

**Shinichi Ishida**

# **CULTURAL HISTORY IN SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS:**

**An Overview of Descriptions in  
Croatia, Serbia, and Japan**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Until quite recently, history textbooks principally dealt with the history of politics and wars, perhaps necessitated by the wish to educate good citizens of modern national states. If need be, the textbook can play its role very well as an instrument for propaganda. Such a tendency can be clearly seen even today, in spite of severe criticism from intellectuals, including historians and educators.

On the other hand, students are apt to consider history as a subject which requires the memorization of useless proper names of historical figures, places and past deeds, etc. This tendency is particularly strong for cultural history, because it often takes the form of listing facts without sufficient explanations. In this paper, the term "cultural history" is used in a broader sense, including the

development of the sciences and arts, and the history of everyday life. In many cases, textbooks describe cultural history by focusing on the nation's tradition and identity. However, some textbooks show it as a kind of common property of humankind, or at least of peoples in a wider region. The latter viewpoint seems more effective for the stabilization of a multi-ethnic (and multicultural) region.

In this paper, descriptions of cultural history in the textbooks of elementary schools in the Yugoslav successor states, especially in Croatia and Serbia, will be analyzed. In the last part, the situation in Japan is shown for comparison.

In compulsory elementary school in Croatia and Serbia, students learn history in chronological order from the fifth grade to the eighth grade. There are four separate volumes of history textbooks. In the other Yugoslav successor states - Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia and Kosovo - in which the duration of elementary school education has been extended from eight years to nine years, students also learn history for four years with four separate volumes of textbooks from the sixth grade to the ninth grade. In any case, the system is completely different from that of Japan, where students learn history only for one or two years and use a single history textbook that contains history from ancient times to the present day.

In the Yugoslav successor states, each history textbook has about 200 pages. In addition, the students in the Yugoslav successor states learn both national history and world history at the same time.

With the "pluralization" of school textbooks in the 1990s and the 2000s, most of the Yugoslav successor states have introduced a school textbook screening system that is similar to the Japanese one. However, the government-designated textbooks are still used in Montenegro. Even in the other Yugoslav successor states, the "plural" textbooks' chapters and sections are almost the same, due to the national curricula and guidelines.

## CROATIA

In Croatia, "a general predominance of political history" was obvious in all textbooks under the former curriculum adopted in the 1990s, partly because "the ruling nationalist party in Croatia 1990-2000 regarded political history as the best way to mobilize people during the war and to secure nationalist support also after it had ended."<sup>1</sup> Such a tendency is still seen even in history textbooks under the present curriculum, regulated by the Croatian National Educational

1 Neven Budak, "Post-Socialist Historiography in Croatia since 1990," in Ulf Brunnbauer (ed.), *(Re) Writing History: Historiography in Southeast Europe after Socialism*. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2004, p. 160.

Standard (CNES) which was fully introduced in 2006. However, the increase in the percentage of descriptions related to social and cultural history in the new textbooks is obvious.

As mentioned above, there are four separate volumes of history textbooks for the fifth, the sixth, the seventh and the eighth grades of elementary schools in Croatia. According to the national curriculum, the history textbook for the fifth grade should contain the following chapters: (1) What's history, (2) The life of peoples in the prehistoric age, (3) Civilizations with early scripts, (4) The rise of ancient Greece, (5) Athenian democracy, (6) Hellenism, (7) The beginnings of Rome, (8) The Republic and the Empire, (9) The Croatian lands in ancient times, (10) The advent of Christianity, and (11) The migration of nations.<sup>2</sup>

Because the ancient history means a history of ancient civilizations, the percentage of descriptions related to cultural history is considerably higher here than in the other periods. In the third chapter, there are descriptions of ancient civilizations such as the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Persian, Indian and Chinese. The textbooks show hieroglyphs, cuneiform script, Phoenician alphabets and Chinese characters and underline the importance of the Code of Hammurabi. They also show the Egyptian pyramids, the Sumerian ziggurats, the Assyrian library and other monuments. In addition, most of the textbooks report the religion or deities of each civilization in detail. The teachings of Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, and Jesus are written about in detail, too. Among these ancient civilizations, the textbooks devote only one or two pages to that of the Chinese.

