

RACIALIZED NARRATIVES IN DUTCH HISTORY TEXTBOOKS: A CRITICAL RACE EXAMINATION^α

*Narrativas racializadas en los libros de texto holandeses:
un análisis crítico de raza*


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Abstract. The current article is a qualitative analysis of racialized narratives in Dutch textbooks (1968-2017), illustrated by eight exemplary depictions of Black people selected from a sample of 200 Dutch secondary school history textbooks. Because images are indicators of racialization, the author focuses on visual narratives. The article concludes that racialization is displayed through two types of narrative structures: a) *racialization through otherness* using one-sided stereotypical identities and racial hierarchy and b) *racialization through sameness* maintained through color-blind frames, racialized narratives and minimization of race-talk. The article furthermore reflects on the use of critical race theory (CRT) as a framework and the use of critical race *methodology* (CRM) in combination with discursive methods for textbook and visual analysis. By inserting counter narratives, this article illustrates that the field of history of education, especially in Europe, could make better use of critical (race) frameworks and research tools that do not divorce historical events from contemporary and persisting injustices.

Keywords: Racialization; Critical race methodology; Textbooks images; History of education.

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Resumen. *El presente artículo es un análisis cualitativo de las narrativas racializadas en los libros de texto holandeses (1968-2017), ilustrado por ocho representaciones de personas negras seleccionadas de una muestra de 200 libros de texto holandeses de educación secundaria. Puesto que las imágenes son indicadores de racialización, la autora se centra en las narrativas visuales. El artículo concluye que la racialización se despliega a través de dos tipos de estructuras narrativas: a) la racialización a través de la alteridad usando identidades estereotípicas unilaterales y jerarquía racial y b) la racialización a través de la semejanza mantenida a través de marcos ciegos al color, narrativas racializadas y minimización de la referencia a las razas. El artículo además reflexiona sobre el uso de la teoría crítica de la raza (CRT) como marco y el uso de la metodología crítica de la raza (CRM) en combinación con métodos discursivos para el análisis visual y de los libros de texto. Insertando narrativas contrarias, este artículo ilustra que el campo de la historia de la educación, especialmente en Europa, puede hacer un uso mayor de los marcos críticos (de la raza) y de las herramientas de investigación que no disocian los sucesos históricos de las injusticias contemporáneas y persistentes.*

Palabras claves: *Racialización; Metodología crítica de la raza; Imágenes de libros de texto; Historia de la educación.*

INTRODUCTION

Narratives on race are often limited, as the dominant narrative constructs marginalized experiences in ways that do not meet reality. This dominant, master narrative, which is often framed as being race-neutral, can be flawed by omission, amplification, distortion; whatever works for those in power to maintain the system of advantage in our hierarchical society. The master narrative «privileges Whites, men, the middle and/or upper class, and heterosexuals by naming these social locations as natural or normative points of reference».¹ Thus, assumptions of whiteness as being «normal» and ideologies of color-blindness, limit narratives by ignoring marginalized experiences.² In the Netherlands this is particularly the case, as race is hardly accepted as a signifier of difference and whites

¹ Daniel Solórzano and Tara Yosso, «Critical Race Methodology: Counter-storytelling as an Analytical Framework for Education Research», *Qualitative inquiry* 8, no. 1 (2002): 28.

² Gloria J. Ladson-Billings and William F. Tate, «Toward a critical race theory of education», in *Sociology of Education: Major Themes*, ed. Stephen Ball (London: Psychology Press, 2000), 322-342; Amanda Lewis, «"What group?" Studying whites and whiteness in the era of "color-blindness"», *Sociological theory* 22, no. 4 (2004): 623-646.

see themselves as «normal», race-less³ or «Dutch» (indicating that race can be closely related to *nationality*), while at the same time racializing⁴ «the other». In educational contexts, discourses on race also follow these master narratives and are not being challenged. Too often, when it comes to race, educators do not engage with critical knowledge, following mostly the information exposed in textbooks, and keeping the Eurocentric epistemological basis of education intact.⁵ In the U.S., critical studies on institutional racism in schooling, the maintenance of racial hierarchies through the educational system, teachers' and white students' racial ideologies and narratives, teachers' constructions of race, students of color's experiences, race in textbooks (etc.) are well documented.⁶ In the Netherlands (and in Europe, with the exception of Britain⁷) however, race in educational contexts is rarely studied. Although some educational studies⁸ on the manifestation of prejudice (on the basis of ethnicity) have been completed, very few researchers have used critical frameworks to study structural racism.⁹ Although some critical work has been done on

³ Melissa Weiner, «Whitening a diverse Dutch classroom: white cultural discourses in an Amsterdam primary school», *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38, no. 2 (2015): 359-376.

⁴ In the famous work of Michael Omi and Howard Winant (*Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 14.), racialization is defined as «the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice, or group», Bonilla-Silva (2015) furthers this by adding that racialization appoints groups into hierarchical categories and thus entails «practices of racial domination». He adds that things can also be racialized (e.g. textbooks that reproduce dominant views of people of color).

⁵ Bree Picower, «The unexamined whiteness of teaching: How white teachers maintain and enact dominant racial ideologies», *Race Ethnicity and Education* 12, no. 2 (2009): 197-215; Ineke Mok, *'Juf was dat echt zo?' Lessen over slavernij in het Amsterdamse voortgezet onderwijs* (Amsterdam: Gemeente Amsterdam, 2011); Weiner «Whitening a diverse Dutch classroom», 359-376.

⁶ E.g. Amanda Lewis, *Race in the schoolyard: Negotiating the color line in classrooms and communities* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003); Amanda Lewis and John Diamond, *Despite the best intentions: How racial inequality thrives in good schools* (Oxford University Press, 2015); Laurie Cooper Stoll, *Race and gender in the classroom: Teachers, privilege, and enduring social inequalities* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013).

⁷ E.g. David Gillborn, «Education policy as an act of white supremacy: Whiteness, critical race theory and education reform», *Journal of Education Policy* 20, no. 4 (2005): 485-505.

⁸ Maykel Verkuyten and Jochem Thijs, «Racist victimization among children in the Netherlands: The effect of ethnic group and school», *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 25, no. 2 (2002): 310-331; Linda van den Bergh, *et al.*, «The implicit prejudiced attitudes of teachers: Relations to teacher expectations and the ethnic achievement gap», *American Educational Research Journal* 47, no. 2 (2010): 497-527; Joep Bakker, «Cultureel-etnische segregatie in het onderwijs: achtergronden, oorzaken en waarom te bestrijden», *Pedagogiek* 32, no. 2 (2012): 104-128.

⁹ Melissa Weiner, «The Dutchman's Burden: Enslavement, Africa and Immigrants in Dutch Primary School History Textbooks», *Sociologias* 17, no. 40 (2015): 212; Melissa Weiner, «(E)Racing Slavery:

textbooks in the Netherlands, there is no direct literature addressing the issue of racial meanings in textbook visuals.

With the intention to contribute to Dutch textbook research and adding value to the body of knowledge in relation to racial meaning, the current article has three main purposes. First, this qualitative study on racialized narratives told in Dutch history textbooks (1968-2017), illustrated by using eight visual examples, is a first step to explore in-depth constructions of race and ways of «othering» in Dutch educational contexts. This article is part of a larger research project that analyzes racial ideology, racial identity, and representation in Dutch secondary school educational contexts in fifty years' time, through textbook analysis (qualitative and quantitative) and through interviews with (former) teachers and former students.

Second, the article addresses critical race theory (CRT), which tackles the complexities of race and more specifically how narratives normalize racism. One of the aims of CRT is to identify visual forms of racism. Images are powerful tools. Audiences are more accepting of the visual frames portrayed, without questioning its reality or truth.¹⁰ This is important because images are indicators of racialization.¹¹ Although the aim to identify visual forms of racism has been explicitly called for by critical race scholars, only few have made the attempt.¹² Thus, this article contributes to the critical race field by analyzing and countering visual racialized narratives.

Although (history of) education scholars often conduct textbook research using a wide range of approaches for analysis and methods (e.g. compositional interpretations, content analysis, semiology, socio-linguistics,

Racial Neoliberalism, Social Forgetting, and Scientific Colonialism in Dutch Primary School History Textbooks», *Du Bois Review* 11, no. 2 (2014): 2; Melissa Weiner, «Colonized Curriculum Racializing Discourses of Africa and Africans in Dutch Primary School History Textbooks», *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 2, no. 4 (2016): 450-465; Weiner «Whitening a diverse Dutch classroom», 359-376.

¹⁰ Lulu Rodriguez and Daniela Dimitrova. «The Levels of Visual Framing», *Journal of Visual Literacy* 30, no. 1 (2011): 48-65.

