



Contemporary History Textbooks in Lithuania: The Case of Innovations

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Abstract. The article analyses recent innovations in Lithuanian history textbooks. Since 1990, when Lithuania regained its independence, history textbooks with new innovative approaches and content have been published. The author of this study uses the content analysis method to summarise the innovations, which are presented in the history textbooks of five publishing houses: *Šviesa*, *Briedis*, *Kronta*, *Tyto alba* and *Elektroninės leidybos namai*. To that end, the author examined 20 history textbooks and distinguished seven most prominent innovations.

Keywords: history, textbook, innovation, teaching, Lithuania, school.

Anotacija. Straipsnyje analizuojamos šiuolaikinės inovacijos Lietuvos istorijos vadovėliuose. Po 1990 m., kuomet Lietuva atkūrė Nepriklausomybę, buvo išleisti naujoviški ir kitokio turinio istorijos vadovėliai. Tyrimo autorius, taikydamas *kontent* analizės metodą, apibendrina inovacijas, kurios yra įgyvendintos penkių leidyklų – *Šviesa*, *Briedis*, *Kronta*, *Tyto alba* ir *Elektroninės leidybos namai* – vadovėliuose. Išanalizavęs 20 istorijos vadovėlių, autorius išskyrė septynias labiausiai pastebimas inovacijas.

Esminiai žodžiai: istorija, vadovėlis, inovacija, mokymas, Lietuva, mokykla.

Introduction

According to Jan Mikk, a professor of the University of Tartu in Estonia, “good textbooks are a bonanza for any nation”¹. The above statement describes the case of

¹ MIKK, Jaan. *Textbook: Research and Writing*. Frankfurt am Main; Berlin; Bern; Bruxelles; New York; Oxford; Wien: Lang, 2000, p. 15.

Lithuania, as for most of the 20th century Lithuania was occupied by its neighbours. Before World War I Lithuania was a part of the Russian Empire. During World War I and World War II Lithuania was occupied by Germany. During the period 1920–1939 the eastern part of Lithuania with its capital Vilnius was a part of Poland. With the advent of World War II, the Soviet Union annexed Lithuania in 1940–1941 and kept it occupied from 1945 to 1990. Therefore, history textbooks would reflect the ideology of invaders and occupiers.

Under the Soviets, all history textbooks were written in Russian and published in Moscow. Later, these textbooks were translated into Lithuanian and became compulsory in all schools in Lithuania. In 1958 attempts were made to publish history textbooks in Lithuania; however, owing to Russification and Sovietisation, these textbooks were saturated with communist and Russian interpretations.

After Lithuania regained its independence from the Soviet Union, the content and curriculum of Lithuanian textbooks was updated leading to the publication of better textbooks. About two decades ago textbooks rapidly absorbed new ideas and features in their layouts and contents. Two factors were prominent: the ability to examine the available Western European textbooks and the free publishing market.

With the arrival of independence, new opportunities for collaboration with Western countries emerged. At that time several seminars were held where education specialists and textbook authors from Sweden, Finland, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany introduced Lithuanian historians to the established methods, techniques, and trends in creating effective teaching materials. In 1993, 1994, 1996 several historians and textbook authors attended the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in Brunswick (Germany). In 1996 the institute organised seminars and workshops for history textbook authors where tutors from the UK and Germany specialising in the creation of educational material gave lectures and seminars to share their best practices. This co-operation provided Lithuanian specialists with new insights into creating the most effective educational materials, including textbooks.

As stated earlier, from 1998 the free market encouraged advances in textbook writing. Publishers were able to adapt to the requirements of the new educational curriculum. Competition stimulated more interest as more historians and teachers were involved in the process of textbook writing. Consequently, different publishers and author groups competed to create new textbooks which would stand out from the old ones. Currently, there is a large variety of new history textbooks available in Lithuania.

Over the last two decades researchers have produced very few academic publications, which focused on history textbooks. There were also several attempts to define the ideal model of a history textbook. One of the studies analysed the first series of history textbooks for grades seven through ten published in 1998–1999. The authors evaluated the textbooks on the basis of four elements: artistry, conformity with the educational curriculum, the

number of history sources, and the difficulty of the content². In addition³, concluded that there was too much political history dominated by wars and suggested placing a greater emphasis on the periods of peace and the daily lives of people. His publication *Ideal History Textbook: between Reality and Endeavour* outlined the guidelines for textbook authors. The researcher argued that a textbook should appeal to students and motivate them to study⁴. He suggested the use of more colourful visuals, various critical thinking assignments, such as distinguishing between a fact and a historical interpretation, and literature, which would relate to students.

Other studies emphasised the necessity to reduce the amount of facts presented in textbooks, such as dates, names, and places. Researchers suggested more appealing and simpler texts, including differing interpretations and greater selectivity in the choice of history sources for textbooks. The shortcoming of overwhelming the student with too many sources and related assignments soon became apparent. Therefore, authors were recommended to include more effective ways for students to acquire new skills and information by giving assignments which would be more understandable. Authors were also advised to reduce redundancies in textbooks⁵.

Nevertheless, after the 90's when the first academic analyses and new textbooks appeared, the use of history sources remained an unresolved quandary. Critics complained about the lack of primary and reliable sources; some sources were not compatible with the topic; not all sources had the authors listed; sometimes, the questions were too vague and did not match the content; moreover, some questions were confusing and students did not understand what the issue was⁶. The prominent Lithuanian politician and member of the European Parliament Vytautas Landsbergis⁷ criticised some history textbooks for being overloaded with old Soviet interpretations.

There are five publishing houses in Lithuania which publish history textbooks. Recently, they have attempted to include new methods with the aim of creating appealing history textbooks for students and teachers.

The primary objective of this study is to analyse the advances and innovations in Lithuanian history textbooks. In order to achieve this objective, secondary objectives were devised. They are as follows:

² BAKONIS, Evaldas; SVĖRIENĖ, Audronė. Ar nauji naujausieji vadovėliai. *Mokykla*, 1999, Nr. 11, p. 28–32.

³ BAKONIS, Evaldas. Ar „taikūs“ lietuviški istorijos vadovėliai? Taikos klausimas lietuviškame istorijos vadovėlyje. *Istorija*, 2000, t. 45, p. 60–65.

⁴ BAKONIS, Evaldas. Idealus istorijos vadovėlis: tarp realybės ir siekiamybės. *Istorija*, 2001, t. 48, p. 48–53.

⁵ ŠETKUS, Benediktas. Kai kurie užduočių ir klausimų istorijos vadovėliuose pateikimo aspektai. *Istorija*, 2003, t. 58, p. 62–67.

