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Linear transmission of "whiteness": A textual analysis of a year 9 "timeline"

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ABSTRACT

This paper draws on theories of history and interculturality to explore how a 'timeline' and its visual language as a 'crystallised text' constructs the linear transmission of 'whiteness'. When the concept of interculturality or associated term of Intercultural Understanding (ICU) is related to history education, it carries connotations of disruption to dominant narratives. The absence of *difference*, *diversity,* and the stories of 'other', are explicated in critical inclusions and exclusions of historical content knowledge and the way it is organised within key pedagogies such as 'chronology'. In addition to focus group interviews with history teachers, the study conducted a textual analysis of a 'timeline' used at Year 9 (students aged 13-15) defined here as a 'Western Drama', underpinned by linear progress as a basic theme. It was analysed through the lens of a 'crystal prism' which conceptually draws on the foundational work of educationalist Jörn Rüsen to explore intersections between history, interculturality and discourse.

KEYWORDS

History education, Interculturality, Textual analysis, Historical thinking, Whiteness.

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Introduction

Three decades of teaching experience tells me that the power of history textbooks is not to be underestimated. More than anecdotal evidence shows, despite the development of new media and educational technologies, history textbooks remain one of the most trusted sources of historical knowledge and a dominant translation of a nation's history and of the History Curriculum in schools (Abdou, 2017; Repoussi & Guillon-Tutiaux, 2010). However, "despite improvements to their content over time, secondary school history textbooks still imply that Australians are white" (Moore, 2017, p. 1).

When the concept of interculturality, and its associated term Intercultural Understanding (ICU), was introduced and integrated across all disciplines F-10 in the first national Australian Curriculum (AC) in 2014, a small study in Victoria explored what this might mean for history education at the secondary level. In addition to focus group interviews with history teachers, the study conducted a textual analysis of a 'timeline' which appears in the *Oxford Big Ideas Series: History 9,* (Carrodus, Delaney, Howitt, Smith, 2013), and followed a methodology of 'crystallisation' and 'discourse analysis'. This paper focuses only on the textual analysis of the 'timeline' which is defined here as a "Western Drama" and underpinned by linear progress as a basic theme (Galtung, 2005, p. 87).

The significance of this research is centred on the fact that although the research base is small, there is a growing body of literature in the field of intercultural education, which this paper contributes to. In particular, the impact this field might have for history education (Garrard, 2020). A steady rise in international interest in the opportunities for interculturality in history teaching and learning (Bolovan, 2009; Nordgren, 2017) and approaches for developing intercultural competencies from within the discipline, reflects an international focus on interculturality for the discipline of History, at the school level, as advocated by the Council of Europe (Costa et al., 2009). In Australia, the learning continuum of ICU aligns with this focus and the Council's definition for history pedagogy to promote, "multiperspectivity, global citizenship, intercultural awareness and deconstruction of stereotypes" (Council of Europe, 2008, pp. 29–30). Within the first national History Curriculum, Year 9 is the only year level, from 7-10 to focus on Australia's early colonial beginnings and the contentious issues raised by the History Wars debate.

There are varied ways to interpret interculturality for history education. There are varied ways to interpret interculturality for history education, including raising question about viewing interculturality from other than a positive connotation, so it is not perceived or interpreted as a cottage industry or approach to fixing the ailments of the post- postmodern world. When interculturality is related to history education there are evidently patterns of conceptual and tangible spaces couched in notions of conflict, silence and exclusion. I explored these spaces through the visual language of the selected 'timeline' in relation to the discourse of the *imagined* curriculum (curriculum policy) and the discourse of *enacted* curriculum (the delivering of the policy enacted through the history textbook as a physical artefact of knowledge construction). Of course, all of these texts are contingent on the teacher's understanding of history itself and the application of what knowledge counts. However, it cannot always be left to teachers to fill the gap created between history and curriculum. Educational research can be used to progress diverse views of Australia's past and the interactions between different cultures; between our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their invaders and traders; between the Chinese migrants and their journey from Robe in South Australia to Ballarat and the exchange of culture, good and bad, along the way; to engage with sensitive issues, through a space for exchange of perspectives in the present, within pedagogical tools used in history classrooms (Harris & Clarke, 2011).

The textual analysis of the study is presented in this paper in narrative form under the subheading 'Painting Whiteness' because the focus is on the visual language of the 'timeline'. Based on the findings of the study, this paper argues that when interculturality is related to history education a space for specific disruption to dominant narratives is created.

What is "interculturality"?

In this paper, I use the broader concept of interculturality to present a nuanced understanding of the associated term of ICU, which is specific to the Australian context because the study was conducted in Australia. However, the systemic shift to mandate ICU as one of seven General Capabilities brings the social imperatives of globalisation and history education into closer contact and positions school history as the support mechanism of national cohesion.