¹¹ Melissa Weiner, «Towards a critical global race theory», *Sociology Compass* 6, no. 4 (2012): 339.

¹² E.g. Lindsay Pérez Huber and Daniel Solórzano, «Visualizing Everyday Racism: Critical Race Theory, Visual Microaggressions, and the Historical Image of Mexican Banditry», *Qualitative Inquiry* 21, no. 3 (2015): 223-238; Daniel Solórzano, «Images and words that wound: Critical race theory, racial stereotyping, and teacher education», *Teacher Education Quarterly* 24 (1997): 5-19.

psychoanalysis, and more¹³), critical race *methodology* (CRM)¹⁴ is not one of them.¹⁵ Therefore, the third purpose of this article is to further examine the potential of CRM as a tool for visual analysis in the field of history of education (a field that often divorces historical events from contemporary injustices).

LITERATURE

In presenting a brief overview of the theoretical scholarship on race, racism, racialization context is provided for the methodology and data analysis section, where a more in-depth discussion of the use of CRT and CRM in visual analysis is provided. Also, in this section we will briefly discuss prior textbook research on race and the concept of «othering».

On race, racism, and racialization

Racism is generally defined as blatant, extreme, and intentional¹⁶ and often seen as visible practices of *individual* prejudices. In 1997, Bonilla-Silva¹⁷ wrote «Rethinking Racism» in which he heavily critiqued this «prejudice approach», by outlining the following problematic aspects to it. When people view racism as prejudice, they deny the fact that racism is embedded in the societal structure, they overly concentrate on racism as a psychological basis, they argue racism to be «irrational behavior», they regard racism as a problem of overt racists, and they consider racism a remnant of past injustices. In the same work, Bonilla-Silva introduces an alternative approach for studying racial matters: the «racialized social system». This refers to «societies in which economic, political, social, and ideological

¹³ Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* (London: Sage, 2016).

¹⁴ Solórzano and Yosso, «Critical Race Methodology», 23-44.

¹⁵ A quick scan of the journals *Paedagogica Historica* and *History of Education*, indicates that few articles were published with the following keywords: «textbook» + «race theory» (respectively 1 hit / 0 hits) and «textbook» + «critical race» (1 hit / 0 hits). The combinations of «textbook» + «race» or «racism» led to more variation (110 / 77 hits in *Paedagogica Historica*, and 178 / 58 hits in *History of Education*). Notably, many titles were related to Nazism.

¹⁶ Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, «More than Prejudice: Restatement, Reflections, and New Directions in Critical Race Theory», *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1, no. 1 (2015): 75-89.

¹⁷ Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, «Rethinking Racism: Towards a Structural Interpretation», *American Sociological Review* 62, no. 3 (1997): 465-480.

levels are partially structured by the placement of actors in racial categories or races»¹⁸. Thus, the idea that people in a dominant position can *racialize* others which is embedded in social structures and institutions, is the core of this perspective. Racialization, is motivated by the desire of those in positions of power to maintain their position in the racialized social system. The overwhelming majority of those in dominant positions of power is white and as a group whites benefit from this unequal distribution of power and advantages them over people of color (*racial privilege*).¹⁹ Obviously white people can deal with hardships, but *racism* is not the cause of this (unlike for example *sexism*, *classism*, *ableism*). Bonilla-Silva²⁰ argues that if we want to understand this system, we need to uncover: «[...] the mechanisms and practices (behaviors, styles, cultural affectations, traditions, and organizational procedures) at the social, economic, ideological, and political levels responsible for the reproduction of racial domination».

Bonilla-Silva further argues that race is not fixed and is thus constantly evolving, as the meanings and consequences are dependent on contexts (e.g. demographics).²¹ He argues that post 1960s racism in the U.S. is often invisible, mostly avoids racial terminology, and is embedded and normalized through institutions.²² Bonilla-Silva identifies this as a new racial structure, namely «new racism».²³ New racism has an ideological component, which is termed «color-blind racism». Color-blind racism entails strategies to justify, downplay, or deny race and racism, and thus upholds new racism.²⁴ Color-blind racism, then reinforces the illusion that there is no such thing as systemic racism in current day society, through (apparently non)racial discourse, utilizing «frames, styles, and racial stories»²⁵. Thus, these *frames, styles and racial stories*

¹⁸ Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *White supremacy and racism in the post-civil rights era* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 37.

¹⁹ E.g. Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).

²⁰ Bonilla-Silva, «More than Prejudice», 77.

²¹ Weiner, «Towards a critical global», 333.

²² Bonilla-Silva and Ashe, «The End of Racism?», 60.

²³ Before this time «scientific» racism, the belief that science provides evidence to support racism, prevailed.

²⁴ Bonilla-Silva and Ashe, «The End of Racism?», 59; Bonilla-Silva, *White supremacy and racism*, 37.

²⁵ Bonilla-Silva and Ashe, «The End of Racism?», 63.

protect (white) people from acknowledging structural racism and racial privilege, which in turn safeguards them from feelings of vulnerability and discomfort when confronted with race (*racial fragility*²⁶) and avoids them from personal accountability (*racial apathy*²⁷). In the Netherlands, many have contested the idea of «new racism», arguing that it does not apply to the Dutch context, arguing that while discrimination might exist, racism does not.²⁸ This line of reasoning follows the general consensus that, after WWII, there is no race and therefore racism in the Netherlands. Despite this master narrative, Dutch critical scholars have proven race and structural racism (e.g. in education) to be extremely relevant.²⁹

On textbooks and othering

In education, most textbook research on race seek to analyze the following themes: a) How do textbooks present racism (and related historical topics like slavery) and b) what processes of othering (which is widely used to exclude «them» from «us» in society) do textbooks contain. Again, the overwhelming majority of these studies have been carried out in the U.S. Many of these studies have demonstrated that race and racism are not treated as fundamental topics in history or social sciences.³⁰ Moreover, textbooks teach students that racism consists of incidental acts of violence by malicious *individuals*.³¹ Outside of the U.S. similar

²⁶ Robin DiAngelo, «White fragility», *The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy* 3, no. 3, (2011):54-70.

²⁷ Tyrone Forman, «Color-blind Racism and Racial Indifference: The Role of Racial Apathy in Facilitating Enduring Inequalities», in *The changing terrain of race and ethnicity*, eds. Maria Krysan, Amanda Lewis (New York: Russell Sage, 2004), 43-66; Thomas Pettigrew and Roel Meertens, «Subtle and blatant prejudice in Western Europe», *European journal of social psychology* 25, no. 1 (1995): 57-75.

²⁸ E.g. Hans Siebers, «'Race' versus 'ethnicity'? Critical race essentialism and the exclusion and oppression of migrants in the Netherlands», *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 3 (2017): 369-387.

²⁹ e.g. Philomena Essed and Isabel Hoving, eds., *Dutch racism* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2014); Melissa Weiner and Antonio Carmona Báez, eds., *Smash the Pillars: Decoloniality and the Imaginary of Color in the Dutch Kingdom* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018).

³⁰ e.g. Keffrelyn Brown and Anthony Brown, «Silenced memories: An examination of the sociocultural knowledge on race and racial violence in official school curriculum», *Equity & Excellence in Education* 43, no. 2 (2010): 139-154.

³¹ Keffrelyn Brown and Anthony Brown, «Strange fruit indeed: Interrogating contemporary textbook representations of racial violence toward African Americans», *Teachers College Record* 112, no. 1 (2010): 31-67.

conclusions were made. Canadian research³² illustrates that racism is portrayed as the prejudice of exceptional groups that exist outside of the nation (e.g. Nazism, KKK, Apartheid). Other scholars argue that racism is portrayed as out of the ordinary.³³ These depictions distort students' views on systemic racism and omit anti-racist discourses. In Germany for example, a study by Marmer *et al.*³⁴ finds that images of poverty, violence, and underdevelopment dominate German textbooks. The narrative is Eurocentric and stereotypes about African people are visibly present. In Portugal, Araújo and Maeso³⁵ found that Eurocentrism was imparted through three types of narratives: 1. a narrative that places the «other» in another timeframe than present day Europe (naturalizing the idea of hierarchy in relation to «civilization»); 2. a narrative that promotes the nation State and democracy as the ultimate form of political organization to justify colonialism; 3. a narrative that connects race and racism to certain locations and historical moments in time. In the Netherlands, textbook studies results are quite similar. Weiner concludes that Eurocentric master narratives are used to perpetuate Dutch social amnesia of slavery and colonialism, that interventions in Africa are justified³⁶, that immigrants are seen as outsiders who cause problems for the tolerant Dutch³⁷, that the Dutch role of enslavement is minimized³⁸, and that Dutch «superiority» is illuminated.³⁹ These studies show that textbooks often evade the most important element in the field of race, namely power relations.⁴⁰

³² Ken Montgomery, «Imagining the Antiracist State: Representations of Racism in Canadian History Textbooks», *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education* 26, no. 4 (2005): 427-442.

