Association for Democracy in the Balkans

History Teaching as a Common European Challenge: The Southeast European Response through the Joint History Project (1999-2019)

Edited by: Iannis Carras

Athens, 2021

In Memory of John Brademas,
who served Democracy and Reconciliation

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The Southeast European Response through the Joint History Project (1999-2019)

Edited by: Iannis Carras
Language editor: Nerina Kioseoglou
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KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG
Greece & Cyprus

Contents

Letter of Introduction

It is my honour, as the first Chair of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe from its establishment in 1997 to 2001 and as a continuing member of its Board through the life of the Center, to congratulate the team of scholars who created and developed the Joint History Project over a period of more than 20 years.

Particular thanks go to Costa Carras, its farsighted supervising rapporteur and the driving force behind the project; Nikos Efthymiadis, the wise and widely acknowledged leading board member of the Center; Professor Christina Koulouri, the Joint History's intellectual leader over many years; Maria Todorova, who chaired the original Academic Committee; and the two executive directors who led the Center over these many years, Nenad Sebak and Zvezdana Kovac.

This is not to slight the many others who helped build the Center, implement its programmes and guide its policies, including the three Chairs who succeeded me, Richard Schifter, Erhard Busek and Hannes Swoboda as well as our many board members, contributing scholars, staff members and supporters. And I must make special note of the contribution of the late John Brademas, a leading American political leader and educator and one of the founding board members of the Center, who contributed so much in its early years and who was a wise and good friend and mentor to me.

The Center was wise to devote significant focus and resources to the teaching of history in Southeast Europe, and the volumes of historical material relating to the region, from the Ottoman period through the

first decade of the twenty-first century remain an invaluable source for teachers and students, and for scholars and citizens as well.

Having spent a fair part of my professional life in international affairs, I keep coming back to the profound insight of George Orwell, expressed in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four:* "Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past." Simple, but heed these words seriously. Those who are writing schoolbooks today, tweeting historical "facts", describing historic events on social media and in the daily press — these are the people who are in fact recreating the past for the present generation, for good or bad, accurately or falsely, and in so doing they are profoundly influencing the future.

History counts, today more than ever. This is true worldwide and remains vitally important in Southeast Europe. The work of the Center through the Joint History Project was an important contribution of serious scholarship and intellectual integrity; it demonstrated respect for the reasonable points of view of others. And by involving scholars from all countries in the region, the process showed that reason and collaboration is possible, even with sensitive and controversial historical material where there are no final and no fully resolvable answers.

Hopefully, this type of serious collaborative scholarship will continue in the region, and hopefully, too, political and intellectual leaders of the various Southeast European countries will take their responsibility seriously with respect to the use of history in the active political life of the region.

With great respect,
Matthew Nimetz

Letter of Introduction

Greetings to friends of the Joint History Project and to those who care deeply about the past, but also the future, of Southeast Europe.

The end of the Cold War in 1989 led to the rebirth of democratic governments in the areas of Eastern Europe that had been dominated by the Soviet Union. It was a development that was highly welcomed by the countries of Western and Central Europe and by the United States. But then, in 1992, the region experienced the outbreak of a brutal conflict in Bosnia Herzegovina; based on ethnic and religious differences. Following more than two years of conflict, the United States was finally able to lead the effort to bring the representatives of the warring parties together at an Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio, where a peace agreement was negotiated.

I was then serving as Senior Director for Eastern Europe in the United States National Security Council (in the Clinton White House). The question that I focused on was what can be done to avoid future similarly ethnic-based conflicts in Southeast Europe. I came to the conclusion that it would be best for the United States to encourage the countries in the region to come together in joint efforts to deal with the multiple problems that they shared. Having been authorized by my government to do so, I contacted most of the Southeast European governments as well as governments of some countries adjacent to the region. This led to the formation of the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) in 1996.

SECI started out by bringing about cooperation on cross-border

traffic and in law enforcement, focusing in the latter particularly on human trafficking. As SECI developed, we made contact with interested members of the private sector. It was in that context that I met Costa Carras, who brought his great talents to this cooperative undertaking. It was he who suggested that the effort to encourage cooperation among governments be paralleled by an effort to combat inter-ethnic hatred through the teaching of history in a way that underlines the common bonds of people in the region. That led to the establishment of the Joint History Project and then the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, in which my friend Matthew Nimetz served as Chair.

I want to express my special admiration for the historians who put together this extraordinary set of volumes outlining the history of the region and providing teachers and students with basic material in which better to understand it, from a regional and European viewpoint, not a parochial perspective. I think it is important to emphasize that the historians who edited and worked on the Joint History Project were outstanding professionals from the region, not a group of outsiders. Special thanks to Costa Carras, who served as a founding board member of CDRSEE and the guiding rapporteur of the Joint History Project. I believe that this type of endeavour can be a model for the work of historians in other regions, especially those conflict-prone areas where feelings about history are so strongly felt.

With best wishes,
Richard Schifter

Letter of Introduction

I feel truly privileged to send greetings to all the friends who supported our CDRSEE initiative and its flagship Joint History Project.

It is widely accepted that Greek civilization and culture has provided much of the basis for the Southeast European development since the Hellenistic times. As an offspring of an Asia Minor Greek business family that went through the experience of being refugees during the 1920s, I was brought up in an environment where democracy and reconciliation were well established within the family traditions. As a young man, I suffered the consequences of the Greek civil war as well as the dictatorship in the late 1960s. By then, the family was "back in business", with the same vision of acting regionally throughout the Balkans. Greece fought its way to remain a Western democracy, but it remained isolated from all its northern neighbours, which were then under socialist regimes. During the early 1990s, at the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, I was the acting Chairman of the Federation of Industries of Northern Greece, which was strongly of the opinion that democracy and reconciliation were the "key" for supporting the newly opened economies of our northern neighbours, and for ensuring their coming together as members of the developing European Union.

At that time, I was inspired by my good friend Costa Carras and I joined the efforts of a small group of Greek businessmen to establish the "Association for Democracy in the Balkans" (ADB), with a vision

of working regionally to promote these values, equally fundamental for business and economic growth.

The brutal ethnic and religious conflict in the former Yugoslavia triggered the establishment of the "Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe' (CDRSEE). Once again, it was Costa Carras that created the basic idea and put together a unique group of historians coordinated by Professor Christina Koulouri, and started the Joint History Project (JHP), working on a common understanding of regional history. Following three years of hard work, in-depth cooperation and a rigorous fact-finding methodology, the group of professors delivered the contents of four JHP books which were broadly accepted by governments as an alternative source of history teaching at schools, training thousands of students and teachers and in this way fostering reconciliation throughout the Balkan region.

The importance and success of the Joint History Project encouraged and inspired several CDRSEE Board members to volunteer and actually get involved in several other public/private sector initiatives in the Balkan region. I was very happy to participate in the US-led Southeast European Cooperation Initiative (SECI). Under the leadership of Ambassador Richard Schifter, supported by Dr. Erhard Busek, SECI created common understanding and programmes for cross-border cooperation and law enforcement, which have helped trade and boosted regional economies.

The appointment of Dr. Busek as the General Secretary of the Brussels-based Stability Pact for Southeast Europe was followed by the high-ranking Business Advisory Council (BAC), supported by some of the strongest multinational enterprises, with my good friend Rahmi Koç as the first chairman and myself taking the same position at a later stage. The Stability Pact Business Advisory Council was supported by a network of local associations, Chambers of Industry and Commerce, the Business Information Clearing Center (BICC) and other regional institutions, and played a major role in the reforms and institution building, that made it possible for Bulgaria and Romania to become members of the European Union.

I wish to recognize the efforts of Ambassador Mathew Nimetz who served as the Chair to the CDRSEE and as a long-term (and successful) Mediator in the dispute over the name of today's North Macedonia.

All in all, I wish to thank and pay respect to all the above persons, professors, working groups and CDRSEE personnel, who worked so hard and efficiently to help establish peace, stability, and economic growth in Southeast Europe, setting an example of social responsibility in this troubled but historic corner of Europe.

With best wishes,
Nikos Efthymiadis

The Joint History Project: A Personal Appraisal

E. Busek

History, not only the background, but also the forefront of politics!

First some personal remarks on the reasons why I became engaged in Southeast Europe and in the enlargement of the European Union: during my political engagement I came into contact with the responsible person for the US politics concerning the Balkans, but also human rights in general. This was Ambassador Richard Schifter, who was born in Vienna and was fortunate to have been able to emigrate to the United States in 1938. The horrible fate of his family was that twenty-eight of its members were brought to Auschwitz and to other concentration camps and died as part of the Shoa. Even in Austrian politics today these events play an important role. We are discussing a memorial at a central location in Vienna, which would underline the responsibility of my country in this terrible happening. It should thus be evident that the memory of all those citizens of Jewish origin who were killed in Vienna still plays an important role in shaping perceptions of our future. In Europe in general, but also in my country, this is a fight that is ongoing.

I was born in 1941, so my engagement with society and politics took place in the shadow of the Second World War. It included a discussion both in Austria and in Europe as to how to overcome this history, but also how to keep it at the forefront of our memory. As a result, I was always convinced that dealing with issues of history and memory in the Balkans was and is essential.

In a way, Austria constitutes a special case due to its constant involvement in Balkan affairs. Since the end of the Roman Empire, different peoples have moved to and through what is now the core part of my country and left their traces. At times, it has even been a state ideology of different governments that we have to fight against those coming from the "East", but also to enlarge the Empire through wars, population movements as well as economic and social cooperation. In Vienna, my home city, it was often said that you have to look through the telephone book: examining the foreign names in it, you can guess where the Viennese were coming from.

Changes of borders during the two World Wars have shaped my country. Sometimes we are shocked by the great number of refugees today, but it should not be forgotten that the number of those exiled, pushed out of their homes and forced to migrate was significantly larger then than the number of migrants today. For example, in Austria a large number of "Sudeten Germans" arrived from Czechoslovakia, but also refugees from the Soviet Union and, later on, those who left Hungary after 1956. Economic immigration has also been significant, with migrants from the Balkans playing a very important social and economic role throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

Migrants can be very helpful and contribute to the resolution of many problems, not only in the economy, but also in society, improving the birth rate of a country that is now, especially following membership in the European Union, seen as a Western one. Though migrants' contribution to our labour force and Austria's human capital is considerable, strong feelings have also developed against those coming from outside. External conflicts are imported into Austria and Europe in general, an example being the conflict between Turks and Kurds, which has at times even exploded into fighting in the streets of Vienna. As a consequence of European integration, election campaigns in other countries are also increasingly brought to Austria itself, many migrants to Austria having dual citizenship and passports from their former home country.

My engagement in the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative

(SECI) and the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe (SPSEE) on behalf of the European Union made clear to me the importance of history in education. The study of history offers tools for examining the roots of group identity, and also can contribute to our capacity to create mutual understanding between groups. The task commences with language-education, but has to be extended to acquiring knowledge of different mentalities, historical roots, cultural traditions and so on. These are areas where the European Union should do more. One of the main difficulties is that education in general is not a responsibility of the EU on the European level, but still under the auspices of each nation state. At the minimum, this has to be changed for questions of migration, but I would also be in favour of incorporating a political strategy on education on the European level alongside the national one. In this sphere, it is not necessary to eliminate the activities of the nation state, but to add a common European perspective. It has become evident that the education system in different countries only covers a part of the necessary knowledge of history. How to improve upon this has always been a subject of intense political discussion.

It is a pity that the Joint History Project has ended as a result of the lack of strategic capacity of the European Commission to develop it further. To be fair: nobody was against this project, but the engagement of the responsible entities within Europe was basically lacking. In this case, the EU has focused more on actual conflicts than on developing a general strategy.

Looking back on the efforts of the Joint History Project, we can only conclude that these have to be continued. It is evident that the challenges facing Southeast Europe are very much connected with the perception of the region's history and the lack of approaches to overcoming the problems that result from these perceptions. I should add one positive word: through the efforts of the JHP, I met a large number of experienced specialists, engaged politicians, teachers, administrators and so on, who were fully convinced that this was a task that should continue. I therefore have the hope that we will at some point be able to continue this task, because developing Southeast Europe as a real and

full part of a common European future can only be achieved through common perceptions of history and out of the need to learn from each other. As the Austrian poet Ingeborg Bachmann had put it: "History keeps teaching, but it doesn't find any students." Nowadays we tend to talk of a "narrative of Europe". We have to start with perceptions of history, because it is through the exchange of different experiences that we can avoid the horrible mistakes of our past.

Now we are living through a pandemic. Even more importantly, we are suffering from our partial and selective memory! But if we want to move towards a better future, we have to discuss where we are coming from, and also the many aspects of the heritage which this past has endowed us!

History, Reconciliation and Peace

H. Swoboda

What is the relation between history, history teaching, reconciliation and peace? Even if people and especially politicians would agree on historic facts, the evaluation of these facts and of the roots and causes leading to these facts vary extensively. In a Europe which was for centuries characterized by wars, the interpretation of history was particularly sensitive. The different, often antagonistic, evaluation of past wars has led to new wars. The experiment of building a common Europe beyond national, ethnic and cultural cleavages could come only with difficulties. And the same was and is true for a region like the Western Balkans. Now the Bulgarian government, with the support of some historians, wants to block the opening of accession negotiations between EU and North Macedonia unless its government accepts the "Bulgarian" interpretation of history.

It was in 2009 when my colleague Jan Marinus Wiersma and I edited a book, called Politics of the Past: The Use and Abuse of History. The background to our decision to deal with the relation between history and politics were debates in the European Parliament, of which we were members. As we were both engaged with the enlargement of the EU after the breakdown of communism and the Soviet Union, we wanted to bring some balanced approach into the debate between representatives of "old" and "new" member states.

East-West debate

For some of our colleagues –especially from the founding members of the EU– the prime reason for a united Europe was overcoming nationalism and especially fascism and the Nazi ideology. They often neglected the evil done by communist regimes. They could not see that the Soviet Army, after liberating countries from the Nazi occupation, became in several countries an instrument of a new form of occupation –by the Soviet Union.

Others again neglected or minimized the evil brought to Europe and its citizens by the various fascist regimes and especially by Nazi Germany. And this neglect irked many representatives coming from the West and South of Europe. Indeed, some of the opposition to the EU enlargement towards the "East" was motivated by the determination to preserve the anti-fascist foundation of the EU. They feared that attitudes and ideologies introduced by Eastern European countries into the European debate would dilute the clear anti-fascist basis of the EU. Many representatives of the new member countries, on the other hand, argued that Europe was incomplete without the countries that suffered under communism. Europe must develop a clear and decisive anti-communist attitude.

Past or Future

One could argue that Europe should think more about its future than about its past. But all the various proponents of the need to deal with the past, also on a political level, followed the words of the American writer William Faulkner in his Requiem of a Nun: "The past is never dead. It is not even past." And as the famous Oxford historian Norman Davies, whom we interviewed as editors, said to us: "I think history is essential to thinking about the future."

We dedicated our book to our colleague Bronislav Geremek, who died tragically in a car accident while the book was being prepared –much too early. Geremek was a Polish historian and liberal politician. In his contribution, which we published post-mortem, he wrote: "Ignoring history will make way for populists and demagogues to use

it as a message of hatred and discord. The present is – whether we like it or not – rooted in Europe's past. We cannot allow the memories of West and East to remain separate, turning their backs on each other. The only way of changing this is to introduce these separate and sometimes contradictory accounts into a shared, common education." Any valuable European narrative must bring the different histories together.

Southeast Europe

With the accession talks between the EU and the countries of the Western Balkans, the European debate about history and politics acquired another additional dimension. The efforts undertaken especially by French and German politicians and historians for a constructive dialogue on their "common" past had to be transferred and adapted to Southeast Europe. The work carried out by the Joint History Project, organized by the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, located in Thessaloniki, was of prime importance.

The leading historian in that project, Christina Koulouri, made it clear that the work must deal not only with different views of different countries, but must also address debates inside the countries of the region. The work of the history team tried to present the various approaches and attitudes of different nations, ethnic or religious groups. As the afore mentioned Norman Davies explained: "The best chances of getting near the truth is to construct different perspectives before making a judgement".

The foreign influence

The history of Southeast Europe was not only made by the countries and politicians of that region itself. Many powerful "outsiders" such as Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, Russia etc. decided the fate of the Balkan people. They exercised their dominant influence on different regional and national political forces. Today again we find different and often antagonistic influences. The European Union is offering –

unfortunately with much hesitation – an integration into the Common Europe. But at the same time Russia, Turkey and even China wish to set foot in the region. And at least Russia and Turkey come with their own historical interpretations.

In this connection, it is interesting that Turkey, an occupation force in the framework of the Ottoman Empire, uses its past role to extend its influence today. Similarly, Turkish President Tayip Erdogan argued for and explained his recently concluded alliance with Libya based on Turkey's past colonial role. Turkey also has a vastly different interpretation of the recent events in Cyprus – in contradiction to the Greek interpretation. The victims of these different interpretations and of course power politics are predominantly the Turkish Cypriot citizens of Cyprus. They are under occupation by Turkish troops, who according to the Turkish interpretation are preventing annexation by the Greek side.

Russia, on the other hand, underlines the orthodox religious links especially to Serbia and partly to Greece, which resulted in some strange positions with regard to the Prespes agreement between Greece and North Macedonia. Russia fought against the agreement, which ended up solving the dispute over the name, but employed totally contradictory arguments in North Macedonia and in Greece respectively.

A special case of contradictory views on the recent past concerns the events in Kosovo and the widely but not universally promoted independence of Kosovo – some would say: Kosovo and Metochia. For many Serbs, Kosovo is the homeland and origin of today's Serbia. For the Albanian majority, belonging to Serbia was a result of the political machinations of the Great Powers, which added Kosovo to Serbia and indirectly to Yugoslavia for their own strategic purposes. And anyway, Serbia lost any moral right on Kosovo due to its oppressive behaviour. Serbia was just a colonial power. And the declaration of independence by Kosovo was a justified act of decolonization. For Serb nationalists, on the other hand, the heart of Serbia has been taken away from Serbia by force – by Albanian terrorists supported by Western powers and NATO bombs.

Although the majority of EU countries did recognize Kosovo as an independent country, those member states that have unsolved issues with a minority within their borders did not. For them, the past is definitely not past; they fear that their own border issues could be raised again. And in the case of Catalonia, the past did indeed recently become the focus of attention in a very powerful way. On the other hand, the difficulties facing the United Kingdom, and specifically the situation in Scotland and Northern Ireland, were no reason not to recognize the independence of Kosovo. So, it is always a question of interpreting the ways in which the past could play a role in the future, which leads to reactions today.

The colonial question

The independence of Kosovo could be interpreted as an act of decolonization, or at least exhibits some specific characteristics of decolonization. The relation between former colonial powers and their former colonies is always difficult. That can be seen in relations between many European and African states. The love-hate relationship between France and Algeria is a special example of this. French-Algerian historian Benjamin Stora argues that a joint culture of remembrance is very difficult here: "After all, on the one hand we have French nationalism, which to this day does not want to accept the withdrawal from Algeria. Algerian nationalism, on the other hand, legitimizes itself on the basis of the victory over its former colonial master. This means, for the moment, at a time when those who were involved in the wars are still alive, it is highly unlikely that they will reach agreement. Both sides feel they are right. We will have to wait another few generations to arrive at a common view of things. Naturally, all of this has to be countered in a progressive, educational manner."

The question of decolonization in its multiple dimensions is of course not only something for politicians and historians. Art plays an important role. Kara Walker – who has also designed a safety curtain for the Vienna State Opera with critical reference to the "Austrian African Imaginary" – posed the question: "What do we want history to do to

US?" Writer Zadie Smith takes up this question and enumerates many possibilities of what history can do to us – teach us – from creating and promoting new antagonisms to underlining the connectivities between oppressor and oppressed. It is always a choice: what "history should do to us", what we want to learn from history or not to learn. There is no automatic learning process from history.

In her contribution, Zadie Smith reveals how many monuments praise explorers and exploiters in countries where victims of their actions have to live amidst these "heroes" in stone. There is no unique and self-evident way of dealing with the way in which past generations have confronted the past – whether in history books or by erecting monuments to former leaders. When new knowledge and new evaluations of past events and political actors become visible and present in both history books and public spaces, this should help strengthen the basis for peace and reconciliation.

The nationalist counter reaction

We must also be aware that any apologies by the representatives of nations for their past deeds will stir and promote nationalistic forces at home. These forces misuse any balanced and self-critical attitude to their own history, identifying themselves even with the most horrific elements in their pasts in order to combat political correctness. For them, recognizing facts and crimes of the past and apologizing for the fact that have been wrongfully done constitutes an offense to national pride.

As politics depends on emotions to a great extent, the emotional, revanchist attitude of nationalist extremists will receive support beyond the group of voters who agree with extreme content. Support for nationalistic forces is widely connected with emotions due to feelings of exclusion, fear and anxiety.

As Martha C. Nussbaum demonstrates in her book The Monarchy of Fear, we live in times of increased fear, enhanced by globalization with its increased competition, including by migrant workers, and climate change with its risk to our environment and welfare. What we need –

as presented, for example, by historians – are "correct facts, informed public debate, and, most important, a spirit of dissent and independence on the part of the citizens. Fear, however, always threatens the spirit of dissent. Fear makes people run for cover, seeking comfort in the embrace of a leader or a homogeneous group. Questioning feels naked and solitary."

And this is today's challenge for politics and the science of history alike. Many citizens want clear – mostly nationalistic – answers provided by strong leaders, and no dissent from either politicians or (even less so) historians. The ambivalence concerning history and its events is difficult to accept for many citizens. And they are supported in their resistance by nationalist politicians and media. But especially in times of such nationalistic trends as the simplification of history and the rejection of responsibility and guilt, we need an approach of focusing on differentiation and the presentation of alternative and even contradictory views with regards to the same event (though not "alternative facts"). As Norman Davies underlines, moral judgements – important as they are – "should come after stating facts and not before".

Morality and facts

Certainly, there are crimes like the Holocaust where, irrespective of nationalistic backlashes, only a clear and unequivocal condemnation is morally acceptable. Historians and politicians should also make it clear which moral guidelines they use for evaluating facts and different approaches to certain events. In an open debate, it is interesting to know whether the relevant personalities support democratic institutions and decision making, or rather authoritarian and "illiberal" attitudes. The ideology and moral compass of politicians but also of historians are relevant because they may influence the choice of documents which are used to define and characterize historic events.

An example of this might be the peace agreements after the First World War. Following on from the agreements, extreme nationalists in Germany reacted fiercely against the unfair treatment of their country. Hitler and his regime undermined the fulfilment of the treaties

and violated the conditions set to prevent German re-armament. But there was also another less ideological but more pragmatic criticism of the conditions of the peace agreement, which were not negotiated but unilaterally imposed. In his work The Economic Consequence of the Peace, the subsequently famous economist John Maynard Keynes analyzed the peace agreements and forecast another war as consequence of the conditions that had been placed on Germany.

Several representatives of the newly established small states were also bitterly disappointed by the way in which they had been treated in Paris. Even when balanced, "agreements" dictated by victors always include flaws. In any case, it should be clear that one and the same event can be criticized from different angles and perspectives. In the case of the Paris treaties, some like John Maynard Keynes feared negative consequences and wanted to prevent new wars. Others used reactionary arguments and wanted to justify new wars of revenge for the conditions set out in the peace treaty. They wanted to undo and destroy the shame of having lost in war.