The current discourse of interculturalism in scholarly fields is located within an older discourse of multiculturalism which emerged strongly in the 1970s (Garrard, 2020). Within interculturalism, 'culture' is not treated in the same way as multiculturalism, whereby, "culture is treated as a thing or object to be possessed and shared by strictly defined groups of people, which sets the group apart from other groups'" (Prato, Pardo, & Prato, 2009, p. 8). Multiculturalism tends to reify and preserve cultural identities, interculturality acknowledges that cultures are endlessly evolving in a society, with the potential to be exchanged and modified (Aman, 2015, p. 153; Gundara & Portera 2008). Interculturality is defined by Rozbicki (2015) to be when, "two distinct cultures encounter each other" and their unknown differences become familiar and known – or their content is exchanged, and a space is created where meaning is translated and difference is negotiated (Rozbicki, 2015, p.3). For the discipline of History, at the school level, the concept of interculturality is the celebration of difference and diversity in the histories of 'other', toward a disruption of dominant historical narratives shaped by policy.

By its own definitions, the *Australian Curriculum: History* places value on "perspectives, beliefs and values of people, past and present", evidencing the theoretical framework for ICU within the curriculum policy as the pursuit of students' understanding of the "historic benefits and challenges of interacting with other countries and cultural groups" (ACARA, History Curriculum, 2015, n.p.). In alignment, ICU in the AC is organised into three interrelated elements in the learning continuum: "Recognise culture and developing respect", "interacting and empathising with others", and "reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility" (Australian Curriculum, 2014). I argue, both the objectives of the History Curriculum policy and the expectation of ICU as a General Capability, and how these might align in the history classroom, suggest we go beyond what Gorski describes as *good intentions*, often packaged as international costume and food days, and look closely at the concept of interculturality being better understood from within a specific discipline (Gorski, 2008). For the discipline of History, this extends to engaging with multiple perspectives and the understanding of an immensely difficult pedagogical position for most teachers and their students; historical empathy (see Retz, 2018).

What is "whiteness"?

I define 'whiteness' in this study as a discourse borne out of the Australian colonial experience, which is different to the American field of whiteness closely related to Critical Race studies. I perhaps align more closely to 'Whiteness' studies which Shiells (2010) points out that since the late 1980s and 1990s has emerged within fields of academic inquiry. This interdisciplinary field does draw on notions from cultural studies and scholars such as Ruth Frankenberg, who wrote about whiteness as an "unmarked marker" or the "invisible norm" that is a "terrain of structural advantage" (Frankenberg, 1993, pp. 236-7). Additionally, Australian historian Richard Dyer (1997), who wrote that whiteness needs to be "made strange" (p. 10). It is in relation to what is invisible that other cultures and identities are constructed and represented; often hidden in plain view whereby discourse constructs an "historical contingency of whiteness and power structures that underpin a normative status" (Shiells, 2010, p. 791). The acceptance of the "reproduction of dominance" (p. 791) and "normativity rather than marginality and privilege rather than disadvantage" (Frankenberg, 1993, pp. 236-7) is made significant on the 'timeline' by the motif of 'whiteness'.

'Whiteness' is one of three pervading motifs (a recurring narrative element with symbolic significance), which emerge to distil significant themes in 'crystallised texts', such as the 'timeline', representing historical content knowledge and knowledge that counts. The three motifs are: Whiteness, Discourse of the settler society, and Discourse of the knotted cord. The construction or transmission of whiteness is common to all three motifs and is therefore the foci of this paper. Critically, 'whiteness' here, is a key theme based on the understanding that it manifests through strategic rhetorical moves (Nakayama & Krizek, 1995) which are everywhere and nowhere at the same time (Lipsitz, 1995), crystallising Hooley's (2009) definition around the concept of whiteness itself as "often silent, unnamed and difficult to describe which is taken as an important characteristic of being dominant" (p. 35).

Methodology

Related theories of history education and interculturality is a useful theoretical framework to explore the visibility of *difference* and *diversity* in artefacts such as history textbooks. I have followed Rüsen's (2005), complex theories of historical consciousness and historical narration throughout the course of this research and concede there are elements of these that go well beyond its dimensions. However, it is important to note, that for Rüsen, each is a specific form of historical memory and historical thinking. Arguably, these are distinct concepts in current history education. Literatures canvassed denote this interrelatedness, whereby historical consciousness is a "narrative mode of thinking that is articulated through telling and understanding the past through historical narration" (Kölbl & Konrad, 2015, p. 20) and historical thinking, as some scholars suggest, "has led to the development of a range of 'second-order concepts,' that is, ideas about how we go about assembling historical knowledge" (Carretero et al., 2017). However, dissensus around what *historical thinking* means often remains a matter of how researchers employ the terminology and dispositions of context (Boadu, 2020). Historical narration is positioned here as a fundamental operation from within the "depths of historical consciousness", but also historical thinking (Rüsen, 2005, p. 10) and follows Rüsen, that there is a creative activity of the human mind working in the process of historical thinking. Historical narration is the way this activity is being performed, and history – or, more precisely, a history – is the product of this activity (Rüsen, 2005).