³³ Marta Araújo and Silvia Rodríguez Maeso, «History textbooks, racism and the critique of Eurocentrism: beyond rectification or compensation», *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35, no. 7 (2012): 1266-1286.

³⁴ Elina Marmer, *et al.*, «Racism and the image of Africa in German schools and textbooks», *International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities and Nations* 10, no. 5 (2010): 1.

³⁵ Marta Araújo and Silvia Rodríguez Maeso, *Discussion Guide: 'After all, it was Europe that made the modern world': Eurocentrism in history and its textbooks* (Coimbra: CES, 2013), 4.

³⁶ Weiner, «Colonized Curriculum», 450-465.

³⁷ Melissa Weiner, «Curricular Alienation: Multiculturalism, Tolerance, and Immigrants in Dutch Primary School History Textbooks», *Humanity and Society* 42, no. 2 (2017): 147.

³⁸ Weiner, «(E)Racing Slavery», 2.

³⁹ Weiner, «The Dutchman's Burden», 212.

⁴⁰ Linda Chisholm, «Representations of Class, Race, and Gender in Textbooks», in *The Palgrave Handbook of Textbook Studies*, eds. Eckhardt Fuchs and Annkatrin Bock (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 225-237.

The concept of othering is very useful to understand these power relations.⁴¹ For those who aim to study racial hierarchies in society, it is necessary to tackle the othering of racialized individuals or groups while addressing «whiteness» at the same time.⁴² The concept of othering was introduced by De Beauvoir⁴³ in 1949 in relation to the construction of the self and was later employed in diverse theoretical fields, like postcolonial studies.⁴⁴ Spivak⁴⁵ was the first to use othering as a systematic concept, which is similar to the more contemporary use of the term. For example, «[...] the process whereby a dominant group defines into existence an inferior group»,⁴⁶ essentializing human beings to negative stereotypes or products. Spivak speaks of three dimensions of othering: the dimension of power (constructing the powerful), the dimension of inferiority (constructing the inferior), and the dimension that infers that knowledge and technology belongs to the powerful. Jensen argues that othering is very well compatible with intersectionality. The process of othering is thus related to different intersections of identity and oppression, like race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, etc. In the current article, we define the concept of othering as a systematic process that is closely related to racialization and intersecting with other systems of oppression. Those in power (whites, middle-class, males) then construct their own positioning in relation to that of other racialized, classed, or gendered groups, by ascribing positive and complex characteristics to themselves, and problematic, one-dimensional characteristics to the others.⁴⁷ In historical narratives, whiteness has long been related to positive characteristics (e.g. beauty, rationality), while Blackness was

⁴¹ Sune Qvotrup Jensen, 'Othering, identity formation and agency', *Qualitative studies* 2, no. 2 (2011): 63-78.

⁴² Weiner, «Towards a critical global».

⁴³ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (London: Vintage, 1997; first published in 1949).

⁴⁴ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 1995; first published in 1978).

⁴⁵ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. «The Rani of Sirmur: An essay in reading the archives», *History and Theory* 24, no. 3 (1985): 247-272.

⁴⁶ E.g. Michael Schwalbe, *et al.*, 'Generic processes in the reproduction of inequality: An interactionist analysis', *Social Forces* 79, no. 2 (2000): 422.

⁴⁷ Michael Romanowski, «Problems of bias in history textbooks», *Social Education* 60, no. 3 (1996): 170-173.

represented as negative (e.g. sexual, dangerous).⁴⁸ Hall⁴⁹ has illustrates how the West has repeatedly used stereotypes of others to maintain ideas that were created during Enlightenment, namely Western societies are civilized, orderly, clean, etc. and «the rest» is uncivilized, traditional, dirty, savage, in use of moral and physical guidance. Van Dijk⁵⁰ refers to this process as the ideological square: «1. Emphasize *Our good things* 2. *Emphasize Their bad things*. 3. *Deemphasize Our Bad things* 4. *Deemphasize Their good things*». We are confronted with these binaries through education and textbooks. We are repeatedly conditioned to believe who is worthy, who belongs and who has the right to access spaces (who is citizen).⁵¹ Although this is not always done with bad intentions (e.g. the use of racialized visuals for fundraising purposes), the effects remain the same. These types of «double gestures of inclusion and exclusion»,⁵² are crucial to illuminate forms of in-and exclusion and address who is included in normality and who is supposedly aberrant. Those who have been deemed «other» however, cannot be seen as merely victims, and the agency of individuals and groups to act and resist social structures should always be considered in the analysis of othering.

METHODOLOGY

To reflect on the use of CRM in education and qualitatively analyze racialized narratives, a number of (visual) examples of Black people in Dutch secondary school history textbooks (1968-2017) have been selected. These examples are singled out from a total of 1064 images from a textbook sample containing 200 textbooks, which have been previously selected for a quantitative analysis with large samples of both images and texts (as mentioned this article is part of a larger project). We

⁴⁸ Malin Ideland and Claes Malmberg. «Our common world' belongs to 'Us': constructions of otherness in education for sustainable development». *Critical studies in Education* 55, no. 3 (2014): 369-386.

⁴⁹ Stuart Hall, «The West and the rest: Discourse and power». in *Formations of modernity*, eds. Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 275-331.

⁵⁰ Teun van Dijk, «Discourse Analysis of Racism», in *Rethinking Race and Ethnicity in Research Methods*, ed. John H. Stanfield II (New York: Routledge, 2011), 54.

⁵¹ Philomena Essed, *Understanding everyday racism. An interdisciplinary theory* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1991); Ideland and Malmberg. «Our common world», 369-386.

⁵² Thomas Popkewitz, *Cosmopolitanism and the age of school reform. Science, education and making society by making the child* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008).

attempted to select an accurate sample of the most common secondary school history textbooks for students' basic training in the years 1968-2017.⁵³ We carefully selected the type of textbooks, specifications of the textbooks, and specifications of the publishers. An equal number of textbooks were selected for every decade (N=40). The textbooks were published by fairly diverse and well-known textbook publishers and were often reprinted. We found the textbooks in the Dutch Royal Library in The Hague and in the Center for Historical Culture in Rotterdam.

We selected depictions of Black people that portray different racial hierarchies (e.g. racial harmony, white racial dominance, white racial dominance without depicting whiteness, Black resistance) and a variety of geographical locations, historical contexts that are covered in Dutch history textbooks, and years of publishing. But foremost, images were selected on the basis of their depictions of *power relations*.

«Blackness» is complex: who is Black and who is not may be described by ancestry or appearance, moreover it is an issue of self-identification⁵⁴. Not everybody identifies with color or with race.⁵⁵ In the current article, «Black» will be identified by physical appearance, assuming that this corresponds with the views of the intended audiences of textbooks. This includes people who are recognized as being «from African descent», those who are part of the African diaspora, and people of mixed (Black with non-Black) origins. «Whiteness» will be identified by physical appearance as well. To use the binary Blackness/whiteness, is very much out of the ordinary in Dutch research. As briefly mentioned, in the Netherlands people generally don't *speak* of a racial order to begin with, let alone a bi-racial order, as has mostly been done in the U.S.⁵⁶ The racial order in the multicultural Netherlands is complex and denied. However, in the

⁵³ In 1968, a major revision in secondary education was enforced with the *Mammoetwet*. As this moment is of enormous importance for the next 50 years of education, this year has been chosen as the starting point of the current study.

⁵⁴ John H. Stanfield II, «Epistemological Reconsiderations and New Considerations: Or What Have I Been Learning since 1993», in *Rethinking Race and Ethnicity in Research Methods*, ed. John H. Stanfield II (New York: Routledge, 2011), 17-18.

⁵⁵ Philomena Essed, «A Brief ABC on Black Europe», in *Invisible Visible Minority: Confronting Afro-phobia and Advancing Equality for People of African Descent and Black Europeans in Europe* (Brussels: ENAR, 2014), 57-75.

⁵⁶ Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, «From bi-racial to tri-racial: Towards a new system of racial stratification in the USA», *Ethnic and racial studies* 27, no. 6 (2004): 931-950.

selection of depictions, we are clearly confronted with a Blackness/whiteness binary and therefore need to analyze it as such. Cornel West⁵⁷ argues that we cannot deconstruct this «binary oppositional logic of images of Blackness without extending it to the contrary condition of blackness/whiteness in itself». In a society where whiteness is often seen as the «norm», others are viewed from that point of departure.

