

Chiriac, Christine (2024): „Das eine tun und das andere nicht lassen“. Produzent:innen von Bildungsmedien für den Geschichtsunterricht im Spannungsfeld von gesellschaftlicher Pluralisierung und nationaler Schließung [eng.: *Do the one without leaving the other undone? Producers of educational media for the history classroom between societal pluralisation and national closure*]. Göttingen: Universitätsverlag.

In the light of the simultaneous pluralisation and polarisation currently perceptible in society, this study examines overlaps between concepts of 'nation' and 'pluralisation' in the educational context. Schools in general, and history education in particular, are both important spaces for the (re)production of the nation and, at the same time, spaces of negotiation with respect to pluralisation. History textbooks include narratives that nations propagate about themselves and about 'others'. They are imbued with a specific authority and reach large numbers of students and teachers.

This book argues that the dynamics of national closure and societal pluralisation are not opposites, as is often assumed. Rather, it critically questions common binarities in nationalism studies and unreflective normativity in debates around multicultural/intercultural education, as well as linear depictions of educational media production and of history teaching in schools. It addresses two research questions: (1) What position(s) do the producers of educational media for history education assume in terms of national closure and societal pluralisation? (2) How do these same producers construct national closure and societal pluralisation in educational media for the subject of history? These inquiries are investigated via semi-structured expert interviews with 17 educational media producers from four German publishing houses, by means of a post-structuralist and praxeological discourse analysis.

The first empirical chapter explores how the interviewees problematise concepts of 'nation' and 'pluralisation', highlighting the implications of overlaps between categorically different constructions of 'otherness' and 'non-otherness'. The 'others' of the nation are given an 'intermediate' national status; they are constructed neither as 'completely foreign' nor as 'fully belonging'. At the same time, the localisation of 'us' within the nation-state is prominent and the position of power this 'us' holds in the national space remains unbroken. The study's findings are remarkably consistent regarding positionings expressed by the interviewees in terms of 'nation' and 'pluralisation': they firmly reject political nationalism, support pluralisation in society, and criticise the national narrowing of history education. Occasionally they include references to migration in their biographical self-descriptions, at the same time, however remaining 'trapped' in the national paradigm in various ways.

The second empirical chapter investigates how the producers recount their professional practices. It shows where the potential of history textbooks for a pluralising society lies according to the interview partners. It highlights the goals these producers pursue and the contribution of production routines to the persistence of the national in textbooks. This chapter also illustrates the discourse-shifting, pluralising interventions producers undertake in educational media, and underlines moments of tension that characterise how the concepts of 'nation' and 'pluralisation' are negotiated in processes of educational media production.

The third empirical chapter analyses how the interview partners recount their work on specific chapters about global history, European history and migration history. The shift towards 'pluralisation' that the producers observe in curricula and implement in educational media remains ambivalent. Even if producers negotiate leeway within the production processes, non-coherence in educational policy, pragmatic limitations, irreconcilable moments of tension, and unreflective constructions (such as the 'mainstreaming of migration') can hinder pluralisation from becoming established in educational media.

The final chapter summarises the results using a quotation from the interview material: Educational media producers find themselves in situations in which they ‘do the one without abstaining from the other’, i.e., they introduce pluralisation into educational media, simultaneously reproducing concepts of nationalism. This insight can advance debates in multicultural/intercultural education and nationalism research with regard to the persistence of the national.

Outline

I Introduction

II Theory

III Literature review 1: Nation and pluralisation

IV Literature review 2: Educational media production

V Methodology

VI First empirical chapter: Problematisations and positionings

VII Second empirical chapter: Constructions of nation and pluralisation in educational media

VIII Third empirical chapter: Topics of history and the construction of nation and pluralisation

IX Final chapter: ‚Do the one without leaving the other undone‘

X Abstract

XI References