With the complexity of these definitions in mind, my reiteration of Rüsen's typologies of historical consciousness and historical narration is based on the systematic relationship between these elements; the linguistic procedure of historical "narration to create meaning" and the specificity of "historical consciousness to give temporal perspective to relate the past to the present" (Rüsen, 2002, p. 2; Rüsen, 2005, p. 3). Both contribute to defining historical thinking for this study and how historical content is organised to provide representation and visibility of difference. I also invoke the capacity of historical thinking to be intellectual attributes critically applied to orient, see, judge, and transform that content (Boadu, 2020; Levesque, 2008; Peck & Seixas, 2008).

A national History curriculum, ICU and the history textbook

The first national History Curriculum (ACARA, 2014), positioned within a 'world history' approach, saw alignment with the core tenets of ICU to invite the history of 'other' into what has previously been a traditionalist paradigm for teaching the past and characteristic of history education in Australia since colonisation. ICU seemed particularly significant for the discipline of History and its teaching, forming the warrant for a study into the contemporary relationship between the concept of interculturality and history education in Australia. The original study used two methods to gather data: textual analysis and focus groups. This paper reports only on the textual analysis which addressed the research question, *'How do prescribed history textbooks in Australia interpret the concept of interculturality?*'

The choice of one timeline from one textbook as the object of analysis is not intended to represent the breadth of AC-aligned history textbooks in Australia. However, the justification for this choice is located within the broader study, whereby, the textual analysis was strengthened by the rigour of focus groups interviews to show how history teachers conceptualised interculturality. The textbook was chosen because, at the time of the study, the *Oxford University History Big Ideas: History 9* (Carrodus et al, 2013), was widely used in schools in Victoria (and marketed so) and it was used in the school where the focus groups for the study were conducted. The timeline, as a single object for analysis, is justified by the foci of the research problematic being about the construction of language to shape discourses used in history education.

The historical concept of *chronology* is a key concept integral to the History Curriculum, and as a commodity of historical content knowledge, may act, as a conveyor of dominant historical narration. Indeed, it cannot be assumed that this textbook and 'timeline' are encountered by all students in schools that have purchased the textbook. However, at the time, data collected by the publisher showed that 70% of schools teaching the Depth Study of 'Australia and Asia' opt to teach 'Making a Nation' (Oxford University Press spokesperson, 2016, personal communication). There was no provision in this study to consider how students encounter the timeline. However, textual analyses of history textbooks largely focus on the place of minorities and marginalized groups within these materials, which is paramount to my research interests (Foster, Hilburn & Fitchett, Sleeter & Grant, 1999). Hence, the methodological choice of textual analysis advances knowledge around the construction of language to reflect interculturality and convey difference, more so than any perceived encounter by the students.

The "imagined" and "enacted" curricula

In this paper, the *imagined* curriculum is the national History Curriculum implemented in schools since 2014. The curriculum policy colloquially is a 'prescribed' curriculum which schools across the country must deliver from F-10, and what the policymakers envisage *should* be taught in the best interests of the school population. Interpretation of that curriculum policy is part and parcel of what teachers *do* in schools and the success of a curriculum is often contingent on the teachers. Therefore, the *enacted* curriculum is what is delivered and happens in the classroom. In this study, the *enacted* History Curriculum includes the trusted history textbook which, in this case, and in most cases now with regard to the AC, is marketed as "written specifically to meet the requirements of the AC across years 7-10" and acts as a contributor to privileging textual information influenced by policy and economic prejudices (Carrodus et al., 2013) . Even so, the history textbook remains a powerful, yet often contingent on use and explanation by the teacher, but highly trusted source of historical knowledge (Conrad et al., 2013).

The discourse of the *imagined* History Curriculum in Table 1 shows that notions of *difference* and *diversity* can be interpreted through the exploration and comparison of cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices. From the table, a discourse around the "effects of contact (intended and unintended)", makes significant (Gee, 2014), the impact of settlement on First Nations People. Table 2 identifies the key descriptors incorporated in the General Capability of ICU. The specific descriptor, "explore and compare cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices" aligns directly with the discourse of the History content. Encouragingly, the discourse of the ICU descriptors, *push* the boundary of *effects* toward *affect* of settlement, through language which invites a challenge to stereotypes and prejudices" (Table 2), and the teaching of multiple perspectives. In doing so, the discourse of ICU shown in Table 2, makes a strong move away from what has plagued History education in Australia for over three decades or since the History Wars, to address "the struggle over collective memory of the colonial past and an object of concern for how this impacts students' sense of national identity" (Parkes & Sharp, 2014, p.159).

I used the specific content descriptors shown in Table 1 and Table 2 as the starting point for analysing the 'timeline' I considered several points of reference: 1) is the language of ICU and its intention immediately visible on the 'timeline'? 2) Is the language of the History Curriculum evidenced/reflected within particular elements of the conceptual framework? 3) The extent of

key actors in terms of Table 1 and how this presence is countered by the multiple perspectives espoused in Table 2 and, 4) Examining what knowledge counts on the 'timeline'.