The Western Balkans

Inside the European Union we have undertaken many steps towards reconciliation and peace, even if we have to acknowledge several steps backwards due to the actions of right-wing extremists and nationalists. In the Balkans, on the other hand, we are even farther from reconciliation. The name issue between Greece and North Macedonia has been officially solved. But in both countries, there are people including state officials who still refuse to use the official name of North Macedonia. And there is still no reconciliation between Serbia and Kosovo given the hugely different interpretations of the past decades. In Bosnia and Herzegovina there are forces who would like to dissolve their country instead of working towards national integration.

As mentioned above, the Thessaloniki-based Center for Democracy and Reconciliation for Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) asked historians from several Balkan countries to develop workbooks for history, which should incorporate different approaches to the same historical events.

As the Center had to close due to lack of financing, a "concluding" event took place recently in Athens. The Konrad Adenauer Stiftung presented the Greek-language version of the history books/manuals that were developed in the framework of the Joint History Project. One can only hope that the end of the Center is not the end of history teaching with the intention of contributing to reconciliation and peace in the Western Balkans.

France started an initiative in the Council of Europe called HOPE, i.e. History Observatory for Peace in Europe. Let's hope that this will also prove conducive for reconciliation in the Western Balkans. The endeavour of the International Institute for Peace to promote the Western Balkans 2030 Project will continue to help bring young people together in order to overcome past cleavages.

Outlook

In the framework of the discussion that I moderated in Athens, there was one question of general importance: to what extent is it wise for

political institutions such as parliaments to "decide" on historical facts? The starting point for this discussion was a recent resolution of the EU Parliament which placed nazism and communism on the same level. Both systems certainly have proved totalitarian and brutal. Nevertheless, there are differences as one of the panel members, Costa Carras, who was also the "father" of the Joint History Project, explained. The marxist roots of communism represented an ideology that did not lead automatically to a cruel dictatorship. Contrary to marxism, Hitler's ideological stance already had the extermination of Jews and other enemies of the German race in its genes.

There are, in any case, three terrible historical events which are still influencing our present political conditions: nazism and other forms of fascism, communist dictatorship and colonialism. They all have different roots and forms of expression. But all of them were extremely inhuman and killed many, if not all, of those whom they deprived of the right to live – either out of racial or political considerations. Discrimination was practiced until extermination. The right to live was subject to the will of the leaders. In the end, all these ideologies and their political implementation have had and have nationalism at (or close to) their centre. One's own nation and race were deemed superior to others'. Even with communism there was a clear national hierarchy, with Moscow demanding absolute leadership – maybe with some competition from China. The communist ideology in its Muscovite form was mixed with nationalism and colonialism.

The teaching of history today must not naively place all ideologies and dictatorships on the same level. But we should show how ideologies and especially nationalism and the feeling of superiority it engenders can lead to cruel and devastating political systems. Destroying supposedly inferior others leads to self-destruction in the end. Nationalist forces will continue to fight against "political correctness" which they see as undermining national interests. But in the long run, we all fall victim to nationalism and racism. Europe has the chance to learn from the self-destructive ideologies of its past. It should not miss the chance.


Παρουσίαση Εγχειριδίων Πηγών για τη Διδασκαλία
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Forward from a Farewell! The Joint History Project as model for History Education in Europe?

C. J. Carras

In 1995, as the bloody wars of Yugoslav secession were ending, three friends met in Chalkidiki, in Greek Macedonia. Nikos Efthymiadis and I are still alive. The third was John Brademas, for years Majority Whip of the Democratic Party in the House of Representatives, to which he had been elected between 1958 and 1980 by the people of South Bend, Indiana. I had worked closely with him for the rule of law against the Greek junta and the Turkish military occupation of Cyprus. We felt the time had come for Southeast Europeans to begin a process of reconciliation, always within a democratic framework. No one doubted that Southeast Europe was Europe's most problematic region.

Thus began 25 years of constant endeavour, whose best known achievement has been the Joint History Project (JHP). Now, as we close the JHP, I shall attempt to set out what lessons have been learnt and thus encourage existing and future efforts to teach European history not just as a celebration of a great cultural heritage but as a challenge to existing prejudices and stereotypes among Europeans, the prejudices and stereotypes of the wealthy and powerful as much as those of the poorer periphery.

The Association for Democracy in the Balkans was founded in the same year, with Nikos Efthymiadis, Rigas Tzelepoglou and myself among its members. Nikos, as Vice President of the Center for Democracy and

Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, the Dutch foundation set up in 1997, has been a moving force, overseeing our Thessaloniki office and opening his and Mary's hospitable home for the many meetings held to plan activities across the region. Rigas Tzelepoglou has been a pillar of sound judgement and meticulous execution, the sure financial hand behind every activity. No non-governmental organisation I have known was better served by its Treasurer. Furthermore, our legal adviser, Stathis Potamitis, was eminently successful both in setting up the Dutch foundation and in guiding us whenever necessary. Neither legal nor accounting problems have proven serious obstacles.

Such a long and sustained effort must rely on devoted and capable people giving unstintingly of their time without seeking personal advantage. No personal advantage has either been sought or obtained by any Board member, but many made devoted efforts to further our work. John Brademas worked intensively to raise money, lower barriers and extend contacts. To him we owe the organisation of a preparatory conference at Ditchley Park in Oxfordshire and an introduction to the American Institute for Democracy which, together with Greek companies, provided much of our early funding.

The Center's first Chairman, Matt Nimetz, has been its most generous donor. His skilful, persistent, efforts, so long apparently doomed to failure, finally helped achieve a negotiated settlement between Greece and North Macedonia in 2019. No one can doubt the depth of Matt's commitment to reconciliation in this instance. It was under Matt's chairmanship that my proposal for a JHP became reality.

In 2001 Matt Nimetz was succeeded by Richard Schifter, who as a young Austrian Jew left Vienna after the Nazis entered his home city in 1938, to enter Berlin as an American soldier in 1945. He served under successive US Administrations, particularly in the field of human rights, and after the end of the wars of Yugoslav secession, he initiated the Southeast European Collaborative Initiative (SECI), with Erhard Busek, formerly Vice Chancellor of Austria, as Coordinator.

Erhard Busek, tireless in his travels, guided first SECI and then the Stability Pact to success. Nikos Efthymiadis and I served under him,

separately, as Co-Presidents of SECI's Business Advisory Council and can bear witness to the negotiating skills and unbounded good-will that characterised both Richard and Erhard in their work. It was natural Erhard Busek should succeed Richard Schifter as our Center's third Chairman in 2006.

Richard Schifter and Erhard Busek reflect the very different world of twenty years ago, when many American leaders were concerned the post-war European experiment should succeed, even if some European countries understandably felt they did not receive equal treatment.

The JHP opened with a conference on the island of Chalki, close to Rhodes, in 1999. As Rapporteur from its inception, I anticipated that the nineteen young historians of the History Education Committee would choose a non-Greek to lead them. Instead, they unanimously elected Christina Koulouri. They could not have made a better choice.

Christina Koulouri proved an exceptional General Editor for both series of workbooks. It is she who guided the other editors and special advisers who have come from Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot community, all, that is, from Southeast Europe, thus demonstrating the high regional quality of teaching and research. Christina, throughout the JHP's twenty-year lifetime, has shown personal concern and pastoral care for scholars who proved less single-minded than herself, sometimes taking on their burdens but yet continuing to drive the overall process forward effectively. She has proven capable of selecting the most critical points from a mass of material and was invariably open to discussion with the workbooks' reviewers, notably Maria Todorova, an American scholar of Bulgarian origin, and myself as the Board's Rapporteur.

The JHP's first publication, Clio in the Balkans, following research across the region on history teaching at the turn of the millennium, was funded, on the recommendation of Sir Michael Llewellyn-Smith, while UK Ambassador in Athens, by the UK Foreign Office and was published in 2002.

The JHP then became more ambitious. We began to prepare not history textbooks, since we were wisely unwilling to challenge national

or communal competences in this area, but regional workbooks to assist school-teachers with more varied material than they might find in textbooks prepared for one specific country. The first four books (The Ottoman Empire, Nations and States, The Balkan Wars and The Second World War) appeared in 2005 and were translated into every regional language, Romanian and Slovene excepted, but also into Japanese! These workbooks have been successfully used in schools throughout the Western Balkans, bringing the Center, through history teachers, into contact with tens of thousands of secondary school pupils.

The JHP Workbooks were praised alike by the Albanian and Serbian Ministries of Education in a tribute to their professionalism, fairness and integrity. The books were honoured with the Human Rights Award of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in 2013, accepted on our Center's behalf by our then Executive Director, Nenad Sebek. In 2017 alone, the Ottoman Empire workbook was downloaded in full almost 25,000 times, and, in part, 124,000; while the Second World War workbook was downloaded in full 25,000 times, and, in part, 153,000. Yet, in almost every country of the region there were objections raised by nationalist historians.

Nationalist views had not been ignored. The process by which the Workbooks were prepared, based always on evidence collected by scholars from the countries concerned, ensured that they included nationalist reports, rhetoric and cartoons. Nationalists, however, generally demand only one nationalist view be expressed, something which is logically impossible when material is being drawn from all countries in any region!

In 2010 EU member states voted, nemine contradicente, that is with no country opposed, to fund the JHP's project for two post-World War II workbooks. Only one country's vote remained in doubt until the very last moment.

This was Greece, where identity is customarily both presented and questioned in historical terms. As it happens, entries concerning Cyprus or Turkey were less controversial than those on "North Macedonia".

Only the fact George Papandreou, a consistent supporter of the Center from its inception, was Prime Minister in 2010, avoided a Greek veto on EU funding. Credit must go to him, to the other EU member states and to DG NEAR, the Directorate for EU neighbourhood relations.

No Greek Government has allowed JHP Workbooks into state schools to date, though some private schools have used them. In Cyprus, reactions were both worse and better. An Education Minister under Glafkos Clerides, who was to support the fifth Annan Plan, publicly attacked us: Tassos Papadopoulos, who advocated the Plan's rejection, authorized the use of the Workbooks by schools that desired to do so. The harshest attacks came from the Greek nationalist left and overseas Macedonian Greeks in the United States. The strongest support came from left-wing supporters of rapprochement in Cyprus. The Orthodox Church in Cyprus was negative, as was the late Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens, while his successor has been neutral, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople welcoming. In short, as we repeatedly learned, stereotypes may just occasionally be accurate, but this provides no worthwhile explanation for their prevalence!

The Center had anticipated stormy seas. For a brief period, Osman Kavala was a member of our Board. He has since been arrested, acquitted in court but promptly re-arrested by arbitrary executive order. Our longest serving Turkish colleague, Dr Selçuk Erez, shared with me my toughest decision, namely to delay the completion of the two post-war volumes for four months, because it had become so difficult to find Turkish historians who were prepared to collaborate. This might have placed our EU funding at risk, but Selçuk agreed that we needed much more material on Turkey. Thus, in good EU style, we "stopped the clock" until Christina had successfully found able historians to complete the work.

One of the successes of the post-World War II workbooks was the insightful and balanced account of human right violations during the 1990s in former Yugoslavia. If you agree, this will serve as the best possible tribute to all those, such as such as Božo Repe, Neven Budak and Dubravka Stojanović, who collaborated in researching and

presenting material on the most fiercely fought war in contemporary Europe.

The two post-World War II workbooks were presented to an enthusiastic audience in the European Parliament in late 2016. They have been translated into Albanian, Serbian and Slovene – and now, generously funded by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, into Greek.

Workbook editors always made the final choice of material. As Rapporteur, however, I both made suggestions and pointed out where there might be a negative impact on the Center's work. One example concerned the Ottoman Empire workbook, which had two editors, Turkish and Romanian. Our Turkish colleague was witty, learned and, like most of his generation, a committed secularist. I argued that the Ottoman Empire was an Islamic empire in which Shariah law applied, but the workbook did not give adequate weight to Islamic sentiment among the Muslim inhabitants of the Empire. The editor proposed one addition, concerning the Bektashis. Although an improvement, I still believe it would have been preferable had the specifically Islamic strain in Ottoman history been given more emphasis.

Any attempt to write European history will prove controversial. If an Orthodox Christian felt there was too little on Islam in a workbook edited by a secular Turk, this type of problem can be expected to reappear in any effort to teach European history.

In 2010, it had appeared that the EU understood how crucial for Europe's future was the gradual emergence of a sense of shared history. Two later events led me to doubt this. When Erhard Busek and I visited Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner for Culture and Education, between 2009 and 2014, we were approached by some EU civil servants, none from Southeast Europe, who were protesting that there was no way their school-age children in Brussels could study European rather than specifically British, French or German history. In other words, the problem identified in Southeast Europe before 1995 was actually a problem for all Europe, but had been ignored even for the EU's own civil servants!

Then, at the presentation of the two workbooks in 2016, I overheard a Commission official comment that such a project was

not a responsibility of the EU but of the Southeast European states themselves. "What blindness!" I thought. This was precisely what those states – and most European states for that matter – would never accept, except perhaps in exceptional post-war situations.

When in Brussels for the December 2017 conference organised by Euroclio in the House of European History, I discovered that this negative approach had triumphed. Together with Zvezdana Kovac, now Executive Director, we met cabinet members of the responsible Commissioner who told us that soon only organisations based in Western Balkan non-member states would be allowed to bid for local EU projects relevant to the JHP's work. Representations by our Chairman, Hannes Swoboda, a distinguished former European parliamentarian, also failed. Hence, the Center closed in 2019. The Association for Democracy in the Balkans continues.

The JHP is now past history itself, but the issues that it has raised remain. To these I now turn. As a Council Member since 1973 of Europa Nostra, the federation of European cultural heritage organisations in Council of Europe member states, I have witnessed European civil society's growing concerns. In 2003, at Europa Nostra's 40th anniversary celebration held in Strasbourg, our then Executive President, the retired German diplomat Otto van der Gablentz, our Secretary General Sneska Quaedvlieg-Mihailovic and I outlined ways in which the shared cultural and social history of Europe might be approached. That European cultural history could be more easily taught than was the case for political history was argued by John Sell, Executive Vice President between 2009 and 2018, who as a committed British European understood that the problem is not confined to Southeast Europe. All pleas for action went unheeded.

Initially, I hoped the House of European History in Brussels might represent a breakthrough. I visited it during the Euroclio conference in 2017 and was disappointed, although impressed by specific features. An absence of considered conceptual structure suggested an unwillingness to ask the hard questions and work out adequate answers.

The 2017 conference itself had a striking title, most effective at encouraging participation, but clearly setting Southeast Europe in a category of its own. The question which stung me was how we could help Southeast Europe "consume" its history. To my mind, behind this lay a fundamental assumption of most consumer societies. The consumer society, it has been well said, is organised against history. What is important is the here and now of consumption: to live with personal or communal memories is, for the committed consumerist, not properly to live. Or, in the words of a Selfridges advertisement I once saw: "I shop, therefore I am!"

This was indeed an existential approach that struck at the heart of what the JHP had consistently attempted. The initial point I made was to say so. We had never felt it ethically acceptable to ask Bosniaks to forget Srebrenica, Armenians to forget the Great Disaster of 1915 or Jews to forget the Holocaust. Memory is a central feature of our personal and communal lives alike, the feature that gives us much of our sense of identity and most of our sense of continuity. Who are we to judge whether a storyline that includes a major tragedy is inferior to a storyline that emphasises ever-increasing wealth?

The JHP, therefore, never asked any group to set aside its collective memories as a whole. What it attempted was to insist on critical and, as necessary, self-critical examination of any and all communal memories and thus of pupils' approach to history, something which is certain, in some instances at least, to lead to a readjustment of or revision to inherited memories.

Quite as disturbing as the implication that people in Southeast Europe had in some sense "too much history" and should be encouraged to "consume" or forget it, was the implication that Southeast Europe was somehow different in this respect from the rest of the world. It is clear that Southeast Europe has been among the most problematic parts of Europe since World War II, but this is partly because Germanic Europe and Russian Europe had been equally problematic in the fifty or so years preceding that war and its aftermath.

Thus, I continued by arguing that the influence of historical memory

on current policy decision making is by no means confined to Southeast Europe. As a citizen of Britain as well as Greece, who initially learnt history at an English school in the 1940s and 1950s, I well recall the clearly implied conclusion that Britain's destiny lay outside Europe. Only when either some threatening ideology such as Roman Catholicism in the remoter or Soviet communism in the more recent past threatened to unite Europe, or when some continental power, perhaps France or Germany, appeared capable of overturning the balance of power, was Britain forced to act as a counterweight within Europe rather than continuing its real business, whether commercial or imperial, in the wider world outside.

It was predictable then that Britons of my generation would vote for Brexit by a large majority in 2016. By contrast, the low level of accuracy that distinguished that referendum campaign on both sides would have been hard to imagine in the 1940s and 1950s. This was the consequence of jettisoning integrity as a fundamental social value to the benefit of those presentational and celebrity features that characterize a consumer society. In short, Britain is no different from Southeast Europe. Perceived memories and changing values explain many contemporary developments, whether one agrees or disagrees with these.

Throughout most of the JHP's life, informed opinion in Western Europe approved of it as an engine of reconciliation in a region of conflict. Was not JHP formed by the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe? Yes, certainly, but democracy and reconciliation can often lead in different directions. How could the JHP simultaneously seek both? I shall draw four personal conclusions from our JHP experience.

First, as already indicated, we began from respect for others rather than from a demand for reconciliation. We learnt that the more you wish to achieve reconciliation, the less should you preach it. You can and must, however, include examples of reconciliation and its consequences. In other words, never preach but persuade through examples.

This is not just a matter of the appropriate approach to other people as equals. It is also stark realism. We might wish to have a clean slate, a "tabula rasa" on which to work. Yet, there is no human being who can represent such a "tabula rasa": we may be certain that grandmother will have got there ahead of us! A sad but conclusive example is communist Yugoslavia between 1945 and 1990. For 45 years there was party but no religious education. Whence then the raw passions welling up from the deep recesses of religious or ethnic prejudices available to be drawn from as communism fell?

Second, there is indeed an alternative, although it is no shortcut. The whole process of history learning needs to be infused with that critical approach to evidence and narrative, which makes the difference not just between propaganda and history – that should be obvious – but between history and myth. Unlike propaganda, myths are not usually products of bad faith, in whole or in part. Myths are also not necessarily false, even when incomplete or inaccurate as to events. They are, however, memories that have not been subjected to critical analysis, including critical analysis of the wider historical background for the relevant period.

Fortunately, I can draw on an example from childhood experience. The illiterate lady in our home who cared for me when I was between eight and ten originated, as had my family, from the island of Chios. She interpreted the past in terms of two equally true and simultaneously mythical events: the massacre of Chios in 1822 and the massacre in Smyrna in 1922. Both reflected actual events, and I cannot complain that an illiterate person did not develop a critical approach to the background evidence concerning the wider period. The challenge of democratic politics however – and this is where the connection between democracy and reconciliation lies – is that whole citizen bodies now need to develop a historical understanding by the use of critical method, if they are to be able to make intelligent decisions in respect both of their own and their neighbours' future.

This, then, is the point at which the JHP has been radical, not in directly preaching reconciliation, still less in recommending pupils to

forget – or to "consume" – their past. Citizens of nation-states in a world that has become a media village require a far better understanding of the need and the means to examine historical evidence and narrative, than was considered necessary when nation-states began teaching history as a mixture of factual narrative and ethnic myth.

The third factor the JHP brought into play has been an encouragement of curiosity, empathy and sympathy flowing from the systematic inclusion with political history of cultural, economic, religious and social history, with an emphasis on everyday life. This has been effective, both because all these factors do indeed interact and because political developments are often specific to one country, whereas cultural, economic and social developments often operate across many countries simultaneously, as with our contemporary ecological crisis or the revolutionary changes in attitudes to issues of gender, that occurred (with variations) on both sides of what appeared to be, and politically was, an Iron Curtain. Such an extension of horizons, sensibilities and sympathies constitutes an essential element in a healthy historical education and has been central to the JHP.

The JHP's fourth element, however, has been an acknowledgment that even after adoption of the critical method, even after an extension of pupils' horizons with sympathy and sensitivity, there may well legitimately remain differing or opposing points of view, both between countries and within them. In the JHP workbook The Cold War there stand two quotations, both factually accurate yet drawing diametrically opposite conclusions, by a right-wing historian, Spiros Markezinis, and a Marxist historian, Nikos Svoronos, on the Second World War and the Greek Civil War which followed it.

In short, historical method can take us a long way but cannot replace basic existential choices. European history presents us indeed with all too many such, particularly in the period which led directly to the creation of contemporary European Institutions. It was for good reasons that the pioneers of European unity after World War II concentrated neither on any historical narrative nor on cultural

heritage, but rather on the enlightened self-interest of simultaneously collaborative and competitive economic reconstruction. World War II had seen one of the most consciously ruthless ideologies of all time, obsessed by death and destruction, with roots deep in European cultural soil and a thorough mastery of modern technology, almost emerge victorious, killing millions in the process.

The post-war situation also posed dilemmas. Many who had fought Nazism in the name of liberal democracy were committed to some model of European colonialism. Others proclaimed a messianic secularism, but practiced a ruthless repression first of human integrity and consequently of human liberty. Today, many years after the end both of centralised communist economies and colonialism, ecologists identify exploitative attitudes to nature, adopted in the European tradition, as a major underlying cause of accelerating climate change.

It is still debated whether nazism, Stalinist communism or colonialism represent the deepest stain on the European record. It is easy to plump for equivalence. Although never a communist and always fiercely opposed to colonialism, however, I believe that the Nazi ideology is especially evil. To adopt it entails hatred and violence in the cause of an allegedly superior race. Colonialism certainly encourages arrogance, exploitation and racism, but these can be and sometimes were tempered by a sense of obligation towards the governed. Communism certainly can express class hatred which resembles racial hatred. If based, however, on positive social ideals, it requires the addition first of a belief that historical forces will lead, through conflict, to paradise on earth; second, a conviction that to achieve this end justifies the use of any means; and third, an acceptance that personal integrity must yield to party decisions, before we arrive at that transformation of ideals into a living hell that marked Stalinist communism.

To treat nazism and communism as equally evil in principle, something many contemporary Europeans desire, is problematic. It implies the downgrading of altruism and playing up of personal cynicism, selfish nationalism and economic opportunism. As the arms

trade of so many European countries reveals, such attitudes remain scars on the European body politic even today.

A more constructive debate would concern positive elements in the European past and how these might prove relevant to our current ecological, existential and social crises. This should, I suggest, begin with an exploration of the three primary (though never sole) sources of the great European river, the Hellenic, the Judeo-Christian and the Roman. All three traditions are seriously flawed, as are the traditions of all human societies. The militarism and brutality of the Romans in their progress towards world empire, the degradation of the very name of God to justify genocide in the early Judaic tradition and the inhumanity of even the mature Hellenic tradition to those outside the magic circle of citizenship speak for themselves. Yet all three traditions were notably creative, and can in principle continue being so. Three examples may give food for thought.

