
THE HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF STUDENTS-PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS: GREEK AND PORTUGUESE ASPECTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS

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This paper analyses seventy-eight written questionnaires of university students, prospective teachers in Greece (Ioannina) and Portugal (UMinho), in 2016. Students were asked first to narrate the Greek and the Portuguese state's history respectively, and second to choose between 'lines of development' indicating decline and progress in time. The study aimed to identify students' patterns of historical consciousness in the context of the current economic crisis situation and a preliminary analysis of the data suggests the prevalence of the 'traditional' type of Rüsen's typology. The present study is informed by previous research in young people historical consciousness also in the initial training requirements of history teachers: if historical education aims at historical consciousness (Rüsen, 1987) and 'history didacticians are something like experts of consciousness' (Von Borries, 2005) history teachers own historical sense making while in situation of crisis, ought to be important.

1. Introduction

Training school history teachers pertains to the discussion on what is history teaching: while in the 1970s a focus took place on the development of students' skills to do the discipline, and research focused on the psychological requirements to understand the process of being a history researcher, since the 1990s we are having a refocus on the connections between past and present or in the uses of history in students' everyday life.

In the 1970s discussion was about “content” or “skills”, history as a “fixed content to be dispensed by professional historians to the public and the students” (Seixas, 1999: 328), or history as its own methodology, perceived rather as a craft in which others would be welcomed too.

In the 1990s various political developments, economic immigration and inter-ethnic disturbances in big European cities, also the collapse of the former communist regimes and the broadening of the European Union, highlighted the cultural diversity rather than the shared history of Europe (Stradling, 2003:12). A refocus was made towards multiperspectivity and the need for students to discuss the reasons, cultural or other, that constitute the basis of differentiated perception of common experiences; (Seixas, 2000: 26). As Laville put it (2004: 174), there seems to have been a transition in history education from the “historical thinking” of the 1970s to “historical understanding”, an understanding of the identity politics that is at stake and the several meanings it creates in a variety of historical accounts.

Following the tendency in historiography and history didactics that considers people’s “needs, interests and functions as determining factors of historical thinking” (Rüsen, 1987: 279), history didactics today seeks to create relevance in school history with students’ interests and lives (Husbands et al., 2011: 150). As a consequence, controversial issues are found in the core of history didactics while history educators emphasize the need for teachers to address both the “intrinsic” and “extrinsic” aims of history teaching (Slater, 1995: 125-126) and be challenged by the transformative power of history especially in conflict or post-conflict societies (McCully and Montgomery, 2009: 93). According to McCully, effective history teaching in contested societies takes a combination of “inquiry” skills, selection of themes that are relevant to students’ lives and addressing students’ feelings which usually frame “exclusive cultural identities” (McCully, 2010: 220).

The latter three elements, history inquiry skills, selection of subjects that have significance for the present and the recognition of one’s own feelings and partiality could also be the basis of history teachers’ training. As Von Borries put it, if school history is to be intellectually proper, it ought to be “multiperspectival”, “controversial” and “pluralistic”, while history educators ought to be

familiar equally with the uses and abuses of history in the society, and with their students' mis-conceptions. Teachers ought also to respond to students' need to make sense of conflicts and "burdening history" (Von Borries, 2005: 8). The latter tendencies of history education seem to be attested also by recent research: in Spain teachers appear to perceive as one of the main goals of teaching history the connection between past and present (Cercadillo, 2015: 131), while in Switzerland, students, teachers and experts evaluated as "good" lessons the ones that bore relevance to student's lives, while they were exploratory and tasks based as processes (Gautschi, 2015: 145).

