold. As a result, global inclusivity depends less on how a textbook is organized and more on how its stories are told. For example, even in texts where historical complexity is strong, attention to contingency and agency still fluctuates by topic. In *Panorama: A World History, Volume 2, From 1300* (Dunn & Mitchell, 2021), colonial power and racial hierarchies are clearly addressed in discussions of Asia, Africa, and postwar independence movements (pp. 781–786). Students are introduced to the realities of imperial control and the various paths toward independence. However, these sections tend to summarize the experiences of colonized peoples and lack first-person voices that would otherwise help students see how everyday people understood their own struggles. As a result, while students learn that colonialism and racial hierarchy impacted these regions, they have fewer opportunities to wrestle with how those histories might be told differently depending on whose perspective is

emphasized. However, even within this common narrative framing, there are exceptions such as the "Thinking Historically" feature in *World Civilizations: The Global Experience, Since 1200* (Stearns et al., 2021), which clearly make the construction of history visible by asking students to analyze how power and "ethnocentrism" influence the construction of historical narratives (Appendix I).

These findings complicate simple comparisons between traditionally organized chronological textbooks and texts designed with alternative approaches. Across the completed rubrics and analytic summaries, some textbooks more frequently include opportunities for students to compare cases, consider ethical questions, or recognize human choice within historical events. At the same time, such moments appear inconsistently across chapters and topics, even within the same textbook. Overall, the data suggests that the visibility of historical consciousness and global inclusivity depends less on textbook type and more on how authors choose to frame particular chapters, examples, and questions for students.

Finding 5: The Integrated HRE–CRE Foundation Supports Consistent Analysis Across Diverse World History Textbooks

The integrated Historically Relevant Education and Culturally Relevant Education (HRE–CRE) foundation demonstrated its usefulness as both a consistent and flexible analytic tool for examining how world history textbooks support or limit historical consciousness and global inclusivity (RQ1). When applied across all eight textbooks, the foundation supported a systematic comparison that did not undermine the unique differences among texts or lead to overgeneralized conclusions. Instead, the foundation was able to help point to recurring patterns, variation in the presence of rubric categories, and the diverse ways history is presented across textbooks despite their different organizational structures and selected emphases. Evidence for

this finding is visible in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 and across the completed rubrics included in the appendices. These tables demonstrate how the same rubric categories (i.e., historical complexity, interpretive plurality, contextual power dynamics, cultural agency, epistemic diversity, personal relevance, and historiographical awareness) were applied consistently across all the textbooks to generate cross-textbook summaries. For example, historical complexity was frequently noted where chapters framed history as a dynamic and contingent process rather than as inevitable, and rejected a single linear narrative; these patterns appeared across both chronological and alternative texts. In *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart* (Adelman, Tignor, & Pollard, 2021), the Black Death is framed not as a single inevitable event, but as an unintended consequence of trade networks where recovery was highly contingent upon regional responses (pp. 434–437). Similarly, in *World History, Modern Times* (Spielvogel, 2023), the post–Cold War era is presented not as a stable "end" to history, but as an unstable period defined by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of new, unpredictable conflicts (pp. 546–588). Spielvogel further reinforces this contingency by illustrating that the transition to democracy is often "fragile and partial," noting that in regions like Eastern Europe and Latin America, democratic elections frequently coexisted with corruption and ongoing conflict rather than following a linear path toward progress (pp. 548–551, 568–576).

The HRE-CRE foundation also revealed meaningful differences in how textbooks portray agency, a fundamental feature of cultural relevance. This approach ensures that diverse cultures are represented as active participants in global history, supporting students' development of identity and how they perceive their own ability to affect history. In some chapters, non-European states are presented as proactive innovators. For instance, *World History: Modern Times* (Spielvogel, 2023) portrays Asian societies as intentional agents of change, highlighting

Akbar's policies of religious tolerance and the Ming Dynasty's economic expansion and exploration under Zheng He. By framing these developments as internal strategic choices rather than side stories to Western history, the text avoids deficit framing and validates non-Western political and cultural advancements. In contrast, other texts limit cultural relevance by presenting non-European agency as primarily reactive to European expansion. In *World Civilizations* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018), Indigenous and African groups are described mainly in relation to European trade demands and labor needs. Their own worldviews and independent perspectives are limited or absent, which limits students' ability to see how these groups also contributed to historical outcomes. By applying this rubric consistently, these qualitative differences in narrative framing emerge as clear patterns, which helps make clear the extent that a text focuses on the lived experiences and agency of marginalized groups.

The foundation supports analysis of how historical understanding is modeled without requiring uniform content, shared narratives, or identical instructional approaches. This makes the foundation especially useful in real-world settings, where textbook adoption, standards alignment, and political considerations vary widely, but stakeholders still need analytic tools that help them see what history is "doing" on the page. This will be further explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 - Conclusion

Historical Consciousness, Cultural Relevance, and Curriculum Analysis

This study examines the extent to which secondary world history textbooks reflect or overlook the principles of historically and culturally relevant education. Drawing on scholarship in historical consciousness (Ahonen, 2006; Rüsen, 2004; Seixas, 2004; van Straaten et al., 2016; Wilschut, 2012) and culturally relevant education (Banks, 2013; Gay, 2000, 2002; Grant, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995), I developed an integrated rubric that synthesizes these ideas into a method for evaluating curriculum. Throughout this research, I refer to this integrated rubric as the HRE-CRE foundation. It evaluates not only what content appears in textbooks, but how historical meaning is constructed within their narratives. As explained in the introduction to this dissertation, van Straaten et al. (2016) argue that history becomes meaningful when it is oriented around three objectives grounded in historical consciousness: building personal identity, becoming a citizen, and understanding the human condition. This dissertation is grounded in the understanding that textbooks are the main source for history learning, and they are not neutral. Rather, they are social artifacts that reflect and reproduce the ideological priorities of their time (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). Using a qualitative content analysis approach grounded in a constructivist paradigm, I applied this integrated foundation to eight secondary world history textbooks, including both widely adopted chronological texts and alternative or thematic texts. Each text was examined using the same rubric with six categories: historical complexity, interpretive plurality, contextual power dynamics, cultural agency, epistemic diversity, and relevance. Through coding and analytic memoing using the rubric, patterns were identified across the textbooks that show how narratives represented global diversity, human agency, interconnection, and the interpretive nature of history as a discipline.

This research was guided by the following questions:

1. How can a framework grounded in historical consciousness and cultural relevance be used to evaluate and inform the development of a historically balanced and globally inclusive world history curriculum?
 - a. How do world history textbooks reflect or distort global interconnectivity, diversity, and mutual influence when analyzed through the integrated framework?
 - b. In what ways do alternative world history textbooks differ from traditional chronological textbooks in supporting historical consciousness and global inclusivity?
 - c. What features of this framework might make it more adaptable or politically viable across varied state educational contexts, particularly where culturally relevant approaches face resistance?

Rather than measuring student perceptions of relevance, as prior studies have done using instruments such as the Relevance of History Measurement Scale (van Straaten et al., 2018), this study examined the textbooks themselves. If historical consciousness depends on how students are guided to understand temporality, contingency, interpretation, and agency, then it makes sense to examine textbooks through an interpretive lens. As delineated in the first chapter, Carr (2018), Fischer (1970), and Novick (1988) underscore that history is an interpretive practice that is guided by present and professional norms, and should also focus on the limits of objectivity.

The HRE–CRE foundation was developed in response to the recognition that history is interpretive and that textbooks, as primary curricular resources, should be examined for how they construct and present historical understanding. While conversations around historically relevant education and culturally relevant education have typically been treated as parallel ideas, this

research argues that they are actually conceptually intertwined. My own experience teaching in diverse settings has taught me that historical consciousness is not culturally neutral; the narratives students encounter in textbooks influence how they understand their own identity and individual agency. Understanding historical consciousness and cultural relevance as interconnected informed both the development of the rubric and my interpretation of the results. The following section briefly revisits the findings discussed in Chapter 4, followed by a discussion of the broader implications of these findings for the field of history education.

Overview of Findings

Chapter 4 presented the findings from analyzing eight secondary modern world history textbooks through the HRE–CRE foundation, which was made up of seven categories within the rubric: historical complexity, interpretive plurality, contextual power dynamics, cultural agency, epistemic diversity, relevance, and historiographical awareness. Several consistent cross-textbook patterns were identified in how historical understanding and global inclusivity were constructed within the narratives. The next section summarizes the major findings from Chapter 4 before moving into the discussion.

First, all the textbooks used in this study reflect global diversity and interconnection to some degree; they all included discussions of cross-cultural exchange, migration, trade networks, and global systems as central storylines in the narratives. However, the depth and framing of cultural agency varied. While societies outside of Europe were consistently included in the narrative, they were often discussed in relation to global processes (e.g., trade systems, imperialism, industrialism, etc.) rather than explored in terms of cultural or intellectual developments within their own societies. In many cases, non-Western peoples appeared predominantly at moments of European contact or conflict, and were often framed as reactive

rather than as contributors in mutual exchange. The second finding demonstrated that of all the rubric categories, historiographical awareness was the most underdeveloped and inconsistent across the textbooks. While elements of historiographical awareness were implied, particularly through limited source comparison activities and the inclusion of prompts related to historical thinking skills, the interpretive nature of history as a discipline was rarely made explicit. Textbooks often presented summarized narratives without clearly demonstrating how evidence was selected or interpreted. Because of this, students are likely to encounter complex historical narratives, but are less likely to be shown how those narratives were constructed or that history itself involves significant interpretation. Finding 3 showed that relevance was present across the textbooks, but was usually communicated through broad, enduring human issues (e.g., power, inequality, conflict, migration, survival, etc.) rather than through direct connections to students' own lives. In other words, students regularly encounter themes that feel universal to the human experience, but there are limited opportunities for them to articulate connections to their personal identity, or connections to their civic roles and the contemporary issues they may face today. The fourth finding indicated that the visibility of contingency, interpretation, and cultural agency varied widely across the texts and cannot be explained by textbook structure (i.e., chronological, thematic, other) alone. While most texts presented history as complex and having multiple causes (as seen in a strong presence of historical complexity across the rubrics), the visibility of interpretation and cultural agency, especially for everyday people and marginalized groups was inconsistent. It depended more on how individual chapters were framed than on the overall structure of the book. The fifth and final finding discussed in the previous chapter demonstrated that the integrated HRE–CRE foundation worked as a consistent and flexible method for analyzing world history textbooks that differed in both the organization and narrative

approaches. The rubric helped clarify how historical understanding was being modeled in each textbook and where opportunities for cultural and historical relevance were more or less visible.

Overall, the findings revealed that modern world history textbooks neither fully neglected nor fully represented the principles of historically and culturally relevant education. Textbooks incorporated many of these elements inconsistently and implicitly, and it even varied by chapter. The following sections discuss the implications for curriculum development, adoption, teacher education programs, and teachers in the field of history education.

Theoretical Implications for Historical Consciousness

Near the beginning of this dissertation, I discussed the gaps that exist in global representation across modern textbooks. While textbooks continue to privilege Eurocentric perspectives and marginalize non-Western societies (Araújo, 2015; Foster, 1998, 1999, 2011; Keita, 2020; Marino, 2011; Ross, 2006; Steinmetz-Jenkins, 2022), the findings in this research suggest that contemporary world history textbooks reflect global diversity, interconnection, and historical complexity to some degree. This research implies that modern world history textbooks do well at reflecting a global understanding of the past. However, despite all the textbooks including broad global awareness, historical complexity, and representation of diverse societies, the actual way that historical meaning is constructed, through interpretation and debate, was far less explicit for students. I refer to this as the difference between coverage and meaning, and it matters because it determines what students actually learn to do with history in the classroom.

Historical consciousness, as articulated by Rüsen (2004), Seixas (2004), Ahonen (2006), and van Straaten et al. (2016), requires more than simple exposure to historical content; it requires that students are given opportunities to orient themselves in time and interpret events to make connections between the past, present, and future. As van Straaten and colleagues explain,

developing historical consciousness means students recognize that “the course of history does not unfold according to deterministic patterns, but is characterized by change, continuity, and contingency” (Wilschut, 2012, as cited in van Straaten et al., 2019, p. 644). Understanding this helps students see that the present is a period of contingency and transition, and that the future is full of possibilities that are determined by human agency. The scholarship on historiography discussed in Chapter 1 reinforces this perspective. Carr (2018) argues that historical meaning is made through an ongoing interaction between historians and the evidence they interpret. He asserts that facts do not organize themselves into the narratives we encounter, rather it is left to the historian to determine the significance of those facts. Since the historian is responsible for selecting, omitting, judging, and emphasizing the collection of facts, then history cannot be neutral. It is my position that historical consciousness, as understood here, needs to not only present complex narratives, but also be transparent about how those narratives were formed.

All of this helps clarify an important point: historical complexity alone does not automatically produce historical consciousness. Fischer (1970) argues that the task of history is not only to convey knowledge of the past, but also to foster historical thinking to teach students how to question, weigh evidence, and make thoughtful judgments about the past (pp. 316-317). Contemporary world history textbooks offer a broad and diverse scope of coverage, yet when narratives are presented as settled, students may come to see historical knowledge as something they simply accumulate rather than something they can construct through interpretation. More importantly, when this happens, they have less opportunities to practice the interpretive work that historical consciousness depends on.

It is important to note that the findings do not suggest that textbooks ignore disciplinary thinking altogether. All the textbooks in this study included document-based questions, source

analysis, and prompts that aligned with historical inquiry, or other activities that would build disciplinary skills. However, these opportunities to ‘think like a historian’ appeared on the side or at the end of sections rather than being integrated into the narrative itself. Wineburg (2001) asserts that historical thinking is not a natural response, thus does not happen automatically when students read. Students have to learn how to contextualize and corroborate information rather than simply take it at face value, which Wineburg refers to as students learning to read both the “text” and the “subtext” (p. 83). The interpretive uncertainty or debate involved around history as a discipline (e.g., what historians actually engage in) was minimal or absent in most of the textbooks analyzed. This is problematic because when that interpretive work is separated from the main narrative, it can unintentionally send the message that interpretation is something students do occasionally, rather than something historians are always engaged in. Students should see that the narratives they encounter in textbooks require disciplinary skills, such as selecting sources, weighing evidence, considering opposing perspectives, and making reasoned judgments (Bloch, 1953; Carr, 2018; Fischer, 1970). Without seeing that process, students may not recognize why certain stories are emphasized, others marginalized, or whose perspectives are missing, and they have fewer opportunities to practice those skills themselves. Moving from representation to interpretation is where the difference between coverage and meaning becomes most visible.

Cultural Relevance Beyond Inclusion

The findings in this research suggest that cultural inclusion of diverse societies does not necessarily translate into cultural relevance. Across all the textbooks analyzed, there was considerable attention to global diversity and discussions of power and inequality; however, the narratives did not consistently or equally portray cultural agency, which is a central component

of cultural relevance as defined earlier in this dissertation. In some instances, societies were portrayed as active participants that contributed to global developments, and in others, they appeared primarily at moments of disruption such as European contact, colonialism, or the exploitation of labor. This distinction has important implications for culturally relevant education (CRE): emphasizing global interconnection is not the same as making cultural agency visible. As outlined in Finding 1, societies were often placed within global systems, but less consistently portrayed as meaningful contributors to those systems.

Culturally relevant education, as articulated by Ladson-Billings (1995), Gay (2002), Banks (2013), and Grant (2012) is more than diverse representation and encompasses three goals: academic development, cultural competence, and critical consciousness. Cultural relevance therefore requires that students can see their histories represented in ways that acknowledge the ongoing historical and cultural exchange, including conflict and injustice. At the same time, culturally relevant education also requires an understanding of societies' intellectual, cultural, and political developments, not simply what was done to them. Ladson-Billings (2014) later reflected on the ways her work has sometimes been reduced to surface-level gestures, cautioning that "The idea that adding some books about people of color, having a classroom Kwanzaa celebration, or posting 'diverse' images makes one 'culturally relevant' seem to be what the pedagogy has been reduced to" (p. 82). This reflection draws attention to a common misunderstanding: representation alone is not the same as cultural relevance. If communities are portrayed mainly as reacting to outside forces, students are less likely to see how those communities influenced historical developments. Without visible agency, well-intentioned inclusion can reproduce the marginalization culturally relevant education seeks to address.

Finding 3 highlights how textbooks frame historical relevance through enduring human issues (e.g., inequality, migration, survival, belief systems, etc.) rather than through clear and ongoing connections to students' own lives/communities or modern civic issues. According to van Straaten et al.'s framework for relevant history education, understanding the human condition is one of the fundamental aims of making history meaningful (2016, pp. 488-490). They argue that "By connecting their personal pasts to the much broader history of mankind, students will realize that they are part of a larger story that started somewhere and has constantly been subject to change and different interpretations" (p. 488). Although the framework is not grounded in CRE language, it nevertheless recognizes that students' sense of self is developed through connections between their personal histories and the broader historical narratives. This aligns with Gay's (2002) call to use cultural knowledge and lived experience as foundations for learning. Students consistently encounter narratives of resistance, reform, and instability that they can easily connect to universal human struggles. However, the connection between these enduring issues and students' lived experiences is rarely made explicit. When relevance is presented to students in ways that generalize human experiences, students may recognize the dilemmas people of the past faced, but they're missing an opportunity to examine how that relates to their own cultural positions, social realities, identity formation, or civic roles. Cultural relevance also depends on ensuring that agency is not marginalized, that power dynamics are explored from multiple perspectives, and that epistemic diversity is visible within the narrative.

The inherent connection between historical and cultural relevance, foundational to this dissertation, becomes especially visible when epistemic diversity becomes part of the conversation. Dray (1971) describes historical narratives as constructed through processes of selection and what he calls "retrospective intelligibility" (p. 159); they are organized accounts,

not neutral recordings of events. Bringing students into that process helps them recognize history as an interpretive practice. As Apple (2018) reminds us, what counts as history in schools is not simply discovered but constructed through power and influence. Epistemic diversity should not be overlooked in that construction of knowledge. In my rubric, epistemic diversity asks whether textbooks validate multiple ways of knowing, such as oral histories, Indigenous knowledge systems, cultural practices, material artifacts, ecological knowledge, maps, and geographical influences. Across the textbooks analyzed, however, interpretive and epistemic awareness was largely implicit. Students were rarely shown how certain voices or forms of evidence were prioritized while others were marginalized or omitted. This matters for both historically and culturally relevant education. van Straaten et al. (2016) argue that relevance supports students in building identity, becoming citizens, and understanding the human condition. Those aims depend on recognizing that history is contingent and interpretive. But it is my position that interpretation cannot be separated from epistemology. As Lim (2015) writes, "...if knowers can be ignored in the quest for knowledge, then questions that draw attention to the social contexts of knowing show the connection of knowledge, society and values, and point to the complexity of social relationships may also be disregarded" (p. 14). They are arguing that as much attention that is paid to the content itself should also be paid to the "nature of the situation" (p. 14). Ladson-Billings (1995) similarly insists that culturally relevant education requires academic success and critical consciousness. However, students lose some agency in developing critical thought when they are not given the opportunities to wrestle with questions like which forms of knowledge are considered valid and how it is constructed into the narrative. Nikolaidis (2018) describes interpretation as central to student agency. When students examine how interpretations are formed and debated, they participate in creating knowledge rather than simply receiving it,

which answers Ladson-Billings' call to academic rigor and critical consciousness. Epistemic diversity, then, is integral to both cultural and historical relevance. Treating history as interpretive forces the question: whose knowledge counts? When multiple ways of knowing are made visible and legitimate, students are better positioned to engage in history critically and connect it to their own lives.

The integrated HRE–CRE foundation developed in this study provides a lens for distinguishing between surface-level inclusion and deeper cultural relevance. By evaluating not only representation but also contextual power dynamics, cultural agency, epistemic diversity, and how relevance is articulated, the rubric clarifies how textbooks embody both descriptive diversity and historical engagement, some more or less than others. In doing so, this study reinforces that historically relevant education and culturally relevant education should be seen as interdependent aspects of a meaningful history curriculum.

Political and Practical Viability Across Contexts

The integrated HRE–CRE foundation is viable across political and educational contexts because it anchors cultural relevance within historical consciousness, rather than approaching it as a standalone ideological stance. In today's fractured political and educational climate, where culturally relevant education is often dismissed as divisive (Cooter et al., 2025; Williams, 2022), this study argues that the core tenets of CRE are actually already intrinsic to rigorous history education. Concepts like contingency, agency, and recognizing multiple perspectives (Seixas, 2004; van Straaten et al., 2016) are central to the discipline. The HRE-CRE foundation doesn't demand that one narrative is replaced with another or that specific groups are minimized. Instead, it advocates for a more transparent account of how historical change unfolds and how diverse societies have meaningfully contributed to global progress.

When we approach history as an active process, the goals of culturally relevant education naturally weave themselves into the curriculum through the narrative choices we make about whose voices carry weight. This grounding in historical consciousness offers an entry point across a spectrum of political landscapes. Take Kansas, for instance: in a state where the History, Government, and Social Studies Standards emphasize students' ability to recognize and evaluate choices and consequences, analyze context, investigate identities and beliefs, trace continuity and change, and construct evidence-based claims (Kansas State Department of Education, 2026), the HRE-CRE foundation aligns well with these goals of interpretation and civic understanding. The rubric (Appendix A) provides a lens for evaluating how texts handle interpretation without demanding a curriculum overhaul. By framing relevance as a matter of academic rigor and civic education rather than overt activism, the foundation may be accepted even in environments that may otherwise resist notions of CRE. It gives teachers and adoption committees a method to navigate local constraints and offers an approach that keeps personal ideology at arm's length. Crucially, this foundation isn't meant to discredit current textbooks; it's designed to illuminate their specific strengths. Once these differences are made visible, local committees can align materials with their specific priorities rather than assuming all textbooks are the same. While the gatekeepers of publishing and state-level politics (Apple, 2013) still hold immense power, this foundation provides a common language to understand the degree in which a text fosters interpretive awareness. At its core, this research argues that historical and cultural relevance are two sides of the same coin. If we treat history as a contingent, human-driven narrative, then representation becomes simply part of good scholarship rather than an outside agenda.

Professional Implications

Although this dissertation is primarily theoretical, as a practicing secondary educator, it feels important to acknowledge the clear implications it has for classroom practice. The analysis in this study focuses on how world history textbooks present historical narratives, but the analysis inevitably connects to teaching and learning in the classroom. One of the clearest implications is the need for teachers to make historical interpretation more explicit for students. As this research shows, that interpretive process is not always made visible in textbooks. While there were some exceptions, most texts present historical narratives without clearly demonstrating that those narratives are interpretations built from evidence and perspective. For this reason, textbooks should be treated in the classroom as interpretive sources rather than authoritative narratives. One practical way that teachers can do this is by prompting students to think more critically about historical narratives by asking questions such as: *Who is telling this story? What evidence supports the interpretation we are reading? What perspectives might be missing from this account? How might another historian interpret this event differently?* This research demonstrates that making historical interpretation explicit is most often left to the teacher, but it remains an important application for classroom practice and can be supported through intentional questioning or the use of supplementary materials.

Another implication of this research is that teachers should supplement textbooks in order to highlight cultural agency. While many textbooks do include diverse cultures, the findings of this research show that marginalized groups are often presented primarily in relation to European interference; they most often appear as responding to European expansion rather than acting within their own historical agency. In the classroom, teachers can address this by incorporating materials that focus on the internal developments and perspectives of these societies. For

example, teachers might use primary sources or case studies from marginalized groups to show their firsthand perspectives or highlight their cultural or intellectual developments. While resistance to European expansion is certainly an important part of global history and shows how groups responded to these events, emphasizing additional perspectives helps students see that these societies were complex and advanced in their own right, rather than defined by their interactions with the West.

The last professional implication I'll discuss relates to framing world history instruction around enduring human questions and helping students see history as a form of orientation rather than memorization. As van Straaten and colleagues (2016) suggest, history education should not simply focus on students memorizing facts about the past, but on helping students use history to orient themselves in time by understanding the connections between the past, present, and future (2016). One way teachers can do this is by framing world history topics around broader human questions and issues; this approach also aligns with thematic history teaching. In the introduction to *Teaching World History Thematically* (2020) (one of the textbooks analyzed in this study), Metro explains that thematic approaches help students see how historical issues develop over time, allowing them to recognize patterns of continuity and change, and to understand how people have worked for change throughout history (pp. 3-4). For example, instead of saying, "Today we are going to study Buddhism," a teacher might frame the lesson around a broader question such as *How do belief systems spread across societies and influence political and social life?* It is worth pointing out again that the findings of this research showed that broad enduring human issues such as power, inequality, or belief systems were already prevalent across the textbooks analyzed. As discussed earlier, the challenge is that these issues are often presented without explicitly connecting them to students' lives today. Teachers can help make these

connections clear for students by framing lessons around enduring questions to encourage students to see how similar dynamics continue to influence societies in the present – through either explicit connections or by pulling in thematic supplementary materials. Finally, related to this is the recognition that world history instruction does not need to, nor is it even possible to, cover every possible topic. Because it is impossible to cover everything, teachers and textbook adopters can instead prioritize narrative structures and topics that lend themselves to deeper inquiry and discussion. As David Hackett Fischer (1970) reminds us, the pursuit of the “whole truth” in history is impossible anyway, so the goal of history education should not be to cover everything but to help students develop the ability to think critically about the past and use historical knowledge to orient themselves in the present (p. 66).

Contributions, Limitations, and Future Directions

This study contributes to the field of history education by developing and applying an integrated analytical foundation that synthesizes Historically Relevant Education (HRE) and Culturally Relevant Education (CRE). While scholarship often views these concepts as separate, this research reveals their inherent connection. The HRE–CRE foundation offers a theory-informed rubric, found in Appendix A, that moves beyond understanding student perceptions. Instead, it evaluates how the written narrative of a curriculum portrays interpretation, agency, power, and global interconnection. By operationalizing principles drawn from historical consciousness (Rüsen, 2004; Seixas, 2004; van Straaten et al., 2016) alongside culturally relevant education (Banks, 2020; Gay, 2002; Grant, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995), this study brings together two bodies of scholarship and turns them into a concrete way to evaluate curriculum. In doing so, it responds directly to the gap identified in Chapter 2: lacking an understanding of how textbooks are simultaneously rooted in historical consciousness and

cultural relevance. Rather than treating historical thinking and cultural inclusion as separate curricular goals, the foundation demonstrates how interpretive transparency, visible agency, and attention to power are actually overlapping conditions for both. This work provides both a conceptual bridge (i.e., clarifying the connection between historical consciousness and cultural relevance) and a starting point for evaluating world history textbooks across diverse political landscapes. By centering on narrative construction rather than on student perception alone, the study responds to Ladson-Billings' (1995) assertion that culturally relevant pedagogy must attend to academic rigor and critical consciousness, not simply representation. It builds on that insight by suggesting that rigor and relevance are not opposing goals. When students can see how interpretation works and how historical narratives are constructed, intellectual depth and cultural meaning develop together.