DATA ANALYSIS

Critical race theory

CRT appeared in the 1970s, challenging beliefs about racism in U.S. (so-called post-racial) society.⁵⁸ Thus, CRT appeared in response to new racism. Early scholars acted in reaction to the alleged color-blindness in (case)law and policymaking processes. They recognized that a conceptual tool was needed to fight subtler forms of racism in the legal system.⁵⁹ CRT scholars may study themes related to social institutions, issues of racial subjugation, and other historical problems of domination, power and representation. CRT is characterized by a number of basic assumptions, of which we will name a few.⁶⁰ A crucial assumption is the firm belief that racism is prevalent and deeply rooted in Western culture, normalized through policies, law, and institutions.⁶¹ Racism, therefore, is at the heart of CRT scholarship, while simultaneously focusing on the intersections with other markers, such as: gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality, etc. This notion of intersectionality argues that «forms of inequality are not additive, but intersecting»⁶². CRT has been rightfully criticized for

⁵⁷ Cornel West, «The New Cultural Politics of Difference», in *Race, identity, and representation in education*, eds. Cameron McCarthy *et al.* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 37.

⁵⁸ Richard Delgado *et al.*, *Critical race theory: The cutting edge* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), xiii.

⁵⁹ Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* (New York: NYU Press, 2012).

⁶⁰ Solórzano and Yosso, «Critical Race Methodology», 23-44; Kimberlé Crenshaw, *Critical race theory: The key writings that formed the movement* (New York: The New Press, 1995).

⁶¹ Delgado and Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory*.

⁶² Joan Acker, «Theorizing Gender, Race, and Class in Organizations», in *Handbook of Gender, Work, and Organization*, eds. Emma L. Jeanes *et al.* (West Sussex: John Wiley and Sons, 2011), 68; in: Bolla-Silva, «More than Prejudice».

not paying enough attention to the inclusion of other indicators of identity. However, more and more race scholars have worked to incorporate intersectionality within the critical race analysis.⁶³ Another important stance in CRT is the *social construction* thesis: the firm belief that race is a *social* construct. Race is not a biological or genetic reality, it is however a lived, material reality.⁶⁴ Also, CRT critiques ideologies regarding dominant assumptions of objectivity, color-blindness, meritocracy, liberalism, diversity, etc.⁶⁵ Furthermore, CRT is «committed to social justice»⁶⁶ and therefore attempts to inspire researchers to study race in diverse contexts, and herewith, confront and reject racism. Moreover, CRT concentrates on the lived experiences of people of color. The structure of white supremacy is so deeply rooted in society that it is often very difficult to recognize for white people.⁶⁷ People of color, on the other hand, have more experiential information and may provide counter narratives involving their marginalized experiences («voice of color»). Counter narratives includes story-telling, oral histories, family histories, scenario's, hip hop, fiction, and more.⁶⁸

Over the years, CRT has acquired a great deal of consideration by scholars of other disciplines, among others, education scholars. In 1995 Ladson-Billings and Tate⁶⁹ touched on the subject of CRT in educational contexts to «challenge the traditional multicultural paradigms»⁷⁰. In the years after, scholars in education have used the framework to further

⁶³ Jessica DeCuir and Adrienne Dixon, «So when it comes out, they aren't that surprised that it is there»: Using critical race theory as a tool of analysis of race and racism in education», *Educational researcher* 33, no. 5 (2004): 26-31.

⁶⁴ Aja Y. Martinez, «Critical race theory: Its origins, history, and importance to the discourses and rhetorics of race», *Frame: Journal of Literary Studies* 27, no. 2 (2014): 19.

⁶⁵ Daniel Solórzano and Dolores Delgado Bernal, «Examining transformational resistance through a critical race and LatCrit theory framework: Chicana and Chicano students in an urban context», *Urban education* 36, no. 3 (2001): 313.

⁶⁶ Solórzano and Yosso, «Critical Race Methodology», 26.

⁶⁷ Edward Taylor, «A Critical Race Analysis of the Achievement Gap in the United States: Politics, Reality, and Hope», *Leadership and Policy in Schools* 5, no. 1 (2006): 71-87.

⁶⁸ Solórzano and Yosso, «Critical Race Methodology», 23-44.

⁶⁹ Ladson-Billings and Tate, «Toward a critical race theory of education», 322-342.

⁷⁰ Gloria J. Ladson-Billings, «Preparing teachers for diverse student populations: A critical race theory perspective», *Review of research in education* 24, no. 1 (1999): 215.

critique educational praxis and research.⁷¹ Traditional educational research failed to include minority groups, focused on biological reasoning to assess educational outcomes, and focused on class and gender to explain educational experiences of minority youth.⁷² Thus, CRT has been introduced in education to understand manifestations of race in education, questioning how education feeds racism, how aspects of education maintain the marginalization of people of color, and how this may be countered.⁷³ Although the use of CRT in educational research is especially vast in the US, the perspective offers European scholars appealing conceptual tools.⁷⁴ This is particularly the case for the Netherlands, where although often denied, racism is still very much present and color-blind frames are used extensively.

Critical Race Methodology for Visual Analysis

CRM is a multidisciplinary theoretically grounded approach. So, to explore the data, we employed an inductive approach. Rather than creating a framework for the images, we were initially open to the ways that racialized narratives come up when analyzing the data. We use CRM combined with discursive tactics for historical textbook research. Discourse analysis is a multidisciplinary approach to study the use of language in their social, cultural, and historical contexts.⁷⁵ Discourse analysis, like CRM, is interested in power abuse and the construction of difference, related to race, class, gender, etc. Thus, the approach helps to examine structures of covert forms of racism, as well as the possible interpretations of the intended audience. *Critical discourse analysis* than furthers this approach by relating it to social structures. For example, the sociopolitical contexts, the background of the author and or textbook publishers, the views of authors or textbook publishers, and the background of the intended audiences. Moreover, critical discourse

⁷¹ Edward Taylor, David Gillborn and Gloria Ladson-Billings, *Foundations of critical race theory in education* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

⁷² Ladson-Billings, «Preparing teachers», 211-247.

⁷³ Solórzano and Yosso, «Critical Race Methodology», 23-44.

⁷⁴ David Gillborn, «Critical Race Theory and Education: Racism and Anti-racism in Educational Theory and Praxis», *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education* 27, no. 1 (2006): 11-32.

⁷⁵ Teun van Dijk, *Racism and the Press* (New York: Routledge, 2015).

analysis is *critical* of these structures, and adopts an explicit stance in the matter. Unsurprisingly, many critical race theorists, use these discursive tactics instead of more traditional content analysis.⁷⁶ Discourse analysis is mostly used to analyze text and talk, however Huber and Solorzano⁷⁷ argue that multimodal texts (which includes visuals) represent discourses. Images have a narrative and discursive structure, much like texts. Therefore, discourse analysis may interrogate power through visuals.⁷⁸

In the current article, we additionally use CRM. CRM explicitly analyzes, challenges and counters narratives that dismiss (or shift focus away from) racism. It *exposes* racialization and racism and rejects the often-presumed «objective» reality of textbooks. From a CRM perspective, we acknowledge that although individual ideologies (like that of textbook authors) may be taken into account, the underlying systemic context is especially pivotal. Critical race scholars⁷⁹ have argued that CRM includes a range of methods, like counter-storytelling. Counter-stories empower people of color by countering deficit storytelling.⁸⁰

For a CRM analysis, we start by gathering data using a CRT lens. This refers not only to the textbooks, images, etc. but may also be additional data. For example, we may use existing multidisciplinary literature to find constructions of race in specific educational and societal contexts, information about the sociopolitical context of the textbooks, etc. We then start the initial analysis by finding topics in the data that we wanted to highlight. For example, using the concept of intersectionality, we analyze intersecting identities. In textbook research and in history of education, CRM helps by acknowledging hidden curricula and analyzes what norms are promoted or ignored. In the process of analysis, while inductive, we note the core elements and are *sensitive of theory*.⁸¹ All, while

⁷⁶ Chisholm, «Representations of Class, Race, and Gender in Textbooks», 225-237.

⁷⁷ Huber and Solórzano, «Visualizing Everyday Racism», 223-238.

⁷⁸ Rose, *Visual methodologies*.

⁷⁹ Solórzano and Yosso, «Critical Race Methodology», 32.

⁸⁰ Solórzano and Yosso, «Critical Race Methodology», 23-44.