Hellenic city states were particularist: their citizens' political rights but also charitable provision depended on their citizenship. Hellenic philosophy, by contrast, developed in a universalist direction. The rapid growth of the Christian Church in the Greek-speaking East during the fourth century led to provision for non-citizens of homes for strangers, and hospital care made available not based on the criterion of citizenship but of human need. Emphasis on shared humanity thus became, if by no means a general, certainly a recurrent element, an element that has been picked up and emphasized by those who argue for a set of positive European values. Interestingly, the first notable Christian to attack slavery as infringing God's image present in every human person was Gregory of Nyssa, around 380.

This is an example of one strand among the three most prevalent traditions transforming another. Quite as impressive is the revival of another strand in a new form, albeit centuries later. I refer to the revival of Roman law beginning in eleventh-century Italy and its use in the then mixed world of feudal kingdoms and autonomous city states to create a radically new institution, namely the university, for

the effective protection of doctors and scholars who became their members. This institutionalisation of scholarship meant that "Regnum" and "Sacerdotium" were joined by "Studium", a decisive moment in the preparation of our modern world, where science and scholarship have become the most important basis for public decision-making.

My third example involves all three major progenitors of European culture, but also specific national traditions of some European countries. The revival of Latin rhetoric and Roman law, admiration of the Roman Republic (in contrast to Roman imperial absolutism) and the reappropriation first of the Hellenic philosophical and then literary legacy contributed to gradually transforming Western Europe. By the sixteenth century, European political ideology had become divided between well-articulated and rigorously argued theories of absolutist sovereignty on the one side and persuasive theories of popular sovereignty on the other.

This rich intellectual soil with its prominent ideological landmarks was fertilized in the seventeenth century by the revolutionary protestant element in Western Christendom. Christian faith is far removed from systems of legal or political philosophy, but has often served as one of the most powerful movers to action. The English Calvinist revolutionaries of the 1640s, most particularly the Levellers, turned philosophical reasoning into political action and, as important, served as a paradigm for further political action.

Such theories, as re-articulated by the Protestant English philosopher John Locke, had within a century led to two seminal revolutions of the Enlightenment Era: one successful, in North America, and another even more revolutionary, because now aggressively secular, in France. This last one failed but, in failing, communicated the ideas of radical enlightenment, popular liberty, equal rights and democratic sovereignty to the rest of Europe and thence to the whole world.

To chart the positive effect of these traditions should not in any way diminish our horror at the darker sides of European history. These have often been dominant. It is from struggling with varied shades of darkness

that values designated today as 'European' have precariously emerged. That uncomfortable expression 'European values' may then best be understood within a framework of contention and struggle as based on a creative use of the past rather than paradise attained. Nonetheless, if over the centuries positive elements can be understood to have been a consequence of this European struggle, then all of European cultural history can be seen as potentially relevant to Europe's future.

All the more, then, should we welcome two recent French initiatives. First came that of Dr Antoine Arjakovsky of the Collège des Bernardins, with a conference and fine book entitled Histoire de la Conscience Européenne. "European consciousness" is certainly not the only relevant element in European history, since there are often important realities of which we are not yet conscious, something particularly true where Europe's Hellenic, Judaeo-Christian and Roman antecedents are concerned. In the present conjuncture, however, it is essential to identify healthy elements of a "European consciousness".

More recently the French government, through Alain Lamassoure, has taken an initiative concerning European history teaching at the Council of Europe, an organization which includes many countries outside the EU, without whose contribution European cultural history cannot be written. A similar initiative at the European Union level would be welcome. This, however, would only prove effective if common ground were to be found between the Parliament, the Commission and member states.

The experience of the JHP should prove helpful for both these initiatives. Given the situation in Southeast Europe in 1995, it was essential we tackled political issues directly. Our experience has proven, contrary to expectations, that this is possible, if inevitably controversial. Beginning with cultural and social history might well prove easier.

A second point: civil servants are suitable for observing developments, but they are not trained to write history. Furthermore, history-writing should not be a matter of simply setting down opposing points of

view as in a negotiation, something which is only appropriate in the aftermath of military conflict between two states. History writing, in general, requires research and dialogue, analysis and synthesis. In this, the JHP has set an invaluable example. Had we confined ourselves to parallel narratives, we would have been accepting that very primacy of the nation state in the currently dominant historical narratives which instead needed and still needs to be thought through, probably corrected and perhaps replaced with a broader perspective based on shared values drawn from European tradition.

Third, the process requires political will and oversight, but also the absence of political control. The choice of leading historians is crucial. All historians have their biases, but many are sufficiently aware of them to permit creative interaction with other historians.

Fourth, no project for workbooks on European cultural history will cost anything like the Common Agricultural Policy! It should be afforded EU financial support, however, because without a sense of cultural identity evidenced by shared questions and certain fundamental values these questions give rise to, the EU's very existence will remain at risk. As developments forbid any delay to programmes for mitigating climate change, so do they forbid delay to the evolution of a genuinely European consciousness.

Fifth, there is little benefit in attempting simply to replace national with European sentiment. A fundamental purpose of the JHP has been instead to prioritise respect for truth as central. This is all the more valuable in a period when technical innovations aimed at exploiting mass psychology are proving capable not just of persuading people to believe specific falsehoods but to live in virtual universes with no necessary relation to the truth.

Sixth, respect for the truth entails consideration of fundamental issues in European history already being vigorously debated, such as European countries' exploitation both of Europe's nature but also that of other peoples, as partially responsible for our planet's current climate crisis.

Seventh, more optimistically, the experience of the JHP is that such

a process of questioning, research, analysis, dialogue and synthesis in history-writing brings people closer and endows them with a broader and a deeper sense of identity, one that does not divide but, through invitation to dialogue, unites. Its primary foundation is shared respect for truth and recognition of responsibility for our neighbour in accordance with the Golden Rule, a fundamental principle (in the Judeo-Christian tradition among others) that has been obscured in the prevailing worldview which encourages the pursuit, by groups as by individuals, of pleasure, power and profit as central aims of human life.

Perhaps, if and when this is partly achieved, someone may recall it was in Southeast Europe, that creative but often despised corner of a great continent, where one serious effort to achieve such a synthesis emerged and for twenty fruitful years, flourished!

The Necessary Flashback to the History of European consciousness

A. Arjakovsky

It is a great pleasure for me to participate in the colloquium in Athens devoted to the Joint History Project at the initiative of Professors Christina Koulouri and Costa Carras, whom I thank very much for their invitation. Their immense work on the history of crossed gazes on the past in Southern Europe was a source of inspiration for the work we undertook on the history of European consciousness at the Collège des Bernardins in Paris from 2011 in association with several European institutions.[1]

We share the same point of view that the history of Europe must be based on the notion of conscience (which makes it possible to heal the wounds of the past and to build peace) and on crossed perspectives (which, as Paul Ricoeur wrote, gives, with the process of translation and of forgiveness, a method for associating identity and otherness without reduction of one to the other). Through our own research, we have also understood that this new kind of History should associate professional historians with European citizens in order to produce a "mosaic", a living and never-completed work associating luminous landmarks set by professional historians and memorial stones laid by responsible citizens.

[1] Histoire de la conscience européenne - Collège des Bernardins (collegedes bernardins.fr)

This common method is at the origin of the open connected history project of European consciousness that we are currently setting up with the European Parliament and the House of European History through the website in 24 languages "My House of European History".[2] It also marked the initiative of our project to build peace between Russia and Ukraine, notably by means of a common history manual, modelled on the Franco-German history manual.[3]

a. The coming of age of a European story

In May 2016, the Collège of the Bernardins held a colloquium entitled "A New Narrative for Europe. Intersecting perspectives on the History of European Consciousness".[4] It took three years of preparation, was placed under the patronage of the European Commission and was organized in association with several European institutions and universities. It brought together about thirty historians from seventeen European countries. The original method was to propose a non-exhaustive and open narrative of European consciousness through intersecting perspectives.[5]

As a first step, it was necessary to point out that there was a reality designated by the term "European identity" as is found in the Declaration of Copenhagen,[6] promulgated by the European Council

[2] Comment raconter l'histoire de l'Europe? | My House of European History (ep.eu)

[3] https://media.collegedesbernardins.fr/content/pdf/Recherche/BrochureCommission-VJR EN.pdf

[4] Antoine Arjakovsky, dir., Histoire de la conscience européenne, préface par Herman van Rompuy, Salvator, Paris, 2016.

[5] Histoire de la conscience européenne - France Culture

[6] "In our wish to assure the respect of values of the juridical, political and moral order to which they are linked, preoccupied with preserving the rich variety of their national cultures, sharing the same concept of a life based on the determination to construct a society conceived and realized for the service of people, they envisage protecting the principles of representative democracy, of the reign of law, of social justice – the goal of economic progress – and of respect for human rights which constitute the foundational elements of European identity". Declaration of the nine

on December 14, 1973, or, better still, a "European consciousness" as was already put forward in 1933 by Julien Benda in his Address to the European Nation, because "the idea that men make of their acts is, in History, more fecund than the acts themselves". But the personalist historian Bernard Voyenne, in his 1952 Short History of the European Idea, showed the limits of Julien Benda's neo-imperialist vision of the construction of Europe as well as those of the idealist vision of Europe, formulated in 1935 by Edmund Husserl in his conference in Vienna, La Crise de l'Humanité Européenne et la Philosophie, which was powerless in the face of the totalitarian reconstructions of the past. For Voyenne, the whole History of Europe was a wavering between, on the one hand, the attempts of a neo-imperial restoration of the Greco-Roman civilization (Charlemagne, Napoleon, Alexander I, Hitler each one in his own way) and, on the other hand, the political elaborations of Europeans – often minorities but always influential – marked by the Christian representation of the Kingdom of God upon earth, from Pierre Dubois, the advisor of Philippe the Fair, who dreamed of a European Federation based on a secularized model of the ecumenical councils, to Immanuel Kant, the philosopher of Königsberg, the author of the 1795 work entitled Projet philosophique de paix perpétuelle. In order to account for this oscillation, source of the best and of the worst, a living and objective History of European consciousness should propose a symbolic, polyphonic and participative narrative. This intersection of perspectives between citizens and professional historians belonging to different nations, generations and historiographical traditions, is the indispensable way for enabling Europeans to become aware of themselves, to regroup around solid institutions and to confront together the challenges that beset them.[7]

heads of European States at Copenhagen, on 14 December 1973. http://www.cve.eu/obj/declaration_sur_l_identite_europeenne_copenhague_14_decembre_1937_fr-02798dc9_4b7d-b2c9.103adb7da32.html

[7] An interactive history of European Consciousness has been proposed for the site of the European Parliament: My House of European History https://my_european_history.ep.eu/myhouse/story/538 It can also be found in La Maison de l'histoire

Recently, three important contemporaneous personalities have insisted on this point.

b. The time of awareness of a European identity

The Speech to the European People, by Barack Obama in Hanover, Germany, on 25 April 2016 was intended as the proposal of a solution to the crises the European continent is experiencing at this moment, ranging from the Russo-Ukrainian War and the conflict between Russia and the European Union to the risk of Brexit and the massive arrival of immigrants from the Near East. The proposals of the American President are indications of the importance for Europeans to confront themselves with the outlook of the other so as to become aware of themselves as belonging to a common civilisational entity:

> I say to you, peoples of Europe, do not forget who you are. You are the descendants of a struggle for liberty […] You are Europe, united in your diversity. Guided by the ideals that have formed the world, you are stronger when you are united.[8]

Such a perspective is all the more interesting in so far as it is formulated by a non-European. Europe becomes greater when it is seen from within, with a feeling of belonging even though this be questioned, and from the outside when it is recognised as inspiring or repulsive, in its strengths and in its weaknesses.

Europeans need a common narrative, not only because they form a whole in the eyes of the rest of the world but, above all, because, without common points of reference, they risk losing their identity. This is what Herman van Rompuy affirmed in Rome in 2011 when

européenne inaugurated in Brussels in 2017. http://www.europal.europa.eu/visiting/en/brussels/house-of-european-history

[8] https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/04/25/remarks-president-obama-address-people-europe; cf also http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/apr/26/the-guardian-view-on-obamas-hanover-speech-a-welcome-endorsement-of-european-unity-and-values

he was President of the European Union. He explained that the discourse on Human Rights could not, on its own, constitute a vertical axis around which Europeans could regroup. "Because it would centre back the person on himself and thus, necessarily, limit, cloister and isolate him. In a word, make him too solitary." That is the reason for which Herman van Rompuy believes that Europeans need a "spiritual supplement" capable of maintaining and reinforcing the acquisitions of European civilizations; equality between men and women, political democracy, the separation of the State and Churches, integration by the Law within multicultural societies. For van Rompuy, love is found to be the basis for such reconciliation between science and conscience. It is therefore necessary that Europeans rediscover, according to the recommendation of Kierkegaard, "the virtues of a love that transcends time."[9]

Pope Francis made a major contribution to the collective reflection on the past and future of European civilization on 25 November 2014, at the Council of Europe and again at the European Parliament in Strasbourg during his first visit to the European capital. In the mind of Francis, only research of the historical truth will enable people to overcome the impasse of individualism that is threatening European civilization.

> In order to march towards the future, the past is necessary. Deep roots are required. Courage is also needed so as not to hide our faces from the present and its challenges. Memory is necessary, as is courage and a healthy and humane utopia.

The Argentinian Pope, of Italian ancestry, disposes of sufficient distance to be able to explain to the European deputies of Parliament that "the roots feed themselves from the truth, it constituting their nourishment, the vital life line of any society that aspires to be truly

[9] This perspective is now that of the contemporary philosopher Jean-Marc Ferry in Les Lumières de la religion, Bayard, Paris, 2013.

free, humane and live in solidarity." However, according to him, the truth should appeal to the conscience in order to manifest itself.

c. Power and limits of European consciousness

The debates at the colloquium of the Bernardins have allowed us to verify that the method of intersecting narratives on the History of European consciousness was, in fact, the correct one. There were real jousts among historians belonging to different intellectual universes, different cultures and different nations, but these contributed to the discovery of structures that are common to European awareness.

In this context, mention can be made of the debates between Luuk van Middelar, a Dutch professor at the University of Louvain-la-Neuve, and the Slovene Taja Vovk van Gaal, the director (before C. Itzel) of the House of European History in Brussels on the question of the political importance of the historical narrative of European History but also of the risk of it being instrumentalised. The divergences between Thomas Maissen, the Swiss Director of the German Historical Institute, and myself concerning the notion of European consciousness followed these exchanges. For Maissen, it is difficult to find traces of a European consciousness at the level of the political History of Europe in modern times. Whereas for me, the History of European consciousness cannot be reduced to the level of Nation-States as can be seen by the emergence of a European university in the 13th century or a Republic of Letters stretching from Paris to Moscow in modern times. Nora Repo, a Finnish scholar, and Philippe Poirier, a professor at the University of Luxembourg, had different points of view regarding the place that should be accorded to Islam in the History of European consciousness and, above all, the lessons to be drawn for our present times. Vincent Dujardin, the Director of the Institute for European Studies at Louvain, and Joanna Nowicki, a Polish university student, elaborated the narrative of European construction from two different points of view. For the first, 1945 signified the end of the Second World War and the beginning of European construction. For the latter, on the contrary, the end of the Second World War only dates from the

fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the integration of the majority of the countries of the former European Socialist block in 2004.

The list of these debates could be extended to cover an even longer period, but they demonstrate that History is a living science, unfinished and constantly revised. Through open and respectful approaches to this debate, several structural elements of a European consciousness have emerged as objects of a consensus.

First of all, from the earliest times, Europeans have propounded versions of unity in diversity. It is not surprising that today the motto of the European Union is "In varietate Concordia". This vision brings together the Greek predilection for universality, the Roman respect for the equal dignity of each person, the monotheistic representation of a transcendent and loving Creator, and the Christian revelation of a God who is One and Triune. But this meta-conceptual equation between the personal principle and the wisdom principle, which is at the origin of a powerful associative, cooperative and syndical movement that has marked the History of Europeans from Stockholm to Madrid, has also led to a permanent political tension in Europe among the monarchical, oligarchical and democratic orders.[10]

The History of European consciousness has also been modified by a recurrent tension between an attachment to the Rule of Law and an imperialist vision of the world. Europeans sought to distinguish secular power from religious power, the participation of religions in the public good, took part in the quest for a political system that would attribute juridical equality to citizens but also a verticality of power allowing for the transcendence of differences. Yet Europeans' love for freedom has been accompanied by colonial violence and a persistent refusal of alterity.

There is no doubt that European consciousness is characterized by a sense of artistic creativity and a spirit of discovery. For Jean-

[10] The Blackwell Companion to Political Theology, edited by Peter Scott and William T. Cavanaugh, Blackwell, Oxford, 2004; Antoine Arjakovsky, Essai de métaphysique oecuménique, Cerf, Paris,,2021 (forthcoming).

François Mattei, the European is someone who always tries to look beyond appearances. In the course of History, this characteristic has distinguished him from other peoples, beginning with the Persians and the diverse Asiatic peoples to which the European was, however, quite near geographically. As related in the myth of the kidnapping of Princess Europa by Zeus, the European has been insistent on distinguishing himself from his neighbours while assimilating what was best in them. This sense of creativity and appetite for discovery were at the origin of universities as a place of apprenticeship of universal knowledge, founded on the community formed by teachers and students. But it was also at the origin of discoveries most dangerous for the future of human civilization such as the phenomenon of nuclear fission, made public in 1934-1938 by the Italian Enrico Fermi, two Germans, Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassmann, and an Austrian, Lise Meitner.

Finally, the History of European consciousness manifests an original and ambivalent conception of love and sexuality as the basis of the fundamental legal equality between men and women but also the basis of their complementarity. As Denis de Rougement demonstrated in his 1938 book The History of Love in the West, down through the centuries, sexuality has been understood as a source of creativity when the libido is mastered and sublimated. The love of Dante and Beatrice is a path to the Beyond. But when the feeling of love is disconnected from sexuality, it can become pathological.[11] The European myths of Tristan and Isolde as well as that of Scheherazade confirm this. And with the libertine vision of love, from the case of Don Juan Tirso de Molina to the Marquis de Sade, European civilization contributed to the emergence of a perverse city, incapable of a balance between the sense of liberty as a gift and as a responsibility.

This memory of History enlightens the present crisis of the European project and justifies the search of hope for Europe. Thus, the first proposition that we formulate is the following: by taking into account

[11] Dany-Robert Dufour, La Cité perverse, Gallimard, Paris, 2009.

the ideas of the association Pax Europa,[12] but also those of Civico,[13] a non-profit European association advocating for more European history in the schools, we suggest that the History of European consciousness should be taught in all the countries of the Council of Europe as early as elementary school. This should be related to national history and realized according to the method of intersecting narratives, making use of tools offered by "My House of European History". We are glad that this idea, supported in France by Alain Lamassoure and Emmanuel Macron, has since November 2020 become established in the new HOPE institution (Observatoire de l'Enseignement de l'Histoire en Europe) at the Council of Europe with the participation of seventeen states, including Greece and France.[14]

d. The need for a new European narrative

The "new narrative for Europe" designed to offer Europeans a common vision of their History is an attempt to respond to contemporary interrogations about the foundations and meaning of the European construction. It was presented in March 2014, at the Bozar Museum in Brussels under the sponsorship of the European Commission and the direction of Jose Manuel Barroso. The presentation was centred on three 20th-century dates: 1945, to mark the end of nationalist ideologies; 1989, to commemorate the fall of the Berlin Wall that led to the end of communist ideology, and 2008 to commemorate "the bursting of the bubble", "the crisis of the dominant narration of our times with its belief in the auto-regulative capacity of the market and its celebration of speculation centred on profit."

But this declaration, which was signed by contemporary intellectuals, journalists and artists such as the Hungarian philosopher

[12] «Pour un récit commun et une conscience européenne commune», Alain Lamassoure - YouTube

[13] CIVICO Europa.

[14] Création de l'Observatoire de l'enseignement de l'histoire en (...) - Représentation Permanente de la France auprès du Conseil de l'Europe (delegfrance.org).

György Konrád, the French cartoonist Jean Plantu and the Italian artist Michelangelo Pistoletto, hence written without the contribution of professional historians,[15] did not have sufficient distance to be able to propose a comprehensive vision of the crisis of nationalist ideologies in the 20th century, nor to propose a constructive vision of the future.[16] Anne Applebaum, the American editorialist, did not hesitate to criticize the lacunas in this attempt. But she recognized that a new narrative is precisely what Europeans today need.[17]

The struggle against extremist currents and half-truths should not be simply conceptual and defensive. As the example of Brexit has shown, European intellectuals will not be able to confront this new, hostile paradigm of post-truth by the simple defence of facts, through a pro-diversity consensus and Cartesian reasoning. Alex Evans, in The Myth Gap, explains that human beings have always had recourse to myths in order to understand who they are and where they are going. Europeans with a creative spirit should not take refuge on the mountain of dry rationality and abandon the plain of sentiments to the populists alone. That is why Matthew d'Ancona, in Post-Truth, proposes a more proactive approach through the formulation of new narratives.[18] He takes as an example the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in London in 2012, imagined by Danny Boyle to show that myth does

[15] We have been invited to participate in some of these encounters organised by the European Commission and have contributed, along with other European intellectuals and artists such as Jürgen Habermas and Placido Domingo, in a collective work: A. Arjakovsky, How to write a new narrative for Europe, The Mind and Body of Europe, E.U., Brussels, 2014, pgs. 187-188.

[16] The European Commission, A New narrative for Europe: artists, intellectuals and scientists stand up for Europe, 2014 http://ec.europa.eu/archives/commission_20110-2014/president/news/archives/2014/02/20140221_1_en.htm

[17] Anne Applebaum, A New European Narrative?, The New York Review of books, October 12, 2017. http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/10/12/new-european-narrative/

[18] Mathew d'Ancona, Post Truth, The New War on Truth and How to Fight Back, Ebury Press, London, 2017.

not necessarily mean the contrary of truth. Rather, when enlightened by a humanist rationality, it makes possible, through an imaginative and danced choreography, the understanding and sharing of the heart of an identity and a vocation.

At the seminar of the Collège des Bernardins, Aurélien Condomines, the creator of the initiative Pulse of Europe in France, suggested the development of the myth "Europe the Protector" in order to give a credible and creative response to the anxieties of European citizens. Door-to-door encounter is also indispensable for offering a contra-narrative to the powerful myths of "the Europe of bankers who propose fiscal evasion for the richest" or "the octopus of Brussels who measures the curve of bananas". The rediscovery of personalism could also lead to the promotion of new roads of fraternity for Europeans. People are waiting to be carried towards an ideal of justice and fraternity at least as much as they want to be protected by customs officers.