⁶ ŠETKUS, Benediktas. Keletas įžvalgų dėl istorijos dokumentų pateikimo istorijos vadovėliuose. *Istorija*, 2011, t. 82, p. 28–37.

⁷ LANDSBERGIS, Vytautas. Istorija ir sovietinis propagandinis balastas. In: Šetkus, B. & Šetkuvienė, R. (eds.) *Mokykliniai istorijos vadovėliai ir europinės visuomenės ugdymas Rytų ir Vidurio Europos šalyse*. Vilnius: VPU leidykla, 2006, p. 85–95.

- 1) To identify the main topics and features which engage and motivate students to study history.
- 2) To define the changes and improvements in history textbook layout and content.
- 3) To summarise and briefly describe the most common innovations found in Lithuanian textbooks.

Methodology

This is a qualitative study where secondary school history textbooks served as the source and focus of the study. In the first stage 50 textbooks published in Lithuania during the period 1990–2011 were chosen for the analysis. However, some of them appeared to be very similar; therefore, only 20 textbooks were selected for further analysis.

In the second stage of the research the author focused on the remaining 20 textbooks. All 20 textbooks were published by five publishing houses, including the oldest and the largest textbook publishing house *Šviesa*, as well as four newer publishers established after the restoration of Lithuania's independence: *Kronta*, *Briedis*, *Tyto alba* and *Elektroninės leidybos namai (ELN)*.

History is taught in secondary schools from grades five to twelve in Lithuania. There are three concentric patterns. The first includes grades five and six (grade five – Introduction to the History of Lithuania; grade six – Introduction to World History). Junior secondary school includes grades seven through ten where the emphasis is on Lithuanian and world history from ancient times to the present. The third stage of the concentric pattern includes grades eleven and twelve, which concentrate on the review of history from ancient times to the present days. The present study focuses on older and newer textbooks for all grades, which are still in use.

Several criteria were used in the textbook selection process. The publishing houses *Šviesa*, *Kronta* and *Briedis* have published the largest amount of textbooks since 1990; therefore, their textbooks were chosen for the analysis. The other two publishing houses, *Tyto alba* and *ELN*, have published only one or two textbooks; however, as these textbooks feature considerable differences in their content, style and layout, they were also chosen for further analysis. A summary of the textbooks analysed in the study is provided in Table 1 by their publishing house and the grade they are intended for.

Table 1. History textbooks by publishing house and school grade

Publishing House	Briedis	ELN	Kronta	Šviesa	Tyto Alba
School Grade	5 th , 6 th , 7 th , 8 th , 9 th	7 th –12 th	7 th , 7 th , 8 th , 9 th , 10 th , 10 th	5 th , 8 th , 9 th , 10 th , 11 th , 12 th	7 th , 8 th

Two stages could be identified in history textbook publishing from 1990 to 2011. Until 1997 the major innovations and changes occurred within history teaching content, which included new topics and themes, new previously neglected facts and evaluations. However, no major changes occurred within textbook layout. Starting from 1997 major changes took place in history textbook content from the perspective of didactics: new and colourful illustrations, extracts from primary sources and various assignments for students were used more frequently. Thus, textbooks (excluding one) published after 1997 were chosen for the study. A summary of the history textbooks analysed in the study by publishing year is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. History textbooks by publishing year

Publishing House	Briedis	ELN	Kronta	Šviesa	Tyto Alba
Publishing Year	1997, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008	2002	1998, 1998, 1999, 1999, 2006, 2008	1993, 2001, 2001, 2004, 2004, 2007	2005, 2006

A digital history textbook is characterised separately, whereas the remaining textbooks are analysed together in order to identify the most frequent innovations.

In the final stage the identified innovations were summarised and characterised. Only the most prominent innovations, which affected the history teaching and learning process, were presented. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines the word *innovation* as a new method, idea or product. Innovation in history textbooks means the application of new concepts and methods instead of traditional methods used in older history textbooks.

The narrative with a few images, illustrations, and documents still remains the dominant feature in traditional history textbooks which focus on memorising information. Traditional textbooks are based on the old paradigm of teaching, while the innovative textbooks represent the new paradigm in teaching. In this new paradigm knowledge is actively constructed, discovered, transformed, and extended by students⁸.

Results

The analysis of Lithuanian history textbooks was followed by the identification of the most frequently used innovations. These innovations and techniques are briefly presented and discussed below.

⁸ JOHNSON, David; JOHNSON, Roger; HOLUBEC, Edythe. *Cooperation in the classroom*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1998.

1. A large number of sources are used in history textbooks

During the 20th century the structure of history textbooks did not change a great deal; they were dominated by the author's narrative with barely several illustrations and documents. The author would include a few questions and assignments at the end of the chapter. This tendency changed dramatically when the publishing house *Briedis* published *World History* for the sixth grade⁹. It was the first textbook to include a large number of historical sources supplementing the author's text.

From 1998–1999 *Kronta* published a series of textbooks for grades seven through ten: *Ancient History* by Šetkus & Pobedinska (1998) for grade seven¹⁰, *World and Lithuanian History: From the Sixth to the Eighteenth Century* by Jokimaitis, Kasperavičius & Manelis (1999) for grade eight¹¹, *Modern History* by Brazauskas, Jurkevičius & Petrauskas (1999) for grade nine¹², *The History of the Twentieth Century* by Kasperavičius & Jokimaitis (1998) for grade ten¹³.

Lithuanian and world history is integrated in these textbooks. Before the series appeared, separate textbooks were used to present the history of Lithuania and the world. The tradition of separating the history of Lithuania from the rest of the world was popular in the independent Lithuania of 1918–1940, as well as in Soviet Lithuania during the period 1945–1990. However, the integration of world and Lithuanian history received some criticism owing to too much focus on world history at the expense of Lithuania¹⁴.

The new series of four textbooks includes a variety of historical sources. Based on French and western models, an attempt was made to use various sources for each topic, including documents, diagrams, maps, and photographs. The same format was used; one page includes the author's text, while the next page presents the sources. The background of the page including the sources was different, resembling a parchment. The innovation was various assignments relating to every source thanks to which teachers were able to use these assignments and save time instead of creating their own.

In 2001 two new history textbooks were published: *Lithuania and the World* for the eleventh¹⁵ and twelfth¹⁶ grade. Only one tenth of the textbook consisted of the authors' text; the rest of the book comprised of historical sources. Approximately ten historical sources were used for analysis in the case of every topic. During 2005–2006 similar

⁹ BAKONIS, Evaldas. *Pasaulio istorija: vadovėlis 6 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 1997.

¹⁰ ŠETKUS, Benediktas; POBEDINSKA, Liucija. *Senovės istorija*. Vilnius: Kronta, 1998.

