In troubled societies narratives about the past tend to be partial and explain a conflict from narrow perspectives that justify the national self and condemn, exclude and devalue the “enemy” and their narrative. Through a detailed analysis, Teaching Contested Narratives reveals the works of identity, historical narratives and memory as these are enacted in classroom dialogues, canonical texts and school ceremonies. Presenting ethnographic data from local contexts in Cyprus and Israel, and demonstrating the relevance to educational settings in countries which suffer from conflicts all over the world, the authors explore the challenges of teaching narratives about the past in such societies, discuss how historical trauma and suffering are dealt with in the context of teaching, and highlight the potential of pedagogical interventions for reconciliation. The book shows how the notions of identity, memory and reconciliation can perpetuate or challenge attachments to essentialized ideas about peace and conflict.

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Teaching Contested Narratives

*Identity, Memory and Reconciliation in Peace Education and Beyond*

Zvi Bekerman and Michalinos Zembylas
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