At any rate, it is only by understanding the deep roots of the European multi-crisis, accepting a questioning of the socialist model as much as of the liberal model, separating the discomforts of citizens regarding the European project from their political and utilitarian recuperations, rehabilitating symbolic and mythological narratives and making the correct semantic distinctions, that we will be able to overtake the neo-liberals and the neo-populists and be able to offer a more humane vision and practice in politics and the economy. Our final observation is that the increasing lack of confidence in the European project during the 2000s came, first of all, from a lack of clairvoyance concerning the profound causes of the crisis. The growing defiance should also be interpreted as a sign of a collective intuition on the necessity of changing the software for governing the affairs of Europe and of the world. In spite of the loss of confidence of public opinion in favour of actual governance as currently exercised,[19] several polls show that, on

[19] A survey of the Bertelsmann Foundation found out that 66% of citizens are not satisfied with the Union's current direction. http://www.euopinions.eu 2017 New Pact for Europe, 2017, p.22.

the contrary, Europeans are favourable to a greater presence of Europe in many fields – from the war on terrorism to energy policy.[20] According to the sociologists Michel Maffesoli and Hélène Strohl, Europeans are mistrustful of centralized States, the materialistic economy, utilitarianism and individualistic egalitarianism.[21] For the English philosopher John Milbank, who came to participate at the seminar on Brexit at the Collège des Bernardins, "it is time to return to the more global vision of the Founding Fathers based on personalism, the dignity of the human person, on the necessity of subsidiarity and pluralism and on the role given to elites who are attached to the European heritage (and not just rely on scientific experts)". Visionaries who have advanced the relevance of this personalist model not just as an alternative to the modern version of the individual but also to that of nature, society and the state have much work ahead.

[20] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/fr/headlines/priorities/sondage-eurobarometre-2017/20170705STO79042/sondage-une-majorite-de-citoyens-en-faveur-de-plus-d-europe; http://www.europarl.europa.eu/external/html/eurobarometer-052017/default_fr.htm#terrorism

[21] H. Strohl, M. Mattesoli, L'Europe est sans pourquoi, in Marc Halevy (dir.) Qu'est-ce qui arrive a l'Europe? Le Thor, L. Massaro, 2016, p.78.

Joint History Project and a Personal Note

N. Kizılyürek

Since the 19th century, the so-called century of nation-states, history teaching aims to contribute to the formation of collective memory for each nation-state while forging a strong, collective national identity of the nation-state's citizens. The national memory is the existential part of the nations. Each nation-state or each nationalism creates its own national memory and contributes to the unity of the nation. Therefore, the cult of history and cult of the nation are not separate. However, this turns the nation into a community of myths. The myths are symbolically influential structures, which contribute to the permanent functions of legitimization and regulation of the united nation. Therefore, national memory is impossible without myths. The cult of history and myths are the essential part of the national memory as the ideological system of the nation.

However, after the catastrophic First and Second World Wars, new questions and debates arose regarding the goals and aims of Education in general, which redefined history teaching in particular with the aim of developing a Culture of Peace. In this new pedagogy of Peace – which included new knowledge, skills, values, stances and tendencies that are needed for building Peace – many international organizations (UNO, UNESCO, EU, the Council of Europe) and states took part.

The new historiography – the New History – began on an academic level in North-Western Europe in the 1970s. It challenged the "traditional" historiography by giving emphasis to "history from below",

multiple perspectives and the interpretation of events in a historical context. Although it did not deny the importance of a chronological knowledge of history, this New History concentrated on offering history students the ability to historicise the past. In this regard, history teaching focused more on providing the skills for analysis, hermeneutics and the synthesis of information which the students received from primary and secondary sources.

When it comes to the countries that experienced ethnic disputes and antagonisms which result in war and division, international research shows that this poses a great challenge for their educational systems generally and history teaching particularly. In ethnically divided societies, especially when conflict lasts for generations and is still ongoing, school education reflects the continuous ethnic conflict. It is a well-known phenomenon that national historiography reproduces national memory through the adaptation of the mechanisms of forgetting and remembrance in a selective way. The ultimate goal of such historiography is not an accurate account of the history but an effective and efficient contribution to national goals and unity. Hence, school education is fundamentally political. Especially in those cases where ethnic conflict still continues, history education and historiography constitute at the same time an element in current politics.

Our Joint History Project deals exactly with this category of countries. Studying history teaching in Southeast Europe, including my country Cyprus, was a great challenge. My involvement in the Joint History Project started in the second half of the 1990s. Our project was an ambitious one. We wanted to study the state of history teaching in Southeast Europe. That such an initiative would face great difficulties was not a surprise to anyone. Especially in Cyprus, which remains a divided country up to now, where history teaching is part of the ethnic antagonism.

When we, Greek, Greek-Cypriot, Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot scholars and teachers attempted for the first time to come together in order to organize a workshop under the Joint History Project, we had a bitter taste of the difficulties of our endeavour. The workshop was to

be held in a village named Pyla, which has access from both sides of the divided island. However, the Turkish-Cypriot authorities would not allow the Turkish scholars to cross over to the village. They were upset because we dared to organize a workshop and tackle the question of history teaching issues in Cyprus. On the other side, the Greek-Cypriot Minister of Education stated publicly that something "inacceptable" was going on and some people wanted to "change our history".

In other words, any discussion on history teaching and school education was not welcome on both sides of the divided island. I personally did not expect such a strong reaction, especially from the Greek-Cypriot authorities. The Republic of Cyprus was on its way to join the European Union, and I was hoping that during this adaptation period it would be willing to update its educational system. My expectations from the Turkish-Cypriot authorities were not high. Given that separatist nationalists were in power and history teaching in the Turkish Cypriot community was nothing but "legitimization" of the partition of the island, I was somehow prepared for the strong reactions of the separatist regime.

My study on the Turkish-Cypriot history textbooks showed clearly that the prevailing narrative not only made it impossible to develop critical thinking amongst the citizens, but also formulated a national identity in contradiction to the "national other". The Turkish-Cypriots were the absolute "victims", whereas the Greek-Cypriots were presented as the "perpetrators". The Greek-Cypriot textbooks did not differ much: the whole blame for the division of the island was put on the shoulders of the Turkish-Cypriots and on Turkey. The recommendations of the European Council for history teaching, which were adopted by the European Commission, did not reach Cyprus:

> History teaching in a democratic Europe should occupy a vital place in the training of responsible and active citizens and in the developing respect for all kinds of differences, based on an understanding of national identity and on principles of tolerance.

Neither respect of differences nor principles of tolerance were in place in Cyprus. Despite this tough reality and the harsh criticism, in the framework of the Joint History Project we continued to organize workshops and bring Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot scholars and teachers together. We managed to raise awareness amongst Cypriot citizens and in civil society in general. At some point, we also experienced some serious efforts to reform the educational system.

In the Turkish-Cypriot educational system, historiographic renewal was mainly expressed through the drafting of new history textbooks in 2004.[22] The new history textbooks have been written with a "history from below" approach, emphasising the social events and rituals common to both communities. In the new books, the Greek Cypriots were presented as co-citizens of Turkish Cypriots living in and sharing the common homeland. They ceased to be presented as the national "other".

However, this effort was quickly abandoned in 2009 when Derviş Eroğlu's right-wing conservative party (UBP) came to power and changed the history textbooks again according to the old school of nationalist historiography. The new Turkish Cypriot leader personally presented the new history textbooks holding a picture of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and saying that "from now on the pupils will learn the true history".

In 2008 a long tradition broke in the Greek-Cypriot educational system: for the first time a Minister of Education was appointed without prior consultation with the Church of Cyprus. The appointment was made by the government of Dimitris Christofias, then newly elected. Christofias was the first President of the Republic of Cyprus coming from the ranks of the left-wing AKEL party. This "innovation" had another impact: the Ministry of Education would undertake an initiative to write anew the Analytical Programmes (AP), which meant the

[22] In 2004 the left-wing Turkish Cypriot Party CTP was elected to the leadership of the Turkish Cypriot community and took the initiative to renew the history textbooks, in order to develop a culture of peace.

replacement of the thirty-year old history textbooks. However, the Church and conservative parties reacted furiously against this initiative and placed enormous pressure on the Christofias government, forcing the Minister of Education to resign and preventing any change to the Analytical Programmes.

Our Joint History Project had a better fortune in other cases: some countries in Southeast Europe were willing to adopt the new approach to historiography and history teaching.

When I was elected to the European Parliament in 2019, leaving academia behind, new challenges awaited. Despite the new approach to history teaching in EU member-states, history teaching is still not free of ideological approaches. On a primary level, some member-states have shifted back to a more traditional historiography, both in the name of the defence of national identity and in a reaction to globalisation.

On a supranational level, the effort to foster a European historical memory is proving problematic. Especially in recent years, a more concrete focus has been adopted, which puts the remembrance of 20th century totalitarianism (notably national socialism and communism) in the same category. This is a biased black-and-white scheme of history, presenting communism and national socialism as a common "black past". Such a teleological approach does injustice to the richness as well as the complex nature of European history, but also leaves out some other crucial issues such as colonialism.

There is a saying which goes like this: "History is revealed when there is nobody left that would be harmed by the truth".

Unfortunately, this saying reveals that history often hides the truth. Nations find it important to obscure the truth because they are aware of the fact that nation-building goes hand in hand with injustices against the "others".

National history obscures the truth also for another reason: to strengthen the "national narcissism".

As Eric Hobsbawm underlines, history is the raw material for nationalist or fundamentalist ideologies, as poppies are the raw material for opium addiction. If they cannot find what they are looking for in

historical sources, they make them up.

Sometimes there is a tendency to make up new historical facts as new identities are forming. For example, the European Union is inclined to do that.

However, the only aim of history should be to reveal the truth.

We have to end the discussion on who is right and who is wrong, when it comes to history-writing. We should not use history as a weapon.

We have to get rid of our need to take sides.

The European Observatory: Reconciling Memories in Europe

A. Lamassoure

May ghosts ever die?

I am neither an historian nor an academic. I am a politician. After having occupied a wide range of positions in French politics, I decided to dedicate my life to the construction of Europe. Sitting for twenty-five years in the European Parliament, I had to transform myself into a self-made historian of sorts. And to learn to listen to others. These reflections build on this hands-on experience.

After seventy years of the construction of Europe, our peoples are reconciled. At least inside the EU. Nobody, nowhere, even the most extremist parties, contemplates, imagines, fears, hopes for a fresh war between, say, Spain and Portugal, France and Germany, Italy and Austria, Poland and Lithuania, or Hungary and Rumania. This is Immanuel Kant's dream of perpetual peace.

But there is nothing perpetual under the sun. The memory of the dramatic and bloody demise of Yugoslavia has not yet faded away. Over the last fifteen years, we have witnessed the resurgence of violence, hatred, xenophobia and new kinds of nationalism in political rhetoric throughout Europe. On both sides of the political spectrum, extremist parties have mushroomed. Those who have not (not yet?) managed to come to power have pushed their agenda in the public sphere, compelling mainstream parties to copy them and sometimes outshout them. Surprisingly but significantly, a couple of years ago, the Ukrainian

and Polish Parliaments engaged in a memory conflict, singling out the heroes and the villains of the atrocities which took place in Galicia-Volhynia at the end of the Second World War. North Macedonia had just compromised on its name with Greece after thirty years of squabbling, when Bulgaria unexpectedly vetoed the opening of its EU accession negotiations on the grounds of conflicting memories of the common fight against the Ottomans in the late 1890s. Recurrent outbreaks of regional nationalisms periodically paralyse Spanish as well as Belgian politics, and following on from the spike in British nationalism which tore that country out of EU in 2016 the Scottish brand jeopardises the unity of the UK itself. Even where overt nationalism is less vocal, picking out foreign, ethnic, social or religious scapegoats to blame them for national failures or frustrations has become the icing on the cake of all political debates. Almost as if the old ghosts of the 1930s are emerging from their tombs.

What to pass on and how?

If we want to have peace deeply rooted in the hearts and minds for the next century, we must also ensure the reconciliation of memories. To this end, history teaching at school has a major role to play. Nowhere is that plain sailing. Why?

From the beginning, in the 19th century, history, as a mandatory discipline to be taught at school, was meant to foster among the younger generation and sometimes to spark the sentiment of belonging to the nation. War, warfare or wartime, generated, facilitated and accompanied the creation of all European nation-states. Teaching the memory of the founding fathers, glorious ancestors, heroes or martyrs of the fatherland was the first task assigned to history courses. At a time when war was a recurrent disease and was contemplated as a plague inherent to the human condition, there was no room for nuances. Understandably. But, at least in Europe, this page has been turned. We should now expect history teaching to be focussed on the art of peace. Unfortunately, this is not straightforward. Several stumbling blocks stand in the way.

To start with, national identity is strongly felt and still needs fostering. Even when widening our perspective, the need to start our narrative with the nation's fortunes and misfortunes is incontrovertible.

So is the need for pride in one's ancestors. Given all the atrocities committed by Europeans in the last centuries – world wars, genocides, colonisation, slavery – teaching the truth while nurturing national pride is not easy. I happened to be in Berlin on the night of 9 November 1989. Watching, at midnight, the surge of exuberant East German youngsters overflowing Checkpoint Charlie into West Berlin, this worry came up to my mind: all these young people crave for freedom and for truth. And for pride, too. Are we going to tell them: "your fathers were bastards because they were communists, your grandfathers were bastards because Nazis, your country has been the perpetrator or the accomplice of the worst collective crimes in human history"? Telling the truth does not dispense us from a "receivable" narrative. But how to define "receivable"?

If in Germany's case it is easy to quote from non-Germans, what European countries can argue that they were immune to at least one of the forms of barbarism of the previous century?

To make matters more complicated, after having experienced an ordeal such as, or close to, a civil war, any nation needs a pause, a time of silence to secure a fragile national reconciliation. It took thirty years for France to open the archives of the Nazi Occupation's "black years" and to accept to do away with the myth of a country massively supportive of the Resistance. And still, this was made possible only under the pressure of American historians. One generation later, the time to bring old wounds to light commenced, and even then many were scarred.

In the mid-1990s I had the opportunity to bring up the topic of the democratic transition in Central Europe with Felipe Gonzalez, then Spanish Prime Minister, in his Moncloa Palace. His comments struck me: "If Spain's experience is anything to go by, my advice would be reconciliation first! Let everybody forgive everybody for all the dire past we want to conjure up. Granted, it requires heroism from those who

suffered the most from the dictatorship. But if you take over from a tyranny in a vengeful mood against all the tyrant's acolytes, you may get some justice, but reconciliation will elude you. You don't build democracy on national vengeance." As a matter of fact, it took one generation to begin the re-opening of mass graves in Spain and re-kindle personal memories of the Civil War.

A last difficulty comes from what we could call the competition between history taught at school and history taught out of school, in day-to-day life: books, movies, media, political controversies, commemorations, streets naming, comics, Wikipedia and the countless sources on social media, potential sources of truth but also of distortion, bias and fake news. At school, students need to be taught how to investigate sources, sort out the wheat from the chaff and make up their own minds. Not a mean achievement.

The state of play

Taking all these difficulties into account, it is small wonder that, in many countries, the recommendations adopted by the Council of Europe on history teaching are not followed.

Carried out in 2019 under the aegis of the French presidency of this organisation, a first, still summary, state of play of history teaching among the member states reveals a bleak picture.

In more than half of the European states, and as was the case everywhere prior to 1939, what is taught as history sounds like nationalist propaganda. As expected, in the front row, we find all the countries affected by a so-called "frozen conflict": there are not fewer than a dozen, most of them on the eastern and southern borders of Europe. The most appalling cases are Bosnia and, surprisingly, Northern Ireland. In those countries, to paraphrase Clausewitz's famous words, history is the continuation of war by other means. Resentments are kept burning on a slow fire to make sure that old hates are passed on to the younger generations. And it works: those who fought late last year in Nagorno Karabakh had not yet been born at the time of the previous war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in the 1990s.

In another category of countries, the situation is the opposite. Not only is national propaganda meticulously avoided, but not to take any chances, any narrative is held in suspicion. What is called history is a "canon", bringing together a collection of transversal themes of the past, not related to each other, without chronology, featuring unknown characters, and paying close heed to the latest political correctness. Moreover, history is not a mandatory discipline for the final high-school exam.

The outcome is sometimes appalling. Last March, in the UK, according to a poll concerning youngsters aged between 16 and 29:

- For 26% of the respondents, the Second World War pitted France against Great Britain, and Waterloo was a battle during the course of that war. For most of the others, Waterloo was only a song by the Swedish music group Abba.

- 21% were not aware that the USA took part in the war.

- For 12% the war ended in the 1960s, when the Beatles topped the charts.

In a third category of member-states, the situation is more satisfactory. They try to teach a non-biased narrative, without prejudice to transversal themes and taking due account of political correctness. But even here, there is no effort to assess the average level of knowledge of history of new citizens when they come of age.

As for the content of what is taught, two other shortcomings are frequent.

- The limited amount of time, if any, dedicated to the history of the fine arts, literature, culture, science and sometimes even to economic history. Whereas the scientific method and the principle of separation of science from religion and philosophy were born in Europe, our students know nothing of these genuinely European discoveries and achievements.

- The oversight, in syllabuses, of big chunks of their continent. Everyone tends to focus on their country and their close neighbours and on the big powers, be they their closest friends or worst foes. Usually overlooked are the Nordic countries after the Vikings, Spain after the

treaties of Westphalia, Greece after Alexander the Great. And, beyond Europe, China before Mao; Japan emerged from the Pacific Ocean with Pearl Harbour and dove back in with Hiroshima; while Africa's history is summed up in three words: slavery, colonisation, decolonisation. How wonderfully simple!

The requirements

What are the areas for improvement? What do we actually need? For the last seventy years, the Council of Europe has done a tremendous work in adopting a couple of basic treaties and a host of recommendations by consensus among the 47 member states. Their conclusions can be summed up in three requirements.

1 — Firstly, the need for a narrative. A narrative based on facts. Historical facts, substantiated by the science of history. From the impressive progress in archaeology to the opening of all the archives of the Second World War and many of the archives of the Kremlin and of other former communist regimes there is no dearth of reliable sources. Viewing history as a science does not prevent the discussion of legends, but legends must be referred to as such, rather than as genuine events. For one century, French pupils learnt to recite "Our ancestors the Gauls". This was sheer legend: true, Gauls once inhabited the territory of today's France and half of Western Europe also, but the Gauls can hardly be considered the ancestors of today's French in terms of their genes. This was a myth. If taught today, it should be taught as such, pointing out the role this myth played in the building of the conscience of the French nation.

Many countries are keen on fostering historians' skills at school: the search for sources, the examination of conflicting pieces of information, the debunking of propaganda and attention to the widest possible range of opinions. Teaching the historians' methods is useful, but it cannot replace knowledge of the past. It is all the more evident today, since the need for collective identity has never been deeper. The need for belonging to, or membership of, a community: nation, region, ethnicity, religion. If we claim to be a community, we need a common narrative.

What does that mean for Europe? Could a European narrative play the same role as the national narrative played in the construction of modern nations? I once believed so. No longer.

For several reasons, but it is enough to mention that this is politically unrealistic. Not one single country, starting with mine, would deem any international outfit whatsoever, let alone a selection of multinational academics, a legitimate body for drawing up a common narrative. We cannot afford the luxury of day-dreaming. I am no diehard sovereigntist, far from it! But if there is a matter which still pertains to national sovereignty, it is the power, for a nation, to decide upon the contents and methods of transmitting knowledge to the younger generation, be it mathematics, language or history.

Which means that, at least at school level, we are condemned to live with dozens of different narratives, each mentioning the history of Europe in its own way – or, as the case may be, not doing so.

2 — Secondly, the need to read and to listen to others' narratives, especially about issues of common interest. What some scholars call multiperspectivity. Let me take a couple of examples.

A sensitive date is the 11th of November 1918. I pick it up because reporting on this event was the biggest difficulty met by the co-authors of the Franco-German textbook on contemporary history fifteen years ago. From the French side, the date reminds us of a great victory of the whole French people, at a terrible price in terms of the death toll. For the Germans, the armistice was hard to understand: on that day, two million German troops still occupied French soil, whereas not one single pair of French pair of boots had set foot upon German soil. And the event triggered a spiral of further hardships for Germany, attempted revolutions or coups d'état in Berlin and Munich, hyperinflation, the humiliating Treaty of Versailles, ending up with Hitler coming to power. But that same date is commemorated as Independence Day in Warsaw and in Prague, as the National Day of Romania, which retrieved Transylvania soon afterwards. Whereas it is cursed in Hungary, which lost two thirds of its population and territory through the subsequent peace treaty. As for Austria, whose millennial empire collapsed as a

result, they decided to treat the day humorously: the 11th of November is the beginning of their yearly carnival.

How, then, should we narrate this date? Not in the same way, but rather, for instance, in the countries that had emerged as victors there should be an attempt to explain how the event was felt and remembered elsewhere, particularly among those on the losing side. Any account should reconcile the peoples involved and render their different narratives complementary and mutually compatible.

Second example. The 8th and 9th of May, 1945. In the UK, in the western part of the continent and in Moscow, we commemorate the victory against Nazism and the end of the worst ordeal in history. But if you live in Warsaw, in Prague, Bratislava or Bucharest, on that day your grandfathers switched one barbarian and totalitarian regime for another. And the choice of 9 May as Europe's Day – the anniversary of Robert Schuman's inspiring address at the Quai d'Orsay (a mere coincidence) – did nothing to alleviate the misgivings.

Again, the way out is not to endeavour to agree on the same presentation of the past, but to take into account other sensitivities. My nation is the centre of my world, not that of the world. And I am destined to live with the others, starting with my neighbours. History starts with geography. Whoever is in power, whatever the past between us, those beyond the Rhine, the Alps and the Pyrenees, Germans, Italians and Spaniards are bound to remain France's neighbours for ever; to live as friends or foes is wholly in our hands.

3 — The third requirement is to take pains to ensure that the profound sentiment of a common European conscience emerges from all these numerous different national narratives. The sentiment of belonging to the same civilisation: a huge melting pot of memories, religions, philosophies, values, discoveries, progress, successes and mistakes, an amalgam which distinguishes us from elsewhere – be it from China, from India, from the Muslim world, from Africa or even from the United States.

These requirements have been adopted by all the European states long ago and repeatedly proclaimed ever since. Unfortunately, unlike

the European Union, the Council of Europe is neither empowered nor equipped to monitor the enactment of its recommendations.

A European Observatory of History Teaching

The proposal we came up with builds on a conviction, an asset and a bet.

The conviction: if we let the current situation continue, it will lead to the re-emergence of populism, nationalism and extremism throughout Europe, and the core of the genuine acquis communautaire – Europe's blessing – will be severely jeopardised.

The asset: this concern is widely shared in every corner of the continent, by a whole variety of universities, think tanks and networks. Euroclio, the very active European network of teachers, the German Georg Eckert Institute, a lot of Academies of Human Sciences, to mention but a few. There are huge expectations from actors in the education sector everywhere.

The bet: in today's world, no country, no leader can afford too bad publicity for too long among too many publics, whether at home or abroad. A continuation of the status quo is only possible because of a lack of awareness of the current situation, with the exception of a few insiders. Policy-makers and historians themselves have a dim view of how history is taught to pupils in their country. Even when they care, they know nothing of what is happening beyond their borders.

Consequently, first, we must ensure that accurate and full information is available to everybody. And second, on this unbiased basis, let the debate start!

1 — **First: the Observatory.** After two years of effort, last November the European Observatory of History Teaching saw the light of day. It is located within the legal and political framework of the Council of Europe.

The aim is to resume, complement and improve upon the current situation which was described in the first primer last year. The primer aims to collect all relevant information about history teaching: the place of history in the curricula, the elaboration and contents of the syllabi,

regulation on textbooks, the training and recruitment of teachers, the assessment of the performance, etc.

Once collected, the presentation of information will be translated and harmonised with a view to facilitating comparison. This report will be released every two or three years. It will constitute a picture, a photograph of the current situation without evaluative comment.