¹¹ JOKIMAITIS, Rimantas; KASPERAVIČIUS, Algis; MANELIS, Eugenijus; STUKIENĖ, Beatričė. *Pasaulio ir Lietuvos istorija: VI–XVIII amžiai*. Vilnius: Kronta, 1999.

¹² BRAZAUSKAS, Juozas; JURKEVIČIUS, Saulius; PETRAUSKIS, Kęstutis. *Naujųjų amžių istorija*. Vilnius: Kronta, 1999.

¹³ KASPERAVIČIUS, Algis; JOKIMAITIS, Rimantas. *Naujausiųjų laikų istorija*. Vilnius: Kronta, 1998.

¹⁴ BAKONIS, Evaldas; SVĖRIENĖ, Audronė. Ar nauji naujausieji vadovėliai. *Mokykla*, 1999, Nr. 11, p. 28–32.

¹⁵ BAKONIS, Evaldas; JANUŠAS, Jonas. *Lietuva ir pasaulis: istorijos vadovėlis XI klasei*. Kaunas: Šviesa, 2001.

¹⁶ GEČAS, Algirdas; JURKYNAS, Juozas; JURKYNIENĖ, Genia; VISOCKIS, Albinas. *Lietuva ir pasaulis: istorijos vadovėlis XII klasei*. Kaunas: Šviesa, 2001.

textbooks were published for lower grades *History: Textbook for the Seventh Grade* by Jankūnienė, Manelis & Pobedinska (2005)¹⁷ and *History: Textbook for the Eighth Grade* by Banys, Jankūnienė & Pobedinska (2006)¹⁸. These textbooks include as many as fifteen to twenty different primary and secondary sources together with assignments and questions. The authors' text is used to introduce the topic only.

The newer generation of textbooks did not gain popularity. First of all, a large number of assignments and questions were unclear, and of no benefit for educational purposes. This situation occurred because the authors lacked information on how to create effective assignments and to choose the best historical sources. Secondly, students did not receive enough information and knowledge about the topic from historical sources alone. Thirdly, it was quite difficult to find relevant primary sources for some topics in the Lithuanian language and their translation proved to be difficult. Fourthly, the majority of teachers and students were not used to these new textbooks and preferred traditional textbooks dominated by the author's text.

The last five years showed a tendency to use a large number of history sources and related assignments. However, the author's text still constitutes the core of every topic. Hence, there are two types of textbooks: in some textbooks the author's words prevail and less attention is paid to history sources, while in other textbooks the opposite is true.

Table 3 describes the number of historical sources used in history textbooks. It presents the results of the analysis of three different textbooks for the tenth grade¹⁹.

Table 3. The number of historical sources used in the textbooks titled *The Twentieth Century History*

Type of historical source	<i>Kronta</i> textbook (1999)	<i>Šviesa</i> textbook (2004)	<i>Briedis</i> textbook (2007)
Documents	75	36	64
Newspapers and press (primary source)	10	1	20
Memoirs	13	26	27
Historical studies	40	46	37
Anecdotes, poetries	0	9	13
Photos	197	181	425
Pictures and images of original items	16	21	109
Cartoons	14	9	42
Maps	24	20	72
Diagrams, schemes, charts	67	21	99
Paintings, reconstructions	3	5	38
Total	456	375	946

¹⁷ JANKŪNIENĖ, Jurgita; MANELIS, Eugenijus; POBEDINSKA, Liucija. *Istorija: vadovėlis 7 klasei*. Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2005.

¹⁸ BANYS, Bronislovas; JANKŪNIENĖ, Jurgita; POBEDINSKA, Liucija; SKARDŽIUKIENĖ, Aušra. *Istorija: vadovėlis 8 klasei*. Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2006.

¹⁹ ŠETKUS, Benediktas. Keletas įžvalgų dėl istorijos dokumentų pateikimo istorijos vadovėliuose. *Istorija*, 2011, t. 82, p. 28–37.

The table above shows a considerable number of history sources used in traditional textbooks; however, photographs are used most often. With this new trend, history teachers faced the challenge of combining the author's text and the sources. Some teachers thought that it was necessary to re-tell the author's text and then move to the analysis of the sources, while others tried to use the author's text and historical sources together according to the sequence provided in the book; however, it proved to be quite difficult. Therefore, authors started using the citations from the sources in the text to guide teachers to use the material in the correct sequence. These guidelines were very helpful to teachers and enabled them to combine all the material effectively. Teachers could integrate the authors' narrative with documents, maps, images, and photographs. This innovation allowed the teacher to incorporate the historical narrative and the sources into a whole, facilitating the job of teachers and the learning of students.

2. More attention to the history of daily life

During the Soviet rule textbooks were dominated by political and economic history. Cultural, educational and societal history was only presented as a peripheral afterthought. This trend existed until 2000 when the focus shifted away from economics and politics to the history of the daily lives of ordinary people. This trend became especially apparent in lower grades.

Daily life is portrayed in several ways. Some topics are compulsory for students. For instance, such topics as *A Stone Age Family*, *The Rich and the Poor of the Sumerians*, *The Daily Life of Greeks*, *Children's Education and the Theatre*, *The Most Important Roman Occupations*, *The Daily Life in the City of Rome* can be found in the textbooks²⁰. In addition, the topics *Jewish Lifestyle*, *Domesticity in Greek Life*, *Bread and Circuses (Ancient Rome)*, *How Romans Lived*²¹ existed as well. The textbooks about the Middle Ages include topics like *Life under the Lords*, *Town Life*, *The Knight's World*, *The Hard Life of Peasants*, *Medieval Towns and Cities*²². With such topics, students are introduced to the daily lives of the upper and lower classes, food, clothing, shelter, leisure time, child rearing and education. In the 20th century textbook topics on daily life include *Changes in Daily Life: 1918–1939*, *The Life under Soviet Occupation: 1940–1941*, *The Life in Nazi Occupied Lithuania: 1941–1945*, and *The Life in the Soviet Lithuanian Countryside and Towns 1945–1990*²³.

²⁰ ŠETKUS, Benediktas. *Senovės istorija: vadovėlis 7 klasei*. Vilnius: Kronta, 2006.

²¹ KAPLERIS, Ignas; MEIŠTAS, Antanas; MICKEVIČIUS, Karolis; ŠALNA, Rytas; ŠOTLANDAITĖ, Ingrida; TAMKUTONYTĖ, Živilė. *Laikas: istorijos vadovėlis 7 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 2004.

²² KAPLERIS, Ignas; MEIŠTAS, Antanas; MICKEVIČIUS, Karolis; RAMANAUSKAS, Robertas; RAŠKAUSKAS, Kęstutis; STEPONAVIČIENĖ, Lirija; TAMKUTONYTĖ, Živilė. *Laikas: istorijos vadovėlis 8 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 2005.