⁸¹ Solórzano and Yosso, «Critical Race Methodology», 41-42.

acknowledging our own personal bias and perspectives. Using CRM, we comprehend that there is no objective position to discuss history and analyze imagery, and historical, social, and political processes influence researchers. This means that the analysis of visuals and text requires an open reflection. From here on we may look at other sources of information, especially knowledge produced outside of the academy (e.g. novels, film, conferences, decolonial courses, etc.). These sources are especially important as they bring forth opportunities to counter the master narratives, by using tools to analyze texts through a decolonized perspective.⁸² In addition, researchers may include their own professional and personal experiences and/or reflect on the experiences of friends, family, colleagues, etc.⁸³

EIGHT DEPICTIONS OF BLACK PEOPLE IN DUTCH TEXTBOOKS

In what follows, we will explore eight visual examples. These depictions have been published in different moments in the past 50 years (respectively, 1972, 1987, 1990, 1995, 2005, 2009, and 2014). The textbooks are published by seven major publishing houses in the Netherlands, mostly used in protestant, public, and catholic secondary schools. The images do not stand on their own; all visuals in textbooks are accompanied by text and other images. To analyze whether we are dealing with racialization in these textbook images, we have taken four steps. (1) Denotation of the image; (2) Connotation of the image; (3) The combination of CRM and discursive tactics to discuss both image and caption, as discussed above. Some additional context is analyzed, when thematically relevant; (4) A discussion on how the portrayed knowledge may be viewed and an explicit focus on transforming one-dimensional knowledge.

⁸² Sandew Hira, *20 Questions and Answers about Reparations for Colonialism* (The Hague: Amrit Publishers, 2014).

⁸³ Solórzano and Yosso, «Critical Race Methodology», 41-42.

The depiction of the Black child in «Africa» (1972)



The first image from a textbook published in 1972⁸⁴ is a photograph, which displays in great detail a young Black child sitting up straight, on a crisp white bed in a medical setting. The child is naked and barefoot. A white male doctor (assumed by the Red Cross badge) leans over the child as he listens to the child's lungs or heart, gently holding his or her shoulder with one hand as he holds the stethoscope against the child's chest with the other. The facial expression of the doctor is not visible, as he is bent forward. This creates an impersonal relationship between the audience and doctor. The child's expression is sad. He or she looks away from the doctor, barely acknowledging his presence. His or her body is extremely thin. A large potbelly illustrates malnutrition, signs of

⁸⁴ Kalle *et al.*, *Podium van het verleden 3*. (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1972), 75. (This textbook is used for year 3 basic training).

suffering, illness, poverty, and hunger. The outstretched arms of the doctor, expresses a dynamic relationship. The doctor literally gives a helping hand. The medium shot, suggests a social relationship with the audience. Furthermore, the image is marked by empty spaces and the contrast of white and black tones, which create disconnection. The audience's attention is captured by the child's body, which stands out from its surroundings. Furthermore, the child looks past the camera. This gaze adds narrative to the image, it refers to pain and suffering outside of the portrayed space. The child is symbolically anonymous, genderless, and ageless. He or she stands for all children in Africa, who are victims of poverty or war. Does this create the feeling of utmost empathy or is it desensitizing? This photograph is yet another image that constructs a Eurocentric frame of «Africa». No real indication of their destination, culture, or individuality is given: the child is invisible, yet hyper-visible at the same time. Adding some context to the image, the added caption states: «The International Red Cross at work. The Red Cross not only cares for the wounded on the battlefields. No, wherever disasters strike humanity, the Red Cross is present to provide medical assistance and relieve *distress in other ways possible*».⁸⁵ The familiar frames of the «West» versus the «Third world», and «Africa» in particular, are confirmed with this text. The Netherlands is seen as part of the West, which in itself is a construction of «us» versus the rest. The West looks at the rest as in need of help, in need of morality, which «we» can bring through «our exceptional values». The caption focuses on the good work of the Red Cross and their responses to disaster. The caption asks us to focus on the white doctor, as savior. The image and caption take up one page in the textbook within the chapter: «Long live the fatherland», which elaborates on the power of nationalism in the 19th century, focusing specifically on Italian and Dutch unity and the dark sides of nationalism.⁸⁶ Thus the photograph, one of very few images in the textbook, is oddly placed in this chapter. The role of the West as perpetrator, e.g. through (neo)colonialism, imperialism and capitalism, is overlooked. At the same time, positive images of the West (e.g. giving emergency aid) are inserted in images and text. This depiction portrays the «peace-bringer»,

⁸⁵ Kalle et al., *Podium van het verleden*, 75.

⁸⁶ Kalle et al., *Podium van het verleden*, 65.

the «helper» versus the «needy underclass», an image so familiar to us as often used for fund-raising purposes.

The depiction of Black American men (2005)



This next daunting image, from a textbook published in 2005,⁸⁷ depicts a lynching of two young Black men. The viewer is confronted with the two battered, bloodied bodies hanging from a tree, as this takes place central in the frame. They are wearing dirty, bloody, ripped up clothing, and are barefoot. The corpses attract crowds of white people, gazing at the bodies, or gazing at the viewer. The crowd consists of mostly men. However, five women are also depicted standing close together. The females seem to have a more passive demeanor and show less emotion than the men. Some of the men are smirking, smiling even. Others just stare, blankly. In the middle of the crowd, a white man points up towards the bodies of the young men. His penetrating stare is unsettling.

⁸⁷ Maria van Haperen *et al.*, *Sfinx 3* (Utrecht/Zutphen: Thieme Meulenhoff, 2005), 23. (This textbook is used for year 3 basic training).

The pointing signifies a warning, a threat towards Black people. A written text on the image states «Beitler Studio», indicating that the photograph was taken by a professional photographer. The gazes of the crowd towards the audience, standing at eyelevel, making contact, establish an imaginary relationship. The viewer is complicit, one with the crowd. At the same time, the corpses are pictured in long-shot, creating an impersonal relationship between the viewer and the murdered young men. This photograph was taken on 7 August, 1930, when a crowd of white men, women and children, gathered in front of a jail in Marion, Indiana. The crowd with the cooperation of police officers took two teenagers, Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith from jail, in broad daylight. They were beaten and hanged to death in Courthouse Square. The night prior to the lynching, these two teenagers were arrested on the charges of robbery, murder, and rape of a white woman. Specifically, the last accusation was regarded as a grave crime against the white community. Later, the allegedly raped woman testified that rape had never taken place.⁸⁸ The local studio photographer, Lawrence Beitling, took the photograph and sold thousands of copies. The photograph was widely distributed and made into postcards. A school teacher from the Bronx who had seen a copy of the image, wrote the poem «bitter fruit»⁸⁹ in reaction, which was later changed to the song «strange fruit» (a euphemism for the lynched bodies) made widely popular by Billie Holiday.⁹⁰ The caption of the photograph «*A lynching in the United States, 1930*»,⁹¹ is an incredibly general way to articulate such an inhuman atrocity. It would seem that more information and perhaps dismay is desired. Lynching was extremely common in the U.S.⁹² Why do these textbook writers conceal judgement in this caption related to atrocities affecting Blacks? The clearly happy attitudes of whites in this image ask for a more in-depth look into lynching, white supremacy, and acts of white hatred and violence. The image is placed under the subtitle «*The deep South*».⁹³ Interestingly

⁸⁸ James Madison, *A Lynching in the Heartland: Race and Memory in America* (New York: Macmillan, 2003).

⁸⁹ Published in the *New York Teacher* (1937) and Marxist journal *New Masses*.

⁹⁰ Madison, *A Lynching*.

⁹¹ Van Haperen *et al.*, *Sfinx* 3, 23.

⁹² http://www.chesnuttarchive.org/classroom/lynching_table_year.html (consulted 26-6-2017)

⁹³ Van Haperen *et al.*, *Sfinx* 3, 23.

enough, the image was not taken in the South, but in the Mid-West of the U.S.⁹⁴ The textbook states:

In the North, Black people had more freedom, but were still paid less [...] in the South, where the KKK was very powerful, Blacks were victims of social inequities until the 1960s. Regularly, it was reported that the Klan had lynched Blacks. Sometimes only for looking at a white female. [...] There were hundreds of illegal lynching and the culprits were hardly ever punished.⁹⁵

This text displays color-blind rhetoric. As it implicitly states, that social inequalities are not a current issue. Many, specifically Black voices, would strongly disagree that the 1960s or the 21st century for that matter, actually terminated the social inequities mentioned (in the South as well as the North). As for the text fragment related to the lynching of Blacks, the text «*there were hundreds of illegal lynchings*» implies that other lynchings (not hundreds like the textbook states, but thousands of them), were legal. It is interesting how the fragment «*sometimes only for looking at a white female*» gives the impression that there were many other reasons for which lynching perhaps were indeed reasonable. This is incredibly problematic as lynchings were often justified, by positing the supposed criminality («the Brute» caricature) of Black men. However, we counter that the purpose of lynching was to eradicate criminals, but was executed for racist purposes. Most of the Black men (and some women) who were lynched for talking back to whites, having consensual sex with a white woman, trying to vote, asking for a raise.⁹⁶ Furthermore, it is a well-known fact that many claims of white women were false.⁹⁷ The image and caption, thus lacks substantial narrative concerning race and racism, which is needed when displaying such a brutal depiction. In this image, we are clearly confronted with the dichotomy of the humiliated versus the powerful, through gendered racialization. Many would argue that this depiction

⁹⁴ Madison, *A Lynching*.