However, several critical limitations inform the interpretation of these results. First, as noted in my introduction, this study treats textbooks as curricular artifacts rather than living classroom tools. No real-time observations or student interviews were conducted. Textbooks exist within what Foster and Crawford (2006) term the context of text production, yet they are ultimately transformed within the context of practice, or in the classroom. The gap between what a page says and how a teacher uses it is where the most significant variations occur, primarily because educators have varied degrees of agency in how they supplement or even ignore specific content. Consequently, these findings highlight the narrative potential within the actual textbooks, but not the lived experience of students. Second, the qualitative nature of this analysis brings the inevitable factor of researcher subjectivity into play. My own background as a world history teacher dedicated to equitable instruction naturally influences my reading of these narratives. While I used transparent coding and analytic memoing to ensure rigor, absolute

neutrality is not possible. The rubric itself is built on specific theoretical and disciplinary concepts, and scholars with different priorities might emphasize different things. Third, the HRE–CRE foundation is a new construct that was created for this specific study and lacks external validation. Its reliability across different contexts (e.g., textbooks, researchers, locations, etc.) is untested. Therefore, the rubric functions as a proposal rather than a definitive concept or evaluation method. Finally, the analytical process was labor-intensive, requiring deep reading and cross-text mapping. The sheer volume of data from eight textbooks suggests a practical hurdle: as it currently operates, the rubric demands significant time and expertise. For adoption committees working under tight deadlines, this level of scrutiny might be unrealistic without a more streamlined checklist. However, I do believe that streamlining the rubric into a condensed evaluative guide or checklist is possible, and would prove easier for practitioners to implement.

These constraints suggest several clear paths for future inquiry. To start, the HRE–CRE foundation requires empirical validation. Future researchers could test reliability or apply the foundation to a broader range of state-adopted materials. Mixed-method studies might also explore whether textbooks with high rubric scores actually correlate with better student reasoning or civic participation. Additionally, exploring how teachers utilize textbooks, and even supplemental materials would be a logical next step. How do teachers actually utilize a text that explicitly models agency? How might they fill in the gaps when a textbook lacks historiographical awareness? Understanding how teachers utilize textbooks will help us see how the potential of the curriculum actually transpires in the classroom, however, it will vary between teachers. Finally, the rubric should be refined for practical use. While this dissertation was intentionally designed as a deep theoretical exploration, I recognize, from experience, that textbook adoption processes do not have the time for that level of depth.

In the end, this research provides a starting point rather than a final destination. Its value lies in proving that historical rigor and cultural relevance are mutually reinforcing parts of meaningful and relevant history education. The next stage of scholarship should refine this foundation so it can transition from an analytical theory to a usable evaluative standard.

Navigating the Tension Between Coverage and Meaning

As an experienced secondary social studies teacher, I have worked with more curriculum materials than I can count. Some have been traditional textbooks, some have been inquiry-based, some promise rigor, and some promise relevance through a thematic approach. In practice, though, I have always supplemented curriculum materials, and I believe this is a common practice for educators. Not because textbooks are useless, but because I have felt the need to create more space for students to think critically. In Kansas, where I teach, our classroom-based state assessment requires students to understand multiple perspectives, construct arguments, and support those arguments with evidence while acknowledging counterclaims. In many ways, Kansas is ahead of the game. The assessment structure itself communicates that history is not memorization; it is inquiry, argumentation, and interpretation. That context matters. When I encountered van Straaten's work on historical consciousness, I felt something click. He writes, "If history is to be contributive to the personal development of students and their preparation for active citizenship, they should be taught how to use knowledge of the past in their orientation to the present and the future" (2019, p. 643). Phrases like 'use knowledge' and 'orientation' resonated with what I already knew from teaching. History is not a warehouse of facts about people who have long been dead. It is a tool for navigating the present. And yet, history is so often underestimated as it is often reduced to timelines, dates, and detached summaries. When students experience it that way, their disconnection makes sense.

From both experience and research, I know that history can be made relevant to students. I have seen students engage deeply when they are invited to interpret rather than recite, and I have seen them make meaningful connections between historical events and present-day civic questions. That is historical consciousness in action. At the same time, I have also participated in countless professional development sessions on equity and culturally relevant education. I know the intentions are good. But I have watched experienced teachers roll their eyes when the conversation repeatedly implies that multilingual students or marginalized students primarily need more scaffolds, more simplification, and/or more access points. Access and scaffolding matter, and are necessary. But for teachers who have been in the field a long time, it can feel less like deepening their practice and more like the recycling of familiar and over-simplified advice. When culturally relevant education is reduced to accommodation alone, the development of historical consciousness is lost.

Students who are learning English, students from historically marginalized communities, and all students for that matter do not need diluted history. They deserve the same intellectual rigor. They deserve opportunities to engage in complex interpretation, to evaluate competing claims, and to see themselves as capable historical thinkers. When culturally relevant instruction is framed only as support rather than as empowerment, equity can subtly fade. Having lived and taught in both more liberal and more conservative political contexts, I have witnessed the discomfort that emerges when conversations shift toward inclusion or critical consciousness. Some fear that expanding the narrative will displace their own histories, and others view interpretive work as political rather than disciplinary. I believe the resistance to CRE is rooted in discernible anxieties about displacement and politicization, but that debate, while important, is not the purpose of this dissertation.

The goal is not subtraction; it is expansion. World history textbooks simply cannot cover everything; the scope alone guarantees that narratives will always be incomplete. The question, then, is not whether to include every story, but how stories are told. This research suggests that structure (traditional chronological, thematic, hybrid, etc.) does not determine whether textbooks foster historical consciousness. Narrative choices do. Across the textbooks analyzed, moments of implicit and explicit relevance appeared to some degree. What ultimately mattered was whether human agency was visible, whether interpretations were modeled, and whether contingency was acknowledged. Marc Bloch's words linger here: "The past is, by definition, a datum which nothing in it will change" (1953p. 58). And yet he cautions that "the past is their tyrant," (p. 58) demonstrating that while events of the past are fixed, their meaning is not. I understand this quote as suggesting that the past becomes tyrannical not because it cannot change, but because it is too often accepted without question. When textbooks present history as inevitable and settled, the past becomes something to memorize, not something to think with.

Bridging historically relevant education and culturally relevant education has clarified this for me: representation alone does not ensure relevance and diversity without agency can still feel distant. True relevance requires visible human choice, interpretive reasoning, and explicit connections between past, present, and future. In an age saturated with information, and misinformation, the ability to analyze claims, weigh evidence, and recognize perspective is not optional; it should be seen as necessary civic preparation. Depth over breadth is often framed as a sacrifice, but perhaps the greater sacrifice is settling for completeness without consciousness. World history education will always exist between coverage and meaning. The field demands breadth to some extent. But when curriculum and narrative choices intentionally embed interpretive work, and when they make human agency visible and invite students into

disciplinary reasoning, coverage begins to feel purposeful. Only then does cultural relevance become more than stuck in the margins as a scaffold; it becomes woven into the story itself. If we want students to understand the human condition, to build identity, and to participate in civic life thoughtfully, history must be more than reading about past events. It must be orientation. It must teach students how to think *with* the past rather than simply read about it. This is when coverage becomes meaningful rather than merely complete.

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Appendix A - Textbook Analysis Rubric

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	
	Notes:			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	
	Notes:			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’	

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	
	Notes:			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	
	Notes:			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	
	Notes:			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.		
	Notes:			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	
	Notes:			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students’ sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students’ recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing?				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	- In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past?			

Note on the Rating Scale: Selected chapters were examined across all eight textbooks, and each category was evaluated using a rating scale: 0 = Absent; 1 = Minimal/Implicit; 2 = Developing/Partial; and 3 = Strong/Explicit. The ratings indicate the degree to which each category is present and developed within the selected chapter. Scores do not evaluate quality or effectiveness; rather, they reflect the extent of inclusion of each concept.

Appendix B - *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: Volume 2, From 1000 CE to the Present* (Adelman, Tignor, & Pollard, 2021)

Chapter 11: *Crises and Recovery in Afro-Eurasia, 1300-1500* (pp. 433-473)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter frames the Black Death as an unintended consequence of interconnected trade networks rather than a single event (pp. 434–437). 3–Recovery from the Black Death is presented unevenly across regions (China, Islamic world, Europe), emphasizing contingency rather than the same global progress or decline across the regions (pp. 438–459). 3–Political power is shown as emerging from crisis (Black Death), not necessarily as inevitable (Ottoman, Ming, Western monarchies) (pp. 440–460). 3–Visuals (plague maps, population tables, dynasty maps) emphasize disruption rather than inevitable, and truly represent global changes.			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?			
	Notes: 3–The Black Death is examined through medical, religious, social, and political lenses (pp. 435–437). 3–The different regional interpretations of the Black Death are present (Islamic scholars, European religious responses, Confucian revival in Ming China) (pp. 440–458). 3–Ibn Khaldun is cited in his response to losing his family to the Black Death, which illustrates Islamic intellectual responses to crisis (p. 435). 3–Visual sources include non-European art and architecture (Islamic mosques, Ming palace complexes). 2–Plurality exists, but primarily as a generalized narrative. 1–Does not include voices of everyday people, and mostly reflects the ‘elite’ experience.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	2
	Notes: 3–The chapter explains how elites used the crisis of the Black Death to gain power (European monarchies, Ming emperors, Ottoman sultans) (pp. 440–459). 3–Religious persecution (e.g., the Spanish Inquisition, expulsions of Jews and Muslims) is described through growth and the opportunity to gain power (pp. 448–451). 2–Power dynamics are clearly described, but it is primarily descriptive rather than revealing how the authors came to that narrative.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	3
	Notes: 3–Non-European states (Ming China, Ottoman Empire, Safavid Iran) are portrayed as innovators in government, architecture, and politics (pp. 440–458). 3–Cultural revival (Renaissance humanism, Confucianism) is framed as intentional and reflects Western and non-Western developments (pp. 452–458). 3–Global influence of trade under the Ming dynasty is present (p. 460) 3–Despite differences, dynasties are presented as facing similar challenges of legitimacy, succession, religion, social hierarchy, and power while remaining both interconnected and autonomous; and includes non-Western cultures.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	3
	Notes: 3–Extensive use of maps, demographic tables, art, architecture, and cultural materials/artifacts (pp. 434–461). 3–Artistic and architectural sources (Islamic mosques, Ming palaces, Renaissance art) are treated as historical evidence and globally representative. 2–Knowledge is presented as largely textual and visual.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	
	Notes: 3–Focus questions invite reflection on crisis, recovery, religion, and government/politics (chapter opening). 2–Themes of pandemic, social disruption, inequality, and power relate to modern concerns, but these connections are implicit, rather than explicit. 1–No sustained civic or ethical framing is present 2–The chapter offers thematic material that is highly relevant to contemporary issues, but this is mostly implicit and does not actively invite or scaffold personal or civic connections for students.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	1
	Notes: 2–The narrative presents multiple explanations but doesn’t really explain how historians consider evidence or debate different interpretations. 1–Uncertainty and how content is selected is not clear.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	1–The chapter does not explicitly discuss historiographical disagreement or methodology. 1–History is presented as a narrative, but it’s not clear on how the interpretation of that narrative takes place.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter consistently emphasizes change and recovery from the Black Death as contingent processes influenced by environment, disease, government responses, and differences/traditions in varying cultures. While broad patterns are identified, there is a distinction between cultures, and outcomes are not framed as inevitable.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>The narrative focuses on societal recovery from the Black Death and elite responses; everyday experiences and marginalized voices are not present or developed.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Political and religious power structures are clearly described, but the chapter does not examine how power influences whose histories are emphasized (e.g., primarily elite experiences are present, though it does include non-Western perspectives).</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students’ sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>Narrative implies that rulers and elites drive history, which may limit students’ connection to the past.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students’ recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter uses maps, art, and cultural materials, but relies primarily on institutional knowledge, which may limit other explanations.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>There are themes of pandemic, crisis, inequality, recovery, etc. that could support connections to contemporary experiences, though these connections are not explicit and would rely on teacher-driven action.</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>Students are not encouraged to consider how historical knowledge is produced or contested.</i>				

Chapter 15: *Reordering the World, 1750-1850* (pp. 607-651)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter presents industrialization, revolutions, and imperialism as processes that are contingent and uneven, and influenced by physical geography, resources, power, and global connections rather than as inevitable progress (pp. 607–609, 626–629, 640–641). 3–Europe’s rise to power is shown in addition to shifts and power dynamics in Russia, the Ottoman Empire, China, Egypt, and India (pp. 632–639). 3–Chronologies and maps highlight parallel developments rather than a single linear one (pp. 628–629, 635, 639). 3–Variation between regions and interdependence is emphasized			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	3
	Notes: 3–Includes perspectives from enslaved people, colonized people, and critics of Enlightenment ideals through			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	primary sources such as Frederick Douglass (pp. 648–649), the Haitian Declaration of Independence (p. 647), and Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti’s response to French occupation in Egypt (p. 646). 2–Women’s perspectives appear through Mary Wollstonecraft (p. 645) and a narrative of women’s roles in the Industrial Revolution (p. 609).			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter explicitly addresses how industrial capitalism and state power influenced global hierarchies, including British dominance in India (pp. 634–636), coercive trade in China and the Opium Wars (pp. 638–640), and authoritarian reform in Russia and the Ottoman Empire (pp. 632–634). 3–Power is consistently framed as shaping both outcomes and inequalities.			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	2
	Notes: 3–Non-European actors are shown making strategic choices, including Egyptian reforms under Muhammad Ali (pp. 633–634), resistance in India (pp. 634–635), Qing policies and responses to European pressures (pp. 637–639), and revolutionary action in Haiti (pp. 647–648). However, agency is often framed in response to European expansion.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	2–Agency is present but primarily framed as reactive and driven through elites.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter includes maps, statistical tables, political cartoons, paintings, and architecture (pp. 628–629, 631, 639–641, 650–651). 3–Primary sources from different cultural contexts are present.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	3
	Notes: 3–Themes of labor exploitation, inequality, migration, protest, rights, revolution, etc. connect past experiences to enduring human issues (pp. 630–632, 647–649). 3–Discussion questions and “Thinking about Global Connections” prompts invite students to link historical change to civic power and social inequality (pp. 629, 643–645).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	2
	Notes: 2–The chapter does compare different outcomes and includes competing ideological claims, but it does not explicitly discuss how historians select or debate historical knowledge. Overall, the interpretive process is implicit rather than explained (pp. 607–651).			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter emphasizes disruption and reordering of governments in distinctive ways based on regions; this helps frame change as uneven and contingent rather than universal.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>Universal ideals of liberty, a focus in this chapter, greatly contrast with slavery, colonialism, and coercive labor/trade; this shows a difference in narratives that may center on exploitation or progress, depending on the purpose and historian (both are represented here).</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Economic and military power structures are clearly revealed, but epistemic uncertainty remains due to vague or lacking explanations of how knowledge was selected or constructed by historians.</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	- What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>Powerful states, elites, and imperial powers are shown as the primary agents of change, which may limit students' sense of historical agency.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter invites comparison across political texts, economic data, and visual sources. Though, there are likely non-Western ways of knowing that are not being addressed or included.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Themes of inequality, labor rights, race, gender, and citizenship make strong connections to modern civic and social issues.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The chapter does not directly address how historical narratives are constructed or debated.</i>			

Chapter 21: Globalization, 1970-2000 (pp. 877-921)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3–Globalization is presented as uneven and contingent, and emphasizes simultaneous influence and inequality across distinct regions (pp. 896–899, 911). 3–Economic growth, changes in technology, demographic shifts (e.g., migration), and political reform are shown as resulting in both opportunity and exclusion (pp. 898–904, 910–912). 3–Timelines and maps illustrate parallel developments rather than a single global direction with distinctive regions recognized (pp. 897, 900, 903).			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	3
	Notes: 3–Includes voices from activists and marginalized groups through primary sources such as Václav Havel (p. 915), the EZLN Declaration (pp. 916–917), World Bank and Amartya Sen texts (pp. 918–919). 3–There is a visual and narrative focus on refugees, women, and indigenous communities (pp. 905–907, 910).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	3—Multiple perspectives are integrated throughout, not just sidebars or as a biography highlight.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3—The chapter explicitly analyzes how state power, neoliberal economics, multinational corporations, supranational organizations (IMF, World Bank), and NGOs influence global outcomes and how various regions are impacted (pp. 904–907, 909–910). 3—Also addresses coercion, inequality, authoritarianism, and limits of power within democracies (pp. 906–908, 916).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	3
	Notes: 3—Lots of highlights of grassroots activism, social movements, and resistance (i.e., feminism, indigenous organizing (EZLN), environmental activism, and movements toward democracy (pp. 900–902, 906–908, 916–917). 3—Individual people, not just elites or people in power, are shown shaping political and cultural changes.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter uses demographic data, maps, photographs, political texts, oral testimony–style narratives, economic analysis, and visual evidence (pp. 897, 900, 903–905, 910). –Primary sources reflect a range of political thought, various ideologies, and knowledge from activists. 3–Various of forms of knowledge are presented as valuable.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	3
	Notes: 3–Themes of migration, inequality, health (HIV/AIDS), gender, environmental crisis, citizenship, and human rights directly connect past to present (pp. 898–905, 907–911). 3–Questions at the end of the chapter and ‘global connections questions’ invite ethical and civic reflection from students (pp. 914–915).			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	
	Notes: 3–It is visible how knowledge is constructed through comparison, debate, and interpretation, particularly in primary source analysis activity (e.g., discussion of democracy, development, famine, and human rights) (pp. 915, 918–919). 3–Interpretive processes are visible.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>Globalization is presented as being both integrative and destabilizing that resulted in connection and inequality.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>The chapter does show how global progress contrasts with poverty, exclusion, and violence, which acknowledges alternative narratives that focus on resistance and harm were occurring alongside connection and developments from globalization.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Economic, political, and institutional power are present, but epistemic questions are not really a focus.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students’ sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>Powerful states, cooperations, and large institutions influence outcomes, but there are notable explanations of how social movements and grassroots movements have substantial influence too.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students’ recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing?				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>There is a variety of political, economic, lived experiences, and activist knowledge that is presented as legitimate ways of knowing.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students' link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Themes of citizenship, gender, health, migration, democracy, social issues, etc. strongly support personal and civic relevance with explicit questioning to help students make those connections.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>Students are encouraged to see global history as contested and interpretive, but historian methodology is not really explicit. With a strong example of historiographical awareness as seen in this chapter, I wonder how much students need to understand methodology itself.</i>			

Appendix C - Teaching World History Thematically (Metro, 2020)

Chapter 4: Conflict: What is Worth Fighting For? (pp.107-138)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3–Non-linear, thematic organization across time and place. 3–Parallel case studies (e.g., Crusades, Napoleonic Wars, Congo Free State, Israel/Palestine, Rwanda) rather than a single chronological framing. 3–Explicit framing questions (“What is worth fighting for?”) that foreground contingency and human choice rather than inevitability (p. 107) 3–Repeated attention to causes, motivations, and consequences that vary across contexts (e.g., nationalism in WWI vs. ethnic construction in Rwanda, pp. 126–137)			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 3—Lessons draw on a wide range of perspectives, including political leaders, soldiers, colonized peoples, nationalists, civilians, and victims of violence. 3—Conflicting viewpoints are intentionally paired (e.g., Herzl and Arafat; colonial officials and Congolese testimony). 3—Vocabulary lists focus on key interpretive concepts such as nationalism, genocide, propaganda, and sovereignty, supporting critical analysis. 3—Activities ask students to identify bias, compare viewpoints, and explain how different groups understood the same events. 3—Attention to oppressed groups particularly in lessons on the Congo Free State (pp. 124–125) and Rwanda (pp. 136–138). 3—Multiple perspectives are built into the structure of the lessons rather than added as side notes.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3—Attention to colonialism and imperial power (Congo Free State, pp. 124–125). 3—Attention to nationalism as a man-made political force (WWI, pp. 126–128). 3—Discussion of propaganda, ideology, and state power (Rwanda genocide, pp. 136–137). 3—Teacher-facing explanations that situate documents within political contexts rather than presenting them as neutral accounts.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	3
	Notes: 3–Emphasis on resistance movements and political organizing (e.g., Palestinian Liberation Organization, pp. 133–135). 3–Conflicts are framed around decisions made by historical figures rather than abstract forces, like inherent superiority. 3–Attention to non-European agency across multiple events (Yemen, Congo, Rwanda, Israel/Palestine). 3–Even in cases of extreme violence or oppression, groups are not portrayed as passive victims; the text highlights strategy, resistance, and decision-making across contexts.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	3
	Notes: 3–Political speeches, constitutions, propaganda texts, and legal documents are present. 3–Cultural visual items are present (e.g., Bayeux Tapestry reference, p. 118). 3–There’s a focus on oral and testimonial knowledge in genocide studies (pp. 136–138).			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions;	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	temporal connections (past–present–future).	
	Notes: 3–There are repeated reflection prompts asking students to evaluate moral choices (“What is worth fighting for?”). 3–Comparisons between historical conflicts and contemporary issues (e.g., Yemen, Israel/Palestine, Rwanda) are throughout. 3–Explicit ethical reasoning tasks and discussion questions throughout the unit. 3–Personal relevance is one of the strongest aspects of this text. The curriculum is explicitly designed to connect historical conflict to students’ ethical reasoning and civic identity as outlined in the Introduction (pp. 1-22).			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	3
	Notes: 3–Every unit and lesson within each unit has teacher-facing explanations about document selection and framing of the events. 3–Explicit comparison of competing narratives and interpretations is present throughout. –Multiple examples of acknowledgement of bias, perspective, and omission within documents (e.g., genocide propaganda, pp. 136–137).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter's underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter frames history as developing through conflict, choice, and consequence rather than steady progress; this emphasizes contingency across different times and places.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students' interpretations? <i>Because there is an emphasis on moral and political conflict, other explanations (such as economic) seem to be secondary. This highlights the interpretive nature of history in terms of the purpose that the historian chooses to focus on when establishing the text; it's not necessarily right or wrong, rather, demonstrates the reasoning and/or motives of the historian.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Power structures such as colonialism, nationalism, and state violence are clearly revealed in historical events. There is a strong justification for the choices made in the structure of the lessons (pp. 1-22) in the Introduction, but less so for why documents/topics were selected.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The narrative emphasizes that both elites and ordinary people contribute to the development of history, which may support students' sense of agency rather than portraying history as driven only by powerful figures/governments.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The focus is on political texts, speeches, and testimony, which does invite interpretive analysis but it relies primarily on written sources.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Throughout the unit, there are themes of conflict, resistance, justice, and moral choice, which directly invites students to connect history to their own values, identities, and present-day issues; this is implicit and explicit throughout the chapter.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past?				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
<i>The chapter makes it very clear that understanding of historical events depends on perspective, selection of sources, and interpretation; this encourages students to see history as contested rather than fixed.</i>				

Chapter 6: Economics, Technology, and the Environment: How Should People Get the Resources They Need? (pp. 165-194)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	2.5
	Notes: 3–The unit compares different economic systems across time (e.g., Indigenous, mercantilism, capitalism, communism) without presenting one as inevitable (pp. 165–166); though, this is a teacher-facing introduction and would need to be made explicit to students. 3–Lessons compare/consider intended outcomes vs. actual consequences, especially in: (1) Mao’s Great Leap Forward (Lessons 6.12, where state planning aimed at efficiency resulted in famine and mass death (pp. 189-192) and (2) Chernobyl (Lesson 6.13), where nuclear power is presented as both a solution to energy needs and a source of catastrophe (pp. 192–194). 3–The structure repeatedly asks students to evaluate “How should people get the resources they need?”, reinforcing contingency rather than inevitability (unit question, p. 165). 1–The text sometimes condenses complex ideas (e.g., capitalism vs. communism) into short comparative lessons that could risk oversimplification.			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	
	Notes: 3–Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua’s narrative provides a first-person account of slavery that makes explicitly clear the human experience of an enslaved person within the context of labor and trade (Lesson 6.10, pp. 185–187). 3–Indigenous perspectives are the focus in Lessons 6.2–6.3, where Aboriginal Australian technologies and environmental knowledge are treated as sophisticated rather than being framed as primitive compared to modern ones (pp. 168–171). 3–Students encounter conflicting interpretations of economics: (1) Adam Smith’s stance on free markets (Lesson 6.11, pp. 187–189), Marxist critiques (though in Lesson 5.7, it’s referenced in this chapter), and Mao’s justifications for collectivization (Lessons 6.12, pp. 189–192). 3–The Chernobyl lesson (Lesson 6.13) contrasts official Soviet statements with later historical assessments and personal reflections (pp. 192–194). 2–The inclusion of marginalized voices is strong, though some perspectives (e.g., peasant resistance during collectivization) are more implied than directly voiced.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 3–The Dutch East India Company (VOC) is presented as a corporate organization that uses state-like power, including military force and the law for economic gain and power (Lesson 6.8, pp. 180–183). 3–Mao’s policies are clearly tied to coercion, propaganda, and punishment for people who resisted (Lesson 6.12, pp. 189-192). 3–In Lesson 6.13 about Chernobyl, government secrecy and control over information are highlighted, especially regarding the delayed evacuation and suppressing information for the public (pp. 192–194). 3–Power dynamics between colonizers and the colonized are clear in the transatlantic slave trade materials (Lesson 6.10). 2–Power is consistently made visible, though students may still need teacher support to connect economic policy and technology and environmental consequences directly to lived experiences.			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	3
	Notes: 3–Aboriginal Australians are shown actively shaping their environments through tools, seasonal migration, and sustainable practices (Lessons 6.2, pp. 168–170). 3–Mesoamerican agricultural and astronomical knowledge (Aztec Sun Stone) is presented as innovation rather than purely cultural (Lesson 6.9, pp. 183–185). 3–Baquaqua’s narrative emphasizes resistance, survival strategies, and activism rather than portraying enslaved people as lacking the capacity for any agency (Lesson 6.10, pp. 185-187). 3–Even within oppressive systems, the text highlights human decision-making (e.g., workers, peasants, enslaved people, political leaders). 2–Agency is shown across cultures, though the scale of suffering in some sections may overshadow important everyday forms of resistance that also should be considered.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	3
	Notes: 3–Archaeological artifacts (shellfish hooks, grinding stones) are treated as historical evidence (Lessons 6.2–6.3, pp. 168-172). 3–Oral histories and first-person narratives (Baquaqua) are used alongside economic and other factors typically seen (Lesson 6.10, pp. 185-187). 3–Visual and material artifacts (Aztec Sun Stone) are analyzed as legitimate forms of knowledge tied to agriculture and astronomy rather than solely cultural (Lesson 6.9, pp. 183-185). 3–Scientific, political, and personal knowledge are all present in the Chernobyl lesson (Lesson 6.13, pp. 192-194). 3–This unit is especially strong in showing multiple ways of knowing history.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	3
	Notes: 3–Lesson about climate change directly connects recent history to present-day student activism (Lesson 6.1, Greta Thunberg speech, pp. 166–168).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	3–Reflection questions repeatedly ask students to evaluate modern energy issues, fairness within the economy, and government responsibility (Lessons 6.11–6.13). 3–In the Chernobyl lesson, the prompts ask students to weigh risks and benefits of nuclear power today (p. 194). 3–Personal relevance is one of the strongest features of this unit.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	2
	Notes: 3–Conflicting explanations of Mao’s “Great Leap Forward” are presented (intent vs. outcome) rather than a single explanation (Lesson 6.12, pp. 189-192). 3–Chernobyl materials contrast official Soviet documents and later analysis (Lesson 6.13, pp. 192–194). 3–Economic theories (Smith vs. Marx) are presented as interpretations, not facts (Lesson 6.11, pp. 187-189). 3–The text implies historiographical debate but it could be stronger with more examples of historians disagreeing.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>This unit frames history as a series of various efforts to solve basic human enduring issues (e.g., food, energy, labor), rather than steady progress. Students see continuity in human needs, but also changes in how those needs are met. New technologies and forms of economy are shown as responses to problems that can also create new ones.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations?				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>The chapter portrays a clear tension between intentions and outcomes. For example, Mao's language emphasizes cooperation and improvement but consequences of famine and death are also considered (pp. 189-192). Indigenous perspectives are present early in the chapter, but not as prevalent in later lessons.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Power is most visible through showing how states control resources and information. The VOC, Mao's government, and the USSR are shown making decisions that shape people's lives with little public input. Furthermore, economic power is often normalized, but the chapter does center human experiences.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The narrative suggests that governments, corporations, and the wealthy drive change in history. Ordinary people (e.g., workers, peasants, enslaved people) appear mostly as those affected rather than decision-makers; this may limit how students see everyday people's agency, however, I think it is important to not downplay the physical lack of control people experienced, too, such as chattel slavery.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter relies heavily on written documents, speeches, and economic texts, especially in later lessons (i.e., Smith, Mao, Gorbachev). Earlier lessons do include cultural materials and ancient artifacts, which are presented as legitimate sources.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Themes like labor, environmental consequences, inequality, human rights, and government responsibility connect directly to students' lives today (e.g., climate change, debates about sources of needed energy, labor conditions). The Chernobyl and climate sections especially push students to consider who should take accountability for the risks of economic development and at what costs.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>By placing contrasting documents side by side (e.g., Mao's speeches vs. actual outcomes of famine and decline or official Chernobyl reports vs. information that came out later), the chapter implicitly shows that history depends on who is speaking and what evidence is included; however, I do think it requires teacher guidance to be made explicit.</i>			