The textbooks for the fifth grade dedicate 25% of the total number of pages to Greek history and 40% to Roman history on average. Thus, too many personal names of Greek and Roman poets, philosophers, scientists, sculptors and historians are mentioned. One textbook has a special chapter on "Greek faith," explaining the names and roles of the deities and Muses.<sup>3</sup> The same textbook also has a special chapter on "Roman architecture."

The Croatian textbook (for elementary schools) devotes much more pages to the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations than the "World History" textbooks for high schools in Japan, though the Japanese textbooks list more personal names. For example, the number of personal names related to the cultural history of ancient Greece and Rome in the most popular "World History" textbook for high schools amounts to forty-seven,<sup>4</sup> whereas the numbers in the Croatian textbooks do not reach thirty.

2 Dijana Vican et al. (eds.), *Nastavni plan i program za osnovnu školu [The Teaching Plan and Program for Elementary School]*. Zagreb: Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa, 2006, pp. 284-285.

3 Tina Matanić et al., *Povijest 5 [History 5]*. Zagreb: Profil, 2006, pp. 156-161.

4 Tsugitaka Sato et al., *World History, revised edition*. Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha (『詳説世界史改訂版』山川出版社), 2011, pp. 44-57.

Actually, the Croatian textbooks try to connect their local (not national) history with the Greek and Roman civilizations. Thus, there are sections such as “the colonies of the Greeks on the eastern shore of the Adriatic” and “the Roman provinces in today’s Croatian territory” in the textbooks. A lot of pictures of cultural heritage and archaeological remains such as the amphitheater (arena) in Pula and Diocletian’s Palace in Split are also depicted in these sections.

According to the national curriculum, the history textbook for the sixth grade should contain the following chapters: (1) Europe and the Mediterranean after the migration of nations, (2) Feudal society, (3) The rise of medieval Croatia, (4) Europe and the Islamic World, (5) The ascent of medieval Europe, (6) Croatia under the Arpads and the Angevins, (7) Humanism and the Renaissance, (8) The great geographical discovery, (9) The Ottoman Empire in relation to Croatia and Europe, (10) The Reformation and the Catholic Renewal, (11) Europe in the Baroque period, and (12) Croatia in the early modern period.<sup>5</sup> Thus, it covers the period from the Middle Ages to early modern times. Each ethnic group in Europe formed a kind of nation or kingdom in this period, so the ratio of national history in the textbooks is high.

The ratio of descriptions related to medieval culture does not reach such a high percentage. The students learn the importance of the church for cultural developments, the foundation of universities, the Arabian influence on the natural sciences, the Romanesque and the Gothic as styles of art and architecture, etc. One textbook emphasizes the emergence of literary works in native languages such as *The Song of Roland* and *The Poem of the Cid*, and the popularity of the love poems of the troubadours.<sup>6</sup> Generally speaking, the Croatian textbooks do not deal with the history of the other South Slav lands or peoples in the Middle Ages, with the exception of Bosnia and Herzegovina. One textbook even has a heading titled “Medieval Bosnian Culture.”<sup>7</sup>

As for early modern times, the textbooks have two chapters related to cultural history: “Humanism and the Renaissance” and “Europe in the Baroque period.” All the textbooks emphasize the effects of the Copernican heliocentric theory and the role of Gutenberg’s printing press. They introduce famous Italian humanists and artists alongside their Croatian counterparts. Following the description of Dante, Petrarch, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, several Croats such as Marko Marulić, Marin Držić and Juraj Dalmatinac are mentioned. One textbook devotes sixteen pages to “Humanism and the Renaissance” with detailed background explanations.<sup>8</sup>

5 Vican et al. (eds.), *Nastavni plan i program za osnovnu školu*, pp. 286-287.

6 Ante Birin et al., *Povijest 6 [History 6]*. Zagreb: Alfa, 2007, p. 83.

7 Neven Budak et al., *Povijest 6 [History 6]*. Zagreb: Profil, 2007, p. 114.

8 Željko Brdal et al., *Tragom prošlosti 6 [Traces of the Past 6]*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2007, pp. 128-143.