If current history at school focuses on relevance, and teachers' and students' capacity to construct meaningful connections between past and present, then this study about Greek and Portuguese prospective teachers' perception and historical conceptualization of the economic crisis in the respective countries could contribute to the discussion about history teachers' education: how do Greek and Portuguese teachers conceptualize the recent economic crisis? Do they historicize it? Doing so, what cultural tools do they use? Rösen distinguishes between pre-given cultural potentials used to overcome a "normal" crisis and new signification processes that take place in the context of "critical" crises (Rösen, 2007: 21). Economic issues are controversial and especially the crises where people suffer and search for the causes to attribute responsibilities: can prospective teachers, teaching the historical conceptualization of the present, make sense of current problems when being themselves in situation of crisis?

2. Teaching History and Training to Teach History

2.1 In Greece

Centralization characterizes Greek education, also history education. While the curricula tend to be 'content' and not 'process' orientated, there is also the parameter of a singular textbook per subject and its distribution for free to the students. The writing of the (history) text books is often commissioned by the state to teachers or scholars of the choice of each government, while till 2012 their publication was conducted by the 'Organization for the Publication of School books', a state organization founded in 1937 by the dictator Metaxas.

In relation to the dominant version of Greek history in Greece, there seems to be a master Greek narrative with two discernible

patterns that prevails both in official history (history textbooks and curricula for example) and also in popular historical culture (literature, popular songs, the mass media, the Church and other organizations (Apostolidou, 2014: 38). These patterns, described as such by historians and located also in the traditional Greek historiography of the 19th century (Gazi, 2000) are the ‘resistance’ one and the ‘uniqueness of the Greek civilization’ one.

In relation to teacher training and while according to Eurydice, the prevailing history teacher training models are the “concurrent” and the “consecutive” (Ecker, 2002: 42), in Greece the prevailing model is the “concurrent”: primary school history teachers graduate from education university departments, while secondary school history teachers from history and philology departments, in both cases being authorized to teach history at school.

According to Von Borries (2005: 1), history teachers, when trained, have to be introduced to the following three interdependent fields: history, methodology of history teaching and pedagogics. In relation to the analogy between academic (history) and professional (general pedagogy, didactics, practical training) preparation, primary school teachers in Greece tend to be orientated towards pedagogy, while history graduates towards historical courses. In consequence, a primary school teacher in Greece could have a limited knowledge of the “topic under scrutiny” (McCully and Montgomery, 2009: 103) while a secondary school teacher could have little knowledge of pedagogy or history didactics. Even more discouraging is the fact that history in secondary schools in Greece is taught not necessarily by history graduates, but also by humanities teachers (philologists) who may be ancient Greek, modern Greek and foreign literatures graduates. The latter may have little knowledge of the subject matter and also of the pedagogy involved. As noted by Mavroskoufis, the methodology of history teaching or history didactics is mostly taught in primary school university departments and not in history departments (Mavroskoufis, 2006: 22).

Additionally, there is obligatory initial training for those teachers appointed either in primary or secondary schools, the latter lasting mostly four weeks (Vergidis et al, 2010: 40), while the institution of practical training in schools exists mainly in primary education university departments.

2.2 In Portugal

In Portugal, the educational system is also centralized by the state, governed by the 1976 Constitution and by various decree-laws issued by the Executive Branch. The General Law of Education, which currently regulates the education system, was published in 1986 (Framework Law on the Education System – Law No. 46/86 of 14 October) and it sets out the main goals of the education system by schooling cycle (Torgal, 1996). According to Magalhães (2013), the educational system was stabilized by means of this Framework Law and the reform of the curricula and programs embodied by Decree-Law No. 286/89 of 29 August. Currently, compulsory education is 12 years.