Chapter 8: Resistance, Revolution, and Reform: How Should People Bring About Political and Social Change? (pp. 223-256)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3—There are different outcomes and costs are highlighted across lessons, using a comparative approach with differing cultures and events across the unit (Gandhi, Stalin, Fanon, Menchú, Havel) (pp. 242–255). 3—Reflection questions that ask whether change should happen “quickly or slowly” and at what cost (Stalin lesson, p. 246). 3—Unit question: “How should people bring about political and social change?” emphasizes open-ended interpretation rather than linear progress (pp. 249, 251).			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 3—First-person testimony from Rigoberta Menchú explaining Indigenous experience and land dispossession (pp. 251–252). 3—Fanon’s argument for violence as a response to colonialism is presented without being dismissed or further critiqued from a Western perspective (pp. 249–250). 3—Gandhi and Havel are presented as alternative moral routes/events rather than “correct” answers (pp. 242–243; 254–255). 3—A few questions directly ask students to compare resistance strategies across different events (e.g., Gandhi vs. Menchú, Fanon vs. Havel).			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3—Clear explanations of colonialism and violence in Algeria and Guatemala are present (pp. 249–252). 3—State propaganda and censorship in Czechoslovakia and the USSR (pp. 246–247; 254–255) are discussed, not just mentioned. 3—Land ownership and economic exploitation is framed as political power moves, not as something in the background (Plan de Ayala, pp. 244–245).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance,	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	(goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	
	Notes: 3–Menchú’s account explores indigenous peoples defending their land and community decision-making (pp. 251–252). 3–Zapatista demands are presented as autonomous political vision rather than rebellion alone (pp. 244–245). 3–Havel’s concept of “living in truth” highlights everyday acts as decision-making power (pp. 254–255).			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	3
	Notes: 3–Oral testimony and lived experience serve as the primary evidence in Menchú’s accounts (Menchú, pp. 251–252). 3–Philosophical and political essays (Havel, Fanon) are presented as historical sources (pp. 249–250; 254–255). 3–Documents are analyzed as collective knowledge (Plan de Ayala, pp. 244–245). 3–The chapter validates multiple ways of knowing by treating oral testimony, political documents, philosophical essays, and lived experience as legitimate historical evidence.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	relevance to contemporary social issues?			
	Notes: 3–Opening questions ask what students would do if their lives were threatened or voices silenced (pp. 249, 251). 3–Reflection prompts connect disagreement, courage, and responsibility to everyday life (Havel, p. 255). 3–Multiple comparative activities ask students to judge the effectiveness of movements and ethical considerations, rather than just memorize outcomes or events. 3–Personal relevance is one of the chapter’s strongest aspects. Students are repeatedly asked to consider ethics, imagine themselves in historical situations, and connect resistance strategies to present-day civic questions.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	3
	Notes: 3–There are various contrasting interpretations of violence, reform, and what is deemed legitimate action (Gandhi vs. Fanon; Stalin vs. critics). 3–Sources identify author background and purpose (through lesson introductions). 3–Student activities require comparison and judgment across sources. 3–While the chapter does not explicitly teach historiography, it models it well by placing competing interpretations side by side and by providing the perspectives from each source beforehand. Students are asked to evaluate credibility, bias, and purpose across sources that openly disagree. This demonstrates one way that historiography			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	can be addressed in student-facing texts without getting into the actual methodology that may or may not be useful to students.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>This chapter treats change as something that comes from struggle and choice, not as inevitable progress. By placing nonviolent resistance and violent resistance side by side, students are challenged to see that change can take very different forms and often comes with tradeoffs. At the same time, there is continuity in the conditions people are responding to: inequality, oppression, and lack of voice show up in various times and places.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>One clear tension is between nonviolence and violence as strategies for change. Gandhi and Havel challenge Fanon and the FLN in ways that don’t actually show resolve for students. Another tension is between top-down change (like Stalin’s policies) and grassroots resistance (Menchú, Zapatistas). The chapter largely focuses on the voice of the resisters, which means the perspectives of state leaders or everyday people who did not resist are less visible, so their perspectives remain untold.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Various forces of power (e.g., colonialism, land ownership, military force, etc.) are clearly tied to people’s lived experiences. Students can see how governments define “order” or “progress” in ways that benefit those already in power. However, because the chapter leans toward resistance narratives, it spends less time examining how those in power justified their actions beyond basic explanations and/or what others’ (e.g., everyday people, less seen movements, etc.) experiences or perspectives were; maybe this reveals a need for balance in such narratives.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students’ sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The chapter sends a strong message that ordinary people matter; peasants, Indigenous communities, regular people who disagree are shown as initiators of change, not background figures. This can help students see themselves as people who could make a difference, even without formal power. At the same time, the high costs of resistance (violence, loss) make it clear that agency is real but limited.</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	- How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>By using testimonies, political documents, philosophical essays, etc. the chapter shows that history is built from more than just textbooks or official records. Students are invited to treat lived experience and moral perspectives as evidence. How historians actually consider or verify these various sources is mostly implicit, though.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Students are encouraged to connect current events and/or their own lives to themes like injustice, fear, courage, land, etc. Questions, for example, about whether violence is ever justified and when speaking out is worth the risk provides a natural way for students to think about civic responsibility and moral choice in ways that are relevant to them today.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The chapter does a solid job at showing that history is argued over, not something that is already settled as fact. Different voices explain the same problems in very different ways, and students are asked to compare and question those explanations. While the book doesn't explicitly teach historiography, it models historical thinking by making interpretation and disagreement central to understanding the past. As I noted previously, I would argue that this is a sufficient and appropriate way for students to participate in historiography without getting into the disciplinary methodology, which may not be appropriate for high school students.</i>			

Appendix D - *Panorama: A World History, Volume 2, From 1300* (Dunn & Mitchell, 2021)

Chapter 18: *The Expanding Global Economy: Expectations and Inequalities 1550-1700* (pp. 514-541)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	2
	Notes: 2.5–The chapter emphasizes rapid change and expansion through global trade networks and exchanges, and is framed as interconnected across regions. Western and non Western cities are framed as key sites of activity throughout the entire chapter, though with uneven exposure. 2–There’s a focus on increasing global connections, especially through trade and exchange, but it’s often presented in a way that suggests changes move in a clear direction rather than showing how uneven or uncertain those developments were. 1–Less attention is given to the idea of continuity within Indigenous, African, and Asian societies.			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative	2

	that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	
	Notes: 2–The chapter covers multiple regions (Europe, Africa, Asia, Americas), but the interpretive frame remains largely European. 2–Non-European groups are described mainly in relation to European trade demands and labor needs. 1–Few opportunities are provided to explore alternative narratives (e.g., Indigenous or African understandings of labor or disruption).			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	2
	Notes: 22–Economic power held by European states, trading companies, and merchants is defined. –Ways of exploitation (e.g., slavery, coerced labor, plantations, etc.) are explained structurally but often without much attention to the lived experiences of the oppressed. 2–They acknowledge inequality, but overall it seems to be framed as a consequence of exchange and expansion, rather than a driving force; what is the consequence of this framing?			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	2

	Notes: 2–Agency is primarily attributed to Europeans and commercial growth. 1–Enslaved Africans, Indigenous peoples, and Asian producers are typically presented as responding to systems imposed on them, rather than contributing to change globally. –This framing may not allow students to recognize that many groups actively shaped global history.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	2
	Notes: 2–The chapter relies a lot on maps, charts, and economic data, which seems to emphasize economic development over human experiences. 2–Visual sources throughout are used to illustrate trade and labor, but are not presented as interpretive whatsoever. 1–Students are not prompted to question whose knowledge is being included or excluded; most prompts are focused on economic matters.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	2
	Notes: 2–Themes of globalization, inequality, and labor systems offer strong potential connections to modern issues, but these connections are implicit and not explicitly developed for students.			

	2–Human experiences (migration, displacement, exploitation) are present but not substantially explored through multiple perspectives.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	1
	Notes: 1–The narrative presents history as settled, and there is limited attention to debate or interpretation. 1–There is little discussion of historiography, debated evidence, or differing perspectives; this may reinforce the idea that history is a collection of facts ready to absorb, rather than to question evidence.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter is organized around interconnection especially as it relates to economic growth, which encourages students to see history as moving toward globalization. Changes due to early globalization seems to be emphasized more than continuity, especially through trade routes and exchanges of goods; this framing could make historical change feel inevitable even without enough attention to the overall destruction to certain groups.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>The emphasis on global exchange/wealth and the discussion of violence and forced labor create a complex push and pull factor in the narrative. Exploitation is acknowledged, however the narrative moves quickly back to economic outcomes. The narrative is missing any ongoing perspectives from Indigenous communities and enslaved people, which keeps the focus on economic development instead of survival or other possible topics.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told?				

Political and economic power is clearly centered on European states, merchants, and trading companies. The chapter explains how control over trade, technology, and labor contributed to global outcomes, but it often describes these systems in neutral ways, which can obscure how power was actively enforced through coercion and violence.

- What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative?

The narrative implies that the world is primarily driven by Europeans, especially elites. Other groups, such as enslaved Africans, Indigenous peoples, Asian tradespeople/producers, are usually portrayed as labor sources or recipients of change rather than creating change; this may limit students' sense that many groups had influence within the systems they operated in.

- How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing?

The chapter relies on maps, charts, images, and economic data to explain global change and interconnection, which helps clarify the scale of the change, but it leaves less room for emotional or cultural influences as ways of knowing. There also lacks prompts to help students identify who and why certain sources were created.

- In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways?

Modern issues can be connected to themes such as globalization, inequality, labor needs, and the environment. But, the chapter doesn't make the connections explicit. With guidance, students can see who benefited/benefits from and consequences of such systems.

- What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past?

The chapter presents historical knowledge as an explanation of settled facts with limited attention to debate or interpretation. It seems evidence is selected to support a very broad explanation of globalization, which may lead students to view history as something that is reported rather than constructed.

Chapter 23: *Capital, Technology, and the Changing Balance of Global Power 1860-1914*
(pp. 664-693)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	2.5
	Notes: 3–Industrialization is framed as rapid, and shows the uneven and disruptive consequences by region (pp. 664–667). 3–Global economic growth is shown alongside persistent poverty and inequality (pp. 676–680). 2– Business cycles, population growth, environmental consequences, and the uneven effects are recognized (pp. 676-677). 2–The chapter shows complexity through uneven development and unintended consequences, but overall the dominant narrative is that of progress through industrialization.			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	2.5

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 3—Considerable attention to workers, women, and colonized peoples (pp. 676–692). 3—Resistance movements referenced (East Africa, Southeast Asia) (pp. 687–692). 2—Perspectives largely summarized rather than voiced directly. 2—Multiple groups are mentioned, but much of the interpretation seems broad and not necessarily sustaining voice from any one group.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	2.5
	Notes: 2—There is an emphasis on imperial governments and industrial states (pp. 667–676). 3—Clear links are recognized between capitalism, imperial expansion, and exploitation (pp. 676–691). 3—Ideas of race and civilization are referenced (pp. 686–687). 1—Resistance movements are acknowledged but largely in a generalized narrative form (pp. 687–691). 3—Power dynamics are clearly identified, especially economic and imperial power.			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	2
	Notes: 2—The text portrays powerful industrial entities and imperial leaders as primary drivers of change (pp. 664–674).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	2–Workers, women, and colonized people seemed to be positioned as affected by industrialization, but not necessarily contributing to global change (pp. 676–687). 2–Resistance is acknowledged but is not deeply developed nor demonstrating many firsthand perspectives (pp. 687–691). 2–Agency is present but is presented as uneven; the narrative is dominated by industrial and imperial states driving change without deeply examining the roles of everyday people in contributing to that change.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	1.5
	Notes: 2–Statistics, maps, photographs, economic data, and generalized narrative is primarily used. 1–The extended primary voices from workers or colonized people are limited. 1–Historical knowledge is presented as explanatory, like facts collected, rather than interpretive or debated.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	2
	Notes: 2–Students can connect to themes throughout the chapter, such as globalization, inequality, labor, migration, etc., but the connections are implicit and would require teacher guidance.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	3–There are strong connections to the global economy that can be compared to today. 1–Few explicit prompts for personal or civic connection are present.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	1.5
	Notes: 2–There are clear cause-and-effect explanations throughout the chapter. 1–Discussion of historical debate, alternative possibilities/explanations, or uncertainty is not present. 1–Overall, the narrative is presented as largely settled, uncontested knowledge.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter is primarily organized around the position that progress occurred through industrialization and globalization, even as it acknowledges disruption and inequalities as consequences (pp. 664–665). Even though change is presented as rapid, the idea of continuity seems to appear mainly by showing sustaining social hierarchies, which may encourage students to see the disruptions of progression, or moving forward, as simply part of it rather than recognize alternative paths.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>The tension between economic growth and widespread poverty in industrial cities and colonized groups is clear throughout the chapter, but seems to remain secondary compared to the broader narrative of expanding economies and globalization.</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>Alternative narratives focused on exploitation, famine, or lived experiences of colonized people could help students ask questions about the moral consequences of industrialization/globalization.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Those entities with strong political and economic power are clearly identified. However, cultural influences, such as race, assumptions of superiority, or how communities contributed to the times is not as deeply explored (though, there is some present); this may result in students understanding who held power more than why those power dynamics were justified.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>Throughout the chapter, agency is primarily shown through governments and those with industrial or imperial powers. Workers, women, and colonized peoples do appear, but mostly as groups reacting to change rather than shaping it; this framing may encourage students to believe that history is driven by elites and downplay the ways that ordinary people also contribute to historical change.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>There is a lot of economic data, maps, and synthesized explanations of events, which encourage a good understanding of the structures in place driving change, however, there is little room left for cultural ways or lived experiences as ways of knowing. Different ways of knowing and any contested interpretations are minimal.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>There are a lot of opportunities for students to make connections to the present in the overall themes of globalization, labor, migration, inequality, etc., however, the connections are implicit. With teacher guidance, students could link historical patterns to modern economics, inequality, or debates about technology and labor, but the text itself does not foreground those connections.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>Because historical knowledge is presented as settled and explanatory, with limited attention to debate or uncertainty, students may not have the opportunity to see how these narratives are constructed or even challenged over time.</i>			

Chapter 26: World War II and Its Aftermath 1933-1950 (pp. 756-787)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3–The beginning of the chapter shows WWII emerging from intertwined causes, such as: poor economy, continued imperial efforts, fascism, and failed diplomacy rather than a single trigger (pp. 756–762). 3–The war’s outcome is framed as uncertain until late stages, especially in discussions of Axis victories and turning points (pp. 763–770). –Postwar outcomes (e.g., Cold War, decolonization) are presented as contingent, not as guaranteed results or outcomes of the war (pp. 777–786).			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 3–The narrative includes European, Asian, African, and American theaters throughout. 2–Civilian experiences, soldiers, political leaders, and colonized peoples appear throughout the entire chapter, though the perspectives of ordinary civilians or the human lived experiences through war are more summarized. 1–Colonialism and decolonization is covered (pp. 781-785) but it is brief and largely summarized. The absence of first-person accounts or sustained attention to anti-colonial perspectives limits interpretive plurality and focuses on the single narrative presented in the chapter.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	2
	Notes: 3–Power structures are explicit, such as: fascist regimes, imperial control, military occupation, genocide, and exploitation of labor during war (pp. 759–775). 2–Colonial power and racial hierarchies are addressed in discussions of Asia, Africa, and postwar independence movements (pp. 781–786), though it is largely summarized and lacks deep first-person perspectives. 2–Some economic power dynamics (e.g., oil, war production) are noted but not analyzed (pp. 767–770).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 2–Narrative of political and military leaders dominate early sections of the chapter (Hitler, Stalin, Roosevelt, Tojo) (pp. 759–772); while this leader-focused narrative gets across the key causes of World War II, it limits cultural agency by marginalizing the experiences and agency of non-elites. 2–Agency broadens later to include resistance movements, women, people living under colonialism, and independence leaders (pp. 771–774, 781–786), but lacks first-person accounts or any analysis of lived experiences; remains largely explanatory. 2–In section addressing genocide, civilians, particularly Jewish victims of the Holocaust, are appropriately portrayed as having their agency violently stripped. However, the narrative fails to explore forms of cultural or moral agency that persisted under these conditions, such as the preservation of religious practice, language, or communal identity. The absence of first-person accounts limits students’ ability to recognize how individuals and communities asserted meaning and dignity even when political and physical agency was stripped away (pp. 772–773).			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	2
	Notes: 3–The chapter uses maps, propaganda posters, photographs, and statistical data (casualties, production, deaths) to support claims. 2–Overall, the sources are mostly presented as factual rather than debated. 1–There is a clear absence of cultural or experiential ways of knowing. Overall, the chapter is presented in a narrative form with very little first-person and in-depth examination of experiences of war; major missed opportunities include, for example, journals, diaries, religious or cultural knowledge.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development,	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts;	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	
	Notes: 3–Postwar sections explicitly connect WWII to the Cold War, the United Nations, decolonization, Israel/Palestine, and global power shifts (pp. 777–787). 2–Human experiences (e.g., genocide, displacement, women’s roles, civilian suffering) offer clear opportunities for student connection, though these links are implied rather than explicitly framed for reflection, and personal accounts are absent (pp. 771–778).			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	1
	Notes: 1–The chapter presents a strong narrative but lacks historical debates or any varying interpretations (e.g., causes of war, responsibility, or outcomes).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	1–Some hints of historiography appear in discussions of appeasement or propaganda, for example, (pp. 760-765, 776), but the text reads as a presentation of facts and lacks any clear direction for students to understand history as interpretive; there are so many missed opportunities for such recent history.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter frames World War II as a time period of extreme disruption followed by regional uneven rebuilding and consequences. The war is presented as the result of earlier instability (imperialism, economic crisis, authoritarianism) and the starting point for decolonization and a reshaping of globalization after 1945; the chapter shows continuity between ongoing power struggles.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>The narrative clearly condemns Axis violence but is less critical of Allied actions such as strategic bombing, atomic warfare, or postwar imperial control; multiple perspectives (such as the moral consideration of using atomic weapons) could be incorporated without diminishing the significance of the Allied victory. Civilian suffering is emphasized, but political and military leaders still dominate the story. Alternative narratives centered on colonized peoples or everyday survival would shift interpretation toward lived experience as part of the narrative as well.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Political and military power is very visible, especially as it relates to authoritarianism; economic power is discussed mainly through wartime industrialism and effects of war; colonial power is acknowledged but not deeply examined (overall, that is a very short section).</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students’ sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>Agency is shown primarily through state leaders, reinforcing the idea that history is made from the top down, and ordinary people appear mostly as victims or supporters rather than driving change; this may limit students’ opportunities to see that collective regular people or grassroots efforts can meaningfully influence history, despite brief attention to resistance and decolonization.</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	- How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter includes a lot of official documents, maps, statistics, and propaganda images. While these sources are legitimate, they don't challenge students to question formal or 'institutional' forms of knowledge, and may limit recognition that history can be interpreted differently depending on perspective and lived experience.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Themes of genocide, displacement, propaganda (media) and war provide opportunities to connect to modern issues like human rights and global conflict, however, those connections are implied rather than made explicit in this particular text and would require a lot of teacher guidance.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>Overall, history is presented as settled and explanatory, with no recognition of historical debate or interpretation. This does make learning certain events more clear (especially complex events like WWII) but it can obscure how historical narratives are understood by students as it leaves out who and how decided on what knowledge was included.</i>			

Appendix E - *World History: A Concise Thematic Analysis, Volume 2* (Wallech et al., 2013)

Chapter 19: *The Differential of Power, Phase One: The Americans and Africa* (pp. 415-446)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	2.5
	Notes: 3—European expansion is explained through multiple factors working together, such as: disease, technology, navigation, and state power (pp. 415–427). 3—The chapter compares Africa and the Americas to explain why European conquest succeeded quickly in some places but not in others, emphasizing geography and disease as key factors (pp. 422–429). 2—It does suggest complexity, but often moves toward European dominance rather than exploring other open-ended possibilities.			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?			
	Notes: 2–The focus on ‘power differentials’ and trade systems, while highlighting inequalities, seems to overshadow cultural perspectives (pp. 415-416). 2–African and Indigenous societies are usually described in response to Europeans, not through their own worldviews (pp. 429–439). 2–There is very little attention to how Indigenous or African peoples understood or explained these events themselves. The only first-person account is a brief excerpt from Olaudah Equiano’s narrative (p. 437).			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3–Shows power through a mix of military force, technology, and economic forces (pp. 416–423). 3–The power of human biology is emphasized, especially immunity to disease, as a decisive advantage (pp. 423–426). 3–Connects slavery and plantation economies to long-term economic control (pp. 435–446).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 3–The chapter explains African participation in the slave trade through Indigenous histories of slavery and political motivations, as well as the cultural differences and different motivations between Africans and Europeans; it is also acknowledged how European demand reshaped these practices into a large-scale Atlantic system (pp. 435–446). 3–Indigenous societies in the Americas are portrayed as powerful before European contact, and their agency being limited by disease and conquest (pp. 427–434). 2–While moments of resistance and the way Indigenous people adapted do appear, the typical narrative of societal collapse is dominant.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	2
	Notes: 2–The primary evidence is scientific and quantitative, such as: discussion of disease in terms of biology, population data, trade statistics (pp. 423–429, 442–446). 2–Maps, charts, and primary source visuals are also used throughout the chapter, but overall, lacks first-person accounts of knowledge. 1–Indigenous knowledge, oral, and spiritual elements are largely absent, and there is a substantial amount of this kind of knowledge from this period, which reflects a narrative choice, not a lack of sources.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	relevance to contemporary social issues?			
	Notes: 2–Throughout the chapter, there are themes of inequality, exploitation, labor, and globalization that offer clear potential connections to contemporary issues, however, these connections would rely on teacher prompts since there are no questions/prompts embedded in the text. 2–Discussion of slavery, societal collapse, and long-term consequences of the era raise ethical and civic questions, but again would rely on teacher prompts in this particular text. 1–There are no explicit prompts, questions, or narrative explanations that directly invite students to connect past to present; though the chapter is very relevant, it’s entirely implicit.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	2.5
	Notes: 3–The way historians use scientific evidence to interpret conquest and power (pp. 423–429) is visible. 3–Discussion that explains how change depended on knowledge and changing conditions, that it was not inevitable (pp. 445-446). 2–The chapter ends with a suggested reading list, which signals historiographical debate but would require teacher initiative to both access and adapt such resources for the classroom (p. 446), so I don’t know how useful that actually is for secondary application.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	2–The chapter does not acknowledge how historians argue or disagree, but it does implicitly model the way the narrative was formed through various forms of evidence.			

Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric:

- How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity?
The chapter is centered on the idea that power differences explain outcomes. Students are pushed to see that change is driven by various factors (e.g., disease, geography, and economic systems), not just a narrow explanation like ‘better weapons’.
- What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations?
A notable tension is that the chapter shows African agency in trade and slavery while also emphasizing European advantages. There also lacks first-person Indigenous or African voices (one exception with Olaudah Equiano), which means the story leans toward explanation from the outside. A narrative centered on Indigenous lived perspectives or African political/social goals, for example, would shift interpretation away from “power differential” and toward culture, however, the chapter is specifically about power differential, so this is to be expected. From a teacher standpoint, the absence of Indigenous and African first-person perspectives reflects the chapter’s interpretive scope rather than a shortcoming in the narrative.
- How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told?
The chapter shows power structures by showing how colonialism, disease, and global economics shaped history. It’s made clear that slavery became part of the larger Atlantic trade system. However, cultural power is less clear (e.g., how Europeans justified domination or how Africans/Indigenous peoples interpreted these events).
- What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students’ sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative?
The chapter implies that history is driven mostly by powerful forces like disease and trade, and by the groups with the most resources to take advantage of them. African leaders and traders appear as decision-makers in the slave trade, but Indigenous peoples are often framed through the impact of disease and conquest.
- How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students’ recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing?