All textbooks place stress on the characteristics of the Baroque in the 17<sup>th</sup> century due to the national curriculum. A similar tendency is seen in the Slovenian textbooks, probably because the Baroque is associated with the Roman Catholic Church, which has a dominant position both in Croatia and in Slovenia.

In addition, most of them explain the development of natural science after Galileo and Newton, and the beginning of the Age of Enlightenment as well. One textbook also mentions the development of literature in the native (Croatian) language after the Reformation and the Catholic Renewal.<sup>9</sup> The textbook also shows the establishment of the University of Zagreb and other institutions of higher education. All the Croatian textbooks mention great men from today's Croatian territory in this period; Ivan Gundulić as the author of *Osman*, Ruđer Bošković as "one of the greatest mathematicians and physicians in the World," and Ivan Lučić as "a father of Croatian historiography." Surprisingly, all the textbooks hardly mention other European writers and artists in the same period.

In Croatia, the students learn modern history from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century to the First World War in the seventh grade. The national curriculum regulates the contents of the history textbook for the seventh grade as follows: (1) The world and Croatia at the beginning of the modern era, (2) The formation of modern society: science, technology and the Industrial Revolution, (3) Europe from the French Revolution to the Congress of Vienna, (4) The Croatian National Revival and the emergence of modern nations in Europe, (5) The Revolution of 1848 in Europe and Croatia, (6) Society, culture and the change in everyday life in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, (7) Europe at the zenith of its power: the emergence of the first modern states, (8) Croatia under the Habsburg rule in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, (9) The world in the era of European domination in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, (10) Society, culture and the change of everyday life in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and (11) The World Crisis and the First World War.<sup>10</sup>

One textbook for the seventh grade devotes eighteen pages to the second chapter, and sixteen pages to the tenth chapter.<sup>11</sup> It also provides several special sections related to cultural history, such as "Research and the arts" in the first chapter, "Cultural activities of the National Revivalists" in the fourth chapter, and "Political ideas" in the fifth chapter. In regard to the Croatian National Revival, a lot of cultural institutions are depicted. In particular, the textbook illustrates the "reading rooms" in detail, because they are regarded as footholds of the National Revivalists. A huge number of names related to cultural history, such as famous

9 Budak et al., *Povijest* 6, p. 209.

10 Vican et al. (eds.), *Nastavni plan i program za osnovnu školu*, pp. 287-289.

11 Krešimir Erdelja et al., *Tragom prošlosti 7 [Traces of the Past 7]*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2007, pp. 28-45, 178-193.

inventors, scientists, writers, composers and painters can be seen in the textbook. However, they are exclusively of European (including Croatian) or U.S. origin.

The difference of the contents in each textbook is noteworthy, too. Particularly they put stress on different points. In connection with Romanticism, one textbook underlines that it was “a general cultural movement” which took over from Classicism in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; and it gives many names of writers and composers who are counted among the Romanticists.<sup>12</sup> Other textbooks refer to Romanticism in contraposition to Classicism.<sup>13</sup> In regard to the National Revival in Dalmatia and Istria, one textbook explains the multi-ethnic character of these regions.<sup>14</sup> In contrast, another textbook focuses mainly on the development of the Croatian national consciousness in these regions and describes the Italian inhabitants in Istria as its opponents.<sup>15</sup> In any case, all the textbooks deal with the cultural history of Europe and the U.S. exclusively. This can be seen as evidence of the traditional Eurocentric view of history.

The Croatian history textbooks for the eighth grade contain eleven chapters as follows: (1) The Versailles System, (2) The democratic process between the two World Wars, (3) The totalitarian regime between the two World Wars, (4) Croatia in the first Yugoslavia, (5) Science and culture in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the world and in Croatia, (6) The Second World War, (7) The world in the era of the Cold War and the fall of the communist system, (8) The process of decolonization of the world, (9) Croatia in the second Yugoslavia, (10) The origin and development of the independent Croatian state, and (11) Croatia and the world on the threshold of the third millennium.<sup>16</sup>

In one textbook, there are sections such as “The development of technology,” “Scientific discoveries and achievements,” “Arts” and “Films” in the fifth chapter.<sup>17</sup> In addition, it has sections such as “The development of technology and its influence on everyday life,” “Scientific discoveries and achievements,” “Postmodernism,” and “Popular music” in the eleventh chapter.<sup>18</sup> Similar to the textbook for the seventh grade, names of scientists, writers, composers and painters, including Croats are given in excess, especially lots of names of famous movie stars and musicians, including several Croatian rock groups who are also listed in the textbook. This textbook devotes about 30 pages to cultural history, but the ratio of Croatian culture to the whole is not high.