Education is characterized by centralization also in the teaching of History (Barca & Solé, 2012; Cainelli, M, Pinto, H. & Solé, G., 2016; Magalhães, 2013; Solé, 2014). Some history programs currently in force have been so since the 1990s, including the Environmental Studies program (1st Cycle of Primary Education), which dates back to 1991, and the Portuguese History and Geography program, (2nd Cycle of Primary Education), which is from 1994. In the 3rd Cycle (7th, 8th and 9th grades), the program currently in place is not the one introduced in 2001 by the National Curriculum for Basic Education – Essential Skills (Ministry of Education [ME], 2001), but the one that was approved in 1991. As for secondary education, the 10th grade program was approved in 2001 and the 11th and 12th grade programs were approved in 2002. The ‘Learning Outcomes’ proposed by the Ministry of Education and Sciences (MEC, 2010) were replaced by ‘Curricular Outcomes’ (MEC 2013). With this normative document the reference standards in force, namely in the ‘Curricular Outcomes of History and Geography’- 2nd Cycle and in the ‘Curricular Outcomes of History’ in the 3rd Cycle, while they value historical content that students need learning downgrade history research processes and methodological concepts (second-order or structural concepts) set out in the National Curriculum for Basic Education – Essential Skills (ME, 2001) which was revoked by Order no. 17.169/2011. The 2001 document embodied a constructivist teaching approach (Grosso, 2015; Cainelli, Pinto & Solé, 2016).

History curricula tend to value "content" over "process", with a dominant, nationalist and Euro-centric narrative prevailing in traditional Portuguese historiography. It is essentially chronological,

political and factual history that dominates history programs at all levels of education, going from antiquity to present times (Portuguese history in the 1st and 2nd Cycles and world/European history [integrating Portuguese History in some of the contents] in the 3rd Cycle and in Secondary School). Currently, textbooks are prepared by specialized teams composed of historians, educators specializing in history teaching and teachers, including a scientific and educational coordinator, and are reviewed and certified before their release.

History is taught by university graduates, some with a master's degree, and currently, since Bologna (2006) by teachers with a vocational master's degree in History, and some in History and Geography – this for the 3rd cycle and Secondary School. In the 2nd cycle, teachers teaching Portuguese History and Geography have a degree in History and/or Humanities and, currently, history teachers of the 1st cycle have a Master's degree. The students included in this study are students of the Bachelor's Degree Course in Basic Education (Of University of Minho).

3. The Data: Places, Time and Procedures

The sample accounted for in this paper is comprised by seventy-eight students of primary education departments of the universities of Ioannina and Minho. It is a “convenience” sample (Cohen, and Manion, 2000: 102), students volunteered to complete the questionnaire. Data collection took place in January 2016 within the context of the continuing economic crisis in the respective countries. The present work identifies with the comparative research model which asks the same question in two different places (Cowen, 1994) while it seeks to locate commonalities and differences in the ideas students from these two different countries hold within the context of the existing economic crisis in both of them, but in different educational, cultural and political environments.

The economic crisis in Greece officially started in May 2010 when the country, after having notified an “unsustainable debt”, applied to be supported by the International Monetary Fund, the European Union and the European Central Bank. In October 2011, a second memorandum (agreement with the above economic organizations) followed, and a third one in August 2015 the latter after a short

period (June-August 2015) in which Greece was not supported financially either by IMF or EU. Since July 2015 Greece has been in the status of ‘capital control’. We are having an impoverishment of the majority of the country population and an unemployment reaching in 2016 the number of almost the 1.169.119 unemployed, the 24, 4% of the population. According to Eurostat, in 2015 the 22, 2% of the Greek population lived in poverty.

Portugal also was plagued by the economic crisis from March 2011, a situation culminating with Portugal submitting itself to the Troika Economic and Financial Assistance Program, signed in May 2011, which demanded Portugal a set of hard measures to overcome it that affected Portuguese society. As a result of this crisis the middle class was hard hit, their wages cut, their living conditions worsened, and there was a general impoverishment of the population and a drastic increase in unemployment that reached more than 500 thousand people, almost greater than 20 %, currently 11.1% (July 2016). Economically, Portugal has been recovering, but the country's situation is still monitored by the European authorities that supervise the country's accounts and public debt, demanding the continuation of austerity measures.