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>The chapter mostly teaches history through scientific and structural evidence, such as maps, disease, population change, and trade patterns. This helps students see history as explainable through data, but it limits how they may see other ways of knowing, like oral history, Indigenous knowledge, cultural memory, or lived experience, because those aren't really present.</i> • In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Themes like unequal power, exploitation, and the global economy connect easily to modern issues. The sections on disease and the decline of a demographic can also connect to how students think about public health today. The chapter doesn't directly make those connections for students, but the content gives teachers a strong starting point.</i> • What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The chapter implicitly shows that historical explanations are constructed by combining types of evidence. While the "Suggested Readings" section suggests that historians have researched and debated these topics, it's not present in the chapter. As such, students learn the explanations opposed to how the explanations were constructed.</i>			

Chapter 22: *The Differential of Power, Phase Two: Ideology, Medicine, and Technology Redefine Global Power* (pp. 497-514)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3—Power is framed through various forces coming together (e.g., technology, medicine, ideology), not as inevitable European superiority, though it's pointed out that European scholars saw it that way (pp. 497–501). 3—Turning points (e.g., new medicine, industrial weapons, nation-state formation) demonstrate shifts rather than being presented as predetermining outcomes (pp. 498–500, 510–511). 2—Europe's position is shown through changes over time; Europe is not portrayed as always being dominant, rather as gaining advantages through specific developments (pp. 497–500), though the narrative moves forward in a linear way which does not explore other alternatives.			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	2
	Notes: 2—Includes European intellectual perspectives across ideological differences (i.e., Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, Marx,			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Darwin) rather than focusing on just one, though non-European intellectual perspectives are not acknowledged (pp. 499–510). 3–Liberal, socialist, and evolutionary interpretations of power and inequality are compared (pp. 499-510). 1–Non-European societies appear in terms of how they were impacted, not through their own interpretations/voices (e.g., Africa, Asia discussed through European lenses) (pp. 497–499, 514). 1–No first-person accounts or Indigenous interpretations of medicine, technology, or ideology are included. Overall, while there is plurality within European culture, there lacks global or diverse interpretive plurality.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3–Throughout the chapter, military power, industrialism, medicine, and ideology are clearly connected to imperial expansion. 3–Explains how modern medicine removed Africa’s disease barrier, enabling colonization (p. 498). 3–Clearly links economic theory to justification of inequality (Ricardo, Malthus) (pp. 501–504). 3–Reveals how ideology (i.e., Social Darwinism) functioned to legitimize social inequality (pp. 507–510). 2–While structural power is clearly defined, there is less attention on how this textbook narrative is a product of these power systems (implicit rather than explicit).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance,	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange	1.5

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	(goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	
	Notes: 2–Europeans are depicted as the primary forces that shape global systems through policy, inventions, and ideology (pp. 497–514). 1–African, Asian, and Middle Eastern societies are portrayed as reactive to European power rather than initiating change or innovating (pp. 497–499, 510–514). 2–Resistance or adapting technology by non-European societies is only mentioned briefly or implied (e.g., resistance to use new military technology) (pp. 511–512). 1–Agency is shown primarily through European and state-based forces, not cultural or community-based.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	2
	Notes: 2–The chapter relies on economic theory, political philosophy, scientific explanation, and connecting industry to nation-state building (pp. 499–514). 3–Includes visual evidence (artillery, factories, industrial imagery) that supports claims (pp. 498-499, 512–513). 1–Oral traditions, Indigenous knowledge, and non-European epistemologies related to medicine or technology are absent. 1–The chapter frames the production of knowledge as having emerged from formal institutions, such as nation-states and academia, which is centered on Western epistemology.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	1.5
	Notes: 2–The narrative raises enduring questions about inequality, labor, the power of technology, and state control that connect to modern global issues, though it is implicit. 2–Economic debates (wages, productivity, exploitation) clearly connect to contemporary capitalism and globalization (pp. 501–507), though it's implicit. 1–There lacks any explicit prompts encouraging students to reflect on identity, lived experience, or civic responsibility. 1–Human consequences (e.g., suffering, displacement) are discussed structurally rather than personally.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 3–The narrative demonstrates that history is interpreted through competing theories, especially as it relates to economics and social thought (pp. 499–510). 3–Shows how different thinkers can explain the same phenomena differently (e.g., Smith vs. Marx) (pp. 499-510). 2–How historians select sources and decide what is excluded is not discussed, but it does implicitly teach interpretation through comparison.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter frames history as uneven progress, where power grows through technology, medicine, and ideology opposed to moral considerations. Students are encouraged to see change as an advantage that is made of several factors, rather than superiority, though the overall narrative leans toward European dominance.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>A key tension is that Europe’s rise is explained through ideas and innovation, while non-European societies are mostly shown as affected rather than shaping events. Other narratives centered on resistance, ways of adapting, or Indigenous knowledge would shift students toward seeing power as more contested.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>The chapter is centered on ‘power differentials’ and clearly reveals how economic theory, military technology, medicine, and nationalism reinforced certain powers while diminishing others.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students’ sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>Agency is primarily shown through European states and scholars, which suggests that global change comes from those with industrial (and maybe elitist?) power. This framing may limit how students understand the way marginalized groups have meaningfully contributed to history.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students’ recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>By relying on economic and political philosophy, and scientific developments of the time, the chapter portrays a singular,</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>Western view of historical knowledge. This limits the opportunity to recognize oral traditions, cultural practices, or lived experience as valid historical evidence.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Themes like inequality, exploitation, and the power of technology connect directly to modern issues about capitalism and globalization. These connections can help students reflect on how events from history continue to impact their world, however, the textbook does not have any explicit prompts that do this.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The chapter shows that history is developed through debate, especially as it relates to the economy and philosophy, but it does not explicitly teach students how historians choose sources or whose perspectives are excluded.</i>			

Chapter 32: Global Decolonization, Phase Two (pp. 696-738)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter presents post World War II as a time of rapid change, especially through decolonization and the Cold War (pp. 696-737). 3–Different paths are shown after independence (e.g., China vs. India vs. Japan) (pp. 696–714). 2–Cause-and-effect relationships between war and opposing ideologies are emphasized. However, the narrative still suggests a forward movement toward nation-states, which implicitly downplays the idea of contingency (pp. 697–710).			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	3
	Notes: 3–Narrative represents multiple regions (China, Japan, India, African states, Middle East, Latin America) rather than focusing on a single one (pp. 696–737).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	3–Different ways of achieving independence are recognized through comparing violent revolutions (China, Cuba) with negotiated or gradual independence (India, parts of Africa) (pp. 699–705; 711–720). 3–Within movements, there were internal debates (e.g., nationalism vs. socialism, reform vs. revolution) and these are acknowledged (pp. 700–703; 732–735). 2–While multiple regions and competing visions/ideologies within them are represented, the narrative is primarily told through leaders and state actions, with limited voice from ordinary people.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3–Decolonization is explained through the context of power struggles between the United States and the Soviet Union (p. 696). 3–By region, the chapter explains how outcomes in Korea, Vietnam, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America were influenced by various global forces. 3–The continued economic dependence and external pressures (e.g., continued/post imperialism) that existed after independence movements are highlighted (pp. 713–719). 3–It is made clear how foreign intervention (e.g., military or economic aid) and various ideologies shape nations after colonialism (pp. 711–735).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance,	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	(goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	
	Notes: 3–Throughout the chapter, leaders such as Mao, Nehru, Nasser, Castro, Mandela, and others are shown as active decision-makers that shape their nation’s outcomes. 3–Nationalist movements are showing as responding to their poor conditions locally, not simply modeling after Western ways (e.g., China and India: pp. 699–704; 711–714). 3–The mass participation of people (e.g., peasants, workers, students, etc.) are acknowledged as contributing to change in revolutions and independence movements (pp. 699–702; 731–734).			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	2
	Notes: 3–Throughout the chapter maps, photographs, and timelines are to support understanding and explanations. 2–While there is a variety of evidence presented, the text primarily relies on political, economic, and military evidence. 1–There is minimal reference to oral traditions, Indigenous ways of knowing, or any cultural practices as sources. 1–Even when discussing non Western societies, knowledge is presented mostly through a Western lens.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	2.5

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	relevance to contemporary social issues?			
	Notes: 3–The themes raised throughout the chapter (e.g., nationalism, foreign intervention, inequality, globalization, etc.) clearly connect to modern issues (pp. 696–699; 713–719), and these connections may be easier for teachers to point out since it’s more recent history. 3–Consequences discussed in the narrative (e.g., Middle East conflict, economic dependency, Cold War, etc.) are still visible today, making these connections more explicit; this allows students to see how past decisions shape present day. 1–There are no direct prompts for students to connect history to their own identities, lives, or civic roles.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	2
	Notes: 3–The narrative explains how ideology from the Cold War influenced how events unfolded in the subsequent years (pp. 696–697). 2–Occasionally, disagreements or failure of policies (e.g., Great Leap Forward, development strategies) are noted (pp. 700–703; 712–713). 1–Nowhere in the narrative does it explicitly explain how historians debate or interpret events; this does not leave room for students to consider whose perspectives are dominate and whose are minimized or missing.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter's underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter structure encourages students to see how the post-WWII world was driven by rapid change and global interconnection primarily through decolonization and pressures of the Cold War. However, the narrative does subtly push a linear narrative toward the building of nation states; this may limit how students' understand other alternatives.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students' interpretations? <i>The narrative compares violent revolutions with opposing tactics toward independence such as negotiation, which shows multiple paths out of colonial rule. However, there is limited explanation of everyday experiences and ordinary first-person voices, which keeps the focus on state or structural level outcomes.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>The chapter clearly shows international power structures, especially relating to the Cold War and economic dependence, as shaping the world post-colonialism. However, it does not show how the narrative is constructed, as certain people and regions receive more attention than others with no explanation as to why this is.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The narrative centers on political leaders and states, which implies that elites hold power and affect outcomes. While mass independence movements are explained, it still may leave students with the idea that history is driven by exceptional elites rather than the everyday action of regular people, which might limit how students perceive their own agency.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>This text relies on the traditional academic view of how history is known, as the forms of evidence provided are primarily political, economic, and military related. This may limit students' recognition that how we understand history might also come from cultural practices, lived experiences, or other, less explored ways of knowing.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>The chapter is very relevant (e.g., nationalism, foreign intervention, inequality, etc.) to today and offers strong entry points</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>for connecting past and present. With teacher support, students can reflect on how historical decisions continue to shape our world and their civic responsibilities today.</i> What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The text presents competing ideologies and different paths to independence, which suggests that outcomes were due to choices and context. However, it rarely makes the interpretive nature of history explicit; how stories are selected or omitted is not clear and everyday people's voices are limited, which may lead students to view history as more settled.</i>			

Appendix F - *World History: Patterns of Interaction* (Beck et al., 2012)

Chapter 20: *The Atlantic World, 1492-1800* (pp. 550-575)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	2
	Notes: 3—Presents the Atlantic World as interconnected between Europe, Africa, and the Americas (map and overview, pp. 550–551). 3—The Columbian Exchange is explained as a two-way transfer of plants, animals, and diseases, noting both positive and negative consequences (pp. 571-575). 1—The decline of Indigenous populations due to disease, war, and exploitation is acknowledged but it is portrayed as a consequence rather than an ongoing process, and it is minimized compared to the sustained focus on European explorers (pp. 553–565). 2—European economic motives are linked to the rise of the plantation economy and slavery (pp. 566–570), but it's presented as inevitable. 1—The narrative follows a linear progression from exploration to exchange to empire to slavery, while contingency or alternative paths are not considered.			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative	1

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	
	Notes: 1–The chapter is centered on European perspectives, beginning with exploration and conquest. 1–African societies are discussed in relation to their role in the slave trade; internal or cultural perspectives are not present with the exception of a brief excerpt (pp. 566–570). 1–Indigenous peoples appear primarily in terms of early contact and disease; there is little to no sustained attention to their voices or interpretations (pp. 553–565). 2–Visual sources (e.g., depiction of conquest and labor) are included but they support the narrative without inviting interpretation or questioning (pp. 553, 558). 1–There is no discussion of whose voices are missing or how different historians might interpret Atlantic interconnection differently.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	2
	Notes: 3–It’s made clear that European imperial expansion was driven by economic competition and state power (pp. 550–564). 2–Conquest is described as involving violence, forced labor, and political domination of Indigenous peoples (pp. 553–565), but the narrative is centered on a European perspective.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	2–Slavery is explained as a system rooted in European demand for labor, and enforced through coercion and brutality (pp. 556–560), but missing voices/perspectives from enslaved people. 1–The text briefly hints at how enslavement and exploitation were justified through social hierarchies (p. 557, 559), primarily through reference to the encomienda system, but it is not explained. 1–The chapter makes clear that European political and economic power shaped colonial systems, but the narrative is told from a European perspective. Indigenous peoples and Africans are discussed mainly in terms of resistance or exploitation, with limited attention to their own viewpoints. As a result, power is acknowledged, but the text does not fully explore how historical knowledge reflects whose voices are prioritized.			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	1
	Notes: 1–Indigenous resistance to European conquest is briefly mentioned, though briefly and without detailed examples (pp. 553–565). 2–Briefly mentions that Africans maintained cultural traditions despite oppression (p. 569), but it is simply referenced and does not include details, maintaining a European framing of the narrative. 1–Resistance by enslaved people, including revolts and everyday acts of survival (pp. 564-570) are briefly noted, but they are only portrayed in terms of how they react to European forces; minimal agency shown outside of that. 1–Cultural exchange is discussed primarily through the Columbian Exchange, and while the movement of crops, livestock, and disease is mentioned, cultural interaction is framed largely in economic terms rather than through lived experiences or cultural practices (pp. 571-575). 1–Europeans are portrayed as primary decision-makers throughout the chapter.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural,	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?		evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	
	Notes: 3–Maps and diagrams are used frequently to show trade routes, migration, and the triangular trade system (pp. 551, 555, 564, 568, 572, 574). 2–Incorporates visual primary sources depicting conquest, labor, and slavery (pp. 552, 560, 569), but these images largely reinforce the existing narrative rather than inviting students to question it or explore Indigenous or African perspectives in depth. 1–Sources are mostly European-produced or later Western interpretations; Indigenous and African epistemology are minimized or absent. 1–Students are not prompted to consider how power shaped which sources are included.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	1.5
	Notes: 2–The chapter notes that Atlantic trade helped lay the foundations of the modern global economy (pp. 571-575), but the impact is presented in economic terms rather than connecting it to present-day inequality. 2–The chapter acknowledges mutual influence in the Atlantic World, such as food, language, and religion (pp. 571-572), but it's presented as an outcome of contact rather than as a new way identities were formed through coercion and survival under enslavement.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	1–Although slavery is described as brutal and exploitative (pp. 557–559, 565, 566-570), the text does not explicitly connect slavery to modern racial hierarchies, systemic inequality in the Americas, or the lasting impact on Indigenous peoples. 1–The text explains the decline of the Indigenous population dispossession of their lands, but these are discussed as consequences of disease and conquest (pp. 557-559, 565); there is no clear connection to Indigenous marginalization or ongoing debates over land. 1–Overall, relevance is implicit and would require teacher guidance to help students connect the Atlantic World to their lives today (e.g., identity, inequality in social and societal structures, migration, sovereignty, poverty, etc.).			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	1
	Notes: 2–The text implicitly shows how historians use evidence, but it does not explicitly discuss how historians interpret or debate these events. 1–There is no acknowledgment that narratives of exploration, conquest, or slavery are constructed or contested, and it is primarily framed through a European perspective with limited inclusion of other viewpoints. 1–The embedded guiding questions and lesson assessments focus on comprehension rather than critical thinking, reflection, ethical considerations, or disciplinary questions. 1–Students are not prompted to question how the story is told or whose perspectives shape the narrative.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric:				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	- How do the chapter's underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter is centered on the interconnection of the Atlantic World and European expansion; this encourages students to understand the changes as a result of European contact. While violence is acknowledged, the overall narrative suggests forward movement toward a more connected world, which seems to minimize the violence and loss when compared to overall progress.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students' interpretations? <i>There's a clear tension between the way suffering in relation to slavery and the Indigenous population is acknowledged and the tendency for the narrative to move back quickly to 'progress' outcomes like economic growth. The narrative is missing sustained attention to Indigenous and African perspectives; centering more on this could help students better understand contingency, other possible outcomes, and a clearer understanding of the cultural and human cost.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Power is discussed in terms of economic and political motivations (e.g., plantation economy, trade, encomienda system, etc.), but they are presented as forces of history rather than as choices made by people. Furthermore, the chapter centers on European exploration with European explorers, gains, problems, etc. receiving most of the attention, which shows how power determines who anchors the narrative.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The narrative implies that change occurs primarily with European actors, while Indigenous peoples and Africans appear more often in reactive roles. Although resistance and survival are acknowledged, they are not developed and may distort students' understanding of whose actions matter over time.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The text offers a variety of evidence, including maps, visuals, and summaries. While it supports multiple ways of engaging with the past, it's not made clear how the sources were selected nor how power influenced the anchor (i.e., European expansion) of the narrative; this may limit how students understand that history depends on whose voices are preserved and centered versus marginalized.</i>			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	- In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>The chapter includes various themes (e.g., forced migration, cultural survival, economic exploitation, identity, etc.) that could help students make meaningful connections to the present. However, the connections are implicit, and would require intentional planning/teaching.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>Overall, the chapter presents the history of the Atlantic world as a settled story, rather than complex events with multiple interpretations and perspectives. The narrative is largely told from a European, economic standpoint, and doesn't invite students to consider how the narrative was constructed, which perspectives were prioritized, or how emphasizing on different aspects of the history would shift the story being told.</i>			

Chapter 29: *The Great War, 1914-1918* (pp. 838-866)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	1.5
	Notes: 2–The chapter identifies several long-term causes (nationalism, militarism, alliances, imperialism), leading to WWI, which shows the layers of causation rather than a single outcome, but it is framed as linear and “marching toward war” (pp. 841–844). 1–The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand is framed as a point of high escalation but it downplays contingency and other choices that were made or could have been made (pp. 843–844). 1–Military strategies (e.g., Schlieffen Plan) seem to be presented as deterministic, which makes the progression of events seem inevitable (pp. 846–847). 2–The narrative is told from a big-picture approach which emphasizes the large-scale causes and outcomes, but it doesn’t really address individual decision making or moments of contingency.			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 3–The text includes various types of primary sources (e.g., letters, poetry, propaganda, photographs), which represents various wartime experiences (pp. 840, 853–857, 863). 2–The primary sources included tend to reinforce a single narrative of sacrifice and suffering, rather than presenting conflicting perspectives about the war’s purpose or justification. 1–Non-European and colonized peoples are mentioned but their perspectives are not present (pp. 851–852). 2–Multiple voices appear in the chapter (e.g., soldiers, civilians, political leaders), but they tend to reinforce the same narrative rather than challenge or complicate one another.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	2
	Notes: 2–State power through militarism and economic power is emphasized (pp. 853–855). 3–The narrative illustrates how power and war extended into civilian life (pp. 853–854). 2–The impact of imperialism and colonialism are acknowledged as contributing to the war, but the inequality or human experience is not examined (pp. 851–853). 1–European nation-states are framed as having power and influencing changes, rather than the global or economic aspects that extended the war beyond Europe.			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance,	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	(goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	
	Notes: 3–Soldiers’ experiences emphasize trauma and endurance, and are told through firsthand accounts (p. 857). 2–The impact and participation of civilians is present, but they’re presented as compliant rather than showing varying perspectives of opposing the war (pp. 853–854). 1–Agency is shown primarily in elite and military leaders throughout the chapter, and there is little attention to lived experiences or collective action of ordinary people.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	2
	Notes: 2–A variety of evidence is presented (maps, statistics, photos, poetry, letters) to construct historical understanding (pp. 838–840, 846-848, 852–857, 860). 1–The sources presented function to illustrate and support the narrative, rather than to spark inquiry. 2–The chapter is rich with quantitative data, which emphasizes the scale of the war, but there is no interpretive questioning with it.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	relevance to contemporary social issues?			
	Notes: 2—Students may be able to connect themes of nationalism, alliances, and militarization to modern global conflicts, though these connections are implicit (pp. 840–844). 3—The Treaty of Versailles is framed as destabilizing with an explanation of long-term consequences and students are asked to analyze the motives and judge the fairness of the treaty (pp. 858–861). 1—There doesn’t appear to be any explicit connections to modern identity, citizenship, or global interconnection; contemporary connections would rely heavily on teacher guidance.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	2
	Notes: 3—The debate over responsibility and war guilt, motives, and fairness in relation to the Treaty of Versailles (pp. 858–861) is explicitly presented both in the narrative and posed for students. 1—Overall, the explanations are presented as settled rather than historically contested, and it’s a very linear progression of events. 2—The process of how sources were selected is not clear, though there is some debate around how sources are interpreted.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric:				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	- How do the chapter's underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapters frames WWI as a global disruption with several complex causes like alliances, nationalism, and militarism. It presents the history in a big-picture kind of way, which helps show the continuity in a global event like war, but it also makes the war feel inevitable and less contingent on the accumulation of human decisions.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students' interpretations? <i>The chapter clearly acknowledges the widespread suffering caused by war, but it doesn't really explore competing interpretations on the purpose of justification of WWI. If other narratives such as opposition to the war or perspectives from colonized populations were presented, students would better understand the war as a series of contested events that are actually not universally understood.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>European governments, political, and military power are centered in the narrative. However, less attention is given to how imperial and economic powers determined how states would participate in the war, and how the story is being presented; this is especially evident in how perspectives opposing the war, or the perspectives of those living in colonies (imperialism is explained as a cause) are not really addressed.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>It's implied in the narrative that world-shaping change comes primarily from national leaders, powerful countries, and military leaders, while soldiers and ordinary people appear as responding to the events. This framing may limit how students understand that ordinary people or non-Europeans also contributed to events and outcomes.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter presents a variety of primary and secondary sources, including maps, statistics, and personal accounts, which shows multiple ways of examining the past. However, the sources presented tend to reinforce the overall narrative rather than invite students to compare or challenge interpretations.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Themes like nationalism, propaganda, violence, displacement, etc. offer strong opportunities for students to connect the past</i>			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>to modern conflicts and civic questions. However, these themes or opportunities for making connections are implicit and would depend on teacher guidance to be made into meaningful connection opportunities (there is minimal explicit prompting in the text).</i> • What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The chapter does well in explaining WWI, but it doesn't really offer insight into how historians debate causes, who is responsible, or how they make meaning of the sources. This framing does help students understand what happened, but it doesn't really encourage them to see how history is interpreted and constructed into the narrative they receive.</i>			

Chapter 35: *Struggles for Democracy, 1945-Present* (pp. 1030-1067)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	2.5
	Notes: 3—Democracy, and the transition to it, is shown as both fragile and reversible; specifically through case studies of Latin America (Brazil, Mexico) and Africa (Nigeria), where democratic progress is repeatedly interrupted (pp. 1033–1039, 1040–1043). 2—The narrative is dominated by big-picture explanations (e.g., economic crisis, ending colonialism, pressures from the Cold War, etc.); this is presented as the underlying force, but the contested choices made by individuals is less emphasized (pp. 1033–1039, 1040–1043). 2—The narrative portrays changes as linear (i.e., authoritarianism to reform to democracy), especially in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union; this makes it difficult to consider the other possible outcomes (pp. 1046–1051, 1052–1054). However, the text does acknowledge ongoing challenges after democracy.			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 2–The narrative includes perspectives from multiple regions (Latin America, Africa, Eastern Europe, China); this broadens the scope of global representation, but it doesn’t offer varying interpretations of the era within each society (pp. 1033–1035, 1040–1045, 1058–1063). 2–There are some primary sources (e.g., Ken Saro-Wiwa, economic crisis under Boris Yeltsin, Tiananmen Square), but they tend to reinforce the dominant narrative and don’t invite the student to interpret for themselves (pp. 1042, 1051, 1061). 2–Movements for reform or opposition are referenced (e.g., Solidarity in Poland, Fall of the Berlin Wall, students in China), yet first-person explanations of ideology are not explored (pp. 1052–1054, 1059–1060). 1–Overall, there is very limited attention to women, rural populations, and non-elites; this limits students’ ability to question whose perspectives are missing.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	2
	Notes: 3–The lasting effects of colonialism (e.g., borders that caused friction and economic dependency) are explicitly acknowledged as destabilizing forces in Africa (p. 1040). 2–The influence of the Cold War is presented primarily as an external force shaping national outcomes, rather than as a lived and debated system of power within those societies, especially in Latin America and Eastern Europe (pp. 1033–1036, 1052-1054). 2–Nation-states and elites are portrayed as having power to shape outcomes; less attention is given to social class, ethnicity, or ideology as forces of power.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	1–The text tells a story of democratic progress but it does not invite students to question how democracy is defined or measured across different regions; it’s not clear how the narrative was constructed.			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	2
	Notes: 3–Examples of agency are present, such as anti-apartheid activism in South Africa and protest in Eastern Europe (pp. 1043–1045, 1052–1054). 2–Examples of grassroots moments are present, such as solidarity in Poland and student demonstrators in China, but these are summarized and missing firstperson voices (pp. 1052–1053, 1061). 2–Non-Western individuals are primarily framed as reactive, as they respond to colonialism, communism, or economic hardship, rather than initiating change on their own terms (pp. 1034–1036, 1040–1045). 1–Overall, agency is unevenly reflected in the narrative, with political leaders receiving far more attention than ordinary people.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	2
	Notes: 3–The chapter includes a variety of visual, quantitative, and primary sources (e.g., maps, graphs, photographs, political cartoons) to support understanding (almost every page throughout the chapter, pp. 1032–1067). 1–The primary sources included are largely from elite perspectives and text-based, which limits representation of cultural or Indigenous ways of knowing (pp. 1042, 1050, 1061).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	2—There are a lot of visual sources throughout the chapter, but they tend to reinforce the narrative rather than invite questioning or critical thinking about it. 1—The text, while there are a variety of source types, does not make it clear how the narrative was constructed. Assessment questions could help with this, but the ones in this chapter primarily check comprehension instead of prompting students to examine sources, consider alternative explanations, or think critically about how the story of democracy is being told.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	2
	Notes: 3—There are strong opportunities for students to connect to issues such as corruption, protest, inequality, and authoritarianism (throughout the chapter). 2—Discussion questions encourage civic reflection, particularly around considering what conditions are necessary for democracy (pp. 1032, 1066–1067), but these are limited. 2—Although the chapter references a range of societies and groups, it doesn’t prompt students to consider how these histories relate to their own identities or communities. 1—The chapter naturally connects to relevant themes/topics, but it depends on teacher mediation, rather than prompts existing within the chapter (throughout chapter).			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing	1.5

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	
	Notes: 2–Democracy is presented as contested, but it’s not framed as an interpretive debate among historians, and includes limited first-person accounts (throughout chapter). 1–While primary sources are included, they don’t model inquiry, such as questioning reliability or perspective (pp. 1042, 1050, 1061). 1–Overall, history appears to be reported rather than constructed, which limits students’ understanding of how we know what we know.			

Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric:

- How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity?
The chapter is built around the idea that democracy is something societies strive toward but don’t always achieve. It presents democratic change as uneven and fragile, which helps students see continuity in struggle rather than a simple story of progress. At the same time, the way the chapter uses broad explanations can make democratic outcomes feel inevitable, even when setbacks are acknowledged.
- What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations?
The chapter shows a clear tension between the message that democracy is contested and the way the narrative settles on outcomes, rather than emphasizing ongoing struggles. There are explanations of people protesting and working toward reform, but first-person voices, especially those that challenge what a democracy looks like in various regions are not developed. Students might be able to see democracy (and how it’s defined) as more debated if the narrative focused more on ground-up stories from ordinary people, especially showing ongoing failures or consequences of societal change.

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	- How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Political power is most visible throughout the chapter, specifically through governments and Cold War influence. However, power is portrayed primarily as something that is exercised by nation-states or elite leaders, rather than something that's negotiated at all levels of society. Inequality is acknowledged, but the way it connects to democratic struggles and everyday people could be more developed.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The chapter suggests that meaningful change often comes from political leaders, while everyday people appear mainly during moments of protest or crisis. This can subtly limit students' sense of who contributes to the development of history and whose actions matter over time.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter presents a range of evidence (e.g., maps, visuals, short primary sources, etc.) but these mostly support the main narrative rather than question it. The chapter doesn't spend much time helping students think about how evidence is selected or how different sources might tell different versions of the same story. As a result, history can feel more reported than interpreted.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>The themes of protest, corruption, inequality, and democratic struggle offer strong opportunities for students to connect the past to present issues. Students should be able to easily connect these to current events (especially since it's such recent history), but the chapter rarely makes any connections explicit. The work of linking history to identity or community is left to the teacher.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>Overall, the chapter presents a coherent story of democratic struggle but it does not invite students to question how that story was built. Any disagreement among historians or to how definitions of democracy influence the construction of the narrative is not addressed. This can lead students to see historical knowledge as settled rather than as something constructed and debated.</i>			

Appendix G - *World Civilizations* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)

Chapter 20: The Renaissance (pp. 716-743)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	2
Notes: 1–The chapter frames the Renaissance as a clear turning point: (i.e., “new ways to see the world” and a “rebirth” of learning), which oversimplifies the transition from medieval and Renaissance Europe as more of a ‘clean break’ rather than a series of events or continuity (Lesson 2 opener, p. 722). 2–Throughout the chapter, change is attributed to multiple causes (e.g., trade, printing, classical texts, patron support, etc.), which adds some complexity (pp. 722–725, 732–733), but these causes still lead toward the single narrative of Europe’s cultural renewal. 1–Timelines (e.g., Printing in Europe) show change over time (p. 733), yet they focus on the development of print in Europe, and do not show alternative or parallel developments in other places. 2–Continuity is acknowledged, but framed through the “rebirth” narrative; Greek, Roman, and Islamic knowledge are presented mainly as precursors to the movement (pp. 728–730), and Europe’s revival remains central. 1–The chapter frames events in such a way that implicitly teaches students that history moves forward when Europe progresses; other regions are only mentioned as the precursor to that change, minimal, or not at all.				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	2
	Notes: 2–The chapter includes multiple perspectives relating to literature and politics, but remain focused on Europe (e.g., Italian humanism, Christian humanism, realism) through figures like Petrarch, Machiavelli, Erasmus, and Shakespeare (pp. 724–725, 734, 737–741). 3–There are several primary-source excerpts (e.g., The Prince, The Praise of Folly, Romeo and Juliet) that explicitly invite students to interpret literature through guided questions (pp. 724, 734, 740–741). 3–There are opportunities for students to compare through visual analysis prompts (e.g., Renaissance vs. medieval art; Northern daily life) (pp. 726, 735). 1–Nearly all perspectives come from elite European men (pp. 724–741). 2–Islamic scholars are mentioned, but no first-person voices are present and it’s not explored deeply—more as a precursor to European intellect (pp. 728–730).			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 2–Patronage by wealthy families and the Church demonstrates how the cultural movement was supported through economics and political power (pp. 724–726), however, this form of power is implicit and no ordinary perspectives are present. 2–Machiavelli’s political work shows power and control in government, but is geared toward a very minor demographic, like political leaders or ‘princes’ (pp. 724–725). 3–The text highlights the Church’s resistance to Bible translation and printing, which shows the institutional power over knowledge and who got access (p. 733). 1–The narrative seems to frame the idea of power and who is in control as ‘just the way history is’ rather than a framing choice; Europe is presented as ‘simply in power’ as a condition of the times or their superiority. 2–The wealth of patrons, which enabled them to support Renaissance artists, is not connected to the global economy (e.g., trade, exploitation of resources/people) despite the fact the timelines in the chapter hint at that expansion (pp. 732–733). 1–Students are not prompted to question who experienced the Renaissance, which was primarily an elite experience, nor consider cultural/intellectual/artistic movements that were happening around the same time in other regions.			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	
	Notes: 2–Agency is shown primarily through exceptional individuals or elites (Leonardo, Michelangelo, Gutenberg, Erasmus, Shakespeare) (pp. 726–729, 732, 734-735, 737). 2–Northern Renaissance art shows scenes of everyday life, which suggests that those without elite status could have participated in the movement (p. 735), however, ordinary people appear primarily as subjects of art, not as agents contributing to change (pp. 726, 735).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	2–Women’s agency is mentioned briefly (education at home, influence through marriage) but not explored in a way that shows any meaningful contribution (p. 733).			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	
	Notes: 3–The chapter incorporates art, architecture, scientific sketches, timelines, and literature, and various primary sources as evidence (pp. 726–729, 733, 735, 740–741). 2–Islamic scholars are credited with preserving classical texts, which acknowledges that knowledge was shared and preserved through both European and non-European sources, though it’s only briefly mentioned and no first-person perspectives are present (pp. 728–730). 2–Non-European knowledge is mentioned, but the narrative frames it as valuable because it enabled European progress, and those forms of knowledge are not deeply explored (pp. 728–730). 1–Students are not asked to compare ways of knowing across cultures, and European culture and ways of knowing is clearly central.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 3–The chapter lessons start with “If YOU were there...” scenarios, which encourage students to imagine choices about identity and opportunity (pp. 716, 722, 732). 3–Literature excerpts show universal human experiences (e.g., love, ambition, conflict), which students can naturally connect to (pp. 736–741). 3–Writing and discussion tasks in the chapter assessment ask students to evaluate leadership, creativity, and technology (pp. 739–743). 2–There are a lot of contemporary connections (inequality, access to education, power over information) in the narrative itself, but they are implied.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	2
	Notes: 2– Some types of evidence that historians use (artworks, notebooks, printed texts) are present throughout the lesson. 3–Source-analysis questions ask students to interpret meaning rather than memorize content (pp. 721, 724, 729, 734). 1–The chapter does not discuss historical debate or various/changing interpretations, which includes how the term “Renaissance” was decided and who actually experienced the movement. 1–It is not acknowledged that this is just one way the past can be organized or interpreted, and it is very much focused on Europe, despite there being other significant cultural/artistic/intellectual movements happening globally.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter's underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter is clearly organized around a narrative that frames the Renaissance as a “rebirth” that moves Europe forward intellectually and culturally (progress narrative). This kind of narrative may lead to students seeing history as improving in one direction, rather than uneven across regions. Continuity is somewhat obscured in that classical ideas are perceived as waiting to be rediscovered by Europeans, opposed to what was already shaping Europe and other regions during medieval times.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students' interpretations? <i>There's a noticeable tension between briefly acknowledging that Islamic scholars preserved and transmitted classical knowledge (p. 728) and then quickly shifting credit to European thinkers once the Renaissance begins throughout the rest of the chapter. Also, women and everyday people are largely absent except as background figures in art or trade; this downplays the collective experience of people who did (or arguably, did not) experience the Renaissance in the same ways it's portrayed in the narrative.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>The chapter shows both political and economic power within the context of the time and place. Merchant wealth and patrons are highlighted as driving creativity (Florence, the Medici family), but not much attention is given to who was excluded or how wealth was accumulated (pp. 718–721). The church is portrayed as both a patron and obstacle, but their power is not questioned. Overall, the narrative portrays power as normal (like those who had it were destined), which may limit their ability to question who was benefiting and actually experiencing the movement at all.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>Agency is shown primarily through artists, scholars, wealthy patrons, and rulers; people with education, money, or power (Leonardo, Michelangelo, Machiavelli, Gutenberg; pp. 726–733); this sends a message to students that historical impact comes from exceptional individuals, and may distance students from seeing themselves in such roles.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter relies on art, literature from elites, and inventions/sketches, which is primarily evidence produced by educated</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	men (pp. 724–731). While this helps students see how historians use artifacts, it limits other ways of knowing (e.g., oral traditions, lived experience, or non-European epistemology), which may lead to a misconception that this is the only real history, or history worth learning about. - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Themes like questioning authority or what is valued in education are relatable for students today (humanism, printing/the power of literacy, questioning the role of those in power like the Catholic church at the time; pp. 722–733). However, these themes are presented as largely positive, which may lead to students missing real potential outcomes of present-day issues or considering who is excluded and why.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students’ understanding of how we know the past? <i>The chapter presents Renaissance ideas as settled; there is no conversation around debate among historians, and other non-European cultural movements are not recognized. There does show some cause and effect relationships (e.g., trade in Italy leading to wealthy patrons), but it’s limited. This may lead students to assume history is something we “know” rather than something actively interpreted, especially when the focus is narrow like in this chapter.</i>			

Chapter 25: *Industry and Imperialism* (pp. 854-883)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	2
	Notes: 2–Imperialism is presented as a response to the Industrial Revolution, which seems to suggest that European industrial growth led naturally to expansion overseas (pp. 863–865), as if that was inevitable or a linear way to progress. 2–Change over time is acknowledged throughout the chapter, but contingency is limited; imperialism appears as an almost unavoidable outcome without considering other possibilities (pp. 864–865). 2–The chapter shows moments of sudden or drastic changes or resistance (e.g., African resistance or the Boxer Rebellion), but they are situated within the text as exceptions that “caused more problems for the Europeans” (pp. 867–868, 873); this reads as simplified and doesn’t account for the continuity of colonized peoples’ long-term efforts at defending their land.			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	1

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?			
	Notes: 1–The narrative voice is dominated by the European perspective throughout the chapter, especially relating to economic justifications for expansion (pp. 863–865). 1–African, Chinese, Japanese, and Indigenous perspectives are summarized rather than voiced, with no first-person accounts (pp. 866–868, 872–874). 2–While the text does name some resistance groups/efforts, the first-person accounts, motivations, and perspectives of those groups are not present (pp. 868–869, 878). 1–Because the narrative does not include Indigenous voices, students may not consider whose interpretations are missing or how the story might shift if told from colonized perspectives.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	2
	Notes: 2–The chapter clearly identifies political and economic motivations and power dynamics, particularly the role of European governments (pp. 865–866). 3–A variety of economic motivations (e.g., raw materials, markets, trade routes) are explained, which helps students see that imperialism was driven by powerful institutions (pp. 864–865). 1–Throughout the chapter, power dynamics are explained in neutral language (e.g., “control,” “involvement,” “influence”) rather than emphasizing violence or dispossession.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	1–In the section about The Berlin Conference, it focuses on the diplomacy of the conference as Europeans worked toward a solution, while there is only limited emphasis on the exclusion of African voices (pp. 867).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	1.5
	Notes: 2–Agency is occasionally shown through non-European peoples through resistance (Ethiopia, Zulu resistance, Boxer Rebellion), which counters the portrayal that they were passive (pp. 868–869, 873). 1–Agency is framed as reactive; the narrative only shows non-Europeans peoples responding to European actions rather than initiating historical change in any other significant ways. 2–European figures (industry leaders, governments, military leaders) are depicted as decision-makers that shape historical outcomes, while others are shown as reactive or not all (pp. 864–866, 877–879). 1–There is no examination of Indigenous cultural, political, or economic systems prior to European arrival.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	2
	Notes: 2–The chapter presents a variety of evidence, but relies primarily on written political and economic evidence, maps, and visual representations created from a Western perspective (e.g., maps of imperial control, battle paintings, European inventions, trade visuals, European art) (pp. 859, 866, 873, 878). 2–The maps shown throughout the chapter represent traditional European territorial claims, which shows (and almost legitimizes) imperial borders, but doesn't necessarily present opportunities to question them (pp. 866, 871, 873).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	1–Oral histories, Indigenous knowledge, or cultural artifacts as sources are not present. 2–Visuals like the Battle of Adwa painting (p. 868) point to non-European perspectives, but they are not deeply analyzed or examined at all.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	2
	Notes: 2–The chapter occasionally invites students to reflect on ethical matters, such as questioning imperial motives or evaluating resistance movements, but these prompts are limited (pp. 868, 877-879). 2– Some connections to modern global inequality can be made, but connections are implicit and would require teacher preparation and guidance. 2–Strong connections could be made between industrialism/imperialism and modern global power dynamics or civic responsibility, but these opportunities are implicit.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of	1

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
		interpretive choices historians make.	omissions; brief methodological explanations.	
	Notes: 1–The narrative is presented as settled, and there is no discussion of how historians interpret or debate understandings of imperialism. 1–Events are presented as factual (e.g., Berlin Conference, Boxer Rebellion, Spanish-American War, etc.) rather than contested or interpretive, and there are no first-person voices present (pp. 867–878). 1–The idea of bias, what is included/excluded, or perspective in how the narrative was constructed is absent.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>As I read this chapter, it seems to operate under the assumption that industrialization naturally led to imperialism, which may lead students to believe that some changes are progressive opposed to considering that other outcomes could have occurred. This kind of narrative also obscures continuity in non-European societies because there is not sufficient coverage of them, which suggests that history “moves forward” according to how powerful nations act.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>Throughout the chapter, resistance is acknowledged but never central to the narrative. While efforts for independence are mentioned, they are more sidenotes than a standalone narrative that’s examined in a meaningful way. If the narrative shifted the focus to consider the perspective of colonized people, especially over time, then an alternate history of survival, loss, perseverance, etc. could be told. The missing voices of colonized peoples makes imperialism feel less violent and negative than is likely was.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Power structures are clearly present but it’s framed from the perspective of powerful institutions (e.g., government, imperialists, industrialists, armies, etc.) rather than the lived experiences of ordinary people. Power dynamics are especially obscured because economic power is normalized and described as motivation rather than domination.</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	- What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The narrative implies that history is driven primarily by nations with economic power, technology, and military strength. Colonized groups are mainly portrayed as reacting to European forces rather than shaping any meaningful history on their own. The idea that only the already powerful are the ones shaping history may limit how students perceive their own agency in shaping history or in civic life.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter relies on maps, political and economic explanations, and visual sources, which is a variety of evidence but may limit history to something that is only categorized or measured, rather than experienced from different angles (leaves out the human cost and emotional aspect of imperialism).</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>There are many connections to the modern world through themes like exploitation, economic inequality, resistance, etc., but these are not explicitly present in the chapter. Students could easily read this chapter as something of the disconnected past, rather than how imperialism actually influenced and continues to influence current global power imbalances.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The narrative presents events as facts rather than interpretations, which may lead students to assume history is simply "what happened" instead of how events were selected and/or framed as part of the narrative. In this chapter especially, I think it problematic that first-person accounts and varying perspectives are absent, which creates very little sense that historians argue over meaning and interpretation.</i>			

Chapter 28: *The Cold War Years* (pp. 951-981)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	
	Notes: 2–The chapter emphasizes wars and crises (China 1949; Korea; Vietnam; Cuba; Eastern Europe) as decisive turning points (pp. 961–968, 973–978), which suggests history only happens at these moments of crisis. 2–Change is presented as occurring quickly through a series of events, while continuity is shown mostly through the rivalry of the U.S. and Soviet Union. 2–The complexity of causation is present: long-term social and economic continuities are briefly mentioned (e.g., Vietnam’s colonial past or inequality/tensions within the Chinese class system), but these are not developed (pp. 961–965).			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 2–The narrative is grounded in a Cold War-era U.S. framing, which is evidence in explanations of containment, domino theory, and military intervention (pp. 963–966). 2–Communist movements are usually presented as threats in terms of their impact on Western interests, with less emphasis on the ideas and social movements that motivated them. 2–Alternative interpretations (e.g., nationalist motivations in Vietnam or reforms in Eastern Europe) are not addressed (pp. 964–967).			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	2
	Notes: 1–The narrative is dominated by political and military power; governments and armies are primarily shown as driving change (pp. 961–968). 1–Economic power is shown, but is just briefly mentioned here or there (e.g., sanctions, aid, industry, etc.) rather than as a force that shaped daily life and decisions. 2–The narrative points to cultural power through things like propaganda, ideology, education, or oppression, but it is not deeply analyzed (pp. 962–963). 3–While the chapter does emphasize the power of political leaders, its account of the Berlin Wall highlights how ordinary people directly shaped history by tearing down the wall themselves.			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance,	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange	

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	(goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	
	Notes: 1–Agency is reflected primarily in elite political figures (e.g., Mao, Castro, Khrushchev, Nixon, Gorbachev) (pp. 962–974). 1–Ordinary people appear as having the least agency, as they are portrayed primarily as victims of famine, war, casualties, etc. 2–The text briefly mentions moments of grassroots efforts and actions (e.g., protests in Eastern Europe, Polish workers on strike) but these are only mentioned and not explored whatsoever (pp. 973–977); the exception to this is the fall of the Berlin Wall which is examined more closely in terms of the role of ordinary people in physically tearing down the wall.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	2
	Notes: 2–The chapter presents a variety of evidence (e.g., maps, timelines, statistics, etc.), but it is narrated from a secondary perspective that presents as settled and authoritative. 2–While there are a variety of visuals included, they do not challenge the narrative or create questions around the evidence at all (pp. 964, 966, 975). 1–There is very little personal testimony, oral history non-Western sources, which narrows the perspective presented.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions;	2

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	temporal connection(past–present–future).	
	Notes: 3–Students may connect to the human costs of war (e.g., death tolls, displacement, oppression, etc.) as it relates to shared feelings of empathy when discussing such topics (pp. 963–966). 2–The “If YOU were there...” (lesson openers) prompts invite students to make a personal connection but they are brief and hypothetical; they are also not ongoing or integrated in the narrative, making it harder for students to connect Cold War history to their own lives. 1–The chapter misses opportunities to explicitly link Cold War power dynamics to ongoing issues today such as migration or proxy wars.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	1
	Notes: 1–Overall, any indication of interpretation or historical debate is not present. 1–Throughout the chapter, conclusions are delivered with a sense of certainty as causes are stated from one event to the next without much depth (maybe this has to do with content coverage) (e.g., the explanation of the Korean War, pp. 963-964).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	1—Students are not encouraged to question whose perspectives shaped this narrative or how different sources/perspectives might shift the story being told.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter seems to suggest that history only moves forward through disruptive events like crisis, war, or new leadership. I kept noticing how continuity, such as in daily life or lingering inequalities, were more of a background story. This sort of presentation may lead students to believe that change happens suddenly rather than unevenly or through ongoing struggles of everyday people.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>There is a tension between how the narrative presents communist countries as unified or rigid while also briefly acknowledging that internal resistance movements existed (but those are not explored in depth). If the experiences of ordinary people were more of a focus point, students might better understand the complexity of the Cold War, not just as a rivalry between two super-power countries, but also as a collection of varying local and cultural conflicts.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Overall, the narrative presents power as very formal and centralized through politics, the military, and foreign policy. Economic power/control is mentioned briefly through propaganda or labor conditions, for example, but those are not deeply explored. Obscured power structures and/or presenting a superficial version of them seems to be typical in many textbooks I’ve encountered including this one.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students’ sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>Agency is shown primarily as belonging to presidents, leaders, and the government; ordinary people are shown mostly as victims and responding to decisions made outside of their control, obscuring any sense of agency they may have had; this may send the message that history is mostly something that is “done to” ordinary people rather than them actually shaping outcomes.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students’ recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing?				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>The narrative is mostly authoritative and the sources presented (e.g., timelines/maps) support events as settled facts. While this does make the message clear and easier to understand, it limits opportunities for students to see history as interpretive.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>There are themes that students can connect to such as the power of protesting, migrations, and inequality, but these are implicit. As a teacher, I'd need to be intentional to help students see how these historical dilemmas relate to today.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>Historical knowledge is mostly presented as settled and objective, rather than as constructed through interpretation. Seeing history as facts delivered through our textbooks may limit students' ability to question how we know what we know about the past (historiographical awareness is limited).</i>			

Appendix H - *World History, Modern Times* (Spielvogel, 2023)

Chapter 3: *Asian Empires, 1450-1800* (pp. 84-124)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
Notes: 3–The chapter shows that multiple empires (Ottoman, Safavid, Mughal, Ming, Qing, Tokugawa Japan) were developing simultaneously; these developments are shown through the narrative, timelines, and maps (pp. 86–87, 111–114, 122). 2–Change over time is clearly explained, but it’s primarily shown through a rise and decline framing, such as “Decline of the Ottomans” (p. 92), “Fall of the Mughal Dynasty” (p. 102), and “Decline of the Ming Dynasty” (p. 113). 3–The narrative demonstrates contingency through multiple events leading to an outcome (e.g., a combination of administrative and military problems, loss of trade routes impacting their economy, and competing with Europe with trade are all mentioned as leading to the fall of the Ottoman Empire), and not a single cause (pp. 92–93). 3–The chapter does not present a typical Western ‘progress’ narrative; there is an emphasis on Asian governmental strength, innovation, wealth, and mutual benefit between societies, especially as seen in Mughal (pp. 100–101) and Ming society (pp. 112–115).				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	3
	Notes: 3–The inquiry activities (e.g., Fall of Constantinople sources, pp. 95–98; Daily Life inquiry, pp. 107–110) present multiple perspectives through primary and secondary sources. 3–Plurality as it relates to religion is shown throughout the chapter: Sunni–Shia, Ottoman–Safavid conflict (pp. 93–94), Sikh beliefs and practices (pp. 103–106), and Confucianism is mentioned (pp. 114–119). 2–Perspectives of women, merchants, peasants, and enslaved people, especially in sections on daily life in China and Japan (pp. 115–119) are mentioned, but not deeply explored.			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter clearly connects history to power structures, such as the powerful bureaucracy in the Ottoman Empire (p. 109) and imperial power under the Ming and Qing (pp. 111–114).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	3–The power of religion is portrayed as overlapping with political power, particularly in how Shi’ism influenced the Safavid government (pp. 93-94, 110). 3–The imbalance of power brought on by European economic pressures are shown as factors that reshaped Asian states (e.g., European competition with Ottomans, pp. 92–93 or British trade with China, pp. 114-115), but the mutual influence is still emphasized.			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	3
	Notes: 3–Asian rulers and societies are consistently portrayed as active agents in shaping history: Akbar’s policies of religious tolerance and government reform (pp. 99–101); Ming economic expansion and exploration under Zheng He (pp. 111–113); Intentional isolation policies to maintain stability Tokugawa shoguns (pp. 118–119). 3–Cultural aspects such as art, architecture, and literature are emphasized (not as side stories or in response to European influence) such as Mogul architecture (p. 99) and Japanese art & literature during the Tokugawa era (pp. 119–120). 3–Deficit framing, which is typical in many textbooks, is strongly avoided here; the decision-making and innovation within Asian societies is emphasized consistently throughout the chapter.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	3
	Notes: 3–A variety of knowledge is portrayed through maps, paintings, architecture, artifacts, and religious symbols (e.g.,			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Ottoman and Mughal art, pp. 95–96, 99; Sikh sacred objects, pp. 104–105) 3–The ‘Daily Life’ inquiry activities use visual and cultural materials as historical evidence (pp. 107–109). 3–Geography is emphasized through repeated “Geography Connection” activities (pp. 87, 93, 114, 122). 2–There are several examples of non-textual and cultural forms of knowledge, though oral traditions are implied rather than explicitly discussed.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	3
	Notes: 3–There are multiple opportunities, through the Inquiry Activities, for students to evaluate turning points, cause and effect, and comparisons across societies (pp. 88, 95, 107, 111). 2–There are multiple ways for students to easily connect past societies to enduring human issues through recurring themes such as religious tolerance, government/civic life, social hierarchy, and economic inequality (pp. 100–101, 108–109, 115–119), though these are sometimes implicit. 3–The activities intentionally encourage students to apply historical understanding to modern concepts (pp. 123–124).			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate,	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	
	Notes: 3–The chapter includes explanations of how historians use sources, particularly in the inquiry lessons (pp. 95–98, 107–110). 3–Secondary sources are labeled and intentionally compared with primary sources (e.g., Fall of Constantinople inquiry, pp. 95–98). 2–The text doesn’t discuss how interpretations change over time, but it does implicitly address historical debate through primary source analysis.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter encourages students to understand history through various lenses such as the rise of imperial powers and consolidation of power, and decline of empires. Empires are shown as dynamic with each having their own belief and leadership practices, but the way the text presents every empire as ‘rise then decline’ may suggest to students that decline was inevitable.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>The narrative includes a lot of regions and social groups, but it doesn’t consider how the history presented might look different from the perspectives of ordinary people with less power. There are moments of tension but nothing that is explored in depth or explicitly outlined for students.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>The narrative clearly explains the power dynamics of political, religious, and economic power; it could be made even more clear how these power dynamics influence the story being told by explicitly prompting reflection on whose voices are central or omitted.</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	- What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The Asian empires throughout the chapter are portrayed as being innovative, organized, influencing others, and adaptive to changes, which helps students see that non-European societies were also active in shaping world history.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter includes a variety of evidence (e.g., visual sources, maps, architecture, cultural practices, etc.), but doesn't acknowledge how sources were selected or omitted.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>The chapter offers a lot of different themes (e.g., religious tolerance, sharing cultural aspects, social inequality, etc.) that students can connect to, especially as it relates to enduring human issues. However, the connections are mostly implicit.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The chapter shows students how historians use sources to explain the past, especially through inquiry activities, which is included in every chapter in this textbook. While it doesn't discuss methodology, students actively practice historical thinking through considering various perspectives and primary sources in the inquiry activities.</i>			