12 Stjepan Bekavac et al., *Povijest 7 [History 7]*. Zagreb: Alfa, 2009, pp. 100-105.

13 Damir Agičić, *Povijest 7 [History 7]*. Zagreb: Profil, 2007, pp. 74-75; Damir Agičić et al., *Povijest 7 [History 7]*. Zagreb: Profil, 2007, pp. 90-91.

14 Erdelja et al., *Tragom prošlosti 7*, p. 88.

15 Bekavac et al., *Povijest 7*, pp. 139-141.

16 Vican et al. (eds.), *Nastavni plan i program za osnovnu školu*, pp. 289-291.

17 Krešimir Erdelja et al., *Tragom prošlosti 8 [Traces of the Past 8]*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2007, pp. 96-111.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 245-251, 255-259.

Another textbook devotes more pages to Croatian culture, including the development of science, education, the arts, literature, movies, the mass-media and sports.<sup>19</sup> It has an unusual section on “Cultural life and the media in the Independent State of Croatia.”<sup>20</sup> It seems that the textbook endeavors to validate the cultural affairs of that puppet state to some extent. Another textbook also has the heading “The economic situation and culture in the Independent State of Croatia,” but it only explains that four volumes of the *Croatian Encyclopedia* were published and the first Croatian feature-length film *Lisinski* was made at the time of the Independent State of Croatia.<sup>21</sup> Due to the national curriculum, all textbooks tend to concentrate on the cultural circumstances in Croatia, ignoring those in other parts of Yugoslavia. One textbook features a table of the illiteracy rate of each province throughout Yugoslavia according to the census in 1931 with a brief commentary.<sup>22</sup>

All the textbooks mention nothing about the cultural trends outside of Europe and the USA. The one exception is a humanoid robot “ASIMO” constructed by a Japanese corporation Honda, which is shown in the last chapter.<sup>23</sup> Interestingly, one textbook has special essays such as “the incidents in the Far East: China and Japan” and “China and Japan after the war” as optional contents.<sup>24</sup> However, social and cultural circumstances in these countries are not mentioned at all, except the so-called “Cultural Revolution” in China.

Throughout the four volumes of history textbooks for elementary schools in Croatia, the cultural trends outside of Europe and the USA are seldom taken into consideration. As mentioned above, a traditional Eurocentric view of history is seen here. Then again, the Croatian textbooks reveal a strong sense of the belonging of the Croatian nation to the Mediterranean and Central Europe. Notwithstanding a common past in Yugoslavia, the Croatian textbooks tend to ignore the cultural history of neighboring peoples, including the Serbs and the Slovenes. This is completely different from the textbook in the 1980s, which gave much more explanations of their social and cultural developments before and after the unification of Yugoslavia.

19 Stjepan Bekavac et al., *Povijest 8 [History 8]*. Zagreb: Alfa, 2008, pp. 82-85, 230-233.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 100.

21 Vesna Đurić, *Povijest 8 [History 8]*, Zagreb: Profil, 2007, p. 91.

22 Snježana Koren, *Povijest 8 [History 8]*. Zagreb: Profil, 2007, pp. 81-82.

23 Erdelja et al., *Tragom prošlosti 8*, p. 251.

24 Koren, *Povijest 8*, pp. 21, 160.

## SERBIA

Serbia was “among the last countries in its region to still have a state monopoly over the publication of history textbooks,” thus “the present holders of power have assigned an important role in the creation of the Serbian state to the teaching of history in public schools.”<sup>25</sup> The entry of non-governmental publishers into the market of history textbooks was permitted at last in the late 2000s, but it seems that the system of textbooks is still unsettled.