Against the background above, students were asked first to comment on their perception of changes in time choosing between lines of development indicating decline and progress. Second, they were asked to narrate in brief the history of the Greek state from 1830 till today (2016) and of the Portuguese state from 1820 till today. The brief narration of Greek and Portuguese history would indicate whether they would include the crisis in a narration of Greek and Portuguese history. Additionally, the narration task would indicate whether their understanding of the economic crisis would be mediated by their cultural tools, their master narrative. The narration of the history of the Greek state was also realized in the context of another study about Greek students' historical consciousness in situation of crisis in 2013-2014 (Apostolidou, 2014).

The other question about lines of development, part of the “Youth and History” questionnaire (Angvik, 1997: A40-41), seeks to understand first their general perception of change in history since

the latter constitutes a part of historical consciousness. Second, the line of development question would show whether their present experience of the lasting crisis informs their general perception of changes in history.

The findings presented in this paper were produced through a process of analytic induction. Recurring patterns were sought in students' narrations of Greek and Portuguese history and these are presented both through students' quotes and through tables indicating the frequency of each pattern. The patterns are not allocated to "previously defined units", as in classic content analysis (Titscher, Wodak and Vetter, 2000: 56) rather they are produced from our interpretations of the students' responses. This study does not seek to attain a "representativeness" of sample, rather the most complete possible description of how a group of Greek students and Portuguese students perceive of the economic crisis, a traumatic and long lasting event for the Greek and Portuguese society (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 214).

4. Findings

4.1 In Greece

The main finding seems to be that students exposed perseverance for the present through the reference to the economic crisis even if they were not directly demanded to comment on it. Another important finding is that they referred to the crisis in terms of repetition: economic crises seemed to have been repeating themselves since the initiation of the Greek state. The later construct was also located in the 'lines of development task'.

In the first task, 'narration of Greek history', there were two kinds of facts the students referred to: first, the 19th century economic crises and economic failures in Greece and especially the bankruptcy of 1893 which led to supervision by the International Financial Commission (Trikoupis governance). Second, facts that constituted the 'resistance' pattern of the Greek master national narrative: in this case students accounted for national successes in coping with various enemies. Students' predilection for different types of events suggests selectivity on their part.

Selectivity of memory has often been commented (Saito, 2000: 158, Halbwachs, 1992: 51): "... the mind reconstructs its memories under the pressure of society". Here two ideas are salient: first the societal factor and second the circumstantial one, both of which refer to the time and the conditions under which a memory is reconstructed, and not preserved and revived as Halbwachs emphasizes elsewhere (Halbwachs, 1992: 40). Greek students in 2013-2014 recalled events that indicated resistance on the part of the Greek people, while in 2016 they referred to cases where Greece did not avoid bankruptcy.

Table 1. Shows the distribution of students' excerpts to different constructs.

TABLE1:

Frequency of students' references & constructs related to the economic crisis

Categories/Constructs- Reference to the current crisis	Students
reference to the 19th cent Crisis	09
the 'politicians' construct	01
the 'enemies' construct	07
the 'self-criticism' construct	05
the 'resistance' construct	03
Total	25 students

Two typical excerpts of students' reference to the 19th century economic crises follow:

- (1) "After the end of the 1821 revolution there were many political disputes that ended to the Kapodistrias assassination and were restricted when king Otto took power. Disputes started again till the constitution was formed. Afterwards a two-party system prevailed in Greek politics, the Trikoupis party being the one of the two parties and we were headed to bankruptcy in 1897, also to defeat in the Greek – Turkish war...", Theodoros.

- (2) “Greek history is characterized by continuous political, territorial and economic transformations. Elections were frequent and wars also ... governments repeatedly changed in the name of “patriotism”, a phenomenon that led to the junta initiated by Papadopoulos. This continues till now with the several governments succeeding each other while past and present economic problems increase”, Maria-Luisa.