Table 1. Making a Nation specific content descriptors

The extension of settlement, including the effects of contact (intended and unintended) between European settlers in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples • Explore and compare cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices • Experiences of non-Europeans in Australia prior to the 1900s (such as the Japanese, Chinese, South Sea Islanders, Afghans) • Living and working conditions in Australia around the turn of the twentieth century (that is 1900) • Key people, events and ideas in the development of Australian self-government and democracy, including, the role of founders, key features of constitutional development, the importance of British and Western influences in the formation of Australia's system of government and women's voting rights

Table 2. Intercultural Understanding in key descriptors: Year 9 Australian curriculum

• Interacting and empathising with others • Consider and develop multiple perspectives • Recognising culture and developing respect • Investigate culture and cultural identity • Explore and compare cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices • Reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility • Challenge stereotypes and prejudices

Both the *imagined* and *enacted* curricula exist as part of the school culture. There is some alignment between the construction of language from the selected Year 9 elective 'Making a Nation' and the discourse of ICU as a General Capability and this alignment is fundamental in understanding how teachers and textbooks might interpret the intentions of the curriculum policy. Despite being a step toward a more diverse and interrelated set of intentions, I argue, there is a gap between the discourse of the *imagined* History Curriculum, to be congruent with interculturality, when translated to the *enacted* History Curriculum, in this case the chronological 'timeline'.

The timeline as data

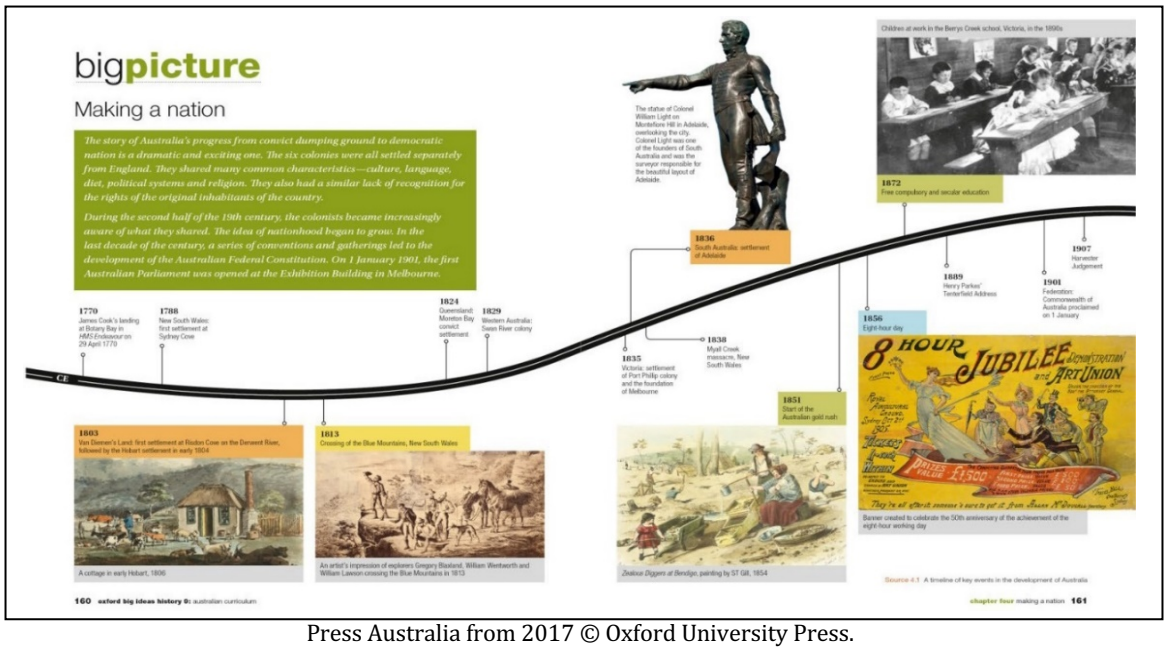
The 'timeline' from the Year 9 *Oxford Big Ideas History Series* was used to generate the data to explore how language constructs the *enacted* History Curriculum, which is the translation and delivery of specific historical content knowledge prescribed in the curriculum policy (see Table 1 & 2). Presented as 'specialised knowledge', the 'timeline' (see Figure 1. Below), bears a responsibility as the *enacted* curriculum for the prescription it represents and therefore a responsibility to recognise what is the "learner's entitlement to knowledge" (Young 2013, p. 101), involving more than one singular culture (Aman, 2015). Aligning with the Year 9 History Curriculum (AC) (Table 1 above), the 'timeline', constructs a historical narrative of Australia's early colonial beginnings. Undoubtedly impacted by space and the economic restrictions of publishing, arguably, the inclusion and exclusion of historical content on the 'timeline' is unlikely left to chance. Therefore, although not categorically deemed in this paper, as ideological or purposeful, there are deliberate choices made regarding the placement, inclusion and exclusion of content knowledge reflected on the 'timeline'.