⁹⁵ Van Haperen *et al.*, *Sfinx* 3, 23.

⁹⁶ David Pilgrim, *Watermelons, Nooses, and Straight Razors: Stories from the Jim Crow Museum* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2017).

⁹⁷ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/27/us/emmett-till-lynching-carolyn-bryant-donham.html> (consulted 26-6-2017).

provokes so many negative feelings about the white actors, that in fact this image is a way to counter racist feelings or ideologies. Although we clearly disagree, we do acknowledge that an image like this, which is related to the U.S. context, seems to be more explicitly related to racism than is the case in the Dutch depiction. This relates to the view of many Dutch, who construct themselves as «tolerant» versus the «racist» and «ignorant» Americans.

A Depiction of Enslaved Africans on an American Plantation (1990)



The next image from a textbook published in 1990⁹⁸ is a lithograph, which illustrates a cotton plantation (or perhaps a more accurate term: labor camp⁹⁹) during harvest. Black men, women and children are working the field. In the foreground, we see a Black man sitting on a wagon full of hay. He is leaning back looking quite relaxed. Next to the wagon, another Black man is standing around. In the foreground of the image, a white man and woman stand. Their clothing is luxurious. Behind them on the right, we see a Black man, woman and child talking.

⁹⁸ Hans Ulrich and Henk L. Wesseling, *Andere tijden 2* (s-Hertogenbosch: Malmberg, 1990). (This textbook is used for year 2 basic training).

⁹⁹ Edward Baptist, *The half has never been told: Slavery and the making of American capitalism* (London: Hachette UK, 2016).

Everybody is neatly dressed on what looks like a sunny day. Due to consciously chosen spaces and positioning in the image, we view the image from left to right. The horses and wagon are pointing towards the right and the steam from the boat (and the smoke from the chimney) moves left to right. By looking into the frame, the horse and wagon leads our eye toward the white couple, where the viewing stagnates, as the couple are clearly pointing and standing in the opposite direction. The natural patterns in the field are visually pleasing and harmonious. In addition, the play of light and shadowing is visually attractive. Thus, the image illustrates a clearly romanticized and harmonious image of a plantation. The image lacks emotional depth. People seem quite relaxed, lazy even. This image does not match the forced backbreaking work of enslaved Africans in labor camps in the American South. Thus, a Eurocentric perspective is clearly present. The additional caption of the image states:

Cotton plantations were the economic basis for the southern states of the US. The civil war was of enormous importance to the south for two reasons: the import duties that the North wanted would increase the price of imported products and the proposed abolition of slavery would make the existing organization of work on cotton plantations impossible.¹⁰⁰

The students are confronted with an economic narrative about slavery (repeated all through the chapter). The image takes up almost half of the page in the chapter called «*The United States*».¹⁰¹ Prior to the discussion of the U.S., students learned about the «*success*»¹⁰² of the WIC. Absolutely no mention is made about the trade in enslaved people in relation to the WIC. The themes colonization, the trade in enslaved Africans (especially in U.S. context), and abolition was discussed more thoroughly. In respect to colonization students do learn about the cruel and horrific circumstances of *English* contract workers on the ship to America.

¹⁰⁰ Ulrich and Wesseling, *Andere tijden*, 207.

¹⁰¹ Ulrich and Wesseling, *Andere tijden*, 186.

¹⁰² Ulrich and Wesseling, *Andere tijden*, 42.

It was in fact a type of slavery. The journey alone was a great horror, because there was hardly anything to eat or drink. As many people as possible, were locked up in the hold of a ship. That trip lasted 6 to 8 weeks. Many people did not survive the crossing. One in three died during the trip. Once in America, they had to work for a number of years for those who had “bought” them, usually in miserable conditions. No wonder many tried to flee, despite the severe penalties that followed.¹⁰³

In relation to the trade in enslaved Africans we read: «*they were shipped under horrible conditions*». ¹⁰⁴ These passages show that the Dutch trade in enslaved Africans is marginalized through comparison. Moreover, the texts display ethnocentrism from Dutch positioning, notably leaving out Dutch failures or nuancing wrongdoings, while other European countries are addressed in a slightly less protective narration (again illustrating the importance of nationality in relation to racialization). When searching for the background information of the lithograph, we find that the image is a reproduction made by a printmaking firm: Currier and Ives. The original was made by William Aiken Walker. Walker was enlisted in the Confederate army.¹⁰⁵ The painting was made in 1884, which is years after the Civil War (1861-1865). Thus, the image captures a romanticized view of the «Old South» from the eyes of a pro-slavery (and anti-abolitionist) confederate. This artistic interpretation is also propaganda, shaping people’s views on slavery. By including this depiction of supposed tranquil life on a plantation, thus the myth of a benign plantation is still brought across to students.

¹⁰³ Ulrich and Wesseling, *Andere tijden*, 190.

¹⁰⁴ Ulrich and Wesseling, *Andere tijden*, 195.

¹⁰⁵ Cynthia Seibels, *The Sunny South, The Life and Art of William Aiken Walker* (Spartanburg: Saraland Press, 1995).

A Depiction of Black Americans: Poverty and the American Dream (1987)



The next photograph, published in a textbook from 1987¹⁰⁶, depicts a group of Black men, women, and children waiting outside, lined up. Some are carrying baskets, bags, and buckets. They look glum. They have on layers of warm clothing however, they are dressed well (long pea coats, nice hats). Some look directly at the camera, others do not seem to notice the photographer. It creates a feeling of a random snapshot, not a staged scene. Behind the people, we see a large billboard, filling the background. The billboard displays a banner (with stripes and stars) stating the slogan: *World's Highest Standard of Living*. Under the banner, it says in cursive: *There is no way like the American way*. The billboard further depicts a middle-class family in their sedan, father and mother in the front and two children in the backseat. They are all smiling and

¹⁰⁶ Leo Dalhuisen *et al.*, *Sprekend Verleden deel 3 boek 1* (The Hague: Nijgh & Van Ditmar Educatief, 1987). (This textbook is used for year 3 basic training).

cheerful. A dog is sitting in the back seat also looking quite content. The size of the billboard overpowers the people in line. In addition, the car visually seems to run over the people waiting in line. The contrast is ironic in multiple ways: the power of the image is this juxtaposition of people in poverty juxtaposed against a context promising abundance and happiness. Furthermore, we see a clear racial contrast. It depicts the contrast of the American ideal of the time (white, consuming middle-class family, conforming to gender stereotypes) versus everyday reality (poverty). The image can be found in the chapter about «*The Depression and the crisis of the American Dream*».¹⁰⁷ The caption of the image states: «*In the Thirties, an American dream did not become reality for many. Here blacks in line for free food (1937)*».¹⁰⁸ In this chapter, the focus is on income differences, the activities of banks, the New Deal, and more. When discussing the New Deal, the authors mention that «*Later the accusation was made that the New Deal did not do enough for blacks*».¹⁰⁹ The authors show that they do not find this criticism entirely justified, because Roosevelt could not do much about it, because «*the southern views about the race issue among whites was still extremely rigid*». Thus, if Roosevelt would explicitly include Blacks (and the author presume that he would) this would «*ruin*» the New Deal. Moreover, views on race were also extremely rigid in the North. When searching for the origin of the image, it was found that the photograph is an iconic image published in LIFE magazine in 1937, made by Margaret Bourke-White. Although the image was taken during the Great Depression, it was not the theme of the shot. The photograph was taken as a part of a news story about the Ohio River flood in the winter of 1937. The people on the photo were flood victims waiting for rations from a relief station in Louisville, Kentucky. The image was intended to illustrate the local tragedy. However, this information is missing from the textbook. When merely reading the caption, and observing the image, students may only detect whiteness as the «norm» versus Blackness as «needy and poor». Again, dichotomies like the failures versus the successful (which are classed as well as racialized) are brought across.

¹⁰⁷ Dalhuisen et al., *Sprekend Verleden*, 114.

¹⁰⁸ Dalhuisen et al., *Sprekend Verleden*, 115.

¹⁰⁹ Dalhuisen et al., *Sprekend Verleden*, 125.