While the first excerpt, Theodoros, only includes Greece’s bankruptcy in Trikoupis time, the second one (Maria-Luisa) suggests repetition. Repetition is suggested in the use of expressions like “for once more”, “repeatedly”, “continues”. The latter idea of the economic phenomena either in repetition or in cycles, also appears in the ‘lines of development’ task that students completed in this study.

Excerpts with events constituting elements of the Greek master narrative follow:

- (3) “Greece took part in many wars, was destroyed, rebuilt, won ...”, Paraskevi
- (4) “... for how long are we going to follow the big ones? ...”, Fani.
- (5) “...there is a silent economic war (against us)”, Sevasti.
- (6) “...consumerism begins, the loans, luxuries and we end up with the economic crisis”, Apostolia.

The first excerpt number 3, Paraskevi, expresses the ‘resistance’ pattern of the master Greek narrative. The idea is that Greece resists equally foreign occupation and cultural assimilation. In the 2013-2014 study, it was found to be the main construct produced by the students (Apostolidou, 2014: 87). The students saw the economic crisis as another war the country ought to fight, while there was optimism, Greece would make it in the end. In the current study the construct has a very low representation. The latter construct emphasizes the fact that while enemies, obstacles and difficulties repeatedly change in Greek history the basic plot remains the same: the Greek people will finally make it.

Excerpts 4 and 5 have been classified to the ‘enemies’ construct, the latter construct another element of the Greek master narrative. Koulouri has offered an interesting insight in the way certain enemies of the 19th and 20th centuries appear and disappear in Greek history textbooks depending on foreign and domestic Greece’s politics (Koulouri, 1996: 150). For similar reasons and more specifically the context of the economic crisis, the current major ‘enemies’ for many Greek people seem to be the representatives of the I.M.F., the Central European Bank and the European Union: while Fani (excerpt 4) describes an unequal relationship between Greece and other countries, the “big” ones, Sevasti (excerpt 5) develops a general theory related to economic intervention. Analysts comment on the general tendency in Greece to develop conspiracy theories, within the context of which, the people of the country are the victims (Panagiotopoulos, 2013: 256; Frangoudaki, 2013: 154).

Finally, the expert articulated by Apostolia (excerpt 6) is a ‘self-criticism’ construct: around 2000 a feeling of well-being, development and modernization prevailed in Greece, mainly owed to European resources and public borrowing, while people generally consumed more than before using credit cards. A thread of analyses referring to the Greek crisis, attribute the crisis to the excessive consumerism and borrowing, public and private) of the preceding period (Triandafyllidou et al, 2013: 10-11). Another excerpt follows being the sole one in its category:

- (7) “...the people after a long recession are seeking for a government that will help them stand on their feet and live decently ...”,
Theodora.

In this excerpt, unique for the 2016 data, but very common for the Greek data of 2014, there is only the implication that Greek people are not satisfied by their politicians; Greeks’ political distrust, has often been commented by analysts and presented to have initiated in the 1990s: Frangoudaki, 2013, Triandafyllidou et al, 2013.

On the whole and in relation to the narration of Greek history in the context of the crisis: Greek students were extremely selective in relation to the facts they referred to depending on a change of attitude between 2013 and 2016: while in 2013, there was optimism expressed by the ‘resistance’ pattern of their master narrative, in 2016 they chose circumstances where the nation failed implying repetition of unfortunate moments.

In the second task, the ‘lines of development’ task, thirty-two out of the thirty-nine students that constitute the Greek sample opted for the ‘things generally repeat themselves’ line of development. The frequency of the justifications for their option is presented in Table 2. below:

TABLE 2:

Frequency of students’ justifications in their selection of the ‘repetition’ line of development

Constructs	Students
Repetition because of the ‘repetition of economic crises in Greek history’	12
Repetition because of ‘people’s mentalities’	06
Repetition without any reason	14
Total	32

Below a student’s excerpt typical of the option “things generally repeat themselves” with reference to economic crises:

- (8) “I believe that line d presents history and history development in a better way. I believe that history is a cycle since historical events are repeated, for example bankruptcies”, Maria.