The 'timeline' as "Western Drama"

The 'timeline' employs linear progress printed across an A3 page in the textbook, a characteristic of postulates of Western historical thinking familiar to Australian classrooms. Christian and secular discourses, whereby, "there is a beginning, an identifiable point of origin, a take-off point" from where progress started (Galtung, 2005, p. 87). Galtung's description of what he expects if he were to predict Western historical thought reveals the "power and breadth"

(Little, 2009) of 'mesohistory', a scale of historical analysis whereby the explanations we find are "closely tied to the historical experience of the subject matter", in this case the actors as subjects of the 'timeline'. "I would expect", says Galtung, "linearity, with progress, as a basic theme", irreversible in finite time (Galtung, 2005, p. 87). Further, the notion of the Western drama is a product of the "key themes of Western historiography, whether good or evil", meaning that the narrative of the 'timeline' as a microhistory of Australia has to "abide by the same basic rules and be inserted into mesohistory" (Galtung, 2005, p. 87). The drama of this 'timeline' fits with these rules, beginning with the actors of civilisation and the ordered society of colonialism; the only reference to the frontier violence of Australia's history is minimal, but fulfils Galtung's expectation of darkness (or evil), in the form of the Myall Creek Massacre (outlined below) before the light comes in the presentation of secular education and the triumph of the eight-hour day. The placement and sequence of the visuals constructs the Western drama, described by Galtung and a sense of "completed progress" made synonymous with *whiteness* (Galtung, 2005, p. 87).

Figure 1. Timeline, *Oxford Big Ideas History 9* textbook, pp. 160-161. Reproduced by permission of Oxford University Press Australia from 2017 © Oxford University Press.



Textual analysis and crystal prism

This textual analysis takes a refreshed position of crystallisation (Ellingson, 2009) and discourse analysis (Gee, 2014), to span, "multiple points on the qualitative continuum", contrasting approaches to analysis and representation (Ellingson 2009, p. 11). Further, it is informed by the work of Gillian Rose (2001) where the textual analysis includes visual language to construct discourse through sequence and placement. Following these principles, I created a crystal prism (shown at Figure 2 below) which invokes the foundational work of Jörn Rüsen and takes, "historical consciousness [as] a narrative mode of thinking articulated through historical narration" (Kölbl & Konrad, 2015, p.20; Rüsen, 2005), to blend with how historical knowledge is organised – historical thinking – using the prism as an analytical framework to interpret the construction of language.

In doing so, the analytical framework uses discourse analysis as a driving axis to analyse that construction. Each visual, and then as a sequence, is viewed through the lens of the crystal prism and its conceptual factors of how we come to understand the past. To experience, or not, the exchange or negotiation of difference across the 'timeline', offering a space for historical thinking

to become intercultural and challenge dominant narratives (Abdou 2017, p. 11; Nordgren & Johansson, 2015, pp. 11-2; Rozbicki, 2015). In Figure 2 below, the outside border of the prism follows Gee (2014) in determining discourses are shaped by *context, identities, intertextuality and complicity* on the one hand, and *significance, relevance, signs and systems* on the other). These mechanisms are discussed in conjunction with the role of each crystal pane: traditional, exemplary, critical, and transformative; a reiteration of Rüsen's typologies of historical consciousness and historical narration (Rüsen, 2005), to interpret the data. The thinner intersecting lines and dot points within the crystalline lattice indicate that discourses constructed under these conditions intersect and are intertwined over time.

Four distinct panes

Conceptually, the *traditional* pane of the crystal sustains the cultural patterns in history that are familiar and orient us in daily life. For example, familiar stories of discovery, victors, and essential actors in a story. The *exemplary* pane provides the rules and allusions of the past; for example, the story of colonisation builds a set of rules for Western civilisation, the setting of groups and who belongs to these groups, such as white settlers and what they have created. Through contexts of familiarity these two stages secure historical identities or complicit relationships from which particular perspectives and narratives are shaped. The *critical* pane of the framework allows for judgement and to ask 'what if?', therefore rejecting what has been passed down through the safety and assuredness of the two previous stages to feed the *transformative* pane of the prism which enacts change (Garrard, 2020).

