

# Worlds Between the Lines

analyses of diversity in social science  
textbooks of major international curricula

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My research topic is about the way countries are represented in Geography textbooks of international schools

One of the main reasons why I chose this topic for research is the map below. There are many more examples like this that create wrong stereotypes about the countries.



the IB curriculum;  
Individuals and Societies  
MYP book by Paul Grace

## Another example

a Korean news article which criticized a French textbook, used by an international school in South Korea, for labeling the East Sea as “Mer du Japon,” a translation of “Sea of Japan”. The body of water between Japan and the Korean peninsula is known by different names depending on the country and the political context. In English, it is commonly referred to as the Sea of Japan, while in Korea, it is called the East Sea. Overall, 30% of international schools in Korea apparently use the same title of mentioned body of water (The Korean Herald, 2022).



“At the time I arrived at the school the History program was almost exclusively Eurocentric and the only references to Pan-African history were considered from the European perspective. This was largely the case as the school blindly followed a British educational model with scant regard for the location of the school.” (Scarlett, 2015)

Adrian Scarlett is an educator who has 25 years teaching experience in eight different countries.

## the IB

The International Baccalaureate (IB). According to their official statistics on the websites (2022) currently, 5,500 schools are teaching the IB curriculum in 159 countries.

The International Baccalaureate was founded in Switzerland.

## Cambridge

Cambridge curriculum is used in “more than 10,000 Cambridge schools in over 160 countries worldwide” (Cambridge 2023). The Cambridge curriculum was founded on the UK.

the IB

IB Geography elaborates on the **similarities** and **differences** between different places, on a variety of scales and from different perspectives. Geography as a subject is unique in its spatial dimension and occupies the centre point between social or human sciences and natural sciences.

Cambridge

Learners will develop a 'sense of place' by looking at the world around them on a local, regional and global scale. They will also look at the ways in which people interact with their environment, and the opportunities and challenges an environment can present, **thereby gaining a deeper insight** into the **different** communities and cultures that exist around the world.

## OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM SOURCE

### OVERVIEW

Considering the fact that both, the IB and Cambridge curricula originate from the Western Europe we can conclude the Eurocentric approach at international schools.

The concept of Stuart Hall's "The West and the Rest" (Stuart, 1996) is one of the basis of promoting Western ideology and identifying reasons of how non-western cultures are viewed and represented by the West. This concept was first mentioned in 1992 but as several resources above showed, the concept still gets reflected in Geography textbooks used in the modern times. This impact could be generalized into textbooks including : cultural bias and stereotypes, language selection while referring to the specific regions, eurocentrism and selective case studies (Stuart, 1996).



# Concepts

Global Citizenship

Promoting understanding, empathy, and responsibility among young students in an increasingly interconnected world.

Decolonization in/of  
education

This theory examines existing literature used at school by the dominance share of the West. Although colonization is not a modern practice, modern education can still have a major impact from it (decolonization refers to the mindset).





## MOST COMMON EXAMPLES

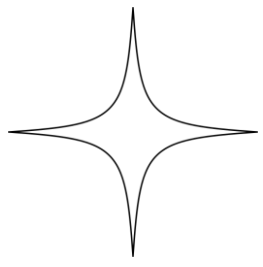
### Physical geography:

1. Brazil - Amazon rainforest deforestation
2. Northern Africa - Sahara and Sahel region
3. Japan - Earthquake and Tsunami
4. Egypt - The Nile River pollution

### Human Geography:

1. The USA (New York): Because of its size, complexity, and global importance, it is often used as a case study for urbanization, metropolitan cities, and urban planning.
2. Brazil: Often given as an example for the favelas or shanty towns due to illegal housing and overpopulation in some regions.
3. Bangladesh: got to choose for the illegal work sector, overpopulation and flooding issues.
4. The UK: example of urbanization, industrialization and MEDC (most economically developed country)

Thank you



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