2 — **Next: the debate.** Upon this unbiased basis, made available to the general public everywhere, let the debate start! We are looking forward to three simultaneous circles of debates.

- The circle of academies, particularly through the network All European Academies. Academies bring together the most senior historians and pedagogues. They are highly valued, at home and abroad, for their skills, their scientific heritage and their independence.

- The circle of universities; the CIVICA network sits at the apex of the list, awarded the title of "European Academy" by the European Commission last year. Much can also be expected from non-European universities, notably American ones. Let us remember the role that British and North American historians played in the rediscovery of our own European contemporary history. And let us expect some disruptive contributions from budding universities in Asia and Africa, too.

- The circle of NGOs, in the broadest sense: for instance, the Museum of European History, the Houses of Europe, the European Movement and the numerous think tanks and platforms interested in history and European matters.

The simple fact of browsing over the output of the Observatory will trigger a host of questions from all stakeholders:

- Why is history compulsory here and only optional there?

- Why is history absent at primary school level in Germany, Austria and Estonia and mandatory only at primary level in Ireland?

- Why are textbooks written and published freely in northern countries, while submitted to registration in many others, and limited to one or two in half a dozen?

- How come that in half the EU member-states, the European founding fathers and the main stages of the European construction are

absent from chapters on contemporary history? At a recent webinar staged by the History Centre of Sciences Po, Mark Lazar, its chairman, said that among a good twenty students of a second Master year classroom, only one of them knew the names of Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman.

- How is it that so few countries are interested in the concrete result of their teaching? Everywhere a loss in history knowledge among youth is feared and willingly denounced, but very little is done to assess this loss precisely.

From academies, universities, and NGOs a large number of publications, comments, recommendations, and also assessments can be expected. But without waiting further, several Ministries are interested in trying to make their narratives compatible with their neighbours'. The Observatory will be able to help such process along, if the relevant parties so wish.

If the experience is a success, it will set a fruitful example for other parts of the globe, where countries are still struggling to assert their nationhood without endangering their relations with touchy neighbours. Without claiming to redeem its shady past, Europe can hopefully learn how to blow away its relentless ghosts. And then show how it did so.

Teaching contemporary history in Croatia

N. Budak

The activities of the Textbook Committee of the Joint History Project received much attention in Croatia. When the project started, the country was only a few years away from the end of the 1991-1995 war, and even less so from the peaceful reintegration of the last part of its occupied territory in January 1998. This must be taken into account in order to understand the political situation at the time, when the work on the first workbooks started. The overwhelming impression in Croatia was that Greece had been supporting the Serbs during the collapse of Yugoslavia and the following wars, which made any initiative coming from Athens or Thessaloniki more than suspicious. Under such circumstances, cooperation by Croatian school-teachers with the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe required some courage. In spite of this, work was done, and the first four workbooks appeared in Croatian in 2007. By then, things had changed in the country. The rigid nationalistic government had been replaced in 2000, and even though the new government went on to lose subsequent elections in 2004, the climate had already eased. The new conservative government tried to present itself as European, more open-minded and tolerant than its predecessors in the 1990s. This enabled the financing of the translations and printing by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. However, very soon it became clear that problems would arise with the distribution of the textbooks.

A large quantity of books remained in the storage of the Agency

for Education and never came into use. This was a clear sign of the politics of the government led by the Croatian Democratic Union (CDU): from the outside everything seemed fine, but nationalism still prevailed under the varnish of open-mindedness, accompanied by the fear of middle-ranking office holders in education displeasing those higher ranked, most of all the Prime Minister. Fortunately, there were many teachers who attended workshops, where they could learn how to use the workbooks, and were eager to apply them to history teaching. Although it was not forbidden to use the workbooks, teachers faced another obstacle which was not easy to overcome, namely the curriculum. In those days, school subjects had to be taught according to documents known as "programmes". These programmes were very rigid and defining, prescribing for almost every hour what the teachers had to do with their pupils. Needless to say, these "programmes" did not foresee using the workbooks in order to broaden the topics dealt with.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, educational authorities followed the general identity policy of the ruling CDU whose goal was, among others, to distance Croatia as much as possible from what was known as "the Balkans". Since the term itself had an obvious pejorative meaning which overlaid its geographical content, even its usage was not welcomed in public space, usually being replaced with "Southeast Europe". The result of this was the removal of the history of the countries of former Yugoslavia from the history teaching programmes and from relevant textbooks. The only exception was the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina, traditionally represented – and believed to be – another Croatian historical land. Since, even in Yugoslav times, other Balkan countries had mostly been neglected by history teaching programmes (except classical Greece, to some extent Byzantium and the Ottoman Empire), children in Croatia had little or no chance to learn anything about their eastern/south-eastern neighbours. The programmes did not schedule time for most of the topics dealt with in the workbooks. An exception was the Second World War, but this too was a sensitive topic in the 1990s (as it has remained until today),

because then was a time when previous paradigms were abandoned and new ones were formed, with more or less (usually less) support from sources. An interpretation of the Second World War including multiple perspectives, even if not touching specifically upon Croatian experiences, would not have been welcomed with much enthusiasm by educational authorities. So, to conclude, even though there were trained teachers who wanted to apply the workbooks in working with children, and even though they were provided with these books, they simply had very limited possibilities to use them because there was little time available according to the programmes.

About a decade after the appearance of the first four workbooks, the new project of preparing another two volumes started under very different political circumstances, at least for Croatian historians. This was the final year of the coalition government led by social democrats and a period of liberalization. It seemed that better times were coming for the use of the workbooks in Croatian schools, even more so because at the same time the Strategy of Education, Science and Technology was defined, with the goal of replacing educational programmes with a more modern and flexible system of curricula. The Strategy was accepted by the Parliament without any votes against, but the CDU abstained. Their explanation was that it was not clear how much the implementation of the Strategy would cost, although this was a long-term policy due to last at least one decade, so it would have been impossible to accurately estimate the necessary budget. At that moment, it seemed that Croatia would finally start changing its outdated educational system, the only one in Europe, besides the Serbian, with only eight years of mandatory education. Teams were gathered in order to prepare new curricula. Optimism was in the air and everybody (me included) believed that we were doing a good job in spite of the fact that most of the Strategy's goals were neglected, reducing the chances for a best possible outcome. However, new elections again brought a change, and the CDU came to power.

From the beginning it was clear that the new government had no intention of implementing the Strategy and introducing changes to the

educational system. However, after large demonstrations in Zagreb in favour of the school reform – the second wave in two years – and a clash between CDU and their partners in the coalition, the ruling party was joined by the Croatian People's Party which acquired the Ministry of Education. The position was taken by a university professor who was independent of party membership and in favour of the reform. She continued the project of writing new curricula and introducing them into primary and secondary schools. A large amount of money was invested from EU funds and a huge team was gathered, consisting of mostly school-teachers but also university teachers many of whom had participated in the project two years earlier.

All went more or less well, until the curricula had to be presented to the public. A public debate showed that there was no interest whatsoever in most of the subjects, but two of them attracted a lot of attention and, of course, criticism: the curriculum for the Croatian language and the one for history. It was clear that only identity issues could provoke interest in the wider audience, and not because of the pedagogical or didactical problems they posed. The main problem with Croatian language was the list of books that pupils would be required to read. Conservatives insisted on the classics of Croatian literature, from the late medieval period through the Renaissance, Baroque and the nineteenth century which, according to them, should constitute the starting point for every pupil in reading books, at a time when encouraging reading has become a serious problem. The other side argued that this literature would only discourage children from reading, and that they should start with contemporary writers whose language and subject matter would be better understood and therefore promote interest in reading for pleasure. The conservatives won.

With the history curriculum, the problems were of a different nature. The main idea of the reform was to reduce the number of topics that should be taught, especially in secondary schools.[23] It has been clear

[23] The educational system in Croatia includes eight grades of primary school and three or four grades of secondary school. In primary schools, history is taught from

for some time that children were overburdened with information about facts they have to memorize. While in Western Europe, in countries like France or Britain, but also Germany, Italy and Spain, national histories also comprise general European or even world history, smaller nations have to teach both national and general histories. Greece has the advantage that learning about ancient Greece or Byzantium combines both national and general history. In countries that lie between Western and Eastern Europe, like Croatia, it is necessary to learn also about East European history, whereas that is often neglected or very reduced in Western Europe. Because of this, Croatian history programmes were very tight, leaving little space for delving deeper into some of the topics, which might make the subject more attractive to pupils. Therefore, the new curriculum suggested a reduction in the number of topics, especially in secondary education, in order to allow the teacher to present and discuss a topic for eight to ten hours. That would enable students to do their own research and, rather than passively memorizing a multitude of facts which they would immediately forget, learn through active engagement. After an overview of history from the beginnings of civilization up to very contemporary history during primary education, working on case studies from different periods and different areas of history would make it possible for pupils to understand historical processes, phenomena and concepts. This would have been an excellent field for using the JHP workbooks, because teachers would have had enough time to discuss different historical events from the Cold War, for example, or – something that would be even more interesting, given the fact that most recent history is often left out from official textbooks – developments after 1990.

For conservative historians – and it turns out that they form the

the fifth to the eighth grade, with some elements already present in the fourth grade. There are three types of secondary schools: gymnasia, four-year vocational schools and three-year vocational schools. In gymnasia, history is taught four years in all, while in vocational schools for either one or three years. In all schools, history is usually taught for two hours per week.

majority of those working in universities or institutes – it was hard to accept that pupils in secondary education would not be taught the whole history of mankind once more, as had been the case previously. Although they were also aware that the quantity of information that children had to memorize was enormous, they believed that learning the same subjects twice in two four-year cycles was better than the suggested curriculum, even though all indicators suggested that this was the wrong approach. Such historians specifically insisted on an overview of Croatian history, which they considered to be more important than general history. The idea of the new curriculum was, whenever possible, to use Croatian history in order to explain general phenomena, but not to go into details which pupils often considered more boring than general history.

Yet, there was another reason why the new curriculum was not acceptable to conservative politicians and historians, and it had nothing to do with the curriculum itself: this was the composition of the group of historians who created the curriculum. Because of two university professors whose political views were well known, all the members of the group – almost all of them school-teachers who had never been involved in politics – were regarded as leftists nominated by the social-democrat government. Therefore, a new working group was created, which finally introduced changes into the curriculum, though very little was left of the original ideas. Among many unjustified interventions, some of which contained factual mistakes, the worst may have been the introduction of many more topics into secondary education. This meant that there would again be a lack of time to go into depth and for pupils to participate in active learning. This was actually the end of the five-year struggle for better education and, especially, better history teaching.

The main argument against the two university professors participating in the working group (Snježana Koren and me) was our engagement in the creation of the two JHP workbooks. There were no direct or specific objections to our own work, but it sufficed that we were members of the team and that we were willing to take part in

a project which treated Croatian history as part of a common Balkan history. These accusations came not only from politicians – although they were pronounced also in the Parliament – and historians, but from different members of right-wing civil society, especially veterans' organizations. In parliament, a discussion was staged between the Speaker Željko Reiner and the director of the Croatian Memorial and Documentation Centre of the Homeland War, Ante Nazor. After the latter heavily criticised the workbooks, the Speaker asked him whether it was true that those who had worked on the "Thessaloniki workbooks" were also members of the working group for the history curriculum. This constituted an obvious political sabotage against the new curriculum. The term "Thessaloniki workbooks" was often used in criticising not only the workbooks, but most of all their Croatian co-authors (apart from the two already mentioned, Hrvoje Klasić, another university professor and member of the Source Committee, is often the target of right-wing extremists who even use death threats). The term recalls the "Thessaloniki volunteers", soldiers of mostly Serbian origin who after the First World War were given land on Croatian territories in order to change these territories' ethnic make-up. Therefore, the term "Thessaloniki workbooks" sounds derogatory and disqualifies the books in the eyes of the nationalists without the need to provide any evidence of their alleged low quality or anti-Croatian attitudes.

Criticism was expressed even in the European Parliament, where Ruža Tomašić, a right-wing Croatian MP – having in mind the JHP workbooks – asked Johannes Hahn if he believed that falsifying history and equating victims and perpetrators was the right way to bring Serbia closer to the EU.

It was not so much – or rather not at all – the first of the two books that bothered nationalists in Croatia. The main problem was the interpretation of the collapse of Yugoslavia and the subsequent wars, especially the Homeland War in Croatia. Ante Nazor published a review of the corresponding chapter of the volume Wars, Divisions, Integration (1990-2008) listing many mistakes, misinterpretations and omissions regarding the causes and the course of the war. It was obvious that

he misunderstood the character of the workbooks, mistaking them for regular textbooks and therefore expecting many more details in the text. In addition, some of his remarks were due to his misunderstanding the English text or taking the sources at face value, as texts pupils should memorize instead of learning to criticise.

Marketing managers often say that any appearance in public space is good advertisement, even if this is criticism. If that is true, then our workbooks were really very much advertised in Croatia and it is a pity that they could not be bought in bookshops. It seems that they were downloaded quite often, but it is hard to say whether this was by Croatian readers and, if so, whether by school-teachers or simply interested individuals. For the moment, the use of the two books in Croatian schools is almost impossible, partly due to the curriculum and partly due to negative politics. I am not aware of their use in universities, but I do not believe that many university professors make use of them either. This is a pity because I am convinced that they are indeed very good books, the successful outcome of the efforts of a large group of scholars. In this respect I am not an optimist, but I will keep believing that things will change for the better and that the Croatian educational system will finally open up to initiatives like this one. Children in Croatia deserve to learn history in a better way, through research, thought and discussion. To achieve that, they need also workbooks like these.

Contemporary history in Greek education

V. Karamanolakis

In this short article I will focus on two distinct matters, both pertaining to the teaching of history in Greece: on the one hand, the existence of Greek history in the present edition in relation to recent domestic historiographical production and, on the other hand, the matter of the display and use of historical sources.

About thirty years ago, the circulation of a book on history and geography manuals in schools, from the institution of the Greek State to the First World War provoked a lengthy debate within the domestic historical community. The book (History and Geography in Greek schools, 1834-1914. An anthology of texts – Bibliography of school manuals, Athens 1988), not surprisingly, was the first monograph by the academic editor of the two textbooks presented today, Christina Koulouri. In its pages, the writer showcased the formation of national identity in the newly established Greek State, through the effects of school history and its dialogue with academic historiography. She placed at the centre of her reflection several matters of interest to the international community, which were then transposed to the Greek context. The debate has been ongoing ever since and has been further enriched regarding the relationship between academic and school history on the basis of a series of educational reforms, which altered the existing detailed teaching programmes. Many questions arise – for instance, to what extent does school history reflect the achievements and accomplishments of academic history? Which filters are needed

during the infiltration of all the knowledge produced by professional historians and addressed to students? How much can the field of school history truly converge with contemporary historiographical approaches? To what extent can students of primary and secondary schools fruitfully encounter the history produced by professionals, depending on their inclinations, their educational level, and age group? To what degree can the dominant within public history concept of mainly national history actually oppose what is taught in schools? What is the role of sources in history teaching?

The central issue concerns the relation between academic and school history, the dialogue between the two, as it is dictated by the specific political and social circumstances in each particular conjuncture. In Greece, 20th-century historiography has been marked by political and social developments and especially by the great traumatic events of the time: the National Schism and the First World War, the Asia Minor Disaster, the Second World War and the Civil War, the military dictatorship of 1967-1974. It would take long for the recent past to become the object of a systematic study by historians within universities and research institutions. The clashes of the 1940s, and especially the civil conflict of 1946-1949, left behind not only a divided society but also divided memories and accounts of the recent past. The writing of history had a strongly political dimension. In fact, during the post-Civil War years, until 1974, the recent past remained perpetually present and a cause of segregation between citizens. Their actions during the 1940s were evaluated with regard to the classification of their political beliefs and their inclusion or exclusion from public life.

If the seven-year dictatorship (1967-1974) represented the utmost consequence of the Civil War, its fall signalled a new period for Greek society as well as historiography. The return of many Greek historians who had been exiled or self-exiled abroad due to political motives and already had an academic and professional career there reinforced the academic workforce while also broadening historical themes and methods. Historiography experienced unprecedented growth, and, at the same time, a series of private and public institutions were

introduced, undertaking the management and ensuring free access for researchers as well as the wider public to an abundance of sources and archives of earlier and more recent years. The 1940s and the post-war period, which had been intentionally left as a quasi terra incognita, emerged, especially during the Metapolitefsi (regime change), as an object of multiple studies and approaches. In this framework, what is now known as the "History of the Present" made a forceful appearance, investigating – regardless of limitations – the most recent decades.

This turn to recent and particularly contemporary history was not an effortless process in the Greek case. As mentioned earlier, it had to deal with a difficult, traumatic past, which was marked by the clashes of the 1940s and especially by the Civil War. The study of this period and the events that characterized it generated political conflicts and tensions in the public sphere, causing a series of "history wars". Despite the conflicts and tensions caused by this debate, it is clear today that it brought a new supply of knowledge and reflection on contemporary Greek history. In the academic field, the history community managed to discuss and process the recent past, as opposed to the pre-dictatorship period, with both consensus and disputes, in the framework of a democratic and open – even though intense – dialogue.

And what about school history? It is common knowledge that history as taught in schools does not result from primary research. Authors of textbooks select, summarize and systematize already existing academic knowledge. To what extent did this actually occur in the Greek case? In Greece, in the framework of a centralized and largely monolithic 20th-century educational system, history textbooks were written essentially in accordance with detailed teaching programmes whose aim was the formation of docile citizens indoctrinated with national ideology. Modern and contemporary history remained absent from schoolbooks – and even when present, there was never "enough time" to teach it, due to indifference on the part of decision-makers. Despite the most important changes that were implemented after 1974 in school education, contemporary history is taught inadequately even as we speak. Until fairly recently, throughout secondary education (three-year

junior and three-year senior high school), modern and contemporary history was taught solely in the third year of junior high school and the third year of senior high school. Up to 2018, the curriculum of history in the third grade of junior high school did not go further than the 19th century, and contemporary 20th-century history was taught exclusively in the third grade of senior high school. On the basis of the educational changes implemented by the previous left-wing government in 2018, history courses for all students were cancelled, and they are now provided only for those interested in human and social sciences. For them, the history curriculum stops at the first decades of the 20th century.

In short, contemporary history is absent from Greek schools, and this is no coincidence. Every mention of change regarding history in school programmes spawns controversy. The historical past retains a powerful emotional charge in the collective imaginary. In a crucial period such as the present, reading the past brings up concerns, expectations and fears for the present and the future of the national body. On the one hand, a turn towards modern and contemporary history in school programmes is believed to belittle the most glorious features of the national past, chiefly that of classical antiquity and, to a lesser degree, Byzantium, those periods from which the national narrative of the three-thousand-year continuum derives.

Within a constant official discourse calling for unity and national unanimity in order to overcome the difficulties of the present, engagement with the recent and divisive past is perceived as an apple of political discord, instigating tensions and providing negative examples to students. In this perspective, the idea that silence is preferable is often dominant. Except that there is no silence. The void is filled by the overabundant speech in broadcasting and social media, which monopolize this flow of information and critically influence public history, often reproducing a discourse that is bigoted, profoundly unhistorical and a threat to democracy.

In this context, I consider the publication of these workbooks as an important "gesture" also in regard to public debate on schools

and contemporary history in Greece. The volumes presented today primarily constitute the outcome of an extensive and systematic effort, which has already borne significant results. Their goal is to familiarize students with contemporary history through the presentation of selected sources. Building on the achievements of contemporary Balkan, and in this case Greek, historiography, they concentrate on a series of historical sources that were selected firstly in order to showcase the multiplicity of the remnants of the past: archival evidence, publications, photographs, posters, advertisements, flyers, etc. Their final selection from a massive body of evidence from various archives and libraries, Greek and foreign, aspired not only to illustrate political and military events but also the human experience, individual as well as collective. The citations are not simply presented; they are also commented on and completed so that they may be understood better in connection with the broader context. The variety of sources, beyond the appeal of the narrative, allows us to face the past as a whole, to illustrate its multiple dimensions, its comprehensive character: the military conflicts, the political negotiations, the international relations, the economic conditions, consumerism, cinema, youth cultures, all of which constitute elements of the history of the people of that time in the national and Balkan context.

The choice of sources was never an "innocent" process. On the contrary, it serves specific purposes linked with the messages that are transmitted through teaching. In this perspective, the selection and composition of sources from different Balkan national histories constitutes a difficult and assiduous process, which has to deal with different and often conflicting national and historiographical approaches. In this sense, we believe that it would be beneficial if this selection of particular sources and their interpretation became the object of a broader dialogue and critical deliberation. Because, in fact, they propose a way to access past traumatic moments while displaying different perceptions and experiences. The most typical example is that of the Yugoslav Wars and the subsequent dissolution of the country at the end of the Cold War, where the combination of a series of sources reflecting many and

– a posteriori – different interpretations was necessary. In the Greek case, the main concern was that the sources on the December events or the Civil War of 1946-1949, for example, reflect both of the opposing sides, their positions, their different perspectives and strategies. In any case, the idea was to highlight the different interpretations of what had happened, rather than hiding them or subsuming them to the dominant narrative. It was not an easy task: the critical issue was not just the selection of sources on the basis of the student's educational level and age group; it was also the dialogue, especially regarding recent events, given the living individual and collective memory.

Of course, the dominant element in these workbooks, as in the whole series, is the effort to place the events in a broader geographical and historical framework, that of Southeast Europe. The sources are intertwined in order to compose a general view on the history of the wider region. It is clearly an extremely complicated endeavour, to the extent that different national versions and priorities meet, often opposed in the context of the Cold War. In the Greek case, this venture seems particularly timely and imperative, given that the Greek historiographical tradition has persistently understated the Balkan dimension of its domestic history to an important extent.

From the first years after the Revolution of 1821, the geographical framework that was chosen to incorporate Greek history was the European one. Western Europe constituted the model. This was the example on which the Greek case would be assessed and normalized. Greece, the "model kingdom", the first independent state to break away from the Ottoman Empire, insisted, from the very beginning, on its superiority over the rest of the enslaved Balkan peoples. The comparison with other Balkan states and the burgeoning of equivalent nationalisms and antagonisms since the end of the 19th century enhanced this sense of superiority. This superiority was eminently cultural, based on the long historical course of the Greek nation and its enduring role as a producer of culture. At the same time, it was linked to the healthy – in comparison with other Balkan states – Greek economy.

Following the Second World War, the inclusion of the other Balkan

states – aside from Turkey – in the opposite camp of the Cold War divide reinforced this differentiation. A differentiation primarily linked to the arrogance inspired by superior living standards, but also connected to fears of the "communist threat", as this was felt by a considerable part of the domestic population. In any case, and with significant exceptions, of course, the Greek historiographical tradition focused mainly on the difference between Greeks and the other peoples of the "Haemus Peninsula" as the Balkans were often termed.

The incorporation of the Greek experience into the Southeast European framework, and indeed in a particularly crucial period, could open new horizons for Greek students. Firstly, it would allow them to understand the Greek experience on a different level, by showcasing the cultural and historical relevance of other Balkan countries in addition to their geographical proximity. It would also allow for the understanding of the long historical course of their interstate relations. In parallel, it would favour the broadening of their viewpoints and the study of matters which are of great interest to Greek public opinion, such as the Macedonian affair, within a broader framework, like that of the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the development of Balkan nationalisms at the end of the Cold War.