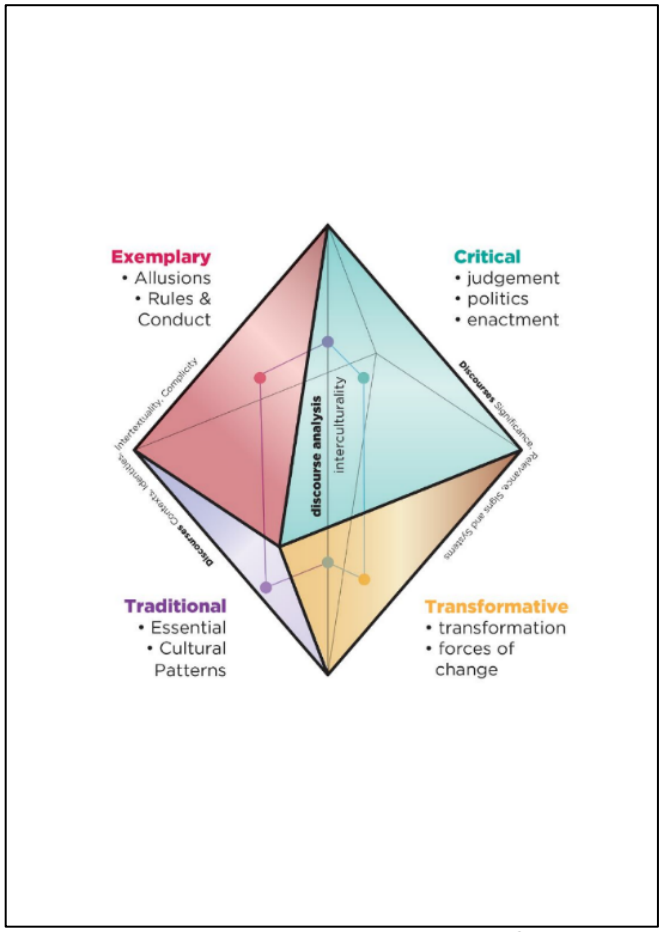


Figure 2. Graphical image of analytical framework © Garrard, 2020

The textual analysis which follows, is characterised by the interpretive nature of the crystal prism. By interpreting the 'timeline' through these four different panes, and using Gee's mechanisms of analysing discourse, the experience of the data is explained through a narrative which shows how the 'timeline' paints a linear transmission of whiteness.

Painting whiteness: A textual analysis

The visual language of the 'timeline' is characteristic of "saying, doing and being" white (Gee 2014, p. 47). As opposed to writing whiteness, the sequence of visuals on the 'timeline' constructs a colour-blind arrangement of the prescribed historical content knowledge, resulting in whiteness denoting "a normative structure, a discourse of power, and a form of identity" (Ware & Black, 2002, p. 1). Despite the introduction of ICU in the AC since 2014, a systemic shift in educational thinking, to challenge, aforementioned, stereotypes and prejudices, this analysis, presented here in a narrative deconstruction of the visuals and sequence, illustrates a distinct absence of interculturality on the 'timeline'.

Australia and its early beginnings are represented on the 'timeline' as a cultural vacuum, whereby any culture that existed was peaceful or 'bland' and characterised by 'average-looking white people' (Moore, 2017, p. 2). The linear progress of the visual images reinforces tropes that tend to regard being white as identical with being human and rely on the embodiments of whiteness, traced through Christianity, and notions of race, enterprise, and imperialism (Dyer 1997, p. 4). Specifically, the discourse of the three paintings is striking in its construction of fundamental wordless statements (Foucault, 1980) through measures of significance defined here as 'painting' whiteness.

Van Diemen's Land 1803

The first painting on the 'timeline' is an artist's impression of Van Diemen's Land first settlement at Risdon Cove on the Derwent River plotted in 1803. The peaceful scene of colonial architecture and archetype cottage complete with fireplace and chimney, provincial windows, and door, safely gated by a picket fence, render defence against the rugged bushland of the new world. In the painting a colonial farmer feeds his imported animals whilst they bask in the sunshine, and neighbouring cottages dot the surrounding hills capturing a picture of colonial success.

Crossing the Blue Mountains

Following the principles of the conceptual framework, the second painting denotes the crossing of the Blue Mountains an area which covers around 1436 square kilometres west of Sydney, Australia, as specific historical content knowledge. The first attempt by Europeans to cross the Blue Mountains was made unsuccessfully by Captain Tench and Lieutenant William Dawes. However, in 1813 colonial explorers Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson were successful. In one of his journal entries, Lawson describes the land they cross as "poor and scrubby"; impinged by "deep Rocky gullys" that made it "impossible to proceed" with horses. On this expedition, the explorers cut a road five miles into the forest only to find a "ridge of mountains" and no feed for the horses (Lawson, 1813, n.p.). The victorious glow captured in this second painting 'Crossing the Blue Mountains' forgets the uncomfortableness of the trek, whereby even Lawson writes that the trek back to Blaxland's tavern was much easier. Ironically, they "simply had to retrace the blazing trail of destruction left as their path" (Lawson, 1813, n.p.).

An unfettered history would expose that the ancient pathways in the Blue Mountains were travelled long before the adventures of Lawson and his party; geographic features and intense flora and fauna of the region recorded by Aboriginal clans. When first contact was made between Aboriginal peoples and colonial Europeans there were already clans of the Darug and Gundungurra people living in various locations across the Blue Mountains. Nevertheless, the effects colonialism has on thinking and shaping historical understanding (see Bhabha, 1990;

Said, 2003; Spivak, 1988) reminds us in times of colonisation in the 19th century, the eyes of the establishment and its power were everywhere, reinforcing the dualistic and Manichean thinking fostered by colonial discourse. Whereby, the colonial dualism of coloniser versus colonised and a dichotomy of strength and weakness is made significant (Ochoa, 1996).