A Depiction of a Black Woman (2009)



The following image from a textbook published in 2009¹¹⁰, is a colored engraving that depicts a Black naked woman hanging from a branch, tied on her wrists. She is hanging, with her head tilted back. Her breasts are bared. A torn cotton cloth is hanging around her hips. Blood is pouring out of her body like little garlands. One of the woman's feet nearly touches the grass, in a puddle of her own blood. Although, the viewer is not confronted with the actual abuse, we understand that the woman

¹¹⁰ Frouke Schrijver *et al.*, *Feniks 2 vwo*, (Baarn/Utrecht/Zutphen: Thieme Meulenhoff, 2009). (This textbook is used for year 2 basic training).

has been brutally beaten with a whip. The Black men, carrying whips in the backdrop seem to be the culprits. The nakedness of the woman displays sexuality. Although the expression of the woman is weak and helpless, she does not necessarily demonstrate much suffering. The image is depicted in the subchapter: «Everything is trade».¹¹¹ Here students learn about slavery. The impressions are twofold. On one hand, we see a very Eurocentric perspective. The main introduction of the chapter discusses the role of Europeans, using a passive voice, not directly appointing those responsible: «Their ships sailed everywhere, looking for products to trade. Discovered areas were colonized and large plantations arose. Slaves worked on these plantations. The slaves and products were supplied from afar. This created an international trade network [...]».¹¹² The chapter further discusses that Europeans did not shy away from violence, because «*trade is war*».¹¹³ Students learn about the most important products that were produced on agricultural plantations. Here, the history is nuanced through economic reasoning. Students are not taught that slavery should be viewed from an integral political, social, and cultural system. In relation to the topic abolition, the authors state that «[...] for centuries many people found slavery a very normal phenomenon».¹¹⁴ This type of *Zeitgeist* statement in relation to crimes against humanity, is often made in textbooks and negates the enslaved people's perspectives. Do we really believe that they found slavery a normal phenomenon? The simple fact of resistance contradicts this argument. The same can be said in relation to the discussion about how enslaved Africans were generally viewed («not humans, less intelligent»), which again is stated as a general view instead of an obvious European perspective. Similarly, the focus on economics is Eurocentric, because it does not take much imagination to know that as far as the enslaved were concerned, the profit was irrelevant. On the other hand, the chapter also portrays a more critical standpoint by including a section from John Stedman's book, who describes the horrible treatment of enslaved men and women in-depth. Here the audience sees the image. The caption states: «An abused female slave,

¹¹¹ Schrijver *et al.*, *Feniks*, 102.

¹¹² Schrijver *et al.*, *Feniks*, 102.

¹¹³ Schrijver *et al.*, *Feniks*, 102.

¹¹⁴ Schrijver *et al.*, *Feniks*, 103.

drawn by William Blake in 1806». ¹¹⁵ Students are thus confronted with the atrocities committed by the Dutch towards the enslaved and (implicitly) the fact that the history of slavery is also a «history of resistance». ¹¹⁶ What is clearly missing, is the discussion of the taking of freedom, the taking of identity, the importance of color and race, and the effects that this part of history had in the world, like racism. This last aspect is obviously not taken into account by the authors, as the chosen image displays stereotypes, which are not contradicted. When searching for the origin of the image, it was found that the image from the textbook is not the original made by William Blake (in 1769). ¹¹⁷



¹¹⁵ Schrijver *et al.*, *Feniks*, 104.

¹¹⁶ Stephen Small and James Walvin, «African Resistance to Enslavement», in *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity*, ed. Anthony Tibbles (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1994).

¹¹⁷ John Stedman, *Narrative of Five Years Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam: Transcribed for the First Time from the Original 1790 Manuscript* (New York: Open Road Media, 2016).

The image from the textbook is a mirror-image of the original. The original is from 1769, but the textbook image is from a later date (not 1806 like the textbook states, but 1818). Interestingly, the image is not just a mere mirror-image. In the older version, the original, two Black men *and* two white men are depicted in the background. These white men were thus left out of the reproduction. Looking closely, we see more distinctions. Firstly, the woman has a different expression. The original image depicts a suffering woman, clearly displaying pain. It is a lot less peaceful than the reproduction we found in the textbook. Secondly, the blood is depicted differently. In the original image the wounds and blood are more realistic. However, there is no puddle of blood present on the grass. Lastly, the original engraving is not as erotic as the later engraving. Although the woman is (half)naked in both images, her curves are a lot more prominent in the textbook. The image in the *textbook* thus shows a clear hypersexualized depiction of a Black woman. Although the textbook states that the image is made by William Blake, this is clearly not the case. The reproduction is undoubtedly an interpretation from another artist (probably Cristoforo Dell'Acqua).¹¹⁸ The main issue at hand is the hypersexual depiction of the woman and the Black men as culprits. Both showcase stereotypical gendered racializations. The idea that Black women were erotic, lewd, and promiscuous stemmed from Europeans first encounters with Africans (e.g. due to semi nudity). Later images depicting hyper-sexual Black women, legitimized sexual assault of enslaved women.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ <https://jcb.lunaimaging.com/luna/servlet/detail/JCB~1~1~4013~6320004:Schiava-Samboe,-Lacerata-dalla-Fust> (consulted 15-4-2018).

¹¹⁹ Pilgrim, *Watermelons, Nooses, and Straight Razors*.

A Depiction of Black Athletes (1995)



The following image from a textbook published in 1995¹²⁰ is a photograph, illustrating three Black athletes during a medal ceremony of the Olympics. The men are standing on high platforms and have already received their medals. All men raise their right fist in salute. USA is embroidered on their jackets. They are all smiling. Their stances are casual. The triangular composition creates the feeling that we are looking at important people, as we are literally looking up to the individuals. The shot creates a feeling of respect for the men, however there is a feeling of detachment as well. We cannot see them in full, because the ceremony leaders who we see from the rear, block our full view. In the backdrop, we see large stands filled with people. The three men are wearing black

¹²⁰ Lars Hildingson and Anne Schulp, *Levende geschiedenis 3*, (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff Educatief, 1995). (This textbook is used for year 3 basic training).

berets, which refers to the Black Panther movement. The beret has a political purpose. Another symbol in the image is the Black power salute, typically known as an explicit political gesture of solidarity and resistance. The caption states: «*Black power: Winners of the 400 meters give their victory a political character*». ¹²¹ This image displays Black men as winners, reframed in a political way. Only in this caption are students confronted with the term «Black power» and with the visual equivalent of the raised fists. In the chapter, the popularity of the American way of life is discussed. The authors mention the changed attitudes towards (and within) the U.S., specifically related to the Viet Nam war. No noteworthy mention is made of racism, civil rights, Black power, etc. The context therefore fails to give students the information needed to understand the agency in the image. When searching for additional information, outside of the textbook, the most striking aspects of this image is the fact that the more famous depiction of the same 1968 Olympics, has not been used. In the iconic image, the medal winners of the 200 meters, John Carlos and Tommie Smith, raised a gloved fist in salute during the national anthem in support of human rights and the civil rights movement. ¹²² They were expelled for it. Black athletes have often used their platform for activist purposes. Jesse Owens, who refused to give the Nazi salute, Muhammed Ali who refused to be inducted into the U.S. army, the current day #TakeTheKnee movement, to name a few examples. The photograph in the textbook depicts the winners of the 400 meters: Larry James, Lee Evans, and Ron Freeman, who also decided to protest. They chose to wear black berets and black socks. They were not banned from the Olympic activities, because they removed their berets and did not salute during the national anthem. Only after the national anthem, they smiled and raised their fists. ¹²³ Why would the authors choose this particular image? Although, this image depicts the recalcitrant other, the represented resistance seems less threatening for the white viewers. Furthermore, the image displays the stereotypical role of the Black man as an entertainer or athlete. ¹²⁴

¹²¹ Hildingson and Schulp, *Levende geschiedenis*, 109.

¹²² Robert Weisbord, *Racism and the Olympics* (London: Routledge, 2017).

¹²³ Weisbord, *Racism and the Olympics*.