²³ BAKONIS, Evaldas. *Lietuva pasaulyje: vadovėlis X klasei*. Kaunas: Šviesa, 2004.

One of the largest publishing houses of history textbooks *Briedis* presents daily life in supplementary optional materials only. The topic *The Daily Lives* is the final section of every chapter. For example, the textbook for grade five starts with Lithuania's prehistory but the section entitled *Daily Life in Prehistoric Times* can only be found at the end of the chapter. The second chapter is dedicated to Medieval Lithuania from the 12th to the 16th century, and the chapter ends with *Daily Life in the Middle Ages*. The third chapter deals with Lithuania's history from the 16th to the 18th century with the concluding topic of *Daily Life in the Modern World*. Other sections include *Daily Life in the Twentieth Century*, *Daily Life between WW I and WW II*, *Daily Life during Soviet Occupation*²⁴.

The authors portray daily life based on eight factors, which include (1) shelter, (2) food, (3) clothing, (4) health and hygiene, (5) life expectancy, child labour, and names, (6) standards and measurements, (7) money, (8) transportation. Additionally, a variety of sources, such as memoirs and photographs, can supplement political and economic history. Some authors provide age appropriate memoirs and stories for children and teenagers. This makes history more relatable to different age groups. Peer memoirs are often more interesting and appealing to students than those from an older generation. For example, students' memoirs about Lithuanian schools before WWII and the first years of Soviet occupation included in the textbooks of the 20th century deal with the changes students experienced when going from Lithuania's independence to Soviet oppression²⁵.

In conclusion, the history of daily life is very interesting, especially when that history is related to students' interests, concerns, and life experiences.

3. Relationship between world history and the history of Lithuania

Teaching practices reveal that student motivation increases when Lithuania's history is placed in a global context. Lithuanian society wants to see, compare and contrast the most outstanding Lithuanian personalities or the lives of ordinary people with those of other countries. Therefore, when describing the history of Europe and other continents, some history textbooks relate it with the situation in Lithuania or Lithuanian people and the nation.

The existing relationships are depicted either in the author's text or through history sources. It is quite often revealed by referring to the participation of Lithuanian people in the events and affairs of other (foreign) countries. Students often think that there is no connection between Lithuanian and world history. They see Lithuania's past in isolation. However, when analysing history in greater detail, they begin to see Lithuania as a part

²⁴ LAUŽIKAS, Rimvydas; MICKEVIČIUS, Karolis; TAMKUTONYTĖ, Živilė; KAPLERIS, Ignas. *Kelias: Lietuvos istorijos vadovėlis 5 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 2008.

²⁵ BAKONIS, Evaldas. *Lietuva pasaulyje: vadovėlis X klasei*. Kaunas: Šviesa, 2004.

of Europe. Lithuanians participated in European and global events. Even if Lithuanians did not actively participate in global events, they wrote memoirs and recorded their stories and experience in diaries, letters, periodicals, and books. Students find it more interesting to see history through their fellow-countrymen's rather than foreigners' eyes.

In order to portray the relationship between Lithuania and the rest of the world, textbook authors use the analysis of Lithuanian historians, archaeologists, ethnologists, geographers, linguists and researchers on the evolution of world history. Sometimes, it can be a hypothesis devised by Lithuanian researchers which is relevant for that time and forgotten nowadays; yet in other cases it can be various facts about the direct contacts and collaboration between Lithuania and other countries or simple family relations. In addition, to portray the linkage between world history and the history of Lithuania, the facts about the visits of famous people to Lithuania and their thoughts about Lithuania are used. Finally, students are introduced to the authentic items from other countries, which are kept in Lithuania museums.

The example of a close relationship could be the history of Lithuania and Turkey. The textbook *History of Ancient Civilizations* (1992)²⁶ includes the topic *Hittite Civilization* and its subsection entitled *Hittites and Lithuania*. The section reveals how at the beginning of the 20th century Lithuanian researchers observed certain similarities between Hittite and Lithuanian languages and tried to prove that Lithuanians are very close to Hittites²⁷.

The textbook *Time: History Textbook for the Eighth Grade*²⁸ contains a section on *The Ottoman Turks*. The authors point out a variety of facts dealing with Lithuania's relationship to the Ottoman Empire. For example, the nobleman of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania Mikołaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł (Mikalojus Kristupas Radvila) wrote about his impressions from the trip to Jerusalem in 1582–1584. He described how the pasha, the high-ranking officials of the Ottoman Empire, ruled Egypt from a unique Lithuanian point of view. The second source is the painting by a 19th century artist depicting the Siege of Vienna at the Battle of Kahlenberg in 1683.

What is more, in their narrative authors mention several facts about how Lithuanians were related to the Ottoman Turks: *“Ladislaus Jagiello, Polish king of Lithuanian descent, fell in the battle of Varna in 1444. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which constituted one state after the Union of Lublin in 1569, and Austria were the ‘Bulwark of Christianity’ in defending Europe from the Ottoman Turks. In 1683 Jan Sobieski, the leader of the Commonwealth’s armies, saved Vienna from the Ottoman Turks. This victory ended the threat of Islam to Europe. Soldiers from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania played a significant role in the wars against the Turks. In the victorious Battle of Khotyn (1673), Michał*

²⁶ BAKONIS, Evaldas. *Senovės civilizacijų istorija: mokomoji knyga XI klasei*. Kaunas: Šviesa, 1992.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ KAPLERIS, Ignas; MEIŠTAS, Antanas; MICKEVIČIUS, Karolis; RAMANAUSKAS, Robertas; RAŠKAUSKAS, Kęstutis; STEPONAVIČIENĖ, Lirija; TAMKUTONYTĖ, Živilė. *Laikas: istorijos vadovėlis 8 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 2005.

Kazimierz Pac led the armies of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the decisive breakthrough into the enemy's camp. The Church of St. Peter and Paul in Vilnius houses these trophies from the battle; huge Turkish battle drums testify to the Lithuanian victory"²⁹.

The textbook *Modern History* includes a passage on the Russo-Turkish War of 1877: "Interestingly, there was a large contingent of 20,000–25,000 Lithuanian soldiers in the Russian army that battled against the Turks and 4,000 of them perished in Bulgaria. Lithuanian soldiers distinguished themselves in the Battle of Philippopolis (1878)." ³⁰ Even the surnames of the dead can be found on the monuments in Bulgaria.