'Zealous Diggers' by S. T. Gill 1854

By the time the Gold Rush officially started in Victoria in 1851, the Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate (1838-1850) had been disbanded. Aboriginal people had been dispossessed of their land by squatters and sheep, and they were now facing a second invasion – gold-seekers from across the globe. When, by the mid-1850s, it became clear that gold was literally strewn across Victoria, the rush to the diggings by a mass of humanity began (Cahir, 2012). Despite this intercultural invasion of Aboriginal land, cultural hegemony lingers behind the choice of 'Zealous Diggers' on the 'timeline'.

In the sequence, 'Zealous Diggers' contributes to a discourse which constructs the rhetoric of nation building and success that runs at the expense of any other successful heterogeneous economic endeavour, of which there were many (see Garrard, 2019). It is a historical narrative of early Australia and a culture of Christian family values; a husband, wife, female child, and new baby, whereby, the man stands as a tower of strength above the female who nurses the babe in her arms, sharing the reward of settlement and conquering of the wilderness, through the norms and values of a dominant narrative.

Like the first two paintings, there is no other ethnicity in 'Zealous Diggers'. The scene hints at "a colonial civilizing mission" (Rogers, 2011, p. 74). This is not a criticism of S.T. Gill, who had his own problems being accepted by the colonial establishment during his lifetime. However, the inclusion of this painting reflects a complicity of such paintings to create safety in the ethnicity represented. For instance, during this period of Victoria's history, people from diverse backgrounds sojourned from one field to another across Victoria, their only goal being where the gold was reported to be found. Contrary to the historical narrative to which 'Zealous Diggers' contributes, pieced together through sequence, the Victorian goldfields were horrendously disordered for colonists, immigrants and Indigenous people alike.

The distinction of 'Zealous Diggers' on the 'timeline', to exclude all others, strengthens the implicit message of 'whiteness', whereby privilege and relevance is given to the colonists, constructing an imagined social milieu. Yet, a simple search of S.T. Gill's work reveals this well-known pictorial diarist drew and painted other impressions of the social milieu that surrounded him on the streets of the Victorian goldfields, some of which make clear that cultural tensions disrupted serenity, and that difference was part of the true social fabric; the antithesis of the composed, sanitised order illustrated in 'Zealous Diggers' (Grishin, 2014).

Statues, classrooms and the eight-hour workday

The three other visuals on the 'timeline' continue to construct a discourse of 'whiteness' and are essentially viewed through the "exemplary" pane of the prism, which examples rules and conduct accepted through historical narratives and familiar tropes of colonial success.

The statue of Colonel William Light, founder of Adelaide attributes success and responsibility for the "beautiful layout" of the city of Adelaide. What is more significant, is the placement and size of the statue on the page which dwarfs the inclusion of the only reference to Australia's frontier violence on the 'timeline', the Myall Creek massacre in New South Wales. One of the few occasions in Australia's history, when white men were brought to justice in Australia's early years of colonisation for crimes against Indigenous people. Next the photograph of 'children at work in the Berrys Creek School' in Victoria in the 1890s, takes a large and prominent position in celebrating the "free compulsory and secular education" in Victoria since 1872. The photograph depicts the 'whiteness' of education at the time and through the lens of the conceptual framework a choice underpinned by traditional and accepted moments of truth in

history. Finally, the propaganda banner of the 'Eight-hour work day' created to celebrate the 50th anniversary of this "achievement" (Carrodus et al., 2012, p. 161, on the' timeline') completes a "narrative template", which as Abdou notes, "impact on students' historical consciousness" (Abdou, 2017, p. 6). The poster, is a statement that enters the discourse above all others (Foucault, 1980), praising the accomplishment of the workers who belong to the nation, whom in this painting are all white.

This poster was part of a series of banners produced in the twentieth century to celebrate what "was the first of a long, hard-fought series of victories that led to Australia having one of the most progressive labour environments in the world by the early twentieth century."[1] The propaganda poster contains "a number of wishes for conventional kinds of success" (Rose, 2001, p. 126); liberty and female representation, the coming together of all classes, the colonial victory of the exploited white workers, the affluence of the working society and the celebration of work at the core of the federated white nation. The organisation of this historical content knowledge fulfils Galtung's expectation of the Western Drama, whereby, the banner is about the West as a place which is "associated with a homogenous history and as a continuous sequence of time" (Al-Azmeh 2002, p. 58; Galtung, 2005).

The Myall Creek Massacre

The role historical agendas play in publishing decisions is less likely to be by chance. Publishers do not underestimate the divide which began with the History Wars and continues nearly twenty years later, as to what we should be teaching in History classrooms. Further, 'prescription' curriculum and its makers certainly estimate public and political reaction to what is taught in the History classroom. The inclusion of the Myall Creek Massacre on the 'timeline' contributes further tension to these issues.