¹²⁴ Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *White on black: Images of Africa and blacks in western popular culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

A Depiction of Equality? (1990)



This image, from a textbook published in 1990¹²⁵, depicts the moment that a naked young white man is (almost) attacked by a large shark. He is floating in the water, holding out his hand to be rescued. We see a dramatic scene of the attempt to rescue him from a rowboat. The focus of the image is on the men in the boat who are trying to rescue the young white man. The men in the boat, eight white and one Black, each have a unique expression on their face. The Black man looks dignified, due to his stylish clothing and flowing scarf around his neck. His clothes seem to be made from rich fabrics which gives him a wealthier appearance than the other men in the boat (with the exception of the man on the right side of the image). The triangular composition of the image displays the Black man on top. The four white men in the boat seem to be sailors and their appearance portray a lower class social positioning. The white man with the harpoon seems to be «upper class». He is attempting

¹²⁵ Ulrich and Wesseling, «Andere tijden», 209. (This textbook is used for year 2 basic training).

to target the animal with full force, while the Black man is not as actively pursuing the rescue. He is holding on to a rope that the young man is reaching for. It seems that the painter chose to depict the Black man as wealthy to contrast the social hierarchies of the time. Maybe, he has included the Black man at the top to suggest equality among all men. Whatever the reason, the image challenges traditional attitudes towards race and equality. In the textbook, the image takes up a large part of the page, in a chapter discussing «art».¹²⁶ The caption that can be viewed next to the image, states:

John Singleton Copley was commissioned to depict the rescue of Watson, who had been attacked by a shark in the bay of Havana. Copley makes every effort to involve the viewer emotionally in the event. The shark is a true monster: the devil cannot be worse. The man with the hook is the saving hero and the boy in the water is helplessly tossed back and forth between boat and shark, between heaven and hell it seems.¹²⁷

Interestingly, the caption and additional text does not mention the presence of the Black man and the other (working class) white men. When searching for more information about the background of the image, we find that the painting, titled *Watson and the Shark* (1778) was very popular in England and the U.S. of the time. This was the moment that the British abolitionist movement started. The painting represents a historical event. Watson, then a 14-year old boy, lost his leg. Watson became the Lord Mayor of London and then commissioned this work.¹²⁸ It is stated that Watson wanted to use the work as a political statement, poking fun at the colonist's views on slavery. Generally, this painting is seen as an early example of imagery related to the positioning of Black people in the U.S.¹²⁹ Although the depiction provides another view on power relations than the other images to this point, it is noteworthy that the textbook lacks greatly, by mentioning the societal critique (in regard to race and slavery) of the painter.

¹²⁶ Ulrich and Wesseling, «Andere tijden», 209.

¹²⁷ Ulrich and Wesseling, «Andere tijden», 208.

¹²⁸ Albert Boime, «Blacks in Shark-Infested Waters: Visual Encodings of Racism in Copley and Homer», *Chicago Journals* 3, no. 1 (1989), 19-47.

¹²⁹ Boime, «Blacks in Shark-Infested Waters», 19-47.

A Depiction of a Dutch Black Man (2014)



In a family portrait, which is included in a textbook¹³⁰ published in 2014, Anton de Kom is photographed with his wife and four children. De Kom is the most prominent person in the image. His hair is neatly brushed. He is wearing a perfectly tailored suit. He looks directly at the camera, smiling modestly. Next to De Kom we see his white wife, Nel Borsboom, blending into the background. She is wearing a modest dress while holding a small toddler. In front of her two boys stand. De Kom's hands, holding his son's head, demonstrate the bond between the man and the boy. Viewers slightly look up at Anton de Kom, making him dominant and impressive. The image depicts Anton de Kom as a family man, not particularly as a resistance fighter or anti-colonialist, political activist, etc. This family portrait is found in a chapter about World War II. Underneath the small photograph, the accompanying caption reads:

¹³⁰ Tom van der Geugten *et al.*, *Geschiedeniswerkplaats 3 vwo*, (Groningen/Houten, Noordhoff Uitgevers, 2014). (This textbook is used for year 3 basic training).

«Anton de Kom with his family (approx. 1933)». ¹³¹ The paragraph is called «The story of...Anton de Kom» ¹³² and discusses his life. The authors briefly mention his family, his role as an activist against colonialism, his time spent in Surinam, being banned from Surinam, his famous work «*We Slaves of Suriname*», and more. Importantly, the authors especially mention his work as an author for the resistance during World War II and his heartbreaking final year: captured by the Germans, his time in a concentration camp and his death two weeks before liberation. Very striking is that De Kom is mentioned as «one of the very few Black Dutch people in the Netherlands during the war». ¹³³ In the Netherlands, Black people (and other persons of color) are often referred to as foreigners, Surinamese, African, Moroccan, anything but Dutch (even when they are in fact Dutch). Except when they have achieved something special. That is exactly what materializes in this fragment: De Kom is framed as «exceptional» and appealing to «whiteness». Which clearly shows in the choice of image as well, depicting his white wife and their children. Although the image is a positive depiction of De Kom and we can consider this mention a pivotal addition to Dutch history textbooks, we should take note of the fact that when a Black person is depicted as a role model, he or she will quickly be portrayed as Dutch.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Although there is not one unified image of race, we could argue that the images combined with the contexts in which they are presented, have some elements in common. At the risk of oversimplification, as we are merely discussing eight images, we would like to mention four noticeable preliminary conclusions in regard to constructions of race and ways of othering.

First, in a number of these depictions we see narratives about who is «uncivilized» and who is «civilized», who is «helped» and who is «helping», who are «humiliated victims» and who are «powerful». In these

¹³¹ Van der Geugten *et al.*, *Geschiedeniswerkplaats*, 71.

¹³² Van der Geugten *et al.*, *Geschiedeniswerkplaats*, 71.

¹³³ Van der Geugten *et al.*, *Geschiedeniswerkplaats*, 71.

images, we see that depictions of the Black experience portray a position of failure or defeat. Although all individuals are racialized in racialized societies, these examples from textbooks show that Black people are racialized downward, while whites have been racialized positively. These images are material evidence of the oppression of Black people and must be confronted directly by the textbook authors. This does not happen. Although attempts are made to include Black history, these depictions are biased practices with false narrative.

Second, although manifestations of racism have changed over the centuries, this is not always the case for stereotypes and caricatures in imagery. The audience is clearly confronted with stereotypes through accounts of hyper-sexuality, physicality, criminality, poverty, etc. These stereotypes are further exacerbated by intersections of oppression (e.g. Black female as hyper-sexual, Black child as victims of poverty, Black males as recalcitrant, Black male middle-class as role models, etc.). These images could indicate that Black males with middle-class appearance are represented in more «harmonious» ways, than women and children.

Third, in some images we see racial harmony and Black agency. Yet, we shouldn't be confused by «symbolic» inclusion¹³⁴, as racial harmony seems to be used as a political narrative of supposed racial equality and race is not considered important in this narrative. It displays ideas of color-blindness and meritocracy. Hence, even images with a focus on «sameness» or «normality», display racialization.

Fourth, these few images become reminders that whatever the geographic location or historical context, racialized images are quite similar. In all instances, important historical contexts are divorced from contemporary and persisting injustices. A notable difference between the images, however, is the way the Dutch are positioned in comparison to «other» geographical locations, especially the U.S. The Dutch construct themselves as «tolerant» versus the «ignorant» Americans. In other words, although coded and sub-textual, we see how nationality plays a pivotal role in the analysis of racialization.

¹³⁴ Bonilla-Silva and Ashe, «The End of Racism?», 57-83.

Thus, these exemplary depictions are imparted through two types of narrative structures: a) *racialization through otherness*, which we argue is an (ongoing) process of othering people through race, among others, by one-sided stereotypical identities and racial hierarchy, and b) *racialization through sameness* maintained through color-blind frames, racial narratives and the minimization of race-talk. Further analysis with large samples (which is part of this same research project) should indicate whether repetitive racialized images of Black people overshadow any fuller range of representation. Research with a large sample, will also examine whether texts and images from textbooks in 50 years' time, are reflective of decades of ideas that (perhaps) have not changed.

In this research, we hope to have illustrated the potential of CRM as a research method as well as a pedagogical tool to impact educational practice, as educators could improve their teaching by examining the curriculum and their pedagogy from a critical race perspective. How do we *transform* current depictions in textbooks? How do we *transform* our teaching and our research? Our task, as researchers and educators, is to bring to light current racialized discourses and critically assess what we are actually seeing in images and reading or hearing in text and talk.

As we have noted earlier, more work is necessary to contribute to a still growing scholarship of race and (history of) education in the Netherlands (and Europe). Further critical race research, can play a role in addressing the problem of racism in textbooks by placing greater emphasis on images, symbols, and on how these affect contemporary thought and imagination. In addition, we would like to explicitly mention the importance of a more obvious focus on (the construction of) whiteness in Dutch and European educational contexts. Lastly, we must consider how (covert) racialized depictions may influence students' racial identities, as it could have significant implications for future generations.¹³⁵ These findings are relevant for every nation in Europe, where overt racism intensifies by the day and structural forms of racism are becoming even more covert.

¹³⁵ Huber and Solórzano, «Visualizing Everyday Racism », 223-238.

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