The war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, known as the Caucasus Campaign, deserves a special mention. Stasys Raštikis, a participant of World War I who later became a general in the Lithuanian military, stated in his memoirs that during the war Lithuanians made up virtually the whole artillery corps. They tenaciously defended the Kars Fort which Russians had previously taken from the Turks. However, when the Turks retook the fort, they slaughtered everyone in it ³¹.

These are only a few examples of how Lithuania's history is connected to other countries, such as Turkey, which is geographically remote from Lithuania. In that way, the history of Turkey becomes more interesting and relevant to students. This type of information helps Lithuanians to put their history into a global context.

4. Representation of local history

A survey of teachers and students reveals that students are much more interested in history when the past is linked to their residential area. According to teachers, when students see a mention of their locality or the photographs of the places they know, they show more interest and attention to the topic. Students realise that history can be closer to them. Consequently, more attention is paid to local history. There are several publications dedicated to this topic. One of them is a book for history teachers on how to teach local history. Since 2008 the teaching curriculums have been structured in a way that 10 per cent of class time (7–8 lessons) for fifth graders should be dedicated to local history ³². To facilitate the teaching of local history, some districts compiled programs and history textbooks for towns and counties, for example, the textbook *History of Kaunas* for grade five.

²⁹ KAPLERIS, Ignas; MEIŠTAS, Antanas; MICKEVIČIUS, Karolis; RAMANAUSKAS, Robertas; RAŠKAUSKAS, Kęstutis; STEPONAVIČIENĖ, Lirija; TAMKUTONYTĖ, Živilė. *Laikas: istorijos vadovėlis 8 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 2005, p. 137.

³⁰ JURKYNIENĖ, Genė; JURKYNAS, Juozas; VISOCKIS, Albinas. *Naujųjų amžių istorija: vadovėlis IX klasei*. Kaunas: Šviesa, 1993.

³¹ RAŠTIKIS, Stasys. *Kovose dėl Lietuvos*. Vilnius: Litanus, 1990, p. 84–85.

³² *Pradinio ir pagrindinio ugdymo bendrosios programos*. Vilnius: Švietimo aprūpinimo centras, 2008.

When portraying world history and the history of Lithuania, some authors try to relate it to the place where students live. This can be implemented in two ways. First, local history can be presented by using various assignments which encourage students to find out more about their locality. Most of the time these assignments require students to find out about the historical events of their locality and their effects on people. This is a supplement to the information found in the textbook.

For instance, a textbook for the fifth grade includes a topic *National Minorities in Lithuania from the Establishment of the State to the Present* with an assignment to find out how many different nationalities currently live in their area and what their differences and similarities with Lithuanians are³³. In the textbook on the Middle Ages for the eighth grade there is a topic on the baroque and classical architecture of the 16th–18th century. The authors suggest students prepare a project on the most important and significant local cultural monuments³⁴. The tenth grade textbook with a topic about the German occupation includes an assignment to write an essay entitled *My Town during the German Occupation* based on eyewitnesses who still remember World War II. This assignment encourages students to listen to real life stories from elderly people³⁵. Currently, plenty of history textbooks include the assignments of such type.

The second way to present local history is by using history sources, such as documents, statistics, maps, photographs and other material related with smaller towns and the countryside. Traditionally, textbooks included information about capital cities or the largest towns and cities with the photographs of their various monuments. Therefore, students can compare the history of their home locality with those of their classmates who might be from a different area.

The textbook *Ancient History* for the seventh grade includes the topic *Baltic Tribes and Their Religion* where a list of archaic place-names is provided. The list includes the names of villages, lakes, rivers, forests, and hills that are closely related to pagan gods, goddess, and their rituals³⁶. The topic about the origins of iron in Lithuania has a list of place names and points on a map where the word iron itself is mentioned, including related words such as *iron*, *blacksmith*, *iron ore* and *smelt*. Using this technique, students find out that a large number of place names (in some cases they refer to the places where the students themselves live) originated because of iron used in bygone ages³⁷.

The practice of linking Lithuanian, world, and local history has proven to be quite successful. Textbook authors need only a little effort to include pieces on students' locality;

³³ LITVINAITĖ, Jūratė. *Palikimas: istorijos vadovėlis 5 klasei*. Kaunas: Šviesa, 2007.

³⁴ KAPLERIS, Ignas; MEIŠTAS, Antanas; MICKEVIČIUS, Karolis; RAMANAUSKAS, Robertas; RAŠKAUSKAS, Kęstutis; STEPONAVIČIENĖ, Lirija; TAMKUTONYTĖ, Živilė. *Laikas: istorijos vadovėlis 8 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 2005.

³⁵ KASPERAVIČIUS, Algis; JOKIMAITIS, Rimantas; SINDARAVIČIUS, Algis. *Naujausųjų laikų istorija: vadovėlis X klasei*. Vilnius: Kronta, 2008.

³⁶ ŠETKUS, Benediktas. *Senovės istorija: vadovėlis 7 klasei*. Vilnius: Kronta, 2006, 92–95.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 84–87.

only a few photographs, images, or simply a text about local history as a supplement to a larger narrative.

5. Questions and assignments to encourage student learning

Older history textbooks did not motivate students. Authors only explained in great detail the information established in the teaching curriculum. However, the authors of newer textbooks try to motivate and encourage students to study history. They explain the relevance, goals, and objectives of every topic to make the learning process easier.

Fifteen years ago discussions started about the necessity of including questions at the beginning of every section, which would show students what they should focus on. Today, most topics are introduced with two to four main questions/objectives to systematically guide students' learning. The first appearance of questions preceding the chapter dates back to 2004 when the publishing house *Šviesa* printed a series of textbooks for the seventh through tenth grades. The textbook *Lithuania in the World: History Textbook for the Eighth Grade* includes the topic *And the Globe is Round*, which starts with three questions: (1) *What led to the Great Geographical Discoveries?* (2) *Which directions did Europeans travel?* (3) *What were the consequences of these discoveries for Europe?*³⁸ Another textbook *Lithuania in the World: History Textbook for the Tenth Grade* includes *Totalitarian Regimes in Germany and Italy* which begins with three questions: (1) *How World War I influenced further developments in Germany and Italy?* (2) *What were the reasons for the growth of totalitarianism in Germany and Italy?* (3) *How did Hitler and Mussolini solve economic and social problems?*³⁹ At the end of the lesson teachers should ask students to provide answers to these questions. Besides, these questions can act as review questions for studying.