While Greek school students and teachers have been repeatedly diagnosed in various studies, with a ‘traditional’ and ‘exemplary’ historical consciousness, in 2016 they justified their option for repetition in history grounding it on the crisis: things are repeated because economic crises are repeated.

On the whole and in relation to the Greek sample, the present of the crisis seems to have prevailed in students’ thinking, equally when they refer to their country’s history, or when they express their perception of development in history.

4.2 In Portugal

‘Crisis’ in general proved to be a common pattern for the Portuguese students of this sample. With regard to the first task, Portuguese students referred to economic political and social crises which took place from 1820 to present times. The narratives of these students are similar to those of other studies in Portugal (Barca, Magalhães & Castro, 2004; Barca, 2015) and they were mostly structured around political disruptions (changes of government, revolutions or military events). They revealed knowledge of the political and economic landmarks of various periods: the Liberal Revolution of 1820, the crisis of 1890, the Establishment of the Republic, Salazar’s dictatorship, the Revolution of April 25th 1974 and Portugal’s accession to the EU. The protagonists are collective (the state, politicians, the military), while individual protagonists rarely appear, with the exception of Salazar. Students expressed ideas of change, mostly in the sense of progress, although moderated by the economic situation, invoking conquered freedoms (with the Establishment of the Republic and April 25th).

All narratives (39) expressed a structure around political facts, revolutions and political changes. The country’s situation throughout these years is primarily the result of political and economic factors attributed to different periods. The recurrence of the crisis arises at various times/historical periods, as expressed in the following excerpt:

(9)"Throughout Portugal's history, there were periods of stability and periods of change. Generally, after a revolution, there is a brief period of stability, which allows the country to develop at various levels (economic, technological, educational, etc.). After this period of stability, the Portuguese 'relax' and lose confidence in and of their country, which leads to critical times of decadence and that, apparently, can only be solved by a new revolution. Thus, a vicious cycle repeats itself", Ana.

A significant number of students (18 of 39 students) referred specifically to the current state of economic crisis that Portugal is currently undergoing. The table shows the frequency with which some constructs appear in student's narratives and will be explained further in relation with the dominant narrative.

Table 3:

Frequency of students' references and constructs relating to crisis

Categories/Constructs-Reference to the current crisis	Students
the 'cyclical economic crisis' construct	07
the 'politicians' construct	02
the 'foreigners/enemies' construct	01
'self-criticism' construct	05
'emigration' construct	03
Total	18

Since economic crises appeared also in other periods of Portuguese history the current one was described as recurrent and cyclical by 7

out of the 18 students that referred to it. Although 6 students referred to the I.M.F., the Central European Bank and the European Union they did not consider them as the “enemies” as the Greek students, but rather as financial aid that helped Portugal out of the financial crises in 1977, 1983 and 2011.

(10) “Several crises occur where the I.M.F. tries to intervene”, Rafael

(11) “Since then (1974) and until now Portugal has been constantly in crisis and has tried to recover with the intervention of the I.M.F”, Ana

Only one of the students mentioned “enemies”, referring to the presence of the French during the French invasion of Portugal (1807-1810) and the harsh consequences it caused, such as the fleeing of the court to Brazil and the handing over of the government to the English up to the Liberal Revolution, leaving the resistance in the hands of foreign allies.

(12) “1820 brought the Liberal Revolution, in which the French left our country in very bad shape, and the Cortes Constituintes (Constituent Parliament) were created.”, Lúcia

The economic crisis was also the reason for the emigration of the Portuguese people from their country, a reality that Portugal has faced several times over the years, but also in present times.