Generally, the percentage of descriptions of cultural history in the Serbian history textbooks is lower than in those of the other Yugoslav successor states, with one exception: the history textbook for the fifth grade. The standard textbook published by the state-owned Institute for Textbooks contains the following chapters: (1) What’s history?, (2) Prehistory, (3) The ancient East (Orient), (4) Ancient Greece, (5) Hellenism, and (6) Ancient Rome.<sup>26</sup> It has sections such as “The culture of peoples of the ancient East,” “Religion and art in ancient Greece,” “The literature and sciences of ancient Greece,” and “The culture of ancient Rome.” In the chapter of “The ancient East,” there are detailed descriptions of the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt; however, it fully ignores those of India and China. Even in the supplementary Historical Atlas, only maps of the area around the Mediterranean with Mesopotamia are shown.<sup>27</sup>

In Serbia, there is a special textbook titled *Diaries from the Past* for the fifth grade, which deals with everyday life in ancient times. However, the world outside the Mediterranean is beneath its notice in the textbook as well.<sup>28</sup> Subsequently, it is remarkable that one of the new history textbooks for the fifth grade in 2011 dedicates two pages to ancient India and China.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, another textbook only shows a picture of the Great Wall of China with a brief commentary.<sup>30</sup>

In comparison with Croatia, the percentage of descriptions of ‘the ancient East’ is extremely low (less than 10%). The textbooks show the prehistoric ruins of Lepenski Vir and Vinča in Serbia, together with Stonehenge in England. However, they do not emphasize the connection between the Greek and Roman civilizations and their local history. The standard textbook has a short section of

25 Dubravka Stojanović, “Slow Burning: History Textbooks in Serbia, 1993-2008”, in Augusta Dimou (ed.), *“Transition” and the Politics of History Education in Southeast Europe*. Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2009, p. 142.

26 Danijela Stefanović et al., *Istorija 5 [History 5]*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2007, p. 3.

27 Danijela Stefanović et al., *Istorijski atlas 5 [Historical Atlas 5]*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2007.

28 Mako Šuica, *Dnevnici iz prošlosti [Diaries from the Past]*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2008.

29 Aleksandar Đukanović, *Mozaik prošlosti 5 [Mosaic of the Past 5]*. Beograd: BIGZ školstvo, 2011, pp. 34-35.

30 Branka Bečanović, *Istorija 5 [History 5]*. Beograd: Klett, 2007, p. 74.

“The Central and Northern Balkans under Roman rule,” showing the foundations of cities such as Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica), Singidunum (Belgrade), and Nais (Niš).<sup>31</sup> The names of the historical figures in the textbooks are the same as the ones in the Croatian textbooks.

The history textbook for the sixth grade in Serbia deals only with the Middle Ages. Thus it has the most detailed description of this period among the Yugoslav successor states. The standard textbook contains the following chapters: (1) Introduction, (2) Europe and the Mediterranean in the early Middle Ages, (3) The Serbs and their surroundings in the early Middle Ages, (4) Europe in the late Middle Ages, (5) The Serbian people and their neighbors in the late Middle Ages, and (6) The Serbian lands and their surroundings in the era of the Ottoman conquests.<sup>32</sup> The percentage of national and regional history is very high (about 60 %). It has sections on “The early culture of the South Slavs,” “The medieval culture of Europe”, and “The medieval culture of the Serbs.”

The Serbian students learn the importance of the church for cultural developments and the foundation of universities as well as the Croatian students. As for the style of art and architecture, it shows not only the Romanesque and the Gothic but also the Byzantine style to a considerable extent. Contrary to Croatia, the textbook also deals with other South Slav lands or peoples in this period. It shows the establishment of independent states such as Carantania (Slovenia), Croatia, Bulgaria, Dioclea (Montenegro), Raška (Serbia) and Bosnia. There are detailed descriptions of Dubrovnik and Bosnia. It also illustrates the common cultural heritage of these lands with some examples such as the churches of Zadar (Croatia), Kotor (Montenegro), Novi Pazar (Serbia) and Ohrid (Macedonia) which were built under the strong influence of Byzantium. All three textbooks contain excessive numbers of pictures of Orthodox churches, monasteries and medieval fortresses in and outside Serbia. On the other hand, they take no account of the world outside Europe, except some sections on “The Islamic world.”<sup>33</sup>

In Serbia, the students learn the modern history up until 1878 in the seventh grade, and then they learn about the history after 1878 to the present time in the eighth grade. The percentage of descriptions pertaining to cultural history is very low in both textbooks.