Chapter 6: *Nationalism, 1815-1900* (pp. 232-260)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3—The chapter presents nationalism as developing unevenly across regions. Nationalism in Europe, Latin America, and the United States is distinctly explained in each region, but still connected through shared ideas (pp. 231–235, 253–257). 3—Revolutions are shown to have different outcomes, and are not overgeneralized (e.g., The revolutions of 1848 initially spread nationalist ideas but largely failed to achieve lasting change (pp. 240–242). 3—Nationalism is linked to both reform and violence throughout the entire chapter and in some cases both are shown in single regions (e.g., Italian and German unification, which included both diplomacy and war, pp. 246–248). 3—The chapter displays continuity and change. For example, it explains how Enlightenment ideas influenced nationalism while older systems of power remained in place (pp. 232–235, 258).			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	
	Notes: 3–The text includes various perspectives (e.g., political leaders like Simón Bolívar, Otto von Bismarck, and Giuseppe Garibaldi as well as artists and writers inspired by Romanticism (pp. 233–235, 246–251). 2–Non-elite groups, such as workers, peasants, women, enslaved people, and Indigenous people appear, particularly in Latin American independence movements and discussions of slavery (pp. 253–256), but there are limited firstperson voices. 3–Inquiry activities ask students to analyze and interpret (not merely memorize) art, literature, and political ideas (Analyzing Sources activity, pp. 249–252).			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3–Nationalism is connected to power struggles, including challenging monarchies, imperialism, and colonialism (pp. 232–235, 253–256). 3–The Congress of Vienna is presented as an effort by elites to maintain power and control: “established a ruling class that protected its own” (p. 234). 3–In Latin America, independence movements show how power was shifted while inequality remained (e.g., creole elites often replaced colonial rulers, pp. 253–256).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	3–The chapter connects nationalism to military power, for example, as seen in German unification under Prussia (pp. 247–248).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	3
	Notes: 3–People and groups are portrayed as active, rather than passive, agents of change; for example, uprisings in 1848 (pp. 240–242) and independence movements in Latin America (pp. 253–256). 3–Romanticism-era art, literature, and music show how cultural movements also shaped national identity (pp. 235, 249–252). 3–The chapter opening frames national identity as something that is developed through shared language, traditions, and culture (pp. 232–233), rather than overemphasizing shared economic or political interests.			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter uses maps, timelines, paintings, poems, novels, political documents, and biographies as historical evidence (pp. 231–260). 3–Romantic art and literature are treated as historical sources (pp. 249–252). 3–Geographic connections help students see how ideas spread across regions (pp. 231–260).			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development,	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts;	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	
	Notes: 3–The “Making Connections to Today” activity explicitly links nationalism to modern debates about identity and citizenship (p. 260). 3–There are discussion prompts that ask students to reflect on rights, responsibilities, and national identity (pp. 238, 259–260). 2–There are recurring themes (e.g., unity, reform, inclusion, exclusion, human rights, inequality, etc.) throughout the chapter that naturally lend to enduring human issues, but these are mostly implicit.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	2.5
	Notes: 3–The ‘inquiry lesson’ asks students to analyze primary and secondary sources and consider how art and literature reflect historical ideas (pp. 249–252).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	3–The chapter shows that nationalism can be interpreted differently depending on the political goals, national goals, and personal status in society (overall). 1–How historians debate or interpret events, thus, how the narrative is constructed is not visible.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>Nationalism is presented as a powerful force creating change; it shows how progress, unity, and independence was achieved while also acknowledging the uneven and sometimes disappointing outcomes.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations? <i>There is a tension between nationalism being portrayed as both liberating and as failing in certain cases; while this tension is not deeply explored, I think it’s appropriately balanced for a high school level textbook, demonstrating the complexity and various outcomes during the era.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>The narrative does highlight struggles between liberty and monarchies/empires, and it shows how nationalism also led to nation-states quickly developing their own identities and power through unification.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students’ sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The chapter emphasizes shared identities, culture, and collective movements, which encourages students to see that ordinary people have agency to influence history, even when it results in undesirable or unintended outcomes.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students’ recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>A variety of evidence is presented as valid and meaningful, such as art, literature, maps, and political and military sources; this encourages students to see nationalism as both a cultural movement and as political.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Nationalism in and of itself offers a strong entryptpoint for students to connect to modern issues; topics like citizenship,</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>national identity, inclusion, and exclusion are poignant topics in modern debates, and with teacher assistance, meaningful connections can be made.</i> What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The chapter (and others in this textbook) shows how historians use different types of sources through the inquiry activities; it provides meaningful and sustained opportunities for students to analyze sources, but it doesn't really make explicit how stories were selected or interpreted. The act of historians' work and interpretation is part of what students are asked to do (be historians), so, in a way, this also positions students to question how the textbook itself was constructed, but it does stop short of this.</i>			

Chapter 13: *The Post-Cold War World, 1989-Present* (pp. 546-588)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3—The chapter presents the post–Cold War era as unstable and uneven, rather than a clear ‘ending’ of that history; the collapse of the Soviet Union is followed by new conflicts, economic challenges, and changing power rather than stability (pp. 546–588). 3—It is made clear that transition into democracy is both fragile and partial. For example, in Eastern Europe, Africa south of the Sahara, and Latin America, it is shown how elections coexisted with corruption, violence, or backsliding into authoritarianism (pp. 548–551, 568–576). 3—The text emphasizes continuity along with change, and it’s noted that the lasting impacts of the Cold War (e.g., ethnic conflict, economic inequality, and foreign intervention, etc.) continue to shape global interactions (pp. 548, 586–588).			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?			
	Notes: 3—Multiple groups are represented, including from first-person voices, throughout the chapter, such as refugees, protestors, activists, women, ethnic minorities, and youth, LGBTQI, etc., especially in discussions of the Arab Spring, African conflicts, and human rights movements (pp. 552–558, 576–584). 3—First-person perspectives are included through case studies and inquiry sources, such as refugee testimony, disability rights advocates, and environmental activists (pp. 577–584). 2—Governments still seem to dominate much of the way the narrative is framed, especially in how sections are organized based on region and described through a political lens (pp. 551–556, 559–576).			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3—The chapter explicitly connects political instability to more powerful nations, and connects weak states, corruption, and outside intervention to the ongoing conflict (pp. 546–549, 556–557). 3—Power is shown in many different ways: authoritarian governments (North Korea, Syria), international institutions (UN, ICC), and the global economy, and human rights concerns (pp. 562, 574, 577–583). 3—The influential role of the United States and other global powers is addressed in showing how power is exerted through military intervention, sanctions, and diplomatic influence (pp. 558–560, 572–574).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making,	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations;	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	
	Notes: 3—Ordinary people are portrayed as active agents of change, particularly through protests, social movements, and civic action (e.g., Arab Spring, environmental activism, and human rights activism (pp. 552–555, 577–588)). 3—The last inquiry activity highlights cultural and social movements (i.e., K-pop or climate activism led by youth) to show how ideas are shared globally beyond the government level (p. 588). 3—There are various examples of how communities respond creatively to challenges and crises, whether through protest, migration, or grassroots efforts (pp. 566–567, 575–583).			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	3
	Notes: 3—The chapter incorporates maps, graphs, photographs, political cartoons, legal documents, and personal narratives as historical evidence (pp. 545-588). 3—Human rights documents (such as excerpts from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) are treated as sources of historical meaning (p. 578). 3—Environmental, economic, and social data are used along with cultural sources to explain global issues (pp. 568–570, 577-585).			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions;	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	temporal connections (past–present–future).	
	Notes: 3–The “Making Connections to Today” sections directly link history to climate change, migration, popular culture, and youth activism (e.g., Greta Thunberg) (pp. 587–588). 3–The activities ask students to engage in tasks such as questioning, analyzing sources, creating newscasts, playlists, or environmental maps, which connect global issues to their own lives and civic duties (pp. 577–588). 3–Themes such as human rights, inequality, and global responsibility are framed as ongoing concerns rather than as being settled.			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	3
	Notes: 3–The ‘Inquiry Activity’ sections ask students to analyze primary and secondary sources, compare perspectives, and evaluate evidence related to human rights, genocide, and activism (pp. 577–584). 3–The chapter clearly demonstrates that the way we understand history is shaped by how sources are selected and framed, especially in case studies of Darfur, Bosnia, and Rwanda (pp. 578–582). 2–How historians debate or shift their interpretations over time is implied, however, the chapter offers strong opportunities for students to actually practice and develop historiographical awareness, rather than just being told.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter's underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter shows how the world post-Cold War was interconnected with ongoing challenges; it shows how the ideological conflict didn't really end at the 'end' of the war, rather it was replaced by new developing challenges; continuity is also seen in the ways those challenges continue to impact our world today.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students' interpretations? <i>There is a clear tension in the chapter between democratic ideals that are emphasized and the persistence of inequality and authoritarianism that are not really resolved post-Cold War years.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>The chapter clearly shows how political and economic power influence historical outcomes, but the narrative seems to focus more on state/national actions more than the consequences people actually endured or their lived experiences.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>Students are encouraged to see themselves as potential agents of change as many ordinary people are highlighted within the chapter as creating change; protestors, activists, and everyday people are shown creating meaningful change.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter portrays legal documents, data, maps, media, and personal stories as types of evidence; this helps students see that history is understood through many forms of evidence.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>The chapter creates strong opportunities for students to connect history to modern issues through topics like climate change, migration, inequality, and human rights, which are all significant parts of the narrative, but somewhat implicit.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The chapter shows that a variety of evidence is gathered and analyzed to create this narrative, but it is not made visible how that evidence was selected or omitted. Students participate in inquiry activities that allow them to act as historians, yet, like</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>the previous chapter, the text stops short of encouraging students to question the textbook itself. At the same time, the inclusion of multiple and often competing perspectives (e.g., through inquiry activities using primary sources) creates a strong foundation for students to develop historiographical awareness in practice. From a pedagogical standpoint, this raises an important question: is it necessary for the textbook to explicitly explain historiography when students are already engaging in it? In this case, the act of practicing historical analysis may be more powerful than simply being told how historical narratives are constructed. But at the same time, I don't want to underestimate the value of questioning how narratives, especially the main narrative presented, are constructed.</i>			

World Civilizations: The Global Experience, Since 1200 (Stearns et al., 2021)

Chapter 9: The World in 1450: Changing Balance of World Power (pp. 213-230)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter clearly frames the time (1450) as a moment of transition rather than inevitability, emphasizing changes among Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas rather than the typical linear rise of the West (pp. 213–215). 3–Multiple regions are presented (Middle East, China, Europe, Americas, Polynesia) as developing globally in a non-linear and balanced representation, rather than a single dominant framing (pp. 216–229). 3–The narrative consistently highlights contingency, such as China’s decision to abandon maritime expeditions and Europe’s uncertain early expansion, stressing that outcomes could have changed (pp. 217–219, 224–226). 3–The visual timelines and thematic overview (“Global Connections and Central Themes”) clearly explain continuity and change across regions rather than focusing on individual civilizations (pp. 215, 229).			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	
	Notes: 3–The chapter presents multiple explanations for notable shifts. For example, the “Rise of the West,” explicitly asks students to consider competing interpretations rather than a single cause, and even acknowledges that their (the authors’) explanations may not be entirely adequate (pp. 218–220). 3–Regions which have been traditionally marginalized in Eurocentric narratives (e.g., Polynesia, West Africa, the Americas) are treated as distinct regions with rich histories rather than how they relate to European contact (pp. 226–230). 3–The primary sources presented (e.g., Ibn Al-Wardi on the Bubonic Plague) represent non-European perspectives on global events (pp. 220–221). 3–Students are encouraged to question assumptions, such as whether China “should” have continued expeditions, which reinforces the ongoing interpretive nature of history rather than presenting it as an ending to the story (p. 230).			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	Notes: 3–Power is situated within broader contexts, such as imperial administration, trade networks, and religious power (e.g., Ottoman control of trade routes, Iberian state-sponsored exploration) (pp. 216–219, 224). 3–The reasons for European expansion are explained as coming from internal pressures (plague, labor shortages, fragmentation), not superiority (pp. 218–226). 3–The “Thinking Historically: The Problem of Ethnocentrism” section explicitly shows how power and perspective shape the narrative, which makes the construction of “official knowledge” visible to students (pp. 228–229). 3–As colonial patterns are introduced, early experimentation and uncertainty are presented alongside it, opposed to a straightforward narrative of domination (pp. 224–226).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	3
	Notes: 3–Throughout the chapter, Non-European societies are portrayed as active decision-makers (e.g., Ming rulers ending overseas expeditions for internal reasons) (pp. 217–218). 3–Polynesian societies are shown as innovators in navigation, society, and their environments, not as stagnant (pp. 226–228). 3–Islamic societies are shown as shaping trade and mutually exchanging intellectual culture, as well as responding to crises (e.g., response to the Bubonic Plague and trade networks) (pp. 216–217, 220–221).			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural,	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?		evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	
	Notes: 3–The chapter presents various types of evidence, including maps, trade data, architectural images, art, and written primary sources (pp. 215, 219–223, 225-228). 3–Cultural aspects (e.g., Renaissance art or Polynesian navigation practices) are presented as historical evidence alongside political and economic records (pp. 222–223, 227). 3–The visual sources are presented to show how the times were interpreted rather than simply reinforcing a linear narrative. For example, the world map showing limited European knowledge demonstrates a misconception of the time (pp. 225).			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	2.5
	Notes: 3–There are multiple critical thinking questions that encourage students to connect past choices to historical reasoning (e.g., evaluating decisions with hindsight and specifically questioning inevitability) (p. 230). 2–The chapter presents various themes such as migration, disease, religious conflict, and economic issues that students can connect to enduring human issues, but these connections are implied (through the chapter).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	2–Ethical considerations are present in terms of conquest, labor, inequality, etc., which open discussion for moral reflection, but these are not explicit (throughout chapter).			
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter repeatedly shows how historical explanations are constructed and debated, especially in sections explicitly asking why certain developments occurred rather than presenting settled answers. 3–The “Rise of the West” section strongly displays historiographical awareness by showing multiple causes to Europe’s rise while explicitly rejecting the notion of one explanation, and even acknowledges that their (the authors’) own explanations do not tell the whole story (pp. 218-220). 3–The ethnocentrism section specifically addresses bias, perspective, and the dangers of projecting cultural values onto the past (pp. 228–229). 3–The questions throughout the chapter encourage students to interpret evidence and think critically about events in various ways.			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>The chapter is built around the idea of the balance of power shifting rather than linear progress. Students are encouraged to</i>				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>see 1450 as a time when old systems still mattered while new ones were beginning. Continuity is shown through trade networks, belief systems, and politics/governmental structures, even as disruption in various regions occurs.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students' interpretations? <i>The narrative shows a tension between framing Europe as 'rising' while also emphasizing that Europe was still relatively weak compared to other societies. Still, though, the narrative still builds toward European expansion, which is typical for chronological structured textbooks. A notable difference in this chapter is that the Americas and Polynesia are discussed in terms of their distinct societal advancements.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Power is mostly shown through states, leaders, and systems of trade. The chapter does a good job showing how political and economic consideration were central to decision-making in places like Ming China or Iberian Europe. At the same time, there is not as much focus on everyday people; the narrative still leans toward institutional power.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The narrative implies that many regions actively impact the world, not just Europe. For example, China's choice to withdraw from maritime exploration, Polynesian navigation, and Islamic trade networks all demonstrate agency. For students, this can open their perceptions to who is capable of making change and shaping history. However, because long-term consequences often center on European expansion, students may still come away feeling that some groups matter more later.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter uses a variety of sources like maps, data, images, and written sources, which helps students see that history isn't built from just one kind of evidence. Art, architecture, and geography, not just political documents, are also emphasized. The variety of sources supports epistemic diversity, but the narrative still does much of the meaning-making for them (not with all sources though; some directly ask students to make meaning of them).</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways?			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
<i>Students are encouraged to make connections to enduring human issues through the chapter's themes like disease, migration, and religious conflict. The plague sections specifically invite reflection on fear, blame, and resilience in times of crisis, which can easily be connected to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the connections aren't spelled out for students, the material creates natural openings for those discussions in the classroom.</i> • What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The chapter makes it clear, especially in sections on the rise of the West and ethnocentrism, that history is interpretive. Students see that historians ask why things happened, not just what happened, and that multiple explanations can exist at once. The use of guiding questions and competing interpretations models historical thinking as an ongoing process rather than a settled story. This is the strongest text I've encountered in this regard.</i>				

Chapter 20: *Civilizations in Crisis: The Ottoman Empire, the Islamic Heartlands, and Qing China* (pp. 549-574)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter portrays moments of crisis as having many causes including internal weaknesses, external pressures, and long-term structural problems rather than sudden collapse (e.g., Ottoman reforms, Qing bureaucracy, Islamic heartlands under pressure) (pp. 549–552, 565–566). 3–Moments of decline are presented as uneven and contested, and shows that reform and resistance were unfolding alongside decline (Tanzimat reforms, Self-Strengthening Movement, Boxer Rebellion) (pp. 552–555, 568–570). 3–Students are encouraged to see crisis as a process, not an endpoint, and that states responded and negotiated issues in different ways (pp. 552–555, 568–572). 3–The narrative demonstrates how non-linear global change occurred, for example, through the simultaneous and sustained focus on the Ottoman Empire and Qing China, instead of just a single narrative of Western dominance (pp. 549–551, 562–566).			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	historically marginalized—so that students can critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?	representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	
	Notes: 3–The text shows many different ways that societies responded to crises (e.g., reform, religion, nationalist movements, armed rebellion, etc.) without suggesting that one was the “correct” path (pp. 552–555, 565–572). 3–Islamic (e.g., Mahdist Revolt) and Chinese (e.g., Taiping or Boxer) resistance movements are explained through internal grievances, and are not dismissed as irrational (pp. 560–563, 568–570). 3–Reformers from different societies are portrayed from their own perspectives (showing their grievances), which displays the tensions within societies rather than framing resistance as simply anti-Western (pp. 552–555, 568–570). 3–The authors specifically push students to think about alternative narratives by asking why reform succeeded in some places and failed in others (pp. 572–573).			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3–The force of European economic and military pressures are clearly identified as influencing trade and political decisions in multiple regions (pp. 551–552, 567–568).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	3–The text shows how state authority can be weakened over time through internal power struggles (e.g., rules and elites or reformers and traditionalists) (pp. 552–554, 565–566). 3–Decline in states, such as the Qing and Ottomans, are portrayed as caused by several factors including debt and unequal treaties, and it’s made clear that the decline was not the result of their choice (pp. 566–568, 570–573). 3–The narrative makes it clear how power shapes the story being told, for example, with how Western intrusion often outlines how the problems are created and explained (pp. 572–573).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	3
	Notes: 3–The narrative portrays ordinary, community-based people/groups as active decision-makers, whether through reform (Tanzimat, Self-Strengthening), resistance (Mahdists, Boxers), or nationalist organizing (pp. 552–555, 568–570). 3–Religious movements are shown as being meaningful forces, not just how they reacted to Western interaction (pp. 555–562). 3–The narrative shows that reformers drew on Confusian, Christian, and nationalist ideas to improve their society (pp. 568–571). 3–The narrative does not portray societies as passive victims, as aspects of agency are emphasized even among failure or collapse (throughout the chapter).			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural,	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?			
	Notes: 3–The narrative presents maps, timelines, visual sources, and secondary explanations to show how crises unfolded in different regions and over time (Ottoman and Qing maps, figures 20.1–20.6; pp. 551, 561, 563–564). 3–The narrative treats religious beliefs and cultural practices as legitimate sources/evidence, such as Mahdism (pp. 560–562). 3–Economic, military, and diplomatic forms of evidence are combined with cultural explanations, rather than being central to the narrative.			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	2
	Notes: 2–The narrative includes themes, such as reform vs. tradition or foreign influence, that students can connect to modern debates about globalization, influence, and cultural identity, but these connections are not made explicit. 2–Students can connect to the human experience of experiencing instability (i.e., fear, resistance, hope, etc.) through reform movements or any form of instability, but these are not made explicit in the text. 2–Overall, the chapter supports relevance indirectly, as it creates a natural space for discussion but it doesn’t make the connections to modern issues explicit.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historiographical Awareness	To what extent does the textbook make visible how historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	3
	Notes: 3–The narrative emphasizes the interpretive nature of societal decline, rather than assumed as a natural development, which questions traditional narratives that explain Western power as a result of cultural superiority (pp. 572–573). 3–The narrative presents opposing explanations (e.g., breakdown of bureaucracy, economic hardship, foreign influence, etc.) for societal decline side by side, without emphasizing one over the other (pp. 565–567). 3–The organization of the narrative invites students to compare regions in a way that reinforces that historical outcomes depend on context and choices rather than some universal force (pp. 549–551).			
Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric: - How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity? <i>This chapter is built around the idea that crisis is not sudden or simple. Societal decline is presented as slow and uneven. The narrative makes clear that change happens through attempts at reform, resistance, and adaptation; it’s not a clean or sudden process, and societies don’t just fail. Continuity is shown in the way traditional systems (e.g., religion or powerful state leaders) persist even as states weaken.</i> - What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations?				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
<i>The narrative creates a constant tension between attempts at reform and resistance. Reformers are portrayed as trying to save their societies, even when they fail, while religious or other popular movements are presented as both effective and destabilizing; this allows students to question if these movements were alternatives or something else, maybe representing deeper problems. On another note, sustained attention to ordinary people and their lived experiences is minimal.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>Power is shown through multiple levels (e.g., imperial governments, local elites, religious leaders, foreign states, etc.), and all as impacting outcomes. However, even with a balanced representation of various regions, European military and economic power still seem to be the backbone of the chapter. At the same time, internal power struggles are portrayed as important. The chapter makes power visible but still tends to center formal political influence more than social or collective (of everyday people) power.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The narrative portrays people in different regions as trying to determine their own futures, even when they fail. Reformers, rebels, and religious leaders all appear as people making choices while faced with real limitations; this can help students see that historical agency exists even in moments of decline or within constraints.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter helps students understand history through multiple sources like political reforms, military outcomes, religious movements, and visual sources like maps and images. Belief systems (e.g., Islamic revivalism or Confucian governance) are also presented as legitimate sources of knowledge; this supports multiple ways of knowing history.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>Themes of foreign pressure, reform debates, or preserving one's own culture feel very relevant to the modern world. Students can easily connect these struggles to current conversations about globalization and national identity, however, these connections are not made explicit.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past?				

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
<i>The idea that decline has a single cause is challenged throughout the chapter. The narrative shows how economic, political, cultural, and foreign pressures are used to piece together explanations, rather than simply uncover truths. A strong example of this is the comparison between the Ottoman Empire and Qing China, which reinforces that similar pressures can lead to different outcomes.</i>				

Chapter 29: *Rebirth and Revolution: Nation-Building in East Asia and the Pacific Rim* (pp. 847-880)

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historical Complexity	To what extent does the textbook present history as a dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative?	Assesses whether the text reflects historical consciousness by emphasizing change, continuity, contingency, and non-deterministic narratives.	Multiple regions represented; non-linear narratives; contrasting interpretations; timelines showing parallel developments; acknowledgment of uncertainty or contingency; avoidance of Western exceptionalism.	3
	Notes: 3–The chapter is built around the idea that crisis can also create opportunity; for example, war, occupation, and revolution are framed as destructive, but the productive aspects that made nation-building possible in Japan, China, Korea, and Vietnam are also acknowledged (throughout the chapter). 2–The narrative is primarily one of progress, especially around economic growth in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the “little Tigers,” where modernization is presented as evidence of national success and recovery (pp. 857–861, 877-878). 3–Uneven progress is shown; for example, revolutionary change in China and Vietnam brought both transformation and suffering rather than linear improvement (pp. 862–870, 871–877). 3–Despite differences between communist and capitalist systems, the chapter shows continuity in state power and control over everyday life.			
Interpretive Plurality	To what extent does the textbook provide multiple perspectives and interpretive frames—especially those historically marginalized—so that students can critically	Evaluates whether the text includes diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses that allow students to examine representation, silence, bias, and historical variation.	First-person accounts; counter-narratives; biographies of marginalized figures; multiple explanations of events; narrative tension; explicit attention to whose voice is missing.	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	examine whose voices are amplified or silenced?			
	Notes: 3–The narrative shows tension between Japan and South Korea experiencing strong economic growth, but showing that success comes with real costs, including strict work expectations, environmental problems, and limited political freedoms (pp. 855–859, 859–862). 3–China’s revolution is shown as hopeful and harmful at the same time: it promises equality, but it also leads to famine, political persecution, and widespread instability during the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution (pp. 862–871). 3–Vietnam’s story shows a contradiction between liberation and war: they gained independence, but only after many years of war, showing that national freedom came at an extremely high human cost (pp. 871–877). 2–Overall, the perspectives of everyday people appear indirectly with minimal first-person accounts (throughout the chapter).			
Contextual Power Dynamics	To what extent does the textbook acknowledge the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced—revealing power dynamics, contestation, and the constructed nature of “official knowledge”?	Assesses whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions.	Accounts of colonialism; explanations about how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians’ interpretations differ; discussion of ideology, nationalism, race, gender, or class in shaping stories.	3
	Notes: 3–Governments are shown as having political power, as they hold strong control over political life across the region, whether through communist rule in China and Vietnam or tightly managed governments in South Korea and Taiwan (pp. 853–859).			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	3–Economic growth is largely guided by the state, with governments deciding how industries develop, how people work, and how countries connect to global trade (throughout). 3–Ideas and culture are used to support government authority, such as communist ideology in China or strong nationalism and social discipline in postwar Japan and Korea (pp. 848-849, 864–867). 3–Outside powers, especially the United States, are shown to influence countries externally (pp. 850–852).			
Cultural Agency	To what extent does the textbook represent diverse cultures, peoples, and civilizations as active agents in shaping global history?	Evaluates representations of agency, decision-making, innovation, resistance, diplomacy, creativity, and cultural exchange.	Examples of resistance; technological or cultural innovations; leadership roles; reciprocal exchange (goods, knowledge, culture, etc.); avoidance of deficit framing.	2
	Notes: 2–The chapter shows history being shaped mostly by leaders and governments, such as Mao, Ho Chi Minh, and postwar leaders in Japan and Korea (pp. 862–866). 2–Ordinary people are shown taking part in labor, war, and political movements, but it doesn’t show them having control over final outcomes (pp. 865–867, 873–877). 2–Women are included in the story through expanded roles in work and education, and working toward equal rights (pp. 867-868).			
Epistemic Diversity	To what extent does the textbook incorporate diverse forms of knowledge (cultural, experiential, geographic, artistic, oral, Indigenous, etc.)?	Assesses epistemic diversity and whether the text validates multiple ways of knowing.	Oral histories; Indigenous knowledge; cultural practices as evidence; maps; artifacts; art; architecture; ecological knowledge.	2
	Notes: 2–The chapter mainly uses political explanations, economic data, and visuals like maps, charts, and photographs (throughout), while primary sources and first-person narratives are not a major presence.			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	2–Statistics and economic data are used to support the idea of modernization, especially when discussing Pacific Rim economies, but everyday perspectives of modernization are not present (pp. 857–862). 2–China and Vietnam are mostly explained through government policies and major campaigns, with less attention to personal stories or lived experiences (pp. 862–868, 871–878). 3–By comparing several regions, the chapter helps students see that countries followed different paths to becoming modern nations (throughout).			
Personal Relevance	To what extent does the textbook help students make meaningful connections between past, present, and future in ways that support identity development, civic understanding, and contextual relevance to contemporary social issues?	Evaluates whether the text supports identity development, civic understanding, ethical reasoning, and recognition of enduring human issues; core objectives of historically and culturally relevant education.	Discussion questions; ethical dilemmas; civic action prompts; modern parallels; identity-related themes; human condition questions; temporal connections (past–present–future).	3
	Notes: 3–Rebuilding after crisis, foreign influence, and national identity are all themes present in the chapter that can easily be connected to modern issues. 3–The chapter invites reflection on the consequences of rapid change (this could be connected to the current rapidly changing landscape of AI, for example), especially when economic success is prioritized over well-being (pp. 866–868, 875–877). 3–The Pacific Rim’s rise section makes explicit connections to why East Asia plays such a central role in today’s global economy and politics (pp. 877-878).			
	To what extent does the textbook make visible how	Assesses whether the text demonstrates that history is a	Explanations of how historians know what they know; references to	3

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
Historiographical Awareness	historical knowledge is constructed (e.g., through selection, interpretation, debate, etc.) and encourage readers to consider how we know what we know about the past?	discipline grounded in evidence-based interpretation. This includes acknowledging uncertainty, alternative explanations, and the interpretive choices historians make.	scholarly debate or changing interpretations; acknowledgment of selection or bias; notes on shifting narratives; multiple historian perspectives; discussions of omissions; brief methodological explanations.	
	Notes: 2–The narrative is constructed through judging success and failure based on long-term outcomes like growth, stability, and global influence (throughout chapter). 3–The chapter balances big-idea explanations, like war, ideology, or economics with leadership decisions, showing how historians weigh multiple causes (pp. 850–852, 865–867). 3–Competing interpretations are acknowledged, particularly regarding Maoism and U.S. intervention, which encourages students to see history as interpreted rather than settled (pp. 865-867).			