The Myall Creek Massacre was one of the few occasions, in Australia's early years of colonisation, when white men were brought to justice for crimes against Indigenous people. It is the only written entry on the 'timeline' examined in this paper simply because it is the only entry which alludes to the existence of our First Nations people, albeit experienced through the violence of white settlers. The entry, which occupies a very small space just above the ordered visual language of 'Zealous Diggers' further illustrates the distinct absence of interculturality on the 'timeline' Viewed through the conditions of the crystal prism, I contend, the Myall Creek Massacre is an opportunity to *enact* the critical and transformative panes of the crystal prism. A way of rejecting historical narratives which remain told through language constructed within the traditional and exemplary panes of the framework. However, this single entry to recognise the existence of First Nations people on this 'timeline' is a contrary. Without a counter entry to show the internecine conflict of the frontier wars in Australia's history, which speak to the strength of Tasmanian Indigenous people in conflicts such as the Black War (1821-1834), a traditional story of dominance and 'whiteness' is passed down as exemplary.

Arguing the case of the textual analysis

The selection and sequence of the three paintings, the statue, the photograph of education in Australia and the propaganda poster on the 'timeline' are in direct contrast to the discourse of the Year 9 History Curriculum (AC) outlined earlier in this paper and its intention to invite the histories of 'other' into History classrooms through multiperspectivity. In the business of exacting what knowledge is valued, the selection and sequence of the visual language gives privilege and relevance to the colonists. Conceptually, this construct is about meaning and significance through traditional historical thinking staged around an imagined social milieu that gives no access to interculturality, therefore, perpetuating an absence of difference which, frankly, exists in all the histories of all nations.

The selection and sequence of the paintings is a responsibility in curriculum development, whereby the representation of knowledge and what it is worth or, at least, what is included or

excluded on the 'timeline', may shape how young people think about this period of history and what it means for Australia's collective memory to develop historical consciousness (Laville, 2006; Seixas & Peck, 2004; Yates, Millar, O'Connor, & Woelert, 2017). The discipline of History is a field 'privileged' with ideological use and school history textbooks are agents of practice which hold a key position in transmitting national identity and values (Kremmydas, 1998). "Those who write the history textbooks have a high responsibility and an exceptionally difficult intellectual task" to tell the whole story (Kelley, 1980, p. 296). It could be argued that history teachers will fill in this gap, to ensure a discourse of difference and diversity, particularly today when teaching Australia's early beginnings maintains a potent position of history politics in this country. However, the findings of this textual analysis, evidenced in the next section, suggests otherwise. There is a layer of complexity in History education today, which needs unpacking; mostly around rethinking the discourse of historical narratives used as a defining factor of curriculum policy.

Specific findings

The 'timeline' is a seamless unfolding of a colonial regime. It celebrates structures of conquering the new world through expeditions and artistic symbolism of patriarchal strength, domestic bliss and ordered society, Following the framework of the study, the 'timeline' falls short in reflecting the goals or intentions of the General Capability of ICU in the Australian Curriculum. It discretely translates the valued historical skill of 'chronology' to signal traditional epistemological boundaries for history education. Just in the selection and sequence of the three paintings alone, the organisation of historical content knowledge lacks any "intersection between History as a subject and intercultural education" (Nordgren, 2017, p. 664). Indeed, it more readily meets the aforementioned expectation of a Western drama. In particular, "linearity, with progress, as a basic theme", irreversibly "encased in finite time" (Galtung, 2005, p. 87).

The textual analysis finds a discourse of 'whiteness' prevalent on the 'timeline'. This is emphasised by a lack of visibility of other contributors to Australia's colonial beginnings, which ironically, results in the significant creation of 'other', dividing our own story of the past from the stories of the 'other', an attribute of creating identity as a temporal experience of historical consciousness (Rüsen, 2005). Indeed, there is an absence of d*ifference* in the selection of visual texts and therefore the notion of *diversity* is obfuscated by a dominant narrative of the colonial acquisition of success. Finally, the organisation of the historical content knowledge, as integral to historical thinking, is complicit in constructing a normative and accepted view of a singular historical narrative of Australia's colonial beginnings.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the value of traditional and exemplary histories, the potential of the crystal prism is the interconnectedness of historical thinking to bring about change to historical consciousness shaped by the construction and development of language.. Although the national History Curriculum gives credence to some change in discourse evidenced by the General Capability of ICU, the 'timeline' reflects an ambivalence toward the concept of interculturality and the curriculum itself falls short in explaining how the concept as an educational strategy is to be interpreted and made visible in exemplars such as history textbooks. Without doubt, further research into the intersection and melding of history education and interculturality through both the *imagined* and *enacted* curricula and prospective agencies, can only benefit how we teach the past in the future.

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Endnotes

[1] http://www.nma.gov.au/online_features/defining_moments/featured/eight-hour_day