All this presupposes that the school programmes will soon incorporate contemporary history, a prospect about which I am not that optimistic. But whether contemporary history is incorporated into the school curricula or not, books such as these can be auxiliary to the work of teachers, who will be their ultimate users and evaluators. They may also broaden teachers' knowledge and perspectives. The aim is not to silence traumatic elements and contentious events, nor should it be to remove responsibilities, but to work through and to understand what led to these events as well as their consequences. No true reconciliation can ensue from silence, fanaticism, or ignorance; it is knowledge that is essential.

Teaching political change and historical continuity in Southeast Europe

K. E. Botsiou

From a historiographical point of view, the two recent workbooks of the 6-volume Joint History Project (JHP) are quite an accomplishment. The coverage of Southeast Europe in the Cold War (1944-1990) and the two decades following its termination (1990-2008) goes far beyond the initial scope of the endeavour, namely the creation of a non-compulsory supplement to established textbooks. The books provide state-of-the art research findings that are expected in academic works but not necessarily in school or even college textbooks. The virtues of the workbooks include also the unbiased approach of eras not too distant and not too simple to analyze; especially the second book poses demanding tasks as it ends with the unilateral declaration of independence in Kosovo and the outbreak of the global financial crisis that shook the world, just eight years before the manuscripts were published in Thessaloniki (2016).

These challenges would have been enough, but the academic team aimed to achieve another major objective: to promote re-conciliation through historical knowledge. The increased risk this entailed contributed to the project's success since the authors stayed devoted to the "truth business" of science. To achieve this in an inherently identity-oriented project they stroke a subtle balance between historiography, archival work and modern politics. Fully aware of "memory wars", they tried to alleviate resentment by re-visiting events that shape and

re-produce dominant historical interpretations. The use of contrast and comparison contributes to an understanding of the self and others under the clearer light of epochal distance.[24] The Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) was vindicated in its decision to support the JHP for raising self-awareness and empathy about conflict and cooperation in the region. Obviously, the final result owes its high quality to the strict research criteria implemented by the multi-ethnic research team under the inexhaustible supervision of Christina Koulouri, a prominent Professor of Modern History at Panteion University.

Reconciliation through historiography is a long-haul journey. Historiography sets in view crucial milestones and specifics. In these workbooks, too, the first step is an introduction into basic facts about Southeast Europe and each country separately. Then, the main thread splits into the multiple episodes and experiences of recent history. One moves from the solid general picture to focus on minorities, political dissension, chronic conflicts, and even civil war. The effort here is to depict major facts and interpretations without trying to satisfy or balance personal biases or widespread perceptions. Nevertheless, these are invariably presented next to the historians' reports through the use of colourful documentation. Apart from the central academic analysis of archival material from governmental and state agencies, the reader finds "narratives" surrounded by photographs, maps, commercials, diaries, songs and letters, thus underlining the diversity of sources that shape historiography, and reflect life. The educational impact of this juxtaposition is equally valuable with the research findings. Through personal experience, this "witnesses to history" approach not only adds emotion to the distanced record of

[24] Mark Saler Phillips, "History, Memory, and Historical Distance", in Peter Seixas (ed.), Theorizing Historical Consciousness, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2004, pp. 86-102; Eric D. Patterson, "Conciliation: Coming to Terms with the Past", in Eric D. Patterson (ed.) Ending Wars Well: Order, Justice, and Conciliation in Contemporary Post-Conflict, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2012, pp. 102-131.

the historian, but also reveals a kaleidoscope of approaches to the same events.[25]

A further asset of the two volumes on the Balkans is their connection with modern communication instruments. The authors fully acknowledge the fact that many books become unreadable if they lack visual material. Texts are invariably accompanied by eloquent pictures. The photographic records are smartly collected to attract both younger and older generations. They activate different perceptions in different ages. From a Greek point of view, the pictures of the Greek Civil War definitely stand out in a book about the Cold War. From today's point of view, they provide a "no filter" depiction of the Greeks' utter poverty after the Axis occupation and during liberation, perhaps the most devastating memory of that generation beside the experience of violence and hatred between and within families. With a light-and-shadow technique, the workbook compares war and civil war with post-war relief and reconstruction; in the case of Greece, civil war and reconstruction ran in parallel until 1949. Due to the "darkness" of the civil war the bright side of reconstruction illuminates the so-called "Greek miracle" of the 1950s and 1960s.

A special section in the chapter on the Axis Occupation and the Civil War belongs to the Greek children of the 1940s. By examining history through their eyes, the authors show the blurred lines between the winners and the vanquished. Orphans seem practically the same on both sides as they pose either in refugee camps that hosted people from villages evacuated by the National Greek Army or in "foster families" and schools in communist Balkan countries where they were taken by the communist Greek Democratic Army (pp. 52-53).

The interest in youth is a salient feature of both volumes. The workbook about the post-Cold War Balkans stresses, for instance, the slaughter of a Yugoslav People's Army Convoy by Muslim forces in 1992 ("Tuzla Convoy", 1992) and, three years later, the attack of the

[25] David Glassberg, "Public History and the Study of Memory", The Public Historian 18/2 (1996): 7-23.

Serb Republic Army in a meeting place for young people in the same town where 71 citizens aged 24 on average were killed (vol. 2, pp. 78-79). The war of propaganda is part of the game and the workbooks do not hide political cynicism. The propaganda-guided replica of a Second World War picture showing a mourning Serb on the grave of his family allegedly killed by Muslims in the Bosnian War raises awareness about the power of manipulation exercised by "embedded" mass media.

The books do not lose sight of the interplay between political change and historical continuity. The dissolution of Yugoslavia was a huge earthquake in the post-Cold War Balkans. It lasted a decade and was finally contained within the borders of the former Yugoslav federation only after two NATO interventions (Bosnia in 1994 and Kosovo in 1999).[26] The fall of Yugoslavia left a vacuum to be filled and many lessons to be learnt by all actors involved. Above all, it refreshed memories of previous conflicts, but also underlined the enduring influence of nationalism in Europe and its incompatibility with present-day international cooperation. Intervention itself was based on painful decisions on the part of former friends and allies of Serbia and Yugoslavia that still recognized their strategic geopolitical role in the Adriatic, cherished memories of common battles, and wondered what kind of a new map would replace the largest Balkan state after its dissolution. Yugoslavia's historical uniqueness since its creation during the First World War was discussed by many analysts, including Henry Kissinger who commented in Newsweek on March 31, 1999 that one needed to differentiate between the Milosevic regime and the Serbs. In the workbook about Wars, Division, Integration after the Cold War the reader finds an excerpt of his interesting statement (vol. 2, p. 99):

The Serbs have rejected the Rambouillet agreement because they

[26] Richard Sobel, "Trends: United States Intervention in Bosnia", The Public Opinion Quarterly 62/2 (1998): 250-278; Ruth Wedgwood, "NATO's Campaign in Yugoslavia", The American Journal of International Law 93/4 (1999): 828-384; Michael Mandelbaum "A Perfect Failure: NATO's War against Yugoslavia", Foreign Affairs 78/5 (1999): 2-8.

> see in it a prelude to independence of Kosovo. They also see the presence of NATO troops as the sort of foreign occupation Serbia has historically resisted against the Ottoman and the Austrian empires, Hitler and Stalin. Even if they are bombed into capitulation, they can hardly be expected to be willing supporters of the outcome […]. The war on Yugoslavia inspires ambivalence. Serbia fought at our side in two world wars, and stood up to Stalin at the height of his powers. We cannot ignore Milosevic's brutality, yet the disappearance of Serbia from the Balkans equilibrium may tempt eruptions in other neighbouring countries containing minorities […]

The reader is asked to state the reasons why Kissinger took the position outlined. The students are called upon to use their background historical knowledge in order to explain diverse views and to include empathy as part of their own historical understanding. This is the crossroads where history meets memory and empathy supports reconciliation. Additionally, this modern way of writing history renders it fun. History learning imitates a treasury hunt where students discover traps, dangers, valuable findings and new worlds both in the past and in the present. This enables them to feel the deeper interconnections between the current situation and the history of Southeast Europe in the decision-making processes that affect their own lives. Complicated issues like the Greek Civil War, national communism of the 1960s and 1970s, the "apostasy" of Yugoslavia, the eternal problem of minorities in the Balkan countries are analyzed in terms of their current repercussions for people's hearts and minds.[27]

Reconciliation is a tricky act. It can hardly find its way based only on interpretations from the outside. The national and regional experience

[27] Dusko Sekulic, Garth Massey and Randy Hodson, "Who Were the Yugoslavs? Failed Sources of a Common Identity in the Former Yugoslavia", American Sociological Review 59/1 (1994): 83-97; Jacques Waardenburg, "Politics and Religion in the Balkans", Islamic Studies 36/2-3 (1997): 383-402.

has been missing for many years, and the two JHP volumes help fill the gap. The Cold War is a striking example. For seven decades, our knowledge about the period has been chiefly shaped by works of historians and political scientists about the strategies of the two Superpowers and the crises between them. However applicable to Europe they may be, there is still a large amount of information missing concerning local inputs into bipolarity and its variations in the Balkans.

The two volumes contribute to our understanding of the Balkans beyond the conventional view of the region as a sub-group of the Cold War and the cliché characterization as a "powder-keg of Europe" that exploded again after the "unfreezing" of world affairs in the 1990s. We "know now"[28] that local actors not only attracted but also produced tensions that precipitated the reshuffling of alliances between the USA and the USSR. The more recent bibliography has rendered it only natural to examine how national strategies and social constellations matched the global trend towards block creation, decolonization and international cooperation.[29] The Balkans is a newcomer in this approach. The recent JHP volumes focus on this local dimension.

National actors retained a remarkable ability to set conditions for the participation in international alliances. This was true not only in periods of international détente, but also in phases of international tensions. Diehard national interest often prevailed over provisional international commitments. As a region of geopolitical fluidity and great power confrontations, more room for manoeuvre was provided to Balkan countries whenever the importance of the region grew, as occurred at times of transition. Such times definitely included the beginning and the end of the Cold War, especially the defining era of the 1940s. For instance, the strategic choices of neighbouring Yugoslavia had far-reaching effects on the international balance of the Cold War.

[28] To paraphrase John Lewis Gaddis, We Know Now: Rethinking Cold War History, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1997.

[29] Svetozar Rajak, Konstantina E. Botsiou, Eirini Karamouzi and E. Hatzivassiliou (eds.), The Balkans in the Cold War, Palgrave/Macmillan, London, 2017.

The Tito-Stalin split in 1948 highlighted the unbridgeable geopolitical differences in the Eastern bloc under the common ideological blanket of communism. Under Tito's leadership Yugoslavia followed its own path to socialism as a reaction to Soviet dominance. The "Third Way" to socialism continued after Stalin's death (1953) and the subsequent rapprochement between Belgrade and Moscow. Moreover, a few years later, Yugoslavia became a founding and leading power of the Non-Aligned Movement which was initiated in Brioni/Yugoslavia in 1956 and became institutionalized in 1961. In that capacity, it maintained a balance between East and West and joined hands with other countries that could afford not to belong to either bloc (Egypt, India, Indonesia, Cyprus, Cuba etc.). Thus, the Balkans became the birthplace of an alternative "bloc among the blocs" which, despite its lack of political coherence and hard power, matched the architecture of international organizations in the period following on from 1945.

The Non-Aligned Movement constituted a powerful bloc in the United Nations and profited politically from the process of decolonization, a "hotspot" of the organization and a priority for both Superpowers. The Cyprus issue constituted a typical case: Greeks were systematically supported by Belgrade against the Turks in the UN in the 1950s, a policy that contributed to the relaxation of Greek-Yugoslav tensions over the Macedonian question. The alternative socialism sponsored by Belgrade was tolerated more easily by the West in the belief that revisionism was a far worse enemy for orthodox communism than capitalism itself. At the same time, it provided Yugoslavia with a bargaining tool stemming from its influence upon communist movements in Western countries. "Socialism with a human face" gained an increased audience in the West after the intra-communist divisions caused by the Soviet-led suppression of the Prague uprising in 1968.[30]

[30] Laurence Silberman, "Yugoslavia's 'Old' Communism: Europe's Fiddler on the Roof", Foreign Policy 26 (1977): 3-27; Nick Miller, "Yugoslavia's 1968: The Great Surrender", in Vladimir Tismăneanu (ed.), Promises of 1968: Crisis, Illusion and Utopia, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2011, pp. 227-

The Yugoslav case was not unique as a starting point of global developments. Previously, the Greek Civil War had become the "testing ground" of the Cold War. As the springboard of the Truman Doctrine that paved the way for the Marshall Plan in 1947, the deadly internal conflict mobilized the United States to contain the expansion of Soviet influence in Europe and undertake long-term commitments to European reconstruction and security. The long list of Southeast European episodes that caused disquiet to the Cold War blocs included clashes of Balkan countries with their allies, e.g. the double Turkish invasion in Cyprus in 1974 and Greece's withdrawal from the military branch of NATO (1974-1980) as well as the phenomenon of national communism in socialist countries after the mid-1960s which facilitated the local version of international détente in the 1970s.[31] The Cyprus issue offered a textbook case in the history of decolonization before and after the Suez crisis (1956) that rendered the end of European imperialism irreversible. The Cyprus question guided Greek and Turkish foreign policy since the early 1950s, took a heavy toll on NATO unity and strengthened the ties between Greece and the Non-Aligned Movement, above all with Yugoslavia and Egypt in the 1950s and 1960s as well as India in the 1980s. Neither Superpower avoided involvement in the issue that started as a Greek-British affair to evolve into an international problem with a strong Greek-Turkish

240; Christopher A. Molnar, "Imagining Yugoslavs: From Communist Agents to Ambassadors of Peace", in Memory, Politics, and Yugoslav Migrations to Postwar Germany, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2018, pp. 129-160; Robin Alison Remington, "Nonalignment as ideological transfer: The South-North Dialogue", The Indian Journal of Political Science 41/3 (1980): 471-497.

[31] Konstantina E. Botsiou, "Balkan Dilemmas in the 1970s and 1980s: A point of No Return?" in Rajak, Botsiou et al. (eds.), The Balkans in the Cold War, pp. 261-282; Stephen A. Garrett, "On Dealing with National Communism: The Lessons of Yugoslavia", The Western Political Quarterly 26/3 (1973): 529-549; Michael B. Bishku, "The Middle Eastern Relations of Cyprus and Malta: from Independence to Nonalignment to the European Union", Mediterranean Quarterly 26/2 (2015): 46-62.

dimension.[32] The JHP volumes present the Cyprus question as both a source and a result of regional and international turbulence.

As a matter of fact, both the USA and the USSR invested in inter-bloc tensions in order to encourage fractures on the other side. The Balkans became a laboratory of Western policies for "breaking the monolith" of communist Europe in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when national communism was also spreading to Romania and Bulgaria. On the other side of the Iron Curtain, the latent dispute between Greece and Turkey about bilateral issues – a few years after the withdrawal of France from the military branch of NATO (1966) – undermined NATO cohesion. All in all, the two workbooks successfully challenge the notion that Southeast Europe was a passive sub-theatre for decisions taken by great powers without the involvement of the local actors.

Text, maps and pictures present the mosaic of alliances that characterized Southeast Europe in the Cold War. National paths created a miniature of world affairs. This included a country-member of NATO and the EU (Greece), a member of NATO only (Turkey), a non-aligned socialist federation (Yugoslavia), a faithful communist partner of Moscow (Bulgaria), a late maverick of the Warsaw Pact (Romania), an isolationist communist state (Albania) and ally of communist China after the Sino-Soviet split, as well as a new state produced by decolonization (Cyprus). The fragmentation of the political geography continued in the post-Cold War era: the most eloquent expression is offered by the post-Yugoslav Western Balkans, where conflicting international and local strategies still prevent a few states from joining NATO and the EU.

The ideological "patchwork" was no less rich. Southeast Europe contained a Western-type democracy (Greece), a state divided between a democracy and a de facto foreign protectorate (Cyprus), a Western-oriented militarized state (Turkey), the cradle of communist reformism (Yugoslavia), a militant protégé of Soviet communism (Bulgaria), a

[32] Timothy W. Crawford, Pivotal Deterrence: Third-Party Statecraft and the Pursuit of Peace, Cornell University Press, Cornell, 2003.

Stalinist dictatorship (Albania), and a prototype of national communism critical of Moscow (Romania). In retrospect, diversity seems only natural. An unstable equilibrium remains a central characteristic of the region due to its exposed geopolitics, near the strategic straits of the Eastern Mediterranean (Dardanelles, Suez). Homogeneity has been hard to attain in a region susceptible to geopolitical change and international antagonisms.

Yet, a common historical experience in Southeast Europe has been the modernizing effect of the Cold War: the unthinkability of a pan-European war after 1945 eroded the nationalist and revisionist strategies that had guided the region since the 19th century. The two Superpowers imposed conservative status quo policies on allies and satellites, preferring to seek geopolitical change far away from Europe, in the emerging Third World. The "frozen" European order enabled Southeast European nations to focus on economic and social development rather than military antagonism. The countries that followed the Western democratic model, namely Greece, Turkey and Cyprus, showed the most significant progress, reaching a take-off point in the early 1960s. But communism also proved a source of modernization particularly through industrialization, the spread of education and healthcare, the pursuit of gender equality, full employment and technological improvement. Until the end of the 1950s, economic and social improvement was comparable on both sides of the Iron Curtain. But in the 1960s, the Western countries left their neighbours well behind. Greece made the most remarkable strides: starting as a painfully poor and war-ridden agricultural country, she managed to become a full-fledged member of NATO (1952) and the European Communities (1981) as well as a symbol of democratization in Europe after 1974. Greek economic and political growth overcame many hurdles as the Greek people experienced war (1940-1944), civil war (1946-1949), fierce ideological divisions (1949-1967), military dictatorship (1967-1974) and a national tragedy in Cyprus (1974).

The impact of European integration on Southeast Europe is a further "horizontal" theme of the two books. The reader is exposed to

comparisons between the two kinds of European unification that took place in the Cold War under the auspices of the two Superpowers. Diversity governed this process, too. Greece joined the West European integration project as early as 1961, Turkey followed suit but remained half-way. In Bulgaria and Romania Europeanization became a paramount national goal only after 1990, whereas the Western Balkan countries have a long way to go until they can fulfil the hope for membership. In a way, this continues the lukewarm stance of the EEC towards Yugoslavia in the Cold War. Despite a late economic relationship, mutual distrust was responsible for the failure of a timely and committed association agreement between Brussels and Belgrade in the 1970s or 1980s. That missing link deprived Yugoslavia of a clear Western orientation when the Iron Curtain fell.[33]

The JHP volumes stress the endemic weakness of cooperation among Balkan countries. Historical fears prevented cordial rapprochement even between countries that have not fought against each other in the past. Economic ties rarely grew beyond trade, whereas regional cooperation relied heavily on bilateral agreements rather than multilateral understandings. The national strategies of the Balkan countries sought in fact to protect them from each other. This trend changed in the 1990s, when a variety of regional cooperation schemes came to life. They proved short-lived but did prepare former socialist countries for EU membership, this being the ultimate working "regional cooperation" scheme that they placed their trust in.[34] It is

[33] Paul Shoup,"The Disintegration of Yugoslavia and Western Foreign Policy in the 1980s", in Lenard J. Cohen and Jasna Dragovi-Soso (eds.), State Collapse in South-Eastern Europe: New Perspectives on Yugoslavia's Disintegration, Purdue University Press, Indiana, 2007, pp. 333-364; Benedetto Zaccaria, "Under the Shadow of the Soviet Union: The EEC, Yugoslavia and the Cold War in the Long 1970s», in Rajak, Botsiou et al. (eds.), The Balkans in the Cold War, pp. 239-259.
34 Konstantina E. Botsiou, Regional Cooperation in Southeastern Europe, ELIAMEP, Athens, 1999; Ana E. Juncos, "The EU's Intervention in the Aftermath of the War" in: EU Foreign and Security Policy in Bosnia: The Politics of Coherence and Effectiveness, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2013, pp. 94-124; Benjamin Miller and Korina Kagan, "The Great Powers and Regional Conflicts:

difficult to understand current developments such as the Prespes Agreement of 2018 between Greece and North Macedonia, the ongoing dialogue regarding the exchange of territories between Serbia and Kosovo, the European prospects of Albania and North Macedonia, the NATOization of Montenegro (2017) and North Macedonia (2020), without an appreciation of the undercurrent of Balkan traditions that feed into them.

The two JHP volumes about the Cold War and the post-Cold War Balkans introduce students to "living history". They show how to combine political events with cultural, economic and social developments, thus enabling readers to refresh their memories. Photographs, cartoons, lifestyle icons and cultural events help recreate this history, of fundamental importance both for research and reconciliation. The tasks the JHP workbooks set for themselves have proved perfectly reconcilable. Both the printed and electronic editions are must-haves for all public and private libraries that aim to serve the study of Southeast Europe, and Europe in general, after 1944. The JHP volumes focus on the human dimension of history, and will serve to emphasise this human dimension for many decades to come.

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When the past meets the present: Teaching the contemporary history of the peoples of Southeast Europe in school classes

A. Palikidis

We may feel disappointed at the inability or unwillingness of our children to learn history at school, but this overlooks the fact that even the weakest and most indifferent pupil develops a historical consciousness. They have, that is, crystalised ideas and perspectives of the historical past, and these are strong enough to have a decisive influence on their attitudes and behaviour in the present as well as the way in which they envision the future.

What is understandably worrying is that in recent years the historical consciousness of the younger generation is being shaped less and less by official educational bodies. If, more specifically, we were to focus on the history of the pre-war and post-war Balkans, the deep ignorance and confusion leaves our pupils exposed to the siren calls of the public history space, which seek to turn them into a spearhead of radical domestic nationalism, as happened with the recent demonstrations against all notions of mutual respect and peaceful coexistence with neighbouring peoples. It is undoubtedly a special type of pedagogical irony to hear of pupils who abhor history lessons attacking historians and criticising them for falsifying history and being traitors to the nation. This is, at the same time, indisputable proof that the vital gap in school education is being filled – with great skill, truth be told – by outside organisations, extremist politicians and religious groups.

Indeed, what we today call Public History appears to be shaping a parallel universe from that of academic history, with an exponentially increasing and disturbing penetration among a variety of social classes and groups. If until recently Public History and, usually along with it, school history comprised the field of conflict between the master narrative of the victors and the "anti-histories"[35] of the losers and the despised of history, today it is being transformed into something different: into a battlefield between academic history on the one hand and the so-called micro-theories on the other which, without having anything essentially new to offer, reproduce Manichean forms and stereotypes from the past, while reviving the propagandistic rhetoric of the religious, nationalist and ideological wars of earlier eras. Despite the obvious weakness of their narratives and interpretations, the groups that produce and disseminate them appear to exercise a powerful influence, in particular among young people. These forms have three common characteristics: their resilience to any scientifically-documented analysis or interpretation; the revival of stereotypical attitudes from the past and, consequently, their investment with the credibility of historical documentation; and, finally, their revisionism towards all post-war conditions for the cultural coexistence and communication of peoples, which go beyond any national differences.