Memo prompts based on definitions in rubric:

- How do the chapter’s underlying patterns or assumptions (e.g., progress, decline, disruption, interconnection, etc.) shape how students are encouraged to understand historical change and continuity?
This chapter encourages students to see history as something that moves forward through disruption (e.g., war, collapse, revolution, etc.), followed by rebuilding. There seems to be an underlying message that experiencing devastation is not the end, but a place where reinvention is possible. Japan’s recovery, China’s revolution, and the rise of the Pacific Rim economies all reinforce a pattern where crisis becomes a catalyst for change rather than a dead end. However, there also shows continuity in strong centralized governments throughout.
- What tensions, contradictions, or absences in the narrative suggest competing ways this history could be told, and how might those alternative narratives shift students’ interpretations?
The narrative presents a clear tension between success and cost. Economic growth is highlighted, while human suffering often feels secondary. Japan’s recovery appears orderly and efficient, while China’s path is chaotic and violent, yet both are

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
	<i>treated as effective routes to modernization. A narrative focused on everyday experiences would better position students to question the justification of the process vs. outcomes.</i> - How does this chapter reveal or obscure the power structures (i.e., political, economic, cultural) that shaped both the historical events and the way the story is being told? <i>The narrative portrays governments, parties, and military forces as driving change. Voices that resist without succeeding or alternatives that didn't align with state goals are not explored. Thus, the narrative seems to privilege power that produces results.</i> - What does the narrative imply about who gets to shape the world, and how might the portrayal of agency here influence students' sense of belonging, capability, or possibility within the historical narrative? <i>The chapter suggests that history is driven primarily by states and larger economic or military systems. Ordinary people are portrayed as mattering most when they act together to support national goals, which can make history feel top-down, but it also shows the significance of community participation.</i> - How does the selection of sources, evidence, and ways of making meaning invite (or limit) students' recognition that history can be understood through multiple ways of knowing? <i>The chapter primarily presents a political narrative, economic data, timelines, and visuals as evidence. The sources presented tend to emphasize outcomes (e.g., economic growth) over individual experiences. As a result, students may understand what changed without fully understanding how those changes affected people's lives.</i> - In what ways could the themes, dilemmas, or human experiences in this chapter help students link historical understanding to identity, community, or contemporary issues in meaningful ways? <i>The chapter presents themes of rebuilding after crisis, pressure to succeed, and trade-offs between freedom and stability, which feel very contemporary. Students can connect this to conversations about education, competition, globalization, and inequality today, especially in terms of questioning who benefits from progress and who bears the costs. However, these connections are overall implicit.</i> - What does the chapter reveal about how historical knowledge is constructed, selected, or debated, and how might this shape students' understanding of how we know the past? <i>The chapter shows that history is constructed through choices about what matters most (e.g., economic growth, political stability, national outcomes, etc.); these choices will develop the story students receive and can make events feel more resolved than they actually were (especially since they lead to modernization). Since debates and alternative interpretations</i>			

Category	Evaluative Questions	Definition	Indicative Evidence in Text	Rating (0-3)
<i>are mostly implied rather than stated, students may not immediately recognize how much interpretation goes into historical writing. However, the comparative view of these societies in the post–Cold War period demonstrates how historical knowledge can be constructed to highlight the different ways Western influence shaped countries and led to uneven outcomes; the important thing to note is that it’s clearly an organizational approach that seems to serve its purpose, whether or not this would be clear to students.</i>				

Appendix I - AI-Assisted Pattern Identification Output (MAXQDA)

This appendix documents AI-assisted outputs generated using MAXQDA's built-in AI-assisted analysis tools, which were employed solely for descriptive data organization and pattern identification. Each section includes the full AI prompt and corresponding AI output, clearly documenting the inputs provided to the software and the descriptive summaries it generated in response. These tools produced summaries aligned with the study's guiding questions; however, all analytic categorization, pattern typology development, and interpretive findings were conducted independently by the researcher.

Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: Volume 2 (Adelman, Tignor, & Pollard, 2021)

MAXQDA AI Input:

You are assisting with qualitative data analysis for a dissertation on world history textbooks.

Please review *Appendix B – Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: Volume 2 (Adelman, Tignor, & Pollard, 2021)* and help identify recurring patterns, tendencies, or design features related to the following research focus:

How world history textbooks structure historical understanding in ways that do, or do not, support historically and culturally relevant teaching under real classroom constraints.

In your response, please do not draw conclusions or make evaluative judgments. Instead do the following:

- Identify examples of how historical thinking is *modeled* (e.g., interpretation, causation, contingency).
- Note what kinds of student engagement appear to be *invited or assumed*.
- Point out where interpretive work is made *visible* and where it remains *implicit or hidden*.
- Identify forms of relevance that appear to be built into the text *without requiring teacher mediation*.

Please organize your response using descriptive observations and illustrative examples drawn from the document, rather than summaries or conclusions.

MAXQDA AI Output:

Here are some observations regarding how Appendix B - Worlds Together, Worlds Apart - Volume 2, From 1000 CE to the Present (Adelman, Tignor, & Pollard, 2021) structures historical understanding, student engagement, interpretive work, and built-in relevance:

Modeling of Historical Thinking

- **Causation and Contingency:** The textbook models history as a dynamic and contingent process. For instance, the Black Death is framed as an "unintended consequence of interconnected trade networks rather than a single event" 1. Similarly, the recovery from the Black Death is presented as "unevenly across regions (China, Islamic world, Europe), emphasizing contingency rather than the same global progress or decline" 2. Political power is also shown as "emerging from crisis (Black Death), not necessarily as inevitable" 3. In a later chapter, industrialization, revolutions, and imperialism are presented as "processes that are contingent and uneven, and shaped by physical geography, resources, power, and global connections rather than as inevitable progress" 4. Globalization is also described as "uneven and contingent, and emphasizes simultaneous influence and inequality across distinct regions" 5.
- **Interpretation and Multiple Perspectives:** The text incorporates multiple perspectives and interpretive frames. For example, the Black Death is examined through "medical, religious, social, and political lenses" 6, and different regional interpretations are presented, such as "Islamic scholars, European religious responses, Confucian revival in Ming China" 7. The chapter on "Reordering the World, 1750-1850" includes perspectives from "enslaved people, colonized people, and critics of Enlightenment ideals through primary sources such as Frederick Douglass (...), the Haitian Declaration of Independence (...), and Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's response to French occupation in Egypt" 8. The chapter on "Globalization, 1970-2000" includes voices from "activists and marginalized groups through primary sources such as Václav Havel (...), the EZLN Declaration (...), World Bank and Amartya Sen texts" 9.
- **Power Dynamics and Constructed Narratives:** The textbook acknowledges the sociopolitical contexts in which historical narratives are produced. The chapter on "Crises and Recovery" explains "how elites used the crisis of the Black Death to gain power" 10 and describes religious persecution as "growth and the opportunity to gain power" 11. The chapter on "Reordering the World" explicitly addresses "how industrial capitalism and state power reshaped global hierarchies, including British dominance in India (...), coercive trade in China and the Opium Wars (...), and authoritarian reform in Russia and the Ottoman Empire" 12. The "Globalization" chapter analyzes "how state power, neoliberal economics, multinational corporations, supranational organizations (IMF, World Bank), and NGOs shape global outcomes" 13.

Invited or Assumed Student Engagement

- **Critical Examination of Voices:** The textbook appears to invite students to "critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced" by including diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses 14 15 16.

- **Recognition of Constructed History:** The text aims to help students "recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions" 17 18 19.
- **Making Connections:** The textbook includes features designed to help students "make meaningful connections between past, present, and future" 20 21 22. This is evident through "Focus questions invite reflection on crisis, recovery, religion, and government/politics" 23, and "Discussion questions and 'Thinking about Global Connections' prompts invite students to link historical change to civic power and social inequality" 24. The "Globalization" chapter also includes questions that "invite ethical and civic reflection from students" 25.
- **Understanding Agency:** The text represents diverse cultures and peoples as active agents, which could influence students' sense of belonging and capability within the historical narrative 26 27 28. For example, non-European states are portrayed as "innovators in government, architecture, and politics" 29, and "non-European actors are shown making strategic choices" 30. The "Globalization" chapter highlights "grassroots activism, social movements, and resistance" 31.

Visibility of Interpretive Work

- **Explicitly Visible:**
 - The "Globalization" chapter makes visible how knowledge is constructed through "comparison, debate, and interpretation, particularly in primary source analysis activity (e.g., discussion of democracy, development, famine, and human rights)" 32. The interpretive processes are explicitly stated as "visible" 33.
 - The inclusion of primary sources from various perspectives, such as Frederick Douglass or the Haitian Declaration of Independence, implicitly makes interpretive work visible by presenting different accounts of events 34.
- **Implicit or Hidden:**
 - In the "Crises and Recovery" chapter, while power dynamics are "clearly described," it is noted that the text is "primarily descriptive rather than revealing how the authors came to that narrative" 35.
 - The chapter on "Crises and Recovery" presents multiple explanations but "doesn't really explain how historians consider evidence or debate different interpretations" 36. Uncertainty and content selection are "not clear" 37, and the chapter "does not explicitly discuss historiographical disagreement or methodology" 38. History is presented as a narrative, but "it's not clear on how the interpretation of that narrative takes place" 39.
 - In the "Reordering the World" chapter, while different outcomes and competing ideological claims are compared, the text "does not explicitly discuss how historians select or debate historical knowledge. Overall, the interpretive process is implicit rather than explained" 40. The memo prompts also note that "epistemic uncertainty remains due to vague or lacking explanations of how knowledge was selected or constructed by historians" 41.

Forms of Relevance Built into the Text (without requiring teacher mediation)

- Thematic Connections to Contemporary Issues: The textbook incorporates themes that inherently connect to modern concerns. For example, the "Crises and Recovery" chapter contains "Themes of pandemic, social disruption, inequality, and power relate to modern concerns" 42. The "Reordering the World" chapter features "Themes of labor exploitation, inequality, migration, protest, rights, revolution, etc. connect past experiences to enduring human issues" 43. The "Globalization" chapter highlights "Themes of migration, inequality, health (HIV/AIDS), gender, environmental crisis, citizenship, and human rights directly connect past to present" 44.
- Discussion Questions and Prompts: The inclusion of "Focus questions" 45, "Discussion questions and 'Thinking about Global Connections' prompts" 46, and questions at the end of chapters 47 are designed to prompt students to make connections and reflect on the material without direct teacher intervention.
- Diverse Forms of Knowledge: The extensive use of "maps, demographic tables, art, architecture, and cultural materials/artifacts" 48, "statistical tables, political cartoons, paintings, and architecture" 49, and "demographic data, maps, photographs, political texts, oral testimony—style narratives, economic analysis, and visual evidence" 50 provides multiple ways for students to engage with and understand historical information, potentially making it more relevant to different learning styles and backgrounds.

Teaching World History Thematically (Metro, 2020)

MAXQDA AI Input:

You are assisting with qualitative data analysis for a dissertation on world history textbooks.

Please review *Teaching World History Thematically (Metro, 2020)* and help identify recurring patterns, tendencies, or design features related to the following research focus:

How world history textbooks structure historical understanding in ways that do, or do not, support historically and culturally relevant teaching under real classroom constraints.

In your response, please do not draw conclusions or make evaluative judgments. Instead do the following:

- Identify examples of how historical thinking is *modeled* (e.g., interpretation, causation, contingency).
- Note what kinds of student engagement appear to be *invited or assumed*.
- Point out where interpretive work is made *visible* and where it remains *implicit or hidden*.
- Identify forms of relevance that appear to be built into the text *without requiring teacher mediation*.

Please organize your response using descriptive observations and illustrative examples drawn from the document, rather than summaries or conclusions.

MAXQDA AI Output:

The textbook, *Teaching World History Thematically* (Metro, 2020), demonstrates several patterns in structuring historical understanding, student engagement, interpretive work, and built-in relevance.

Historical Thinking Modeled

The textbook models historical thinking through various approaches, emphasizing interpretation, causation, and contingency:

- **Contingency and Non-deterministic Narratives:** History is presented as a "dynamic, contingent process rather than a predetermined narrative" 1. This is evident in the "Conflict" chapter, which uses a "non-linear, thematic organization across time and place" and "parallel case studies" like the Crusades and Napoleonic Wars instead of a single chronological framing 2. Explicit framing questions such as "What is worth fighting for?" foreground "contingency and human choice rather than inevitability" 3. Similarly, the "Economics, Technology, and the Environment" chapter compares different economic systems "without presenting one as inevitable" 4. It also highlights the difference between "intended outcomes vs. actual consequences," such as Mao's Great Leap Forward leading to famine despite aims for efficiency, and Chernobyl being both a solution and a catastrophe 5. The "Resistance, Revolution, and Reform" chapter emphasizes that change "comes from struggle and choice, not as inevitable progress" 6.
- **Causation and Varying Consequences:** The text repeatedly draws attention to "causes, motivations, and consequences that vary across contexts" 7. For instance, it compares nationalism in WWI with ethnic construction in Rwanda 8.
- **Contrasting Interpretations and Perspectives:** The textbook frequently presents "contrasting interpretations" and "multiple perspectives" 9 10. In the "Conflict" chapter, "conflicting viewpoints are intentionally paired (e.g., Herzl and Arafat; colonial officials and Congolese testimony)" 11. The "Economics, Technology, and the Environment" chapter has students encounter "conflicting interpretations of economics" from Adam Smith, Marxist critiques, and Mao's justifications for collectivization 12. The Chernobyl lesson contrasts "official Soviet statements with later historical assessments and personal reflections" 13. In the "Resistance, Revolution, and Reform" chapter, "various contrasting interpretations of violence, reform, and what is deemed legitimate action (Gandhi vs. Fanon; Stalin vs. critics)" are presented 14.
- **History as Constructed:** The text assesses "whether the text helps students recognize that history is constructed, shaped by power, contestation, and sociopolitical conditions" 15 16 17. This is evident in discussions of colonialism, propaganda, ideology, and state power 18 19 20. The "Historiographical Awareness" section notes that the chapter "makes it very clear that understanding of historical events depends on perspective, selection of sources, and interpretation; this encourages students to see history as contested rather than fixed" 21.

Kinds of Student Engagement Invited or Assumed

The textbook invites and assumes several forms of student engagement:

- **Critical Analysis and Evaluation:** Students are asked to "critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced" 22 23. Vocabulary lists focus on "key interpretive concepts such as nationalism, genocide, propaganda, and sovereignty, supporting critical analysis" 24. Activities ask students to "identify bias, compare viewpoints, and explain how different groups understood the same events" 25. In the "Economics, Technology, and the Environment" chapter, students are repeatedly asked to "evaluate 'How should people get the resources they need?'" 26. The "Resistance, Revolution, and Reform" chapter includes "reflection questions that ask whether change should happen 'quickly or slowly' and at what cost" 27.
- **Ethical Reasoning and Moral Choices:** The text includes "repeated reflection prompts asking students to evaluate moral choices ('What is worth fighting for?)" 28. The curriculum is "explicitly designed to connect historical conflict to students' ethical reasoning and civic identity" 29. In the "Resistance, Revolution, and Reform" chapter, students are asked to "judge the effectiveness of movements and ethical considerations" 30.
- **Comparison and Synthesis:** Students are expected to compare different historical events, perspectives, and strategies. For example, activities ask students to "compare resistance strategies across different events (e.g., Gandhi vs. Menchú, Fanon vs. Havel)" 31.
- **Imagining Themselves in Historical Situations:** "Opening questions ask what students would do if their lives were threatened or voices silenced" 32. "Reflection prompts connect disagreement, courage, and responsibility to everyday life" 33.

Where Interpretive Work is Made Visible and Where it Remains Implicit or Hidden

- **Visible Interpretive Work:**
 - **Explicit Framing Questions:** The unit questions themselves, such as "What is Worth Fighting For?" 34 and "How Should People Get the Resources They Need?" 35, explicitly foreground interpretive work by asking students to consider open-ended questions rather than seeking single answers.
 - **Paired Conflicting Viewpoints:** The intentional pairing of "conflicting viewpoints" (e.g., Herzl and Arafat) makes the interpretive nature of history visible by showing that historical events are understood differently by different actors 36.
 - **Teacher-Facing Explanations:** The document notes "Teacher-facing explanations that situate documents within political contexts rather than presenting them as neutral accounts" 37. This makes the interpretive choices in document selection and framing visible to the teacher, who can then mediate this for students.
 - **Contrasting Intentions and Outcomes:** Presenting "conflicting explanations of Mao's 'Great Leap Forward' (intent vs. outcome)" makes visible the interpretive challenge of understanding historical causality and consequences 38.
 - **Modeling Historiographical Debate:** The "Historiographical Awareness" section in the "Resistance, Revolution, and Reform" chapter notes that the text "models it well by placing competing interpretations side by side and by providing the perspectives from each source beforehand. Students are asked to evaluate credibility, bias, and purpose across sources that openly disagree" 39.
- **Implicit or Hidden Interpretive Work:**

- Oversimplification of Complex Ideas: The text "sometimes condenses complex ideas (e.g., capitalism vs. communism) into short comparative lessons that could risk oversimplification" 40. This condensation might implicitly hide some of the nuances and complexities of these ideologies, requiring further interpretive work from students or teachers.
- Implied Marginalized Perspectives: While the inclusion of marginalized voices is strong, "some perspectives (e.g., peasant resistance during collectivization) are more implied than directly voiced" 41. This means students might need to infer these perspectives rather than having them explicitly presented.
- Teacher Guidance for Historiography: While the text implicitly shows that history depends on perspective and evidence, it "requires teacher guidance to be made explicit" for students 42. This suggests that the full interpretive implications of contrasting documents might not be immediately obvious to students without mediation.
- Focus on Resisters' Voices: The "Resistance, Revolution, and Reform" chapter "largely focuses on the voice of the resisters, which means the perspectives of state leaders or everyday people who did not resist are less visible, so their perspectives remain untold" 43. This selective focus implicitly shapes the narrative and the interpretive lens through which students understand power dynamics.
- Implicit Methodological Explanations: While the chapter invites students to treat lived experience and moral perspectives as evidence, "How historians actually consider or verify these various sources is mostly implicit" 44.

Forms of Relevance Built into the Text Without Requiring Teacher Mediation

The textbook incorporates several forms of relevance that appear to be designed to connect with students directly:

- Connections to Contemporary Issues: The text includes "comparisons between historical conflicts and contemporary issues (e.g., Yemen, Israel/Palestine, Rwanda)" 45. The "Economics, Technology, and the Environment" chapter directly connects "recent history to present-day student activism (Lesson 6.1, Greta Thunberg speech)" 46. Themes like "labor, environmental consequences, inequality, human rights, and government responsibility connect directly to students' lives today (e.g., climate change, debates about sources of needed energy, labor conditions)" 47.
- Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Choices: "Explicit ethical reasoning tasks and discussion questions throughout the unit" are present 48. The "Chernobyl lesson, the prompts ask students to weigh risks and benefits of nuclear power today" 49. Questions about "whether violence is ever justified and when speaking out is worth the risk provides a natural way for students to think about civic responsibility and moral choice in ways that are relevant to them today" 50.
- Identity Development and Civic Understanding: The curriculum is "explicitly designed to connect historical conflict to students' ethical reasoning and civic identity" 51. The "Resistance, Revolution, and Reform" chapter sends a "strong message that ordinary people matter; peasants, Indigenous communities, regular people who disagree are shown as initiators of change, not background figures. This can help students see themselves as people who could make a difference" 52.

- Enduring Human Issues: The "Economics, Technology, and the Environment" unit frames history as "a series of various efforts to solve basic human enduring issues (e.g., food, energy, labor)" 53.

Panorama: A World History, Volume 2, From 1300 (Dunn & Mitchell, 2021)

MAXQDA AI Input:

You are assisting with qualitative data analysis for a dissertation on world history textbooks.

Please review *Panorama: A World History, Volume 2, From 1300 (Dunn & Mitchell, 2021)* and help identify recurring patterns, tendencies, or design features related to the following research focus:

How world history textbooks structure historical understanding in ways that do, or do not, support historically and culturally relevant teaching under real classroom constraints.

In your response, please do not draw conclusions or make evaluative judgments. Instead do the following:

- Identify examples of how historical thinking is *modeled* (e.g., interpretation, causation, contingency). You don't have to address all of these, just the most prominent patterns.
- Note what kinds of student engagement appear to be *invited or assumed*.
- Point out where interpretive work is made *visible* and where it remains *implicit or hidden*.
- Identify forms of relevance that appear to be built into the text *without requiring teacher mediation*.

MAXQDA AI Output:

The analysis of Appendix D - Panorama - A World History, Volume 2, From 1300 (Dunn & Mitchell, 2021) reveals several patterns related to how historical understanding is structured, the types of student engagement invited, the visibility of interpretive work, and built-in forms of relevance.

Modeling of Historical Thinking:

- Causation and Interconnection: The textbook frequently models historical understanding through clear cause-and-effect explanations, particularly in relation to economic growth and globalization 1 2 3. For instance, Chapter 18 emphasizes "rapid change and expansion through global trade networks and exchanges" as interconnected across regions 4. Similarly, Chapter 23 is "primarily organized around the position that progress occurred through industrialization and globalization," acknowledging "disruption and inequalities as consequences" 5. Chapter 26 frames World War II as emerging from

"intertwined causes, such as: poor economy, continued imperial efforts, fascism, and failed diplomacy" 6 7.

- Contingency: While some chapters present history as moving in a clear direction, others explicitly acknowledge contingency. Chapter 26, for example, frames the outcome of WWII as "uncertain until late stages" and postwar outcomes like the Cold War and decolonization as "contingent, not as guaranteed results or outcomes of the war" 8. In contrast, Chapter 18 is noted for often presenting changes in a way that "suggests changes move in a clear direction rather than showing how uneven or uncertain those developments were" 9.
- Change and Continuity: The text highlights rapid change, especially through industrialization and globalization 10 11 12. However, the concept of continuity is less explored, particularly regarding Indigenous, African, and Asian societies in Chapter 18 13. In Chapter 23, continuity "seems to appear mainly by showing sustaining social hierarchies" 14.

Kinds of Student Engagement Invited or Assumed:

- Understanding Structures and Systems: The frequent use of "maps, charts, and economic data" 15 16 17 18 suggests an invitation for students to engage with and understand large-scale structures and economic systems. This is particularly evident in Chapter 18, where prompts are "focused on economic matters" 19, and Chapter 23, which uses "economic data, maps, and synthesized explanations of events" to encourage "a good understanding of the structures in place driving change" 20.
- Passive Reception of Information: The recurring observation that the narrative presents history as "settled" and "explanatory" 21 22 23 24 implies an assumption that students will primarily absorb information rather than actively question or interpret it. This is reinforced by the limited attention to "debate or interpretation" 25 26 27.
- Implicit Connection-Making: While themes like globalization, inequality, and labor systems offer "strong potential connections to modern issues" 28 29 30, these connections are often "implicit and not explicitly developed for students" 31 32 33 34. This suggests an assumption that students, possibly with teacher guidance, will make these connections themselves.

Visibility of Interpretive Work:

- Implicit or Hidden Interpretive Work: The textbook generally presents historical knowledge as "settled" and "uncontested" 35 36 37. There is "limited attention to debate or interpretation" 38 39 40 and "little discussion of historiography, debated evidence, or differing perspectives" 41. This approach tends to obscure the interpretive choices historians make and how historical narratives are constructed 42 43 44. For example, visual sources are used to illustrate trade and labor but are "not presented as interpretive whatsoever" 45.
- Limited Acknowledgment of Bias/Construction: While some chapters acknowledge power dynamics in historical events 46 47, there is less explicit discussion about "how the narrative was constructed, whose perspective it reflects, or how historians' interpretations differ" 48 49. The text often describes systems "in neutral ways, which can obscure how power was actively enforced through coercion and violence" 50.

Forms of Relevance Built into the Text:

- Thematic Relevance to Contemporary Issues: The chapters inherently contain themes that are relevant to modern issues, such as "globalization, inequality, and labor systems" 51 52 53 54. Chapter 26 explicitly connects WWII to "the Cold War, the United Nations, decolonization, Israel/Palestine, and global power shifts" 55. These thematic connections are present in the content itself, even if not explicitly highlighted for students.
- Human Experiences (Implied Relevance): The text includes discussions of "human experiences (migration, displacement, exploitation)" 56 and "civilian suffering" 57, which offer "clear opportunities for student connection" 58. While personal accounts are often absent, the description of these experiences provides an inherent, albeit implied, relevance to human issues.
- Economic and Political Parallels: The focus on "global economic growth" 59 and "imperial expansion" 60 in Chapter 23, and the "strong connections to the global economy" 61, offer built-in parallels to contemporary economic and political landscapes.