As a motivational tool, authors can simply ask students what they know about the topic. For example, in the textbook *Ancient History: Textbook for the Seventh Grade* the section *The Achievements of Mesopotamia* includes a short introduction to discussion questions such as: *We use a variety of inventions from Mesopotamia in our daily life when we go to school, when we read, write, and when we ask what time and month it is... Let's think what these inventions could be*⁴⁰. *The Might of the Roman Empire* has the following introduction: *Several Roman phrases are still used today like 'All roads lead to Rome', 'Rome – the marketplace of the world', 'I am a Roman citizen', Let's think what these phrases*

³⁸ BITLIERIŪTĖ, Salomėja; LITVINAITĖ, Jūrātė. *Lietuva pasaulyje: istorijos vadovėlis VIII klasei*. Kaunas: Šviesa, 2004, p. 152.

³⁹ BAKONIS, Evaldas. *Lietuva pasaulyje: vadovėlis X klasei*. Kaunas: Šviesa, 2004, p. 39.

⁴⁰ ŠETKUS, Benediktas. *Senovės istorija: vadovėlis 7 klasei*. Vilnius: Kronta, 2006, p. 114.

meant to say about Rome⁴¹. Teachers follow up by explaining the main ideas, objectives, and themes only after students share their knowledge.

Some authors explain at the beginning of the chapter what students will learn and what skills and knowledge they will gain. The textbook *Heritage: History Textbook for the Fifth Grade* includes the topic *Lithuania in Soviet Hands*, which starts with the following introduction: *Soon (1) you will find out what were the differences between Lithuania's occupation by the Soviets and the Nazi; (2) you will be able to define the words 'exile', 'collective farm'; (3) you will find out how Lithuanians fought for independence*⁴².

Authors try to motivate students in every possible way. Some textbook chapters start by explaining what students will learn by listing the most important questions to deal with. Other textbooks use a variety of colourful pictures as an attention getter.

Usually, the end of the chapter provides review material where students can check their knowledge and skills. There are several ways to do this. Some authors suggest students test themselves by (1) defining new terms (e.g. cuneiform, mummy), (2) mapping the listed areas and locations (e.g. Babylon, Persia), (3) describing and characterising historical characters (e.g. Ramses II, Darius), (4) revising the most important dates (e.g. when the Sumerians invented writing), (5) answering the most relevant questions (e.g. working in groups, making a list of the most important ancient achievements)⁴³. Other textbooks use different layouts with assignments such as: (1) check the most important dates on a timeline, (2) define the terms, (3) answer the questions, (4) analyse the illustrations, (5) identify and explain what is portrayed in the picture, (6) analyse the historical document, (7) perform the tasks on the historical map⁴⁴.

According to Lithuanian practices, questions and assignments should help a student review and understand the main points. These methods can also enhance student motivation.

6. Information for analysing sources and undertaking history projects

Besides providing information about people's lives, today's textbooks introduce students to the work of historians and provide various methods for analysing sources. In 1996 the textbook *World History: Textbook for the Sixth Grade* included a chapter entitled *Stories about History* which contains twelve different lessons. For example, *Why*

⁴¹ ŠETKUS, Benediktas. *Senovės istorija: vadovėlis 7 klasei*. Vilnius: Kronta, 2006, p. 206.

⁴² LITVINAITĖ, Jūratė. *Palikimas: istorijos vadovėlis 5 klasei*. Kaunas: Šviesa, 2007, p. 52.

⁴³ ŠETKUS, Benediktas. *Senovės istorija: vadovėlis 7 klasei*. Vilnius: Kronta, 2006, p. 154.

⁴⁴ KAPLERIS, Ignas; MEIŠTAS, Antanas; MICKEVIČIUS, Karolis; LAUŽIKIENĖ, Andželika; RAMANAUSKAS, Robertas; TAMKUTONYTĖ, Živilė. *Laikas: istorijos vadovėlis 9 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 2006, p. 154–155.

*Do We Need History? When and How Has History Evolved? How Is History Written? How to Analyse Written Sources? What Archaeologists Do? What Ethnographers Do? What Can Coins Tell Us?*⁴⁵.

Today, similar topics can be found in other history textbooks. Textbooks introduce students to various sources and include guidelines explaining how students should analyse these sources. Textbooks from *Briedis* pay special attention to historical sources and their analysis. The end of every chapter has supplementary source materials. *Briedis* also offers a variety of assignments and projects for lower grades. The textbook *The Path: History Textbook for the Fifth Grade* offers projects and provides guidelines how to undertake these projects. The first project *My Locality in the Past and Present* encourages a student to find out when their locality was first mentioned in writing. Students then prepare a list of cultural and historical monuments in their vicinity. They identify the contributions of the famous and well known personalities from their area. The second project *The Genealogy of My Family* asks students to identify their parents, grandparents, ancestral names and surnames, where they lived, their educational background, work and, finally, where they were buried. Other projects include *Traditional Lithuanian Games*, *My Family's History in Photography*, *Lithuanian History on the Internet*⁴⁶.

Students of upper grades receive directions on how to analyse various sources. The material is often presented on one page entitled *Methods*. Eighth grade students studying the Middle Ages are presented the following information: *How to Analyse a Painting? How to Analyse Sources? The Analysis of Historical Maps, Internet – Information Treasury, Analysing a Cartoon, A Trip to the Museum*⁴⁷.

In ninth-grade textbooks the following *Methods* can be found: *The Analysis of Graphs and Diagrams*, *Working in Groups*, *The Preparation and Presentation of History Projects*, *Organising Discussions*, *Writing Papers*, *Statistical Analysis*, *Monuments as a Source for History*, *Songs as a Historical Source*⁴⁸.

Methods for the tenth grade contain *The Analysis of Political Posters*, *Historical Postcards*, *Analysing Photographs*, *Jokes as a Historical Source*, and *Essay Writing*⁴⁹.

Textbook authors recommend taking students' learning styles, themes, and the type of sources into consideration. When starting any projects, teachers should first introduce

⁴⁵ BAKONIS, Evaldas. *Pasaulio istorija: vadovėlis 6 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 1997, 137–185.

⁴⁶ LAUŽIKAS, Rimvydas; MICKEVIČIUS, Karolis; TAMKUTONYTĖ, Živilė; KAPLERIS, Ignas. *Kelias: Lietuvos istorijos vadovėlis 5 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 2008, p. 109, 129, 175.

⁴⁷ KAPLERIS, Ignas; MEIŠTAS, Antanas; MICKEVIČIUS, Karolis; RAMANAUSKAS, Robertas; RAŠKAUSKAS, Kęstutis; STEPONAVIČIENĖ, Lirija; TAMKUTONYTĖ, Živilė. *Laikas: Istorijos vadovėlis 8 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 2005, p. 31, 69, 95, 147.

⁴⁸ KAPLERIS, Ignas; MEIŠTAS, Antanas; MICKEVIČIUS, Karolis; LAUŽIKIENĖ, Andželika; RAMANAUSKAS, Robertas; TAMKUTONYTĖ, Živilė. *Laikas: istorijos vadovėlis 9 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 2006, p. 27, 51, 69, 95, 115, 151, 173, 215.