History teaching in the schools of Greece facilitates the efforts of these groups in multiple ways. The post-war and post-Cold War history of Europe, in particular of the Balkan South, is effectively absent from school curricula and textbooks – with, in a few exceptions, some conventional references in their final pages, although these are never included in the teaching material. Modern history is similarly enormously devalued. But this is not the only problem. The type of history taught in Greek schools is inspired by historiographical forms and assumptions

[35] M. Ferro, L'Histoire sous surveillance: science et conscience de l'histoire, Greek trans. V. Tomanas, Nisides, Athens, 1999, 49-86; R. J. Evans, In defence of history, Greek trans. L. Papadaki, introduction S.I. Seferiades, Savvalas, Athens, 2009, pp. 218-226.

that become imprinted onto the children's consciousness and, over time, acquire an official status and dogmatic character. Such historiographical forms are, for example, historical myths and perceptions, including:

- The myth of the national homogeneity of the societies of the past, upon which the extreme rhetoric of the zealots of national falsification and ethno-cultural separation is based; this myth presents migration as a kind of military invasion that will lead to the disappearance of the Greek nation;
- the myth of national unity, which demonises every "deviation" from the dominant narrative and divides citizens into patriots and traitors;
- the myth of the inevitability of ethno-religious division, according to which it is impossible to have domestic peace, harmonious coexistence and intercultural osmosis in multi-ethnic societies, for which reason they must be separated; and,
- the conviction that violence and injustice are constitutional principles of human nature and deterministic factors in the historical development of societies and, for this reason, war is sometimes a necessary evil. This idea, of course, distinguishes violence into "good" and "bad", "civilised" and "barbaric", while instilling into general opinion a kind of "ethics" of historical violence.[36]

At the teaching level, independent of the content of the history lesson, a series of factors prevent all possibility of cultivating critical thinking and a democratic consciousness in the history lesson. A few examples of these factors are:

- the exclusive use of the sole, state-authorised school textbook, which in combination with rote learning enforces the official narrative;

[36] This was one of the conclusions reached by the large empirical study conducted by students in three university departments in Greece. See:A. Palikidis, G. Kokkinos, A. Andreou, and P. Trantas, "War and violence in History teaching: an empirical analysis of future teachers' perspectives in Greece", International Journal of Research on History Didactics, History Education and History Culture, 38(2017): 117-151.

- the prominence of political/military history and of "great figures", which demotes the participation of social actors and the simple people in historical events and also ignores their historical experiences;
- the use of historical sources that adhere to the sole narrative, invest it with the stature of scientific authenticity and reinforce the dominant interpretation; and
- the avoidance of teaching controversial, traumatic and conflicting events, especially from contemporary history – which further distances school history from modern life.

The critical situation that is developing in Europe today, however, and in particular in the Balkans, does not leave room for respite and complacency. On the contrary, it requires serious and brave institutional initiatives as well as scientific and pedagogical mobilisation at all levels of the education system. In Greece, a major step was recently taken with the parliamentary vote in favour of a new Historical Studies Curriculum.[37] The new Curriculum is the first statutory text of the Greek school education system to establish history lessons according to modern academic principles, historiographical positions and teaching methods oriented towards the development of historical thought and consciousness. It is also the first statement of principles that respects and makes use of the Council of Europe Guidelines on history education

[37] See: (a) *Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών του μαθήματος της Ιστορίας στις Γ΄, Δ΄, Ε΄ και ΣΤ΄ τάξεις του Δημοτικού Σχολείου* [Curriculum for History classes in the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th grades of Elementary School], Government Gazette, no. 5222/B/21.11.2018; (b) *Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών του μαθήματος της Ιστορίας των Α΄, Β΄ και Γ΄ τάξεων του Γυμνασίου* [Curriculum for History classes in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades of Middle School], Government Gazette, no. 959/B/21.3.2019; and (c) *Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών του μαθήματος της Ιστορίας Α΄ και Β΄ τάξης Γενικού Λυκείου* [Curriculum for History classes in the 1st and 2nd grades of High School], Government Gazette, no. 2020/B/3.6.2019. The Curriculums are available at http://www.iep.edu.gr/el/social-sciences-yliko/programmata-spoudon-gia-to-mathima-tis-istorias-stin-ypoxreotiki-ekpaidefsi-kai-stin-a-lykeiou (accessed on 5/9/2020)

and links history with social studies and democratic citizenship.[38] If it is not abolished or dismantled in the meantime, the new History Curriculum could form the institutional basis and pedagogical framework upon which educational material could be utilised – such as the four workbooks in the series *Εναλλακτικό Εκπαιδευτικό Υλικό για τη διδασκαλία της Νεότερης Ιστορίας της Νοτιοανατολικής Ευρώπης* [Alternative Educational Materials for Teaching Modern Southeast European History], which were published in 2005,[39] and of course the new project for the two source books on the Cold War and the post-Cold War period in the Balkans.

The publication of the two source books by the Association for Democracy in the Balkans entitled The Cold War (1944-1990) and Wars, Divisions, Integrations (1990-2008) for the Teaching of Contemporary Southeast European History,[40] is in reality a very demanding effort that has been carried out with exceptional difficulty.

[38] Council of Europe, Quality history education in the 21st century – Educating for diversity and democracy: teaching history in contemporary Europe. Principles and guidelines, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg 2018. Available in digital format at https://www.coe.int/en/web/history-teaching/culture-of-cooperation (accessed on 5/9/2020).

[39] Published by the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, with Christina Koulouri as the series editor: Workbook 1, *Η Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία* [The Ottoman Empire] (ed. B. Murgescu, trans. I. Pentazou); Workbook 2, *Έθνη και κράτη στη Νοτιοανατολική Ευρώπη* [Nations and States in Southeast Europe] (ed. M.L. Murgescu, trans. S. Marketos); Workbook 3, *Οι Βαλκανικοί Πόλεμοι* [The Balkan Wars] (ed. V. Kolev and C. Koulouri, trans. I. Pentazou); and the Workbook *Ο Δεύτερος Παγκόσμιος Πόλεμος* [The Second World War] (ed. K. Erdelja, trans. S. Marketos).

[40] C. Koulouri (series editor), *Εγχειρίδια πηγών για τη διδασκαλία της σύγχρονης ιστορίας της Νοτιοανατολικής Ευρώπης* [Teaching Southeast European History: Sourcebooks for History Teachers]: vol. 1:N. Budak and A. Kalionski (eds 2019), *Ο Ψυχρός Πόλεμος (1944-1990)* [The Cold War (1944-1990)], Greek translation by A.-M. Droumbouki; vol. 2:C. Koulouri and B. Repe (eds), *Πόλεμοι, Διαιρέσεις, Ενοποίηση (1990-2008)* [Wars, Divisions, Integrations (1990-2008)], Greek translation by P. Carabott, Association for Democracy in the Balkans, Thessaloniki 2019.

The absence of adequate academic studies, on the one hand, and the many different languages in which the sources were written, on the other, would have made this effort impossible, if not inconceivable in any other circumstances.[41]

Let us focus instead, however, on a critical overview of the two sourcebooks through the prism of the Teaching of History. These sourcebooks bring together certain crucial qualities that correlate strongly with the new trends in the Teaching of History and school history, contributing significantly to the cultivation of historical thought and skills in democratic cultural and human values. More specifically:

1. Many of the sections in both volumes engage with the present, responding to the two most important questions that we are obliged to ask in history lessons: what has the past left us, and in what ways does it influence our lives and perspectives? Chapter 6 of the Cold War sourcebook, entitled "Demography", is a characteristic example of such a skill.[42] Focussing on migration, one of the most common phenomena in the post-war history of the Balkan peoples, it provides sources that enable the analysis and interpretation of the most massive and populous movement of people in Europe in the second half of the 20th century. The chapter underlines not only the economic, political and ideological aspects of large-scale migration but also the repercussions on the social microscale. Additionally, it does not circumvent the inclusion of traumatic events, such as the policies of assimilation and displacement of the Turkish populations in Bulgaria during the 1985-1992 period, the assimilation policies towards Slav-speakers in Greece as well as the expulsions of the Greeks of Constantinople in 1964. The study and discussion of the above events in the classroom gives pupils both the stimulus and the necessary material to understand and explain the ethnic and cultural

[41] This issue is discussed analytically by Christina Koulouri in her introduction to the first volume (13-14).
[42] Vol. 1, pp. 191-207.

homogeneity or diversity of Balkan societies in historical terms and, consequently, to critically deconstruct the recently revived racial theories of the inter-war period.[43]

2. From an epistemological perspective, the work follows a new historiographical approach to events that lie outside the limits of national historiography and rejects to a great degree established models such as national-international history or national-European-global, even if simply through the addition of local dimensions. The history of the people of Southeast Europe is not seen as the sum of the national histories with parallel and intersecting national narratives, which as a rule are redefined by the historiographical models of the colonial power states of the West. On the contrary, the workbook dares to take a multifaceted approach, which sheds light from many sides on the idiosyncrasies of the European periphery and its peoples, rejecting the dominant orientalising narratives of traditional Western historiography. It thus gives the teachers and pupils of Balkan countries the opportunity to see the history of their own country and the history of the relations between them differently.[44]

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[43] On racial theories and their reception in Greece in the 20th century, see E. Avdela, D. Arvanitakis, E.-A. Delveroudis, E. D. Matthiopoulos, S. Petmezas, T. Sakellaropoulos (eds), *Φυλετικές θεωρίες στην Ελλάδα. Προσλήψεις και χρήσεις στις επιστήμες, την πολιτική, τη λογοτεχνία και την ιστορία της τέχνης κατά το 19ο και 20ο αιώνα* [Racial theories in Greece. Recruitment and uses in the sciences, politics, literature and the history of art in the 19th and 20th centuries] Crete University Press - Publications of the School of Philosophy, University of Crete, Heraklion, 2017. See also G. Kokkinos, *Η ευγονική δυστοπία. Διαδρομές ιδεών* [The Dystopia of Eugenics; Routes of ideas], Thines, Athens, 2017. For the position of these ideas in the school textbooks in the post-Civil War period see, A. Palikidis, "Πόλεμος και πολιτισμός στην ιστορική διαχρονία του έθνους: εθνικά ιδεολογήματα και ιστοριονομικά σχήματα στον λόγο των σχολικών εγχειριδίων της μετεμφυλιακής Ελλάδας" [War and culture in the historical diachronicity of the nation: national ideologies and historical schemas in the discourse of the textbooks of post-Civil War Greece], in Th. Karfyllis and I. Tataridis (eds), *Εκπαίδευση: Κρίσεις και Πόλεμοι* [Education: Crises and Wars], Tziola, Athens, 2020, pp. 565-578.

[44] On the reconsideration of the meaning of global history in the school curriculum,

3. The sourcebooks also take a perspective on political and military history that is discrete from the conventional one, while it also extends to fields that are almost unknown in Greek school history such as social, economic and cultural history, demography, the history of political institutions and ideologies, the history of art (especially public), the history of everyday life, nutrition, and public history. The combination of chronological narrative and thematic approach, the expansion and fragmentation of the historiographical field and the rearrangement of the historical subjects are reflected in the organisation of the material, as indicated in the titles of the chapters of the first volume: A) Old states, new regimes; B) The Cold War; C) Dictatorships and demographic transitions; D) Ideology; E) The Economy; F) Demography; and G) Society and culture.
4. The sourcebooks incorporate subjects that are related not only to the echoes left by traumatic events such as the communal fighting and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus or the war in post-Communist Yugoslavia, but also to the processing of the memory of violence and trauma and the treatment of the monuments of the communist regimes after their fall.[45] This is essentially a "living history", which encounters memory and converses with it. The pupils in today's school classrooms are the third generation since these events, which means that they have internalised their family narratives and they live in a climate that is charged in diverse ways with the echoes of the recent past. For them, the conditions and the events of the Cold War era are both familiar and distant. They are familiar because they are an inseparable part of family and community memory, but

see U. Kocka, "Is globalizing history topics in the classroom a way of dealing with increasing global diversity?", International Society for History Didactics, 34 (2013): 11-26.

[45] It is precisely this perspective that chapter 2 in the second volume, entitled "Ways of Remembering", adopts. The sections in this chapter deal with critical issues such as the public treatment of the memory of the Second World War and recent wars, the attitude towards the communist past in the post-communist era and reconciliation policies (pp. 210-234).

they are also distant because their own personal lived experiences are very far from this past. The integration of traumatic events into education and methodical study at school is perhaps the most certain way for children to understand and interpret them rationally, and to integrate them into their historical consciousness in a productive way. At the same time, they are given the opportunity to elaborate critically on the diverse ethnic, political and cultural stereotypes in their environment, as well as to contemplate and discuss their controversial past and contentious present.[46]

5. The confrontation of the sensitive past by the educational community requires an honourable pedagogical stance towards it, and that was non-negotiable for the academic team behind the project. Their work does not prettify, does not silence or devalue the complexity of societies in conflict, it does not avoid difficult issues or turn a blind eye to trauma. On the contrary, it describes them calmly and respectfully, highlighting their multiple aspects, shedding light not only on hatred, violence and pain, but also on altruism, humanity and reconciliation in extreme situations.[47] In order to understand how difficult this work is, one should merely consider that the events of this history took place within the biological limits of the primary trauma generation – it is addressed, that is, to the generation of the teachers and families of the pupils who experienced the traumatic events.
6. This work welcomes the perspectives and methods of the social sciences, in particular anthropology and ethnography, while highlighting the value of profoundly interdisciplinary disciplines

[46] For the pedagogical handling of traumatic historical events, see G. Kokkinos, *Το Ολοκαύτωμα. Η διαχείριση της τραυματικής μνήμης* [The Holocaust. The handling of traumatic memory], Gutenberg, Athens, 2015, pp. 319-332.

[47] Examples include the offering of a kidney by an anonymous Greek donor to a Turkish earthquake victim in 1999 (volume 2, p. 106), the refusal of a reservist to fight in the war in Yugoslavia (op. cit., p. 92) and the appeal by the mothers of Croatian soldiers to the Yugoslav government not to send their children to the front to kill their brothers (op. cit., p. 93).

such as Microhistory, Oral History and Local History. It especially utilises Oral History and many other historical sources which Walter Benjamin described as "the waste of history".[48] It sheds light on the invisible protagonists of history, the ordinary soldiers and resistance fighters, the children and women, the perpetrators and the victims of the "great" history.

7. The sourcebooks give teachers and pupils the opportunity to abandon the closed, self-referential narratives of the school textbooks and "ready" interpretations, which are indifferent to children's questions, underestimate their thinking and require only their memorisation. By offering diverse multimodal historical sources, framed by brief texts in the form of overviews and, where appropriate, useful information, they encourage the development of a fruitful dialectical relationship with the past. The presentation of perspectives and textual sources from all the Balkan countries on the same events encourages both a comparative examination of historical experience in the past (horizontal comparison: how did different peoples experience the same event?) and a comparison with the past (vertical comparison: what changed and what is the same today in relation to the past?). Moreover, the multiperspectivity of the sources results in a creative ambiguity or even cognitive conflict, which in turn stimulate interest in further research, raise new questions and provoke lively debates. In other words, they shape an authentic environment of active learning, in which the indifference and boredom caused by the finality of traditional narratives of school history have no place.
8. In terms of historical time, teachers and pupils are given the opportunity to abandon the linear time of positivist historiography and to discover the multiplicity of the conceptualisation of New History.[49] One can easily recognise at all levels of the project the

[48] Benjamin, W., The Arcades Project, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 2002, p. 460.

[49] For the historical concepts and teaching approach of New History, see I. Mattozzi, *Εκπαιδεύοντας αναγνώστες Ιστορίας* [Educating History Readers], trans. P. Skondras,

intent of its creators to show the continuities and discontinuities, the changes and the ruptures, the inertia and the transformations. Given that the notion of historical time is perhaps the most significant impediment that pupils of all levels meet in their attempt to understand the past and be familiarised with civilisations and cultures that are different from today's, questions such as the following are of great methodological significance: "In Yugoslavia, TV broadcasting began in the second half of the 1950s. Compare it with the situation in your country. Describe the early TV programme (source VII-36B). How many hours per day was the programme broadcasted? Talk to your relatives and find out what life was like before television and the Internet. What information and entertainment means were available?"[50] Equally important, however simple it might at first appear, is the question on the appearance of household electrical appliances in Balkan countries: "Try to imagine how life was at home without any electrical machines. How did home electrical appliances influence women's emancipation?"[51] In both cases, a comparative study of Balkan societies leads to a better understanding not only of the other but also of one's self.

9. From a methodological view, the basic mechanism of selection, in combination with the elaboration of the historical sources, is based of three elements: the historical question, which, regardless of whether it is "closed" or "open", does not seek stereotypical answers but aims to pose questions and encourage problematisation; multiperspectivity; and empathy.

Metaichmio, Athens, 2005, pp. 51-72. More generally, on the relationship of history with the New History trend, see M. Repousi, *Μαθήματα ιστορίας, από την ιστορία στην ιστορική εκπαίδευση* [History lessons, from history to historical education], Kastaniotis, Athens, 2004, pp. 246-257 and G. Kokkinos, *Η σκουριά και το πυρ. Προσεγγίζοντας τη σχέση ιστορίας, τραύματος και μνήμης* [The rust and the fire. Approaches to the relationship between history, trauma and memory], Gutenberg, Athens, 2012, pp. 337-373.

[50] Vol. 1, p. 233.

[51] Ibid. p. 236.

The structure of the publication is simple and functional:

- Introductory texts to each chapter and section
- Chronological/historical timelines
- Comparative tables
- Brief information boxes, which correspond to the sets of sources for each historical event or issue and assist in their understanding (keys, light bulbs)
- Sources

It should be noted that, although each chapter and section is introduced with a narrative historical overview and analysis, the sources have the primary role and are not subordinate to the secondary historical texts, as is usually the case in educational textbooks and other publications.

Although they may not be aware of it, educators who teach history in the countries of Southeast Europe share the same concerns and hopes. For the savviest of them, the teaching of history should be a deeply socialising force. Through contact with the past, they hope that history classes will not form soldiers, as was the case in the past, but sensitive individuals and thinking citizens, who will be capable of guaranteeing a better future for the peoples and democracies of their countries.[52] Teachers' aspirations for history lessons is that they will shape citizens with a pluralistic culture, open to other views, who can compromise, are opposed to violence and injustice, suspicious of propaganda, socially responsible and consciously human-centred. The nationalist circles of the Balkan states understand the catalytic power of historical education, and this is why they react furiously to every attempt to democratise it. They know that the battle for yesterday will define the societies of tomorrow.

[52] For the connection between historical education and a democratic consciousness, see A. Palikidis, "Διδάσκοντας ιστορία για μια δημοκρατική κοινωνία" [Teaching history a democratic society], in G. Tsigaras, E. Naxidou, D. Stratigopoulos (eds), *Ανδρί κόσμος. Τιμητικός Τόμος στον Καθηγητή Κωνσταντίνο Κ. Χατζόπουλο* [Andri kosmos. Volume in honour of Professor Konstantinos K. Chatzopoulos], Thessaloniki, 2019, pp. 507-523, with the relevant bibliography.

If history is an intellectual science that studies not only the past, but also the relationship that people develop with it – a relationship sometimes fruitful and dialectical and other times inflexible and toxic – why should the teaching of history be any different? From this perspective, the two volumes offered to us by the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe are a powerful tool in the hands of visionary teachers who believe that the learning of history can contribute to the creation of a better world.

Afterword

When I was first writing these lines, the aforementioned Greek History Curriculum (2018-19) was still in force. Nevertheless, shortly before the publication of the current volume, in September 2020, the Greek Ministry of Education along with the Institute for Educational Policy withdrew it and returned to the "normality" of history teaching tradition. Despite the disappointment and the frustration caused to the people who worked in this project, nothing can stop our efforts to help pupils see the past and think about it productively beyond the myopic lenses of nationalism.

Beyond Reconciliation: The six workbooks of the Joint History Project as an example of teaching history

Ch. Koulouri

The JHP in the post-conflict Balkans

In 1999, in the wake of the wars in Yugoslavia, a number of historians coming from all Southeast European countries responded to the invitation by the CDRSEE to gather on the Greek island of Chalki and discuss questions of national identities and nationalisms, history teaching and textbooks. The History Education Committee (HEC), where I had the honour to be elected as chairperson, was founded in Chalki with the aim of conducting the Joint History Project (JHP). For more than twenty years, the HEC held teacher training workshops across the region in various phases, monitored analyses of curricula and textbooks which were recorded in two edited volumes and finally had six workbooks published with alternative educational materials for the teaching of modern and contemporary history in all Balkan countries.

The Joint History Project (JHP) was a civil society initiative dictated by the historical context of the 1990s, the fall of communist regimes and the bitter experience of the wars in Yugoslavia. The awakening of nationalisms, ethnic cleansing and war, the redefinition of borders and the creation of new nation-states, post-Cold War political transition and Western military intervention enhanced feelings of instability and insecurity in Southeast Europe. However, the JHP may also be

considered as part of a global effort to promote the revision of history teaching through bilateral, multilateral/regional and international projects, which were supposed to secure peace in societies traumatised or threatened by conflict. These projects were aimed at eliminating stereotypes and hostile attitudes vis-à-vis neighbours and included textbooks analysis, teacher training and compilation of teaching materials. The underlying assumption behind that activity was that a change in the teaching methods of history might have a long-term effect on the way neighbouring peoples see one another. Consequently, the ultimate goal of this concept of writing and teaching history was to promote democratic citizenship, tolerance and mutual understanding.

A key concept which transcends post-conflict initiatives to reform history education is reconciliation, especially in regions like the Balkans where there are reasons to be particularly "suspicious" of nationalism. Reconciliation concerns equally relations between neighbouring countries and relations between majority and minorities within the state. There is no doubt that reconciliation cannot be imposed by law or a curriculum; it demands bottom-up initiatives and consensus by large segments of the society. In this respect, because education reaches far beyond the level of the elites, the reform of history education has been considered as an important part of reconciliation processes, although sometimes expectations have been too high to be realistic. On the other hand, reconciliation is inevitably connected with a relationship to a difficult past with which societies need to come to terms. "Coming to terms with the past" has been extensively used in the German case, while the Franco-German Post War example of dealing with their past has been used as a model in European Union official discourses. It would not be an exaggeration to say that reconciliation has been one of the founding myths of the EU (Defrance 2016).

In the context of the JHP we had to decide whether reconciliation with the traumatic past should be achieved through silencing or teaching controversial and sensitive issues. Although there is no doubt that we need to challenge a narrative which overemphasizes conflict, we

cannot speak of "what unites us" by referring to a past of harmonious co-existence, a kind of lost paradise, while silencing the dark sides of history. "Integrating negative historical experiences into the master narrative of one's own group" is, according to Jörn Rüsen, a necessary strategy of historical thinking in order to overcome ethnocentrism and to acknowledge otherness (Rüsen 2004, p.125). In societies which have opted for amnesia as a tool of reconciliation, Spain after Franco being one example, the contested past returns through a public history that generates "memory wars" or even secessionist movements. As Tzvetan Todorov reminds us: "the choice that we have is not between remembering and forgetting; because forgetting can't be done by an act of will, it is not something we can choose to do. The choice is between different ways of remembering" (Todorov 2003).