As an exception, the Institute for Textbooks publishes two kinds of history textbooks for the seventh grade. One textbook by Ljušić contains the following chapters: (1) Europe discovers the world and itself, (2) The Ottoman and Habsburg Empires, (3) The Serbs in Turkey, Austria and Venice, (4) Bourgeois revolutions, (5)

31 Stefanović et al., *Istorija 5*, p. 65.

32 Rade Mihaljčić, *Istorija 6 [History 6]*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2008, p. 3.

33 Ibid., pp. 26-29; Đorđe Bubalo et al., *Istorija 6 [History 6]*. Beograd: Klett, 2010, pp. 54-56; Marko Šuica et al., *Istorija 6 [History 6]*. Beograd: Freska, 2010, pp. 42-45.

Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (until 1878), (6) The monarchies of failed reforms and the Serbs, (7) The Serbian Revolution, (8) The Principality of Serbia, (9) Montenegro, and (10) The world, Europe and Serbia.<sup>34</sup> The other textbook by Bataković contains the following chapters: (1) Europe from the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, (2) The Serbian people under foreign rule from the 14<sup>th</sup> century to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, (3) Europe and the world from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the 1870s, (4) Serbia and Montenegro: The modern Serbian states, and (5) The Serbian people under foreign rule from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the 1870s.<sup>35</sup>

Of these two textbooks, the latter devotes more pages to cultural history. For example, the former devotes only one page to the section of “Humanism and the Renaissance,” but the latter contains eight pages on the same topic. In the same way, the former has no section dedicated to the Industrial Revolution or to the Age of Enlightenment, whereas the latter gives these topics independent sections, each counting three pages. Contrary to the Croatian textbooks, both textbooks pay little attention to the characteristics of the Baroque period, though the latter has a special column on “Baroque and Classicism.” The latter also devotes one page to the description of Romanticism, mentioning many writers, painters and composers in Europe in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. “The National Revival” of each nation in the Habsburg Empire and its leaders, including Vuk Karadžić (of Serbia) and Ljudevit Gaj (of Croatia), are also mentioned.

As for the Serbian national culture, the textbook by Bataković mentions the cultural and educational conditions of the Serbs under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, the Habsburg Empire, and the autonomous Serbian and Montenegrin principalities until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and stresses the importance of the Serbian Orthodox Church with its monasteries for the Serbs in this period. All the textbooks, including three other new ones which contain less descriptions of cultural history in general,<sup>36</sup> mention the establishment of important cultural and educational institutions in Serbia, such as the society *Matica Srpska*, the Society of Serbian Letters (today’s Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts), the National Library, the National Museum and the National Theatre. The development of the modern school system, including the founding of the University of Belgrade, is also described in all the textbooks.

The standard textbook for the eighth grade contains the following chapters: (1) Europe and the world in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, (2) Independent Serbia and Montenegro, the Serbs under

34 Radoš Ljušić, *Istorija 7 [History 7]*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2009, p. 3.

35 Dušan Bataković, *Istorija za sedmi razred osnovne škole [History for the seventh grade of elementary school]*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2009, pp. 4-6.

36 Goran Dujković, *Mosaik prošlosti 7 [Mosaic of the Past 7]*. Beograd: BIGZ školstvo, 2010; Radoš Ljušić, *Istorija 7 [History 7]*. Beograd: Freska, 2010; Branka Bečanović et al., *Istorija 7 [History 7]*. Beograd: Klett, 2011.

Austro-Hungarian and Turkish rule, (3) The First World War - the Great War, (4) Serbia and Montenegro in the First World War, (5) The world and Europe during the First and Second World Wars, (6) The Yugoslav Kingdom 1918-1941, (7) The Second World War, (8) Yugoslavia in the Second World War, (9) The world after the Second World War, and (10) Yugoslavia after the Second World War.<sup>37</sup> The percentage of descriptions related to cultural history in this textbook is still very low, as in the former edition.<sup>38</sup>

In the first chapter, the textbook explains “the progress of industry and transport,” “ideologies and social movements,” and “the progress of science and culture” in Europe in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the fifth chapter, it mentions the progress of science, technology, culture and society in Europe and the USA in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In these chapters, many names of famous scientists, writers and artists appear without sufficient commentaries. In the ninth chapter, there is a heading titled “Modernization and cultural transformations” in the world after the Second World War. It contains brief biographies of Pablo Picasso, Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley and Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali). Including all the other textbooks for the eighth grade, nothing is written on cultural history outside of Europe and the USA, just as in all Croatian textbooks.