⁴⁹ KAPLERIS, Ignas; MEIŠTAS, Antanas; MICKEVIČIUS, Karolis; LAUŽIKIENĖ, Andželika; TAMKUTONYTĖ-MIKAILIENĖ, Živilė. *Laikas: istorijos vadovėlis 10 klasei*. Vilnius: Briedis, 2007, p. 37, 73, 99, 177, 253.

the methods for analysing historical sources. Even though not all teachers cover this material, students often read it by themselves. In this way, students can gain a deeper understanding of history and develop the skills needed for research.

7. Digital history textbook

At the end of the previous century history teachers started using CDs in Lithuania. In 1998 the first history CD dedicated to Lithuanian history *A Glimpse into the Golden Age* appeared; in 1999 the CD *Lithuania before Mindaugas*, which includes the history of Lithuania until the 13th century, was released; in 2002 the CD *Native History. From Seventh to Twelfth Grades* appeared⁵⁰. The latest CD was given the status of a history textbook. It should be noted that at the time when CDs were first released, textbooks came only in the printed form. Therefore, in 2003 the Ministry of Education and Science had to change the existing definition of a textbook that would include digital books as well. The aforementioned CD was perhaps the first type of history textbook for the seventh through twelfth grades in Europe. The majority of students were excited about this new medium. They often showed a preference to study from a digital textbook rather than traditional ones. However, some difficulties arose. Students were not used to reading from monitors. The majority of students preferred computer games and attractively looking assignments rather than studying from this textbook. Despite these few difficulties, the digital textbook became a fact of life which also appeared in the second and third edition.

In 2004 the digital CD *Attractive History of Lithuania* was published. This CD did not receive a textbook status but it conformed to the existing history curriculum, which included three main parts: (1) the history of the state from ancient times to the present (2) the history of the arts and culture from ancient times to the present (3) society from ancient times to the present. The three CDs on the history of Lithuania contain a total of 89 topics⁵¹.

There are many advantages to these digital materials since they include dynamic images, animation, documentary film clips, and contemporary audio recordings. All of this is appealing to students and enhance student motivation for learning. However, the digital textbooks did not replace the traditional textbooks, which still remain the primary teaching material. Teachers use these digital materials quite often and they explain how to use them at home, but they are used more as a supplementary tool. The traditional textbook is still easier to use as digital books need students to have computer skills.

⁵⁰ JOVAIŠA, Eugenijus (Ed.) *Gimtoji istorija. Nuo 7 iki 12 klasės (CD)*. Vilnius: Elektroninės leidybos namai, 2002.

⁵¹ JOVAIŠA, Eugenijus. (Ed.) *Įdomioji Lietuvos istorija (3 CD)*. Vilnius: Elektroninės leidybos namai, 2004.

4. Limitations

Some limitations were identified in the study. First of all, not all history textbooks were analysed. Since Lithuania gained its independence (1990), approximately 200 history textbooks have been published, but this study focuses on some of them only, which means that some other innovations could exist as well; however, they were not identified and analysed by the researcher.

Additionally, the researcher focused on those innovations, which were most prominent and identifiable. It could be stated that this study represents the subjective author's approach. The researcher did not undertake the survey of history teachers; thus, it cannot be compared how the results of the study correspond with prevailing teachers' opinions. What is more, the author did not carry out a survey of students, which could give the insights into how effective these innovations are.

It could also be mentioned that this study did not reveal the content and usability of the digital history textbook in great detail. The work is limited to general information about the textbook as a whole and its usage in schools, while the advantages and disadvantages of the digital textbook are not explained.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The results of this study identify seven most important innovations in Lithuanian history textbooks. First of all, one of the most important innovations is the inclusion of a variety of historical sources as supplementary material. Since 1997 a large number of illustrations with accompanying texts and assignments have been integrated into textbooks. During the period 2001–2006 improvements multiplied. A large part of the content consisted of history sources where the author's text was only used for introductory purposes. In the last ten years the tendency has shifted back to the author's narrative as a centrepiece, which also includes sources with accompanying assignments. The majority of publishing houses now publish history textbooks which have less author's narrative and include more different types of primary sources and various assignments to encourage students' self-study, interest in the past, and the application of proactive methods.

Secondly, more attention is being paid to daily life, which is presented in several ways. Some textbooks have a separate compulsory section. *Kronta* and *Šviesa* published textbooks, which include separate sections focusing on people's daily lives, for example, the daily life in ancient Rome, medieval Europe, and Soviet Lithuania. The sources reflecting daily life are integrated with political and economic history. *Briedis* history textbooks portray daily lives in the form of additional material describing the same

aspects: shelter, food, clothing, health and hygiene, life expectancy, child labour, and names, standards and measurements, money, and transportation.

Moreover, today authors aim to portray the close relationship between the history of Lithuania and world history. Foreign political, economic and cultural history is linked to Lithuania. It is done either through the facts about Lithuanians participating in the events of other countries or by using their ideas and perceptions on foreign affairs. The realisation of this idea is presented in the textbooks using the facts about Lithuanian contacts with the Turks (the Ottoman Empire), which stimulate students' interest in history.

Furthermore, local history has found a place in textbook assignments. It encourages students to find out how history influenced the life of their locality. Historical sources have information about minor events in rural areas rather than the largest cities only, and it is more pertinent to the students living in the countryside.

The history textbooks also include various questions and assignments to enhance learning motivation and self-check. Most of the textbook's topics start with 2–4 questions, which help students study systematically, whereas other textbooks use discussions to start with or simply ask students what they already know about certain topics from other sources rather than a history textbook. Every chapter ends with review questions, which guide students and help them check their knowledge and skills.

Contemporary history textbooks aim to introduce students to the historian's craft and to show how a professional analyses sources. In the upper grades students receive instructions on how to analyse various textual and visual sources. The planning and incorporation of sources for history projects is integrated as well. This trend is quite common in *Briedis* history textbooks for grades 5–10.

Finally, one of the biggest innovations is the digital history textbook. In 2002 *Elektroninės leidybos namai* published the CD *Native History. From the Seventh to Twelfth Grades*⁵², which included not only the authors' text but also images, videos, animation, documentary film clips, and contemporary audio records. This innovation received widespread popularity among students, which was followed by the decrease in the interest in the digital textbook. Finally, the digital textbook plays a secondary role in the history teaching and learning process.