(13) “In 1820, the Liberal Revolution takes place, with many Portuguese families having to flee the country and take refuge somewhere abroad. This is what is currently happening in our country because of the crisis. Many families have to leave to try to build a better life”, Maria

The ‘self-criticism’ construct is recurrent in the narratives of Portuguese students, who consider that the crisis situation is constantly repeating itself in Portuguese history, and that it results from political choices and more from “our” responsibility than that of ‘others’, a position that is a bit different from that of Greek

students, who attributed the crisis to the ‘enemies’ or to ‘conspiracies against the country’.

This same idea of self-criticism regarding national history is recurrent in several Portuguese studies (Barca, 2015; Magalhães, 2009). While Greek students predict that the crisis will repeat itself, Portuguese students display also more ideas of change, in terms of progress, similar to the ideas of linear progress and expanding freedom found by Barton (2001) in the narratives of North-American youths.

In relation to the dominant narrative in Portugal, Portuguese students were expressed by traditional Portuguese historiography, with a strong influence of positivist history, the 'histoire événementielle', which is also reflected in official school history programs; the latter structures national history into historical periods associated with the organization of the Portuguese state also with political revolutions (Liberal Revolution, Establishment of the Republic, Dictatorship and Revolution of April 25th, which corresponds to the emerging of Democracy in Portugal). However, some narratives contain echoes of the ‘Annales School’, namely references to changes that have occurred throughout this time, changes that are occurring slowly, such as changes in mentality, as we can verify in the following excerpt:

(14)"Since 1820, Portugal has evolved, to the extent that its people conquered and were given freedom, freedom of expression and the right to vote. Furthermore, the emancipation of women was also an evolution that occurred in Portugal over time", Mariana.

Regarding the ‘line of development’ task, most Portuguese students (28 out of 39 students) chose line of development d), stating that “in history things often repeat themselves”, and Table 4 shows the frequency of the justifications proposed by the students.

Table 4:

Frequency of justifications given by students when selecting the construct 'repetition' in the line of development.

Constructs	Students
Repetition because of the 'repetition of economic crises in Portuguese history'	13
Repetition because of 'people's mentalities'	06
Repetition of the past in the present for various reasons (economic and political)	08
Repetition without any reason	01
Total	28

The main justification given is that the economic crisis repeats itself throughout Portuguese history. It is invoked by 13 students, who state that this repetition is due to the fact that the economic crisis is cyclical and it repeats itself in Portugal.

(15) "We found that, over time, there are several periods of crisis and stability, which repeat themselves", Vitória.

The predominant idea related to repetition and identified in the Portuguese data was associated to the cyclical idea of undergoing a crisis and overcoming the crisis, i.e. the eternal repetition of progress and decline, prosperity and poverty and of "non-development". As in other studies (Apostolidou, 2014; Barca, 2015; Rösen, 2001; 2012), a 'traditional' and 'exemplary' historical consciousness prevails among these students. This link between past and present, as well as its

implications for the future, was expressed by 8 of the 28 students who chose this line of development, as shown below:

- (16) "In a way, things repeat themselves in different ways and for different reasons. Nevertheless, the past always influences the future", Daniela

It should be noted that 9 out of 39 students choose option a) "things usually get better", considering that technological progress and overall development have augmented in the present if compared to the past:

- (17) "Despite the various economic and social crises, progress in the living conditions of the population is evident", Luísa.

Only one student has a negative view of historical development, stating that:

- (18) "Things are usually worse because increasingly the country is in crisis moments after a recovery back to crisis", Gabriela

5. Discussion

Analysts seem to agree that despite the common socioeconomic profile and reforms imposed by the I.M.F., there have been differences between Greece and Portugal in the political management of the crisis: in 2014 Portugal was freed from any memorandum while Greece was continuing and Greek people were reacting "in much more violent and activist ways than in Portugal" (Guerreiro, 21-4-2015, Huffington Post). Zartaloudis adds:

"Greece and Portugal [have been considered] to have similar sociopolitical and welfare systems, ... to have been more vulnerable to the crisis than the richer countries of Northern Europe and their larger Southern counterparts (Italy and Spain). [On the other hand], ...while Portugal implemented a number of cost-containment reforms before the crisis, Greece maintained a generous expansionary policy until 2008...", Zartaloudis, 2014.