On the other hand, all the textbooks explain the cultural and educational circumstances in the Principalities or Kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro before the First World War, and in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the interwar period. One textbook has a section on “the South Slav peoples” before the First World War, but it contains only a history of the Serbs abroad, including that of Montenegro; the textbook clearly implies that “the inhabitants of Montenegro were Serbs.”<sup>39</sup>

For the description of cultural history after the founding of Yugoslavia, two textbooks use the expression of “the Yugoslav cultural area.”<sup>40</sup> All the textbooks mention that Yugoslavia was one of the worst countries in Europe with regard to its rate of literacy, adding that the situation was improved to some extent by the establishment of new elementary schools and the increase in the number of teaching staff. Also, in the last chapter, which deals with the Socialist Yugoslavia, all the textbooks mention the “mass culture” or “popular culture” such as rock and pop music and movies. One textbook devotes four pages to the section on “the Society of the Socialist Yugoslavia,” carefully explaining the migration of the populations, education and the sciences, the media of mass communication, the arts and culture, and popular culture and sports.<sup>41</sup>

37 Đorđe Đurić et al., *Istorija 8 [History 8]*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010, p. 3.

38 Suzana Rajić et al., *Istorija 8 [History 8]*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2005.

39 Radoš Ljušić et al., *Istorija 8 [History 8]*. Beograd: Freska, 2010, p. 58.

40 Ibid., p. 140; Zoran Pavlović et al., *Mozaik prošlosti 8 [Mosaic of the Past 8]*. Beograd: BIGZ školstvo, 2011, p. 93.

41 Predrag Bajagić et al., *Istorija 8 [History 8]*. Beograd: Klett, 2010, pp. 189-192.

Thus, the history textbooks in Serbia generally take notice of the cultural and social history during the period of Yugoslavia from the viewpoint of a common Yugoslav cultural area, paying attention not only to Serbia but also to other regions (republics) in Yugoslavia. In this sense, Nikola Tesla, Ivan Meštrović and Ivo Andrić are included both in the Croatian and the Serbian textbooks, although their backgrounds are explained from the viewpoint of each respective state.

## JAPAN

After the Second World War, the education system in Japan was rebuilt following the American model. According to this system, nine years of schooling are considered compulsory. Students usually attend elementary school for six years and junior high school for three years. History is taught only for one or two years (a minimum of 105 hours) as a part of the subject of “Social Studies” in junior high school. The contents are regulated by the Course of Study – a set of governmental teaching guidelines. The students in public schools use only one textbook which the authorities of each educational district select from among several kinds of textbooks. It covers history from ancient times to the present day; which means that the amount of information is much smaller than that contained in the Croatian and Serbian textbooks. Students must learn about “World History” and “Japanese History” in detail in high school. One of the basic problems we encounter is that history textbooks for junior high school pay little attention to foreign history. In addition, history education in high schools tends to attach greater importance to “Japanese History” and the textbooks tend to present historical viewpoints based on a sense of “national isolation.”<sup>42</sup>

According to the Course of Study, the contents of a history textbook should be: (1) The currents of history and local history, (2) Japan in ancient times, (3) Japan in medieval times, (4) Japan in early modern times, and (5) Japan and the world in modern times. For instance, the most popular textbook has chapters in conformity with it on: (1) The currents of history, (2) Japan in ancient times, (3) Japan in medieval times, (4) Japan in early modern times, (5) The opening and the course of modern Japan, (6) The two World Wars and Japan, and (7) Contemporary Japan and the world.<sup>43</sup> In fact, more than 80% of the average textbook deals with Japanese history.<sup>44</sup>

42 Shingo Minamizuka, *Is “World History” Unnecessary?* Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten (南塚信吾『世界史なんていらない?』岩波書店), 2007, p. 40.