In creating the six Workbooks we therefore opted for integrating sensitive issues and wars into our accounts, with the argument that history teaching could only function as part of a major project of peace education. Actually, controversial issues are at the centre of historical thinking and they can help students understand the fundamental nature of history as a discipline, that historical events are open to various interpretations. Students need to develop critical skills which will enable them to compare and assess historical evidence. The variety of the historical sources included in the six Workbooks invite students to see historical developments from differing points of view and to acquire skills that will help them understand the complexity of history, especially in their region.

The actual process of the creation of these materials has been an important part of the aim of reconciliation, especially because it offered a new paradigm, namely the collaborative work between historians coming from societies which had just experienced violence and conflict and which were still impregnated with hostility, resentment and painful memories. On the other hand, this work gave an implicit answer to the dilemma whether reconciliation is a prerequisite for history education reform or, alternatively, whether textbook revision is necessary to promote reconciliation; a chicken-and-egg problem.

The six Workbooks: aims, content and method

The creation of the Workbooks was the end of a long preparation which started with the analysis of history textbooks and curricula and also of teaching practices in Southeast Europe. During the first phase of the JHP, university and school-teachers met with ministry officials, authors of history textbooks and representatives of non-governmental organisations in workshops offering an occasion to communicate and to exchange information on the Balkan educational systems, the authorisation and distribution of textbooks and the degree of state control, while they contributed to mobilising human potential in the region and to creating a network of regional historians, especially of the young generation. Besides, the JHP workshops helped us realise two things: (a) that the results of the textbooks analysis should be propagated in all Southeast European countries, especially to decision-makers in the field of history teaching; (b) that history teachers are more important than textbooks in disseminating stereotypes and biased interpretations of history, and that we should include them if we really want to make significant changes in history teaching.

The comparative analysis of textbooks in all the countries of Southeast Europe that we conducted in the late 1990s (presented in our book Clio in the Balkans) proved that national histories were based on opposing or mutually rejected national myths. The same events were described and interpreted in a very different way and with a very different vocabulary depending on the "centre" of the narration. As a result, the real challenge faced by the editors of the Workbooks in a region experiencing new nationalisms, dramatic economic and social change and even armed conflicts has been to confront the dogmatic, powerful national narrative; in other words, to confront the myths of national histories. Therefore, it was of critical importance to deconstruct the myths and to convey a sincere, sober and balanced account of the past. On the other hand, it proved necessary not to deal emotionally with but to historicise traumatic events, i.e. to put them in their particular historical context in order to understand what happened.

We claim that teaching about the controversial and traumatic past

should not be about sympathy for people who suffered, but rather that it requires critical awareness and evidence-based practice. Students need to develop critical skills which will enable them to compare and assess historical evidence. Because national history taught at school is one-sided, offering the exclusive perspective of one's nation, we have designed the alternative teaching materials so as to make known also the perspective of the "other". The six Workbooks that we produced in two stages (the first four in 2005 and the last two in 2016) may be assessed as a significant example of how history can be taught in divided societies.

These workbooks do not aim to replace the history textbooks currently used in the classroom, nor do they aspire to provide a cohesive narrative of the history of Southeast Europe from the fourteenth century until today. We thought it best to put together thematic sourcebooks with textual and visual documentation, which would function as complements to the existing textbooks. We chose our sources from a wide and varied selection of evidentiary material: legal texts, political speeches, diplomatic documents, treaties, literary texts, memoirs, oral interviews, statistical tables, diagrams and graphs, cartoons, photographs, newspaper and journal articles, etc. In selecting the documentation, we adopted the principle that any relic of the past can be seen as a historical source. Hence, we tried to include a broad range of texts and illustration materials so as to cover economic, social, cultural and political aspects of historical experience and enable multiple associations. Working with historical evidence aims to provide an insight into the historian's work. It is important for students to realise that a historical testimony may be used in different interpretations, but this does not mean that it is always deliberately distorted or misused.

Our Workbooks, therefore, propose a rewriting of history through a focus on method rather than content. For their creation, we took into account the eventual compatibility with the history curricula in high schools, the control that the state exercises over these curricula and over school textbooks, and the teachers' needs for supplementary educational material. We have followed a regional perspective in

as much as all present-day countries of the Balkan Peninsula are represented. The issue of representation is, probably, the most arduous one for a project of this kind. In each country separately, pupils must be able to locate their own national history within a regional context and, in this way, become aware of the multiple levels on which historical events are developed. Simultaneously, they will also have to trace their national history in sources on the history of other countries. Thus, through employing the comparative method, pupils are geared towards a better understanding of their own national history. As a matter of fact, we placed greater emphasis on the representativeness of themes so as to cover, whenever feasible, all aspects of political, social, cultural and economic history. And this at a time when the existing history textbooks offer almost exclusively narratives of political history based on a very limited number of sources.

All the volumes conceive of Balkan history as part of European and world history. This means that the notion of a "distinct" historical evolution of the Balkans (a kind of Sonderweg) is rejected from the outset as stereotypical and biased. At the same time, the Workbooks can be used for educational purposes in schools as well as in universities across the globe where the language of instruction is English. Given that there is a dearth of accessible primary sources from Southeast European countries translated into English, our Workbooks have already been of use to a wider international reading public and attracted attention as an innovative project of history education reform at an international level (Korostelina and Lässig 2013).

Six subject areas of modern history and contemporary history, each corresponding to a specific period, were selected as topics for the six volumes: The Ottoman Empire (WB1); Nations and States in Southeast Europe (WB2); The Balkan Wars (WB3); The Second World War (WB4); The Cold War (1944-1990) (WB5); Wars, Divisions, Integration (1990-2008) (WB6). If the geographical scope of the six volumes is Southeast Europe, from Slovenia to Cyprus, their chronological scope is the period from the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans to the 21st century. Specifically, the first two, The Ottoman Empire (WB1) and Nations and

States in Southeast Europe (WB2), refer to long periods and cover the time from the fourteenth to the early nineteenth century and from the late eighteenth to the late twentieth century, respectively. The other two books, The Balkan Wars (WB3) and The Second World War (WB4), cover shorter periods and include two major armed conflicts in the region.

The last two volumes cover the period from 1944 to 2008, the most recent and controversial of the periods examined. We settled on 2008 because that year the independence of Kosovo was declared, a development that seemingly brought to an end the cycle of Yugoslavia's break-up. That was also the year when the world financial crisis began, which hit Greece and Cyprus especially hard. The planning and production of educational material on the post-Second World War and post-Cold War period has been indeed a great challenge for us historians, because recent history has not been the subject of systematic scholarly research to the same extent and is not taught in high schools of the region, while narratives on the Cold War and especially the post-Cold War period, particularly in countries of the former Yugoslavia, are highly politicised and biased.

In cases of traumatic memory, the historians' task is exceedingly difficult and sensitive. The creation of the last two volumes was the synthesis of intense discussions and arguments but also of a pleasant surprise, the realisation that a historian's work can abolish boundaries. We agreed on the following principles which cut across all six Workbooks:

1. Multiperspectivity. The six workbooks aspire to multiperspectivity in practice: to think historically by analysing and synthesizing evidence and to compare not only different sources but also different interpretations of the sources. The students discuss the reasons why different interpretations of the same event exist and they analyse the doubt and uncertainty about the past, confronting the dogmatic "truth" of their national history. The ultimate goal of this approach should be to integrate the "other" into the collective subject of historical narration and to stop teaching an exclusive

and ethnocentric history, still dominant in the Balkans. In fact, multiperspectivity enables students to acquire knowledge about their neighbours and to develop tolerance and an inclusive historical identity.

2. Empathy. Empathy means to enter into the other's shoes, in order to better understand the experience of the victims and of the defeated. Students study testimonies and reflect on traumatic memories. It is more difficult to invite students to think about the motives and the experiences of the perpetrators. The danger in using empathy as a teaching method stems from the fact that students identify themselves with the victims and history lessons become an emotional experience. However, empathy does not mean passive and unmediated identification with the victims. In our books, we maintain a distance, avoiding both heroïzation and victimization. Further, we try to make students familiar with the experience of war as a complex phenomenon and above all as a common human experience. Teaching about war, according to our Workbooks, should not emphasize just the negative but also the positive aspects of historical experience, even in the context of war, which are found in human moments of friendship, solidarity and fun.
3. Source analysis. The Workbooks that we edited are not traditional textbooks but collections of historical sources, which can be used in parallel to the existing official textbooks. They include textual and visual documents accompanied by introductions and "keys", which concisely describe the historical context of each source, and "infos" with biographical data, short notes on definition of terms, etc. Exercises, questions and tasks follow after the sources or at the end of the sub-chapters. All around the world, the work of the historian is based on the analysis of historical sources. However, in many official history textbooks, sources are used to "prove" the description of the events and not to challenge it. In our workbooks, through the inclusion of contradicting sources and also through exercises in multiperspectivity, students are invited to construct their arguments based on documents. For most of them, this would be

the first time they would ever read a historical source drafted by the "enemy".

4. The voice of the silent historical actors. Traditionally, history has been the house of the "great men", famous leaders and warriors. Our books listen to the invisible and "silent" protagonists of history such as women, children and minorities, who, as a rule, are absent from school textbooks. If we did not reach the proportion we would like, it is because of the kind of sources that are dominant and accessible, in which these social groups have only a marginal place. However, in the last two volumes, we had access to a variety of sources on youth culture, women and minorities, and we were able to allocate entire sub-chapters to them. Although political events and wars inevitably take up a considerable part of the narrative, we have given emphasis to social, economic and cultural history.

Looking back and forth

Fifteen years have passed since the first Workbooks were published, yet many features of the teaching of History in Southeast Europe remain the same. Curricula and textbooks have not been attuned to the sweeping changes that characterise those of other subjects, while in quite a few instances a certain regression is noticeable. Pupils in their majority still consider History a difficult or boring subject that requires sound knowledge of dates and names and the ability to memorise. At the same time, it is not clear whether school textbooks can rival Public History in the moulding of historical consciousness. The curricula continue to be ethnocentrically based and ignorance still reigns as regards the history of neighbouring countries.

However, I think that the JHP has been successful in many aspects. The six Workbooks opened up windows, triggered critical dialogue and convinced many teachers to change their minds. They are still here on our desks, on the libraries' shelves and on the internet to be downloaded for free and to be used by teachers at all educational levels. The fact that they are still used and discussed proves that they actually have filled a gap in history teaching. The first four Workbooks were

translated in nine local languages and were used for teacher training in various national contexts. Teachers received the copies for free. Of course, it is difficult to assess their real use in the schools. We expected that problems would arise because of political and ideological reactions. However, although "history wars" were fought around the JHP in various countries of the region, the real challenge came from realities in schools and inertia of state mechanisms. History teachers have very limited time to develop creativity and innovation when curriculum allocates few hours per week to the subject of history while assessment and grading of pupils' performance depends on memorization. The tight control of school history by political leadership, the fear of change and ministries' reluctance have in many instances restrained the propagation of alternative educational materials.

An important asset of the JHP has been its people. Since 1999, the project has been carried out by a group of more than thirty historians representing all the countries in the region, mainly academic historians who are experts in modern history and history didactics. The JHP has contributed to building transnational networks of cooperation at an academic and school level. The historians of the group belong to the generation who lived through the recent wars and political transitions in the Balkans, and they decided to take up the responsibility of suggesting how to teach these events. This is the reason why JHP's membership transcended professional commitment and integrated a common vision and common values regarding history teaching and its role in shaping the future of our societies. The outcome depends on this remarkable teamwork which managed to overcome bitter memories and conflict by speaking the language of historical discipline. We believe that only high-quality professional historical research can be used as a shield to protect societies from stereotyping the "others" and from developing blind nationalism. Blind nationalism is not patriotism; on the contrary it can be harmful to national interests, as our recent history has shown. The main challenge of history teaching in our region is to teach new generations how to deal with our "dark" pasts: this is not just a history lesson; it is also part of an education in citizenship and human rights.

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Brief biographies of authors

Dr. Antoine Arjakovsky holds a doctorate in History from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris). He is currently director of research at the Collège des Bernardins in Paris (France), founder of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies in Lviv (Ukraine) and president of the Association of Christian Philosophers. He has published several books devoted to the history of Russia and Ukraine, notably The Way, Religious Thinkers of the Russian Emigration (Notre Dame Univ. Press, 2013), Russia-Ukraine, from war to peace? (Parole et Silence, 2014), West-Russia: how to get out of the conflict (Balland, 2016) and Travel from St. Petersburg to Moscow. Anatomy of the Russian Soul (Salvator, 2018). He has also edited the book History of European Consciousness (Salvator, 2016). His latest book Getting back the test of European adventure? was written with Jean-Baptiste Arnaud (Bayard 2019). Getting-back-the-Taste-of-European-Adventure.pdf (collegedes bernardins.fr); https://media.collegedesbernardins.fr/content/pdf/Recherche/Bernardins_livre_Europe_web%20def.pdf

Dr. Konstantina E. Botsiou studied History-Archaeology at the University of Athens and holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Tübingen. She is Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Greek and International History (KEDIS) at the University of the Peloponnese, where she also served as Vice Rector for Education and Quality Assurance. She is a Visiting Professor at the Hellenic National Defense College and Director of the Council for International Relations-Greece. As a Lecturer at the University of Athens she offered

the semester history course at the English-taught MA in "Southeast European Studies" (2000-2008). She was General Director and Vice President at the Konstantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy and has been a research fellow at the State Scholarships Foundation, the US IVLP Program, the Jean Monnet European Center of Excellence, the National Audiovisual Archive, the LSE-IDEAS, DAAD, the Bank of Greece a.o. She has published over 100 academic articles and book chapters as well as 17 authored and edited books, including Greece's Course to Europe: from the Truman Doctrine to the Association with the EEC, 1947-1961 (1999, in German); Europe between NATO and the EEC, 1949-1957 (2002, in Greek); Booklets of Parliamentary Speeches, ed. (2010, in Greek); The Founders of European Integration, ed. with C. Svolopoulos (2013); The Balkans in the Cold War, co-ed. with S. Rajak et al. (Palgrave/Macmillan, 2017).

Dr. Neven Budak is Professor of Medieval Croatian history at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, where he is head of the doctoral programme in medieval sciences. He also taught at the Central European University in Budapest, Department of Medieval Studies, gave lectures at several universities in Europe, America and Asia, and participated in more than 60 conferences. His research interests are: early medieval identities, urban history, slavery, early medieval history of the Eastern Adriatic, early modern Croatian history, history of historiography, and history teaching. Among his books are the following: Prva stoljeća Hrvatske [First Centuries of Croatia] (1994); Kroatien. Landeskunde - Geschichte - Kultur - Politik - Wirtschaft – Recht (1995) (ed.); Towns and Communication, vol. I, Communication in Towns (2010) (ed.); Hrvatska i Slavonija u ranom novom vijeku [Croatia and Slavonia in the Early Modern Period] (2007); Hrvatska povijest od 550. do 1100 [Croatian history from 550 to 1100] (2018); Antijudaizam, antisemitizam i Holokaust u Hrvatskoj [Anti-judaism, Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust in Croatia] (2020) (ed.). His articles and book chapters were published in several European countries.

Dr. Erhard Busek (born 1941 in Vienna) was Minister for Science and Research, Minister for Education, Vice-Chancellor of the Republic of Austria, Special Representative of the Austrian Government for the Enlargement of the European Union, Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe, President of the Vienna Economic Forum and Chairman of the University Council of the Medical University of Vienna. Now he is, among other positions, Chairman of the Institute for Danube Region and Central Europe in Vienna, Coordinator of the "Southeast European Cooperative Initiative", President of Senat of Economic Austria and Jean Monnet Professor ad personam.

Costa Carras was born in London in 1938 of Greek parents and educated at Harrow School and Trinity College, Oxford, where he studied philosophy, ancient history and classical literature. He is, with his wife Lydia, co-founder in 1972 of Elliniki Etairia (Society for the Environment and Cultural Heritage) and serves on the Council of Europa Nostra, the federation of European cultural heritage organisations. Since 1999 he has been Greek Coordinator of the Greek Turkish Form, which includes members from Cyprus.

Together with the late John Brademas and Nikos Efthymiadis, Costa Carras founded the Association for Democracy in the Balkans in 1995 and subsequently the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe. He served as Rapporteur for the Joint History Project from 1999 to 2019.

Relevant publications include: "Greek Identity: A Long View" in Balkan Identities, ed. Maria Todorova (Hurst, London 2004); "The Significance of Cultural Heritage for Europe Today", in Heritage and the Building of Europe, eds Sneska Quaedvlieg-Mihailovic and Rupert Graf Strachwitz (Maecenata Verlag, Berlin 2004); "La contribution de la Grece Antique" in Histoire de la conscience européenne, ed. Antoine Arjakovsky (Salvator 2016); "Environment and Security" in Towards an Ecology of Transfiguration, eds John Chryssavghis and Bruce V. Foltz (Fordham University Press 2013); and "The Golden Rule: A Principle on which Christians, Jews Muslims and Secularists might agree?" in

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Nikos Efthymiadis is Chairman of REDESTOS-Efthymiadis Agro-technology Group, one of the leading groups of the agricultural sector in Southeast Europe. He is President of the Thessaloniki Technology Park, Chairman of the Business Information and Clearing Center (BICC), President of the Association for Democracy in the Balkans and Member by Excellence of the Board of the Thessaloniki Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In the past he has served, among other positions, as President of the Federation of Industries of Northern Greece (1993-1997) and Chairman of the STABILITY PACT / Business Advisory Council for Southeast Europe, Brussels (2005-2006).

Dr. Vangelis Karamanolakis is Associate Professor in Theory and History of Historiography at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA). He is, also President of the Historical Archive (NKUA) and Vice President of the Society's Board of Directors of the Contemporary Social History Archives. He has taught at the universities of Crete, Athens and Panteion (Greece). He has published several books and articles about theory of history, Greek historiography, memory studies, history of dictatorship (1967-1974), history of institutions, archival research and psychiatric institutions. His last book is *Ανεπιθύμητο παρελθόν. Οι φάκελοι κοινωνικών φρονημάτων και η καταστροφή τους* (Αύγουστος 1989) [An Unwanted Past. The Files of Social Convictions and their Destruction (1989)], Athens 2019.

Dr. Niyazi Kızılyürek was born in Potamia, Cyprus, but was forced to abandon it with his family due to the intercommunal violence of 1964. He studied at the University of Bremen, completing a doctorate with a thesis on the Cyprus question. In 1995, he entered the University of Cyprus as a lecturer. In 2013, he was elected Dean of the School of Humanities. Niyazi Kızılyürek has authored around 20 books, including Glafkos Clerides: The Path of a Country. Niyazi Kızılyürek

entered politics in 2019 and was elected as a Member of the European Parliament representing the Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL).

Dr. Christina Koulouri is Professor in Modern and Contemporary History and Rector of Panteion University of Political and Social Sciences (Athens, Greece). She studied at the University of Athens (Department of History and Archaeology), the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales and Paris I – Panthéon – Sorbonne where she also received her PhD. She was Visiting Research Fellow at Princeton University (2017) and at the University of Regensburg (2019), Chair of the History Education Committee and coordinator of the Joint History Project (1999-2019), lecturer in many international conferences in Greece, Western and Southeast Europe, USA, Japan and China. She is also member of the editorial board of refereed academic journals and academic societies. She is the author of several books and articles on the teaching of history, the history of historiography, school textbooks, national identity, public history and the history of sports and the Olympic Games. She is also the editor of six workbooks (alternative educational materials) for the teaching of modern and contemporary history in Southeast Europe.

Alain Lamassoure is an alumnus of the ENA (National School of Administration in France), Magistrate at the French Court of Auditors, Mayor of Anglet, France, Member of the French National Assembly (1986-1993), Minister for European Affairs, then Budget Minister (1993-1997), Member of the European Parliament (1999-2019), Chairman of the Budget Control Committee, then of the Budget Committee and of the temporary Committee on tax avoidance, Member of the Convention on the Future of Europe (2002-2003). In 2005, he published a detailed account of the Convention in Histoire secrète de la Convention européenne (Editions Fondation Robert Schuman & Albin Michel).

Matthew Nimetz is an American retired diplomat, lawyer and private equity investor. From March 1994 through September 1995, Mr. Nimetz served as President Bill Clinton's Special Envoy in the mediation of the "name" dispute a between Greece and (then) the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and now Republic of North Macedonia. From 1999 through 2019 he was the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in connection with the continuing negotiations between those two parties, and played a leading role in resolving the dispute through the Prespes Agreement of June 17, 2018 which he signed on behalf of the Secretary-General. Mr. Nimetz previously served as Undersecretary of State and as Counselor of the Department of State (1977-1980) and earlier as Staff Assistant to President Lyndon Johnson (1967-1969). He also had several official appointments in New York State and New York City governments, including as a Commissioner of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. For many years Mr. Nimetz practiced law in New York as a partner of two major law firms and later was a Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer of the global growth equity firm, General Atlantic. He earned degrees from Williams College (B.A.), Oxford University (Balliol College) (M.A.) and Harvard Law School (LL.B.).

Dr Angelos Palikidis is Associate Professor of History Didactics at the Department of History & Ethnology of Democritus University of Thrace (Greece). He is a co-author of the Greek History Curricula and expert of the Council of Europe in History Education. His main research interests are: art history and historical pictures in history teaching, museum history education, history textbooks and curricula, teaching historical trauma and controversial historical issues. Selected papers in English include the following: "War and violence in History teaching: an empirical analysis of future teachers' perspectives in Greece", co-authors: G. Kokkinos, A. Andreou, P. Trantas, International Journal of Research on History Didactics, History Education and History Culture, v. 38 (2017), pp. 117-151; "Tracing Roads of Nostalgia: Can there be a shared lieu de mémoire for the Turkish and Greek refugees of

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Richard Schifter was born in Vienna in 1923 to Polish parents. At the age of fifteen, he received a visa for the United States. The rest of his family died at the hands of the Nazis. He served in the U.S. Army in a unit for young Jewish-German refugees. Later he graduated from Yale Law School. He served as assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs under Presidents Reagan and G.H.W. Bush. The Southeast European Cooperation Initiative (SECI) was his brainchild, and it was he who approached Erhard Busek to become its first coordinator, with Costa Carras and Rahmi Koc as the first joint chairmen of SECI's Business Advisory Council. He was Chairman of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe from 2002 to 2006. He passed away aged ninety-seven in October 2020.

Hannes Swoboda was born in 1946 in a small town in Lower Austria near the Slovak capital, Bratislava. After different political positions in Vienna, dealing with urban development and regional politics, he was voted into the European Parliament at the first elections after Austria joined the European Union in 1996. He was Vice-President of the Socialists and Democrats Group (S&D) until 2012. He followed Martin Schultz as President of that group until 2014.

Besides being member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and several delegations to non-European countries, he served as first Vice-President of the Delegation for Southeast Europe and rapporteur for the accession of Croatia to the European Union. In addition to parliamentary work, he dealt with several questions of the relations between politics and

history and, together with his Dutch colleague Ian Marinus Wiersma, published a book with the title Politics of the Past: The Use and Abuse of History. It contains contributions by Bronislav Geremek, György Konrad, Norman Davies, Pierre Hassner, Kryystof Pomian and others.

After leaving the European Parliament, he became the last President of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) in Thessaloniki. He is at present President of various non-governmental institutions, for example the Austrian University of Applied Science Campus Vienna and of two think tanks with special emphasis of the Western Balkans: the International Institute for Peace and the Vienna Institute for International Economics.