Could the above have contributed to different experiences of the crisis as located in the speech of the Greek and Portuguese students that participated in the present study?

As one may recall from the different sections of the data presentation the main findings of the Greek and Portuguese data were common: students in both countries included the recent economic crisis in the narration of respectively Greek and Portuguese history despite the fact that were not asked directly about the crisis, an inclusion implying the prevalence of the present in students' thinking. They also did so in indicating a line of development in history where they justified their predilection for repetition on the grounds of repeated economic crises in both countries. That could also imply a projection of the past into the future as repetition also suggests a lack of vision for the future or pessimism (Haste and Hogan, 2012).

In reference to how students made sense of the economic crisis, it seems that in both countries students used "pre-given cultural potentials" as Rösen would put it (Rösen, 2007: 21): while in Greece students used to a high degree the "resistance" pattern of their master national narrative (in 2014), or events indicating difficulties and obstacles for the Greek people (in 2016), in Portugal, students tended to focus in their official version of the national narrative typical of the Portuguese traditional positivist historiography. On the whole, Greek and Portuguese students participating in this study seem to bear a "traditional" or "exemplary" historical consciousness which focuses on repetition and misses to see change in history and the need for temporalization (Rösen, 2005: 29). In that sense, political and economic crises in Portugal and economic crises, bankruptcies, in Greece were attested to be the favorite themes of students' speech in both countries.

In relation to differences in the articulation of students' speech, there seems to be an alternative justification of the economic crisis itself on the part of the Portuguese students, who while seeing repetition did not attribute the crisis either to their politicians or to foreigners. Greek students on the other hand either accused "the foreigners" considering the I.M.F. rather as the cause and not the aftermath of a

problematic economic situation (the ‘enemies’ construct), or resorted to fatalism, seeing a repetition of bankruptcies that were not managed by the political personnel of the country. As Panagiotopoulos remarks, it is strange that Greek people did not even discuss the successful economic reforms of the 19th and 20th centuries and focused only on failures (Panagiotopoulos, 2013: 260), rejecting in this way any possibility for reforms in the present crisis.

Finally, Portuguese students were found to be more optimistic as they also saw progress in history, equally in their national history, either selecting the respective line of development in the relevant task, or focusing on Portugal’s development in specific sectors of life (technology, living standards and other).

What would the implications of the above findings be for history teachers’ training demands: in both countries, the economic crisis seems to have taken the dimensions of a cultural trauma (Alexander, 2004); students-prospective teachers refer to it even when not asked. The same students seem to have been inculcated in a traditional historical consciousness environment, either in respect of each country’s historical culture and pre-university studies or in respect of their professional training in the education departments they study: in Ioannina Greece, history didactics constitutes only one obligatory course among many other courses of general pedagogy in a way that student know very little of historical methodology and theory of history. In Portugal, in its higher education in the Basic Education Course at the University of Minho (Portugal), the students have history of Portugal integrating various periods of national history up to nowadays and also ‘Theory of History’, Cultural Heritage and Didactics of Social Studies (which includes Didactic of History Teaching) thus reinforcing the temporal orientation and historical thinking in the future teacher trainees. It is possible that Portuguese students’ positivism noted in this study originated in their pre-university education.

If the aim of history teaching today is to make students enter sense making processes in relation to their present and use the past in ways of a critical historical consciousness, prospective history teachers’ own training ought to focus on the same processes: reading history in different forms and being familiarized with its methodology seems to

be a good training in evaluating past accounts or other informative material, also the opinions and the different assumptions historical accounts are constructed on. If teaching history is teaching historical thinking, at least part of the training ought to be devoted to the specific domain. In this way, prospective teachers ought to be more hesitant to adopt popular ideas explaining current circumstances usually reproduced by their cultural milieu in an uncritical way.

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