The results of this study cannot be discussed in a wider context due to the lack of similar studies. First of all, it is necessary to note that Lithuanian history textbooks generally received little attention from researchers and only a few academic articles dealing with this topic were identified. As noted by historian Vyšniauskas⁵³, the current situation in Lithuania is “that history textbooks should not only be written and published but also

⁵² JOVAIŠA, Eugenijus. (Ed.) *Gimtoji istorija. Nuo 7 iki 12 klasės (CD)*. Vilnius: Elektroninės leidybos namai, 2002.

⁵³ VYŠNIAUSKAS, Arūnas. Komparatyvistinio vadovėlių tyrimo metodinės ir praktinės problemos. In: *Mokykliniai istorijos vadovėliai ir europinės visuomenės ugdymas Rytų ir Vidurio Europos šalyse*. Vilnius: Vilniaus pedagoginis universitetas, 2006, p. 134–152.

investigated.” He highlights that there are not enough studies focusing on the content of history textbooks and no surveys have been undertaken to capture students’ opinions.

Only a few studies on history textbooks analysed textbooks from a historian’s perspective aiming to identify how various historical facts and interpretations of different historical events or periods are portrayed. There are some studies which analysed textbooks from the perspective of didactics; however, the units of analysis are different; therefore, the researcher cannot compare his results with a wider context.

Additionally, some of the identified innovations, for example, local history and the representation of people’s daily life, appeared only a few years ago. Also, textbook authors have only recently started using various assignments and tasks at the beginning of every lesson to promote students’ motivation for learning. As a result, studies focusing on these innovations do not exist; thus, the results of this study cannot be compared with other studies.

The results of this study support the findings of earlier researchers according to which the number of historical sources used in modern history textbooks has increased in recent years. Svėrienė⁵⁴ undertook the study of history textbooks published in the period 1999–2003 and concluded that “more and more attention is being paid to illustrations in history textbooks. Whereas previous textbooks were published without any illustrations, now they can contain up to 50 per cent of the textbook content.” Porutis and Stašaitis⁵⁵ also studied the history textbooks of the 20th century and drew similar conclusions. They argue that “modern history textbooks, in comparison with Soviet history textbooks, include the effective proportion of the text and illustrations that empower pupils to reconstruct the past effectively”⁵⁶.

Some authors analysed various aspects of history textbooks in periodicals but their studies are not supported by the primary research and remain highly controversial.

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⁵⁴ SVĖRIENĖ, Audronė. Istorijos vadovėlio kultūra (1999–2003). *Knygotyra*, 2004, t. 43, p. 16.

⁵⁵ PORUTIS, Andrius; STAŠAITIS, Stanislovas. Praeities rekonstrukcija XX a. visuotinės istorijos vadovėliuose Lietuvoje: žodis ir vaizdas. In: *Mokykliniai istorijos vadovėliai ir europinės visuomenės ugdymas Rytų ir Vidurio Europos šalyse*. Vilnius: Vilniaus pedagoginis universitetas, 2006, p. 96–105.

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Šiuolaikiniai istorijos vadovėliai Lietuvoje: keletas inovacijų

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Santrauka

Išanalizavus penkių leidyklų – *Šviesa*, *Briedis*, *Kronta*, *Tyto alba* ir *Elektroninės leidybos namai* – 1992–2011 m. išleistus istorijos vadovėlius, nustatytos ir straipsnyje įvardytos septynios didžiausios inovacijos. Viena pirmutinių inovacijų yra ta, kad istorijos vadovėliuose po 1997 m. pradėta pateikti daug rūšių istorijos šaltinių. Todėl vadovėliuose gerokai sumažėjo autorinio teksto apimtys. Pirminiams ir antriniams istorijos šaltiniams analizuoti yra pateikta daug užduočių, kuriomis siekiama skatinti mokinius savarankiškai tyrinėti istoriją ir kartu stiprinti jų domėjimąsi istorija.

Daugiau dėmesio yra skiriama kasdieniam žmonių gyvenimui ir tai daroma dviem būdais. Leidyklų *Kronta* ir *Šviesa* išleistuose vadovėliuose kasdienybės istorijai yra skirtos atskiros temos apie skirtingus istorijos laikotarpius, pvz., senovės Romoje, viduramžių Europoje ar sovietinėje Lietuvoje. Kasdienybės istoriją atspindintys šaltiniai yra pateikti politinės ir ekonominės istorijos temų kontekste. Leidyklos *Briedis* vadovėliuose kasdienybės istorija dažniausiai yra pateikta kaip papildomos temos, aprėpiančios šiuos kasdienybės istorijos aspektus: būstą, maistą, rūbus, sveikatą ir higieną, gyventojų lūkesčius, vaikų darbą ir vardus, matavimo vienetų, pinigų ir transportą.

Vadovėlių autoriai siekia glaudžiau integruoti pasaulio ir Lietuvos istoriją, parodydami Lietuvos užsienio politikos, ekonomikos, kultūros sąsajas su kitomis valstybėmis, pateikdami faktų apie lietuvių dalyvavimą kitų valstybių įvykiuose.

Istorijos vadovėliuose daugiau dėmesio skiriama lokaliajai istorijai. Pateikiama daugiau istorijos šaltinių apie įvykius ne didžiuosiuose Lietuvos miestuose, bet šalies regionuose, taip pat užduočių, skatinančių mokinius dažniau naudotis mokinių gyvenamosios vietovės šaltiniais.

Istorijos vadovėliuose yra pateikta daug užduočių, kurios skatina mokinių motyvaciją ir padeda save įsivertinti. Dažniausiai kiekviena tema pradedama 2–4 klausimais, kurie padeda mokiniams suvokti, kas nagrinėjant šią temą yra svarbiausia. Kartais siūloma pradėti temą nuo pokalbio ar diskusijos. Kiekvienos temos pabaigoje yra pateikti klausimai žinioms ir įgūdžiams patikrinti.

Šiuolaikiniai istorijos vadovėliai siekia įtraukti mokinius į istorijos šaltinių tyrimą. Žemesniųjų klasių mokiniams yra pateiktos atmintinės, kaip analizuoti įvairius tekstinius ir vizualinius šaltinius. Taip pat yra siūloma atlikti įvairius istorijos projektus. Tokio pobūdžio medžiagos daugiausia yra pateikta leidyklos *Briedis* vadovėliuose 5–10 klasei.

Pagaliau viena iš didžiausių inovacijų yra skaitmeninis istorijos vadovėlis *Gimtoji istorija*. *Nuo 7 iki 12 klasės*, kurį 2002 m. išleido Elektroninės leidybos namai. Kartu su autoriaus tekstu šiame vadovėlyje pateikta daug iliustracijų, vaizdo medžiagos, animacinių filmų, dokumentinių filmų ištraukų ir šiuolaikinių garso įrašų.

Įteikta / Received 2016 09 27
Priimta / Accepted 2017 03 19