World History: A Concise Thematic Analysis, Volume 2 (Wallech et al., 2013)

MAXQDA AI Input:

You are assisting with qualitative data analysis for a dissertation on world history textbooks.

Please review *Appendix E - World History: A Concise Thematic Analysis, Volume 2 (Wallech et al., 2013)* and help identify recurring patterns, tendencies, or design features related to the following research focus:

How world history textbooks structure historical understanding in ways that do, or do not, support historically and culturally relevant teaching under real classroom constraints.

In your response, please do not draw conclusions or make evaluative judgments. Instead do the following:

- Identify examples of how historical thinking is *modeled* (e.g., interpretation, causation, contingency). You don't have to address all of these, just the most prominent patterns.
- Note what kinds of student engagement appear to be *invited or assumed*.
- Point out where interpretive work is made *visible* and where it remains *implicit or hidden*.
- Identify forms of relevance that appear to be built into the text *without requiring teacher mediation*.

MAXQDA AI Output:

The document "Appendix E - World History: A Concise Thematic Analysis, Volume 2 (Wallech et al., 2013)" provides an evaluation of three chapters from a world history textbook, focusing on various pedagogical aspects.

Examples of how historical thinking is modeled:

Causation and Contingency:

- The textbook explains European expansion through multiple interacting factors such as disease, technology, navigation, and state power, rather than a single cause 1. It compares Africa and the Americas to explain differential success in European conquest, emphasizing geography and disease as key factors 2.
- Power is framed through various forces (technology, medicine, ideology) coming together, and turning points like new medicine, industrial weapons, and nation-state formation demonstrate shifts rather than predetermined outcomes 3.
- The chapter on decolonization presents post-World War II as a time of rapid change, emphasizing cause-and-effect relationships between war and opposing ideologies 4 5.
- The text discusses how change depended on knowledge and changing conditions, indicating that it was not inevitable 6.

Interpretation:

- The textbook implicitly models how a narrative is formed through various forms of evidence 7.
- It demonstrates that history is interpreted through competing theories, particularly concerning economics and social thought, and shows how different thinkers (e.g., Smith vs. Marx) can explain the same phenomena differently 8.
- The narrative explains how Cold War ideology influenced subsequent events 9.

Kinds of student engagement invited or assumed:

- The textbook's structure and content often assume that teachers will mediate connections to contemporary issues, ethical dilemmas, and civic understanding. For example, themes of inequality, exploitation, labor, and globalization offer potential connections to contemporary issues, but these connections would rely on teacher prompts as there are no embedded questions or prompts in the text 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17.
- The inclusion of a suggested reading list signals historiographical debate, but its utility for secondary application would require teacher initiative to access and adapt these resources 18.
- The text implicitly invites students to see history as explainable through data by relying on scientific and structural evidence like maps, disease, population change, and trade patterns 19.

Where interpretive work is made visible and where it remains implicit or hidden:

Visible Interpretive Work:

- The textbook explicitly shows power dynamics through a mix of military force, technology, and economic forces 20. It emphasizes the power of human biology, especially immunity to disease, as a decisive advantage 21.
- It clearly connects slavery and plantation economies to long-term economic control 22.
- Military power, industrialism, medicine, and ideology are clearly connected to imperial expansion 23.
- The text explains how modern medicine removed Africa's disease barrier, enabling colonization 24.
- It clearly links economic theory to the justification of inequality (Ricardo, Malthus) and reveals how ideology (Social Darwinism) legitimized social inequality 25.
- The narrative demonstrates that history is interpreted through competing theories and shows how different thinkers explain the same phenomena 26.
- Decolonization is explained through the context of power struggles between the United States and the Soviet Union, and how outcomes in various regions were influenced by global forces 27.
- The continued economic dependence and external pressures after independence movements are highlighted 28.

Implicit or Hidden Interpretive Work:

- While the text suggests complexity, it often moves toward European dominance rather than exploring other open-ended possibilities 29.
- The focus on 'power differentials' and trade systems, while highlighting inequalities, appears to overshadow cultural perspectives 30.
- African and Indigenous societies are usually described in response to Europeans, rather than through their own worldviews 31.
- The textbook lacks first-person Indigenous or African voices, meaning the story leans toward explanation from the outside 32.
- While structural power is clearly defined, there is less attention on how the textbook narrative itself is a product of these power systems 33.
- The narrative moves forward in a linear way, which does not explore other alternatives, implicitly suggesting a predetermined path 34.
- The narrative still suggests a forward movement toward nation-states, implicitly downplaying the idea of contingency 35.
- The text primarily relies on political, economic, and military evidence, with minimal reference to oral traditions, Indigenous ways of knowing, or cultural practices as sources, and knowledge is often presented through a Western lens even when discussing non-Western societies 36. This implicitly limits students' recognition of multiple ways of knowing 37 38.
- The chapter does not acknowledge how historians argue or disagree, but it implicitly models how the narrative was formed through various forms of evidence 39.
- How historians select sources and decide what is excluded is not discussed, though interpretation is implicitly taught through comparison 40.
- The text rarely makes the interpretive nature of history explicit; how stories are selected or omitted is not clear, and everyday people's voices are limited 41.

Forms of relevance that appear to be built into the text without requiring teacher mediation:

- The themes of inequality, exploitation, labor, and globalization are present throughout the chapters, offering inherent connections to contemporary issues 42 43 44 45.
- Discussions of slavery, societal collapse, and long-term consequences of historical eras raise ethical and civic questions 46.
- Economic debates (wages, productivity, exploitation) clearly connect to contemporary capitalism and globalization 47.
- The consequences discussed in the decolonization narrative (e.g., Middle East conflict, economic dependency, Cold War) are still visible today, making these connections more explicit and allowing students to see how past decisions shape the present day 48.

World History: Patterns of Interaction (Beck et al., 2012)

MAXQDA AI Input:

You are assisting with qualitative data analysis for a dissertation on world history textbooks.

Please review *Appendix F - World History: Patterns of Interaction (Beck et al., 2012)* and help identify recurring patterns, tendencies, or design features related to the following research focus:

How world history textbooks structure historical understanding in ways that do, or do not, support historically and culturally relevant teaching under real classroom constraints.

In your response, please do not draw conclusions or make evaluative judgments. Instead do the following:

- Identify examples of how historical thinking is *modeled* (e.g., interpretation, causation, contingency). You don't have to address all of these, just the most prominent patterns.
- Note what kinds of student engagement appear to be *invited or assumed*.
- Point out where interpretive work is made *visible* and where it remains *implicit or hidden*.
- Identify forms of relevance that appear to be built into the text *without requiring teacher mediation*.

MAXQDA AI Output:

The analysis of Appendix F - World History: Patterns of Interaction (Beck et al., 2012) reveals several patterns in how historical understanding is structured, the types of student engagement invited, the visibility of interpretive work, and built-in forms of relevance.

Historical Thinking Modeled:

- **Causation:** The textbook frequently models causation, particularly in explaining major historical events. For instance, Chapter 20, "The Atlantic World," links European economic motives to the rise of the plantation economy and slavery 1. Similarly, Chapter 29, "The Great War," identifies several long-term causes for WWI, such as nationalism, militarism, alliances, and imperialism, presenting them as leading to the conflict 2. Chapter 35, "Struggles for Democracy," attributes democratic progress and setbacks to factors like economic crisis, the end of colonialism, and Cold War pressures 3.
- **Interconnection:** The concept of interconnection is prominent, especially in the "Atlantic World" chapter, which presents the Atlantic World as interconnected between Europe, Africa, and the Americas 4. The Columbian Exchange is explained as a "two-way transfer of plants, animals, and diseases" 5.
- **Contingency:** While some chapters acknowledge contingency, it is often minimized. In the "Atlantic World" chapter, the narrative follows a linear progression, and "contingency or alternative paths are not considered" 6. In the "Great War" chapter, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand is framed as a point of high escalation, but it "downplays contingency and other choices that were made or could have been made" 7. However, Chapter 35, "Struggles for Democracy," does present democracy as "both fragile and reversible," particularly through case studies where "democratic progress is repeatedly interrupted" 8.

Kinds of Student Engagement Invited or Assumed:

- **Comprehension:** A primary form of engagement invited is comprehension of the presented narrative. Assessment questions and embedded guiding questions often focus on checking understanding rather than critical thinking or ethical considerations 9 10.
- **Analysis of Motives and Fairness:** In some instances, students are invited to analyze motives and judge fairness, such as in Chapter 29 regarding the Treaty of Versailles 11.
- **Observation and Interpretation of Visuals:** The textbook includes various visual sources like maps, diagrams, photographs, and political cartoons 12 13 14 15 16. Students are implicitly invited to observe these, though the text often uses them to reinforce the narrative rather than to spark independent inquiry or questioning 17 18 19 20.
- **Connecting to Modern Issues (Implicit):** While explicit prompts are rare, the text implicitly invites students to connect historical themes to contemporary issues. For example, themes in the "Atlantic World" chapter like forced migration and economic exploitation could be linked to the present 21. Similarly, the "Great War" chapter's themes of nationalism and militarization could connect to modern global conflicts 22. The "Struggles for Democracy" chapter offers "strong opportunities for students to connect to issues such as corruption, protest, inequality, and authoritarianism" 23.

Visibility of Interpretive Work:

- **Explicitly Visible:** Interpretive work is explicitly visible in discussions of historical debate, such as the debate over responsibility and war guilt in relation to the Treaty of Versailles in Chapter 29 24. Chapter 35 also presents democracy as "contested" 25.
- **Implicit or Hidden:** More often, interpretive work remains implicit or hidden.

- The "Atlantic World" chapter presents history as a "settled story" rather than complex events with multiple interpretations 26. There is "no acknowledgment that narratives of exploration, conquest, or slavery are constructed or contested" 27.
- In the "Great War" chapter, explanations are generally "presented as settled rather than historically contested" 28. The process of source selection is not clear, and sources tend to reinforce the overall narrative rather than inviting students to compare or challenge interpretations 29 30.
- The "Struggles for Democracy" chapter presents a coherent story but "does not invite students to question how that story was built" 31. While primary sources are included, they "don't model inquiry, such as questioning reliability or perspective" 32.

Forms of Relevance Built into the Text (without requiring teacher mediation):

- Foundations of Modern Systems: The "Atlantic World" chapter notes that Atlantic trade "helped lay the foundations of the modern global economy" 33.
- Long-term Consequences: The "Great War" chapter frames the Treaty of Versailles as "destabilizing with an explanation of long-term consequences" 34.
- Ongoing Challenges to Democracy: The "Struggles for Democracy" chapter acknowledges "ongoing challenges after democracy" 35. It also explicitly acknowledges the "lasting effects of colonialism" as destabilizing forces in Africa 36.
- Mutual Influence: The "Atlantic World" chapter acknowledges "mutual influence in the Atlantic World, such as food, language, and religion" 37.

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World Civilizations (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)

MAXQDA AI Input:

You are assisting with qualitative data analysis for a dissertation on world history textbooks.

Please review *Appendix G - World Civilizations (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)* and help identify recurring patterns, tendencies, or design features related to the following research focus:

How world history textbooks structure historical understanding in ways that do, or do not, support historically and culturally relevant teaching under real classroom constraints.

In your response, please do not draw conclusions or make evaluative judgments. Instead do the following:

- Identify examples of how historical thinking is *modeled* (e.g., interpretation, causation, contingency). You don't have to address all of these, just the most prominent patterns.
- Note what kinds of student engagement appear to be *invited or assumed*.
- Point out where interpretive work is made *visible* and where it remains *implicit or hidden*.
- Identify forms of relevance that appear to be built into the text *without requiring teacher mediation*.

MAXQDA AI Output:

The textbook, Appendix G - World Civilizations (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018), exhibits several recurring patterns and design features related to structuring historical understanding.

Historical Thinking Modeled:

- Causation: The textbook frequently presents cause-and-effect relationships, though sometimes in a simplified manner. For instance, the Renaissance chapter attributes change to "multiple causes (e.g., trade, printing, classical texts, patron support, etc.)" 1. Similarly, in the "Industry and Imperialism" chapter, imperialism is presented as a "response to the Industrial Revolution," suggesting a direct causal link 2. The "Cold War Years" chapter also highlights "complexity of causation" by briefly mentioning "long-term social and economic continuities" like Vietnam's colonial past or Chinese class tensions, though these are not deeply developed 3.
- Contingency: While mentioned as an evaluative question, the modeling of contingency is often limited. The Renaissance is framed as a "clear turning point" and a "rebirth," which "oversimplifies the transition" and presents it as a 'clean break' rather than a series of events or continuity 4. In the "Industry and Imperialism" chapter, imperialism appears as an "almost unavoidable outcome without considering other possibilities" 5. The "Cold War Years" chapter emphasizes "wars and crises (...) as decisive turning points," suggesting history happens at these moments of crisis rather than through dynamic, contingent processes 6.
- Interpretation: The textbook includes features that invite interpretation, particularly through primary source excerpts and visual analysis. The Renaissance chapter includes "several primary-source excerpts (e.g., The Prince, The Praise of Folly, Romeo and Juliet) that explicitly invite students to interpret literature through guided questions" 7. It also offers "opportunities for students to compare through visual analysis prompts (e.g., Renaissance vs. medieval art; Northern daily life)" 8. The "Historiographical Awareness" section notes that "Source-analysis questions ask students to interpret meaning rather than memorize content" 9.

Kinds of Student Engagement Invited or Assumed:

- Direct Engagement with Primary Sources: The inclusion of primary source excerpts and guided questions assumes students will actively engage with these materials to interpret meaning 10 11.
- Visual Analysis: Prompts for comparing visual elements, such as Renaissance versus medieval art, invite students to analyze and draw conclusions from images 12.
- Imaginative Scenarios: The "If YOU were there..." scenarios at the beginning of lessons encourage students to imagine themselves in historical contexts and consider choices about identity and opportunity 13 14.
- Evaluative Tasks: Writing and discussion tasks in chapter assessments ask students to "evaluate leadership, creativity, and technology" 15. The "Industry and Imperialism" chapter occasionally invites students to "reflect on ethical matters, such as questioning imperial motives or evaluating resistance movements" 16.

Where Interpretive Work is Made Visible and Where it Remains Implicit or Hidden:

- **Visible Interpretive Work:**
 - The "Interpretive Plurality" category explicitly evaluates whether the text includes "diverse historical voices and interpretive lenses" 17 18 19.
 - The "Historiographical Awareness" section directly addresses how historical knowledge is constructed and encourages readers to consider "how we know what we know about the past" 20 21 22.
 - Source-analysis questions are designed to make interpretive work visible by asking students to interpret meaning 23.
- **Implicit or Hidden Interpretive Work:**
 - The narrative often presents events as "settled" facts rather than contested interpretations. For example, the "Industry and Imperialism" chapter notes that "The narrative is presented as settled, and there is no discussion of how historians interpret or debate understandings of imperialism" 24. Similarly, the "Cold War Years" chapter states that "Overall, any indication of interpretation or historical debate is not present" 25.
 - The textbook's framing choices, such as presenting the Renaissance as a "rebirth" or imperialism as an "unavoidable outcome," represent implicit interpretations that are not explicitly discussed as such 26 27.
 - The absence of diverse first-person accounts, particularly from marginalized groups, means that alternative interpretations are often hidden or summarized rather than directly presented 28 29 30 31.
 - The "Contextual Power Dynamics" section notes that the narrative in the Renaissance chapter "seems to frame the idea of power and who is in control as 'just the way history is' rather than a framing choice" 32.

Forms of Relevance Built into the Text Without Requiring Teacher Mediation:

- "If YOU were there..." Scenarios: These lesson openers are designed to immediately engage students by asking them to imagine themselves in historical situations, fostering a personal connection to the past 33 34.
- Universal Human Experiences in Literature: The inclusion of literature excerpts that show "universal human experiences (e.g., love, ambition, conflict)" allows students to "naturally connect" to the content 35.
- Ethical Reflections (Limited): The "Industry and Imperialism" chapter occasionally invites students to "reflect on ethical matters," which can prompt personal consideration without direct teacher intervention, though these prompts are limited 36.
- Implied Contemporary Connections: While often implicit, the text contains themes that can resonate with contemporary issues. For example, the Renaissance chapter has "a lot of contemporary connections (inequality, access to education, power over information) in the narrative itself, but they are implied" 37. Similarly, the "Industry and Imperialism" chapter notes that "Some connections to modern global inequality can be made, but connections are implicit" 38. The "Cold War Years" chapter mentions that "Students may connect to the human costs of war (e.g., death tolls, displacement, oppression, etc.) as it relates to shared feelings of empathy" 39.

World History, Modern Times (Spielvogel, 2023)

MAXQDA AI Input:

You are assisting with qualitative data analysis for a dissertation on world history textbooks.

Please review *Appendix H - World History, Modern Times (Spielvogel, 2023)* and help identify recurring patterns, tendencies, or design features related to the following research focus:

How world history textbooks structure historical understanding in ways that do, or do not, support historically and culturally relevant teaching under real classroom constraints.

In your response, please do not draw conclusions or make evaluative judgments. Instead do the following:

- Identify examples of how historical thinking is *modeled* (e.g., interpretation, causation, contingency). You don't have to address all of these, just the most prominent patterns.
- Note what kinds of student engagement appear to be *invited or assumed*.
- Point out where interpretive work is made *visible* and where it remains *implicit or hidden*.
- Identify forms of relevance that appear to be built into the text *without requiring teacher mediation*.

MAXQDA AI Output:

The textbook, *Appendix H - World History, Modern Times (Spielvogel, 2023)*, exhibits several patterns and design features related to structuring historical understanding.

Modeling of Historical Thinking:

- Causation and Contingency: The textbook frequently models causation by presenting multiple factors leading to historical outcomes. For instance, the fall of the Ottoman Empire is attributed to a combination of administrative and military problems, loss of trade routes, and competition with Europe, rather than a single cause 1. Similarly, the post-Cold War era is presented as unstable due to new conflicts, economic challenges, and changing power dynamics following the collapse of the Soviet Union 2. Contingency is also highlighted, such as in the discussion of the 1848 revolutions, which are shown to have spread nationalist ideas but largely failed to achieve lasting change 3.
- Interpretation: The textbook encourages interpretation through its "Inquiry Activities" 4 5 6 7 8. These activities ask students to analyze primary and secondary sources, compare perspectives, and evaluate evidence, such as in the "Fall of Constantinople sources" 9 or the analysis of art, literature, and political ideas related to nationalism 10.
- Change and Continuity: The text consistently emphasizes both change and continuity. For example, the chapter on Asian Empires notes the simultaneous development of multiple empires and their dynamic nature 11. The chapter on Nationalism explains how

Enlightenment ideas influenced nationalism while older systems of power remained in place 12. In the Post-Cold War chapter, the lasting impacts of the Cold War (e.g., ethnic conflict, economic inequality) are shown to continue shaping global interactions 13.

Kinds of Student Engagement Invited or Assumed:

- **Active Analysis and Interpretation:** The textbook invites students to actively analyze and interpret historical sources rather than merely memorizing facts 14. This is evident in the inquiry activities that require students to evaluate turning points, cause and effect, and make comparisons across societies 15.
- **Critical Examination of Perspectives:** Students are encouraged to critically examine whose voices are amplified or silenced by engaging with multiple perspectives through primary and secondary sources 16. The text also includes diverse voices, such as refugees, protestors, activists, and ethnic minorities, especially in discussions of contemporary issues 17.
- **Application of Historical Understanding:** The activities intentionally encourage students to apply historical understanding to modern concepts 18. For instance, students are asked to engage in tasks like creating newscasts or environmental maps, connecting global issues to their own lives and civic duties 19.

Visibility of Interpretive Work:

- **Visible Interpretive Work:** The "Inquiry Activities" explicitly make interpretive work visible by asking students to analyze sources and consider how art and literature reflect historical ideas 20. The comparison of secondary sources with primary sources, as seen in the "Fall of Constantinople inquiry," also highlights the process of historical interpretation 21. The chapter on the Post-Cold War World demonstrates how the understanding of history is shaped by the selection and framing of sources, particularly in case studies of Darfur, Bosnia, and Rwanda 22.
- **Implicit or Hidden Interpretive Work:** While the textbook provides opportunities for students to practice historical analysis, it often stops short of explicitly discussing how historians debate or shift their interpretations over time 23 24 25. The selection or omission of evidence in constructing the narrative is also not always made visible 26 27 28. For example, the text doesn't acknowledge how sources were selected or omitted in the chapter on Asian Empires 29. Similarly, in the Post-Cold War chapter, it is not made visible how the evidence was selected or omitted, even though students are encouraged to act as historians 30.

Forms of Relevance Built into the Text:

- **Connections to Contemporary Issues:** The textbook builds in relevance by explicitly linking historical themes to modern debates and issues. For example, the "Making Connections to Today" activity in the Nationalism chapter links nationalism to modern debates about identity and citizenship 31. In the Post-Cold War chapter, these sections directly connect history to climate change, migration, popular culture, and youth activism 32.

- Enduring Human Issues: Recurring themes such as religious tolerance, government/civic life, social hierarchy, economic inequality, human rights, and inequality are presented as enduring human issues, allowing students to connect past societies to present-day concerns 33 34 35.
- Identity and Civic Understanding: Discussion prompts and activities encourage students to reflect on rights, responsibilities, and national identity 36. The portrayal of ordinary people as active agents of change, such as protestors and activists, can influence students' sense of belonging and capability within the historical narrative 37 38.

World Civilizations: The Global Experience, Since 1200 (Stearns et al., 2021)

MAXQDA AI Input:

You are assisting with qualitative data analysis for a dissertation on world history textbooks.

Please review *Appendix I - World Civilizations: The Global Experience, Since 1200* and help identify recurring patterns, tendencies, or design features related to the following research focus:

How world history textbooks structure historical understanding in ways that do, or do not, support historically and culturally relevant teaching under real classroom constraints.

In your response, please do not draw conclusions or make evaluative judgments. Instead do the following:

- Identify examples of how historical thinking is *modeled* (e.g., interpretation, causation, contingency). You don't have to address all of these, just the most prominent patterns.
- Note what kinds of student engagement appear to be *invited or assumed*.
- Point out where interpretive work is made *visible* and where it remains *implicit or hidden*.
- Identify forms of relevance that appear to be built into the text *without requiring teacher mediation*.

MAXQDA AI Output:

The document "Appendix I - World Civilizations: The Global Experience, Since 1200 (Stearns et al., 2021)" provides insights into how a world history textbook structures historical understanding.

Modeling Historical Thinking:

- Interpretation: The textbook models interpretation by presenting historical explanations as constructed and debated, rather than settled answers 1. For instance, the "Rise of the West" section explicitly asks students to consider competing interpretations for shifts and

acknowledges that the authors' own explanations may not be entirely adequate 2 3. Similarly, the chapter on "Civilizations in Crisis" emphasizes the interpretive nature of societal decline, questioning traditional narratives that attribute Western power to cultural superiority 4. It also presents opposing explanations for societal decline side by side without prioritizing one over the other 5. In the chapter on "Rebirth and Revolution," competing interpretations are acknowledged regarding Maoism and U.S. intervention, encouraging students to view history as interpreted rather than settled 6.

- Causation: The textbook explores causation by presenting moments of crisis as having multiple causes, including internal weaknesses, external pressures, and long-term structural problems 7. For example, the reasons for European expansion are explained as stemming from internal pressures like plague, labor shortages, and fragmentation, rather than inherent superiority 8. The chapter on "Civilizations in Crisis" attributes decline in states like the Qing and Ottomans to factors such as debt and unequal treaties, making it clear that decline was not a matter of choice 9. The chapter on "Rebirth and Revolution" balances "big-idea explanations" like war, ideology, or economics with leadership decisions, demonstrating how historians weigh multiple causes 10.
- Contingency: Contingency is highlighted by framing the year 1450 as a moment of transition rather than inevitability, emphasizing changes across various regions instead of a linear rise of the West 11. The narrative consistently stresses contingency, such as China's decision to abandon maritime expeditions and Europe's uncertain early expansion, suggesting that outcomes could have been different 12. The chapter on "Civilizations in Crisis" encourages students to view crisis as a process, not an endpoint, and shows that states responded and negotiated issues in diverse ways 13. The chapter on "Rebirth and Revolution" is built around the idea that crisis can create opportunity, framing war, occupation, and revolution as destructive but also acknowledging their productive aspects in nation-building 14.

Invited or Assumed Student Engagement:

- Students are encouraged to question assumptions, such as whether China "should" have continued maritime expeditions, which reinforces the ongoing interpretive nature of history 15.
- The textbook includes critical thinking questions that prompt students to connect past choices to historical reasoning, such as evaluating decisions with hindsight and questioning inevitability 16.
- Students are invited to compare regions, as seen in the chapter on "Civilizations in Crisis," which reinforces that historical outcomes depend on context and choices rather than universal forces 17.
- The organization of the chapter on "Rebirth and Revolution" by comparing several regions helps students recognize that countries followed different paths to becoming modern nations 18.

Visibility of Interpretive Work:

- Visible: The "Thinking Historically: The Problem of Ethnocentrism" section explicitly demonstrates how power and perspective shape historical narratives, making the construction of "official knowledge" visible to students 19. The "Rise of the West"

section strongly displays historiographical awareness by showing multiple causes for Europe's rise and explicitly rejecting the notion of a single explanation 20. The ethnocentrism section specifically addresses bias, perspective, and the dangers of projecting cultural values onto the past 21. The questions throughout the chapter encourage students to interpret evidence and think critically about events 22. The chapter on "Civilizations in Crisis" makes it clear how power shapes the story being told, for example, by outlining how Western intrusion often defines the problems and their explanations 23.

- **Implicit or Hidden:** While the chapter on "Personal Relevance" presents themes like migration, disease, and religious conflict that students can connect to enduring human issues, these connections are implied rather than explicitly stated 24. Similarly, ethical considerations related to conquest, labor, and inequality are present, opening discussions for moral reflection, but these are not explicit 25. In the chapter on "Civilizations in Crisis," themes such as reform versus tradition or foreign influence can be connected to modern debates, but these connections are not made explicit 26. The chapter on "Rebirth and Revolution" presents themes of rebuilding after crisis, pressure to succeed, and trade-offs between freedom and stability, which are contemporary, but these connections are overall implicit 27. The chapter on "Rebirth and Revolution" also notes that debates and alternative interpretations are mostly implied rather than explicitly stated, which might lead students to perceive events as more resolved than they actually were 28.

Built-in Forms of Relevance (without teacher mediation):

- The visual timelines and thematic overview ("Global Connections and Central Themes") clearly explain continuity and change across regions rather than focusing on individual civilizations 29.
- The primary sources presented, such as Ibn Al-Wardi on the Bubonic Plague, represent non-European perspectives on global events 30.

The chapter on "Rebirth and Revolution" makes explicit connections to why East Asia plays a central role in today's global economy and politics in its "Pacific Rim's rise" section 3