43 Gomi Fumihiko et al., *New Social Studies: History, new edition*. Tokyo: Teikoku Shoin (『新編新しい社会 歴史』帝国書院), 2007, p. 5.

44 Hisao Suzuki, *Let’s Regain “World History”* (鈴木久男『世界史を取り戻そう』). Tokyo: The Middle East within Asia, Booklet Series No. 1, p. 5.

The percentage of descriptions related to cultural history in Japanese history textbooks is relatively high. The above-mentioned textbook has many sections which bear “culture” or “civilization” in their titles, although most of the terms are specific to Japan, derived from era or place names (e.g. *Momoyama* culture, *Genroku* culture, *Kasei* culture). There are detailed descriptions of everyday life including food, clothing and shelter in each era, too. According to an index of other textbooks, 36% of the historical figures they contain are categorized as “people who contributed to cultural development.”<sup>45</sup> Among them, there are many Buddhist priests, along with writers, painters, and scientists. Literary works from the *Kojiki*, a collection of myths concerning the origins of Japan, as well as modern Japanese novels are also listed.

On the other hand, only four foreigners are connected with “culture” or “civilization; Confucius, Jesus, Muhammad, and Jianzhen (or Ganjin, a naturalized Japanese priest from China). In addition, some foreigners are classified as “people who had a great influence on Japanese or world history”, including Sakyamuni and Luther.

The ancient civilizations, except that of China, hardly appear in Japanese history textbooks. As mentioned above, the only historical figures appearing in ancient times are Sakyamuni, Confucius, and Jesus. The civilizations of Greece and Rome, as well as of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and India are explained only briefly. The strong influence of Chinese civilization on Japanese society including the introduction of Chinese characters and Buddhism in the 6<sup>th</sup> century is mentioned. As for medieval history, other than that of Japan, the textbooks only deal with China, Korea, and Mongolia - focusing on their political and economic relationships with Japan.

There are relatively detailed descriptions of “the Age of Discovery,” because Japan had a direct connection with Europe for the first time in this period. All the textbooks include a little about the Reformation. The Renaissance is either less mentioned or fully ignored.

In the textbooks, there are no descriptions related to the cultural history of Europe since the Industrial Revolution, which is briefly mentioned. Almost all writers, artists, and scientists in modern times listed in the textbooks are Japanese. Generally, they do not deal with cultural history after the Second World War at all, even in the case of Japan. In one textbook, there is a special section “Culture in the Shōwa Period (1926-89).”<sup>46</sup> However, it merely gives a limited explanation of

45 Hideo Kuroda et al., *Social Studies: History for Junior High School. The History of Japan and the World*. Tokyo: Teikoku Shoin (『社会科 中学生の歴史 日本の歩みと世界の動き』帝国書院), 2009, pp. IV-V.

46 Nobukatsu Fujioka et al., *Social Studies for Junior High School: The New History Textbook, new edition*. Tokyo: Jiyusha (『中学社会 新編新しい歴史教科書』自由社), 2010, pp. 222-223.

Japanese Nobel-Prize winners, Japanese literature, Japanese movies and cartoons, and changes of Japanese lifestyle during this period, and no observations on foreign (worldwide) culture are to be found.

## CONCLUSION

This paper tries to present an outline of the characteristics of history textbooks in Croatia, Serbia, and Japan, focusing on descriptions related to cultural history. In these countries, textbooks are frequently revised, so it is difficult to evaluate them synchronously. For example, the new history textbooks have been partly introduced since 2012 in Japan. Detailed descriptions of cultural history and everyday life in Croatian textbooks might change the image of textbooks in the 1990s that concentrated on politics and military affairs. A sense of belonging to Europe as a common cultural area is clearly seen. In the case of Serbia, the percentage of descriptions related to cultural history is still low. Nevertheless, there are excessive enumerations of 'facts' in these textbooks. Such a tendency is even more conspicuously noticeable in the case of Japan. In addition, the Japanese textbooks only explain the historical events abroad as supplementary subject matter that can be omitted.

This narrow-minded national history must be revised by introducing "World History" or the history of a wider region such as East Asia, in which a common cultural heritage can be seen clearly. It is our wish that the problems of descriptions related to cultural history in textbooks will be resolved by continuous investigation and international academic cooperation.