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›Transition‹ and the Politics of History Education in Southeastern Europe

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Augusta Dimou

Introduction[1]

Since the 1990 s a large part of Southeast Europe has been going through significant change, both with regard to the cartographic physiognomy of the region and the nature of its political systems. The collapse of communism, on the one hand, signified the end of a nearly half-century-long political experiment and initiated complex processes of socioeconomic and political change often subsumed under the generic and rather murky notion of »transition.« The disintegration of Yugoslavia, on the other hand, brought about the dissolution of the largest state and the most important supranational, federative experiment in the region with significant and long-lasting consequences. Borders were redrawn and are – in some cases – still being disputed; populations were displaced, uprooted, and induced either to forced or voluntary migration; the social texture of societies was torn apart; and finally, processes of nation-state and identity building were initiated that are partially still going on today. These mutating conditions affected education in manifold ways – from the structure of educational systems to the content of history teaching. The present volume, with its focus on the states constituted as a result of the Yugoslav wars of succession and, additionally, the Republic of Moldova, provides an analysis of developments in the field of history education from the mid-1990 s onward.

For nearly a decade the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (GEI hereafter) has pursued its own project on textbook development[2]

1 The following text draws upon ideas and themes that were exchanged in the course of various meetings among the majority of the participants of this volume, who can rightfully be considered coauthors of this introduction (Falk Pingel, Heike Karge, Katarina Batarillo, Robert Pichler, Snježana Koren, Branislava Baranović, Peter Vodopivec, and Stefan Ihrig). I would additionally like to thank Marija Rudić (OSCE, Belgrade), with whom I had the chance to discuss several aspects of international project work during my 2006 stay in Belgrade. Naturally, only the author of this text is ultimately accountable for the content and opinions expressed therein. Last but not least, I would like to express my gratitude to the editors and translators of this manuscript. Special thanks go to Wendy Anne Kopisch, Peter Carrier, Anna Stock-Hesketh and Liesel Tarquini.

2 The Project for the Co-ordination of Textbook Research, Development and Comparison in

by supporting, initiating, and monitoring textbook revision processes, conducting official evaluations of teaching materials, providing textbook analyses, and sponsoring scholarships for textbook authors. Through the organization of training seminars, conferences, and summer schools, the institute aimed at functioning as a transmission belt for the dissemination of know-how and experience, building bridges between the academic world and the world of educational practice, between historical scholarship and didactical and pedagogical expertise. During this period, the GEI has been a partner to several international and European organizations involved in educational development in the Balkans, with whom it has coordinated multifarious activities either as co-organizer or simple participant. The current study was conceived as a distillation of the GEI's involvement as an NGO actor in the sphere of educational policy and development in the Balkans. Though this volume offers an occasion to reflect more theoretically and critically upon the work of the GEI, it is not understood as a summary of that project. Rather, by taking our GEI work as a starting point, this volume would like to address relevant issues in more generic terms, as well as register recent developments and persisting problems in the educational sector. What is the effect of international intervention in education? How are projects operationalized and what are their outcomes? What do changes and reforms in education look like in the context of »transition«? What provides for sustainability of reforms? Are there models of successful intervention? Are the problems in successor countries similar, and can we generalize about them? In which direction are educational systems heading? What are the contents of postwar historical narratives? Though this volume takes history education as the general point of reference, we, as an institution, have concentrated extensively on textbook development and this naturally provides a major analytical pillar for the majority of the essays.

The scholarly background of the contributors to this volume is informed by various neighboring disciplines, ranging from political science to history, anthropology, and pedagogy. This allows for an interdisciplinary dialogue and diverse analytical angles but also divergent approaches. In addition, we invited the authors *not* to eschew personal experience. On the contrary, they were deliberately encouraged to bring their understanding and familiarity with these occurrences into their narratives. Several contributors have taken advantage of the potential offered by oral history and included interview material in their analyses, while the majority of the authors have been active participants in educational policy and often draw from personal experience in the processes they portray.

South-East Europe was initiated in 2000 and has been coordinated by the following scholars in chronological succession: Heike Karge, Sabine Rutar, Augusta Dimou, and Katarina Batarilo.

A series of publications that have appeared since the late 1990 s have drawn attention to existing problems in textbooks and history education in Southeast Europe. *Öl ins Feuer?*,[3] *Clio in the Balkans,*[4] and *Teaching the History of Southeastern Europe*[5] were pathbreaking for a number of reasons: in the first place, they represented the first attempts to register national historical canons and historicize the process of nation building from a comparative perspective. Constituent to this process was an analysis of images of the national self and the »other« as well as an incorporation of comparative methodology in the investigation of nation building processes so as to demystify the notion of national uniqueness. In the second place, all these projects inaugurated an interregional scholarly cooperation, designating for the first time a willingness to get acquainted with one another's narratives by critically scrutinizing reciprocal mental maps. Inherent to all efforts was the acknowledgment that serious and critical reflection on the problems and consequences of nationalist and exclusivist versions of history is a precondition for the future common and peaceful cohabitation in the region. The aspiration to move from a narrow ethnocentric perspective to a more comparative and comprehensive regional one was the driving motivation behind the design of the *Alternative Educational Materials*,[6] produced by the CDRSSE in Thessalonica. They are an outstanding example of both the capacities of fruitful collaboration in the region and the possibility of applying the paradigms of social and cultural history in the classroom, an approach that, apart from a few shining exceptions, has so far been missing from traditional school history teaching in the region.

Öl ins Feuer? and its follow-up, *Only a Powder Keg?*,[7] were products of the work of the Georg Eckert Institute. The first dealt with stereotypical images cultivated through textbooks in Southeast Europe, the second with textbook representations of Southeast Europe within the region but also within the broader European context. This third volume is designed in a similar fashion as the preceding two, but with a slightly different emphasis. The focus on textbooks

3 Wolfgang Höpken, ed., *Öl ins Feuer? Oil on Fire? Schulbücher, ethnische Stereotypen und Gewalt in Südosteuropa; Textbooks, Ethnic Stereotypes and Violence in South-Eastern Europe, Studien zur internationalen Schulbuchforschung, Vol. 89* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1996).

4 Christina Koulouri, ed., *Clio in the Balkans. The Politics of History Education* (Thessalonica: CDRSEE, 2002).

5 Christina Koulouri, ed., *Teaching the History of Southeastern Europe* (Thessalonica: CDRSEE, 2001).

6 Christina Koulouri, ed., *Teaching Modern Southeast European History, Alternative Educational Materials, Vol. 1 – 4* (Thessalonica: CDRSEE, 2005).

7 Andreas Helmedach, ed., *Pulverfass, Powder Keg, Baril de Poudre? Südosteuropa im europäischen Geschichtsbuch, Studien zur internationalen Schulbuchforschung, Vol. 118* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2007).

and historical narratives still predominates, and in this respect the book intends to provide an update on the developments and trajectories of national historical narratives. However, efforts have also been made to register developments and changes in the educational systems, report on educational reforms and their outcomes, include curricula, inform on the conditions of textbook production, take into account the political background that has informed educational policy, incorporate public debates on history and history textbooks, consider the actual practice of history teaching, and appraise the postcommunist development of historical narratives with a view to the multinational composition of countries like Macedonia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina and Moldova. By doing so, we would also like to draw attention to »blank spots« in current research on education conducted in the region. While the analysis of historical narratives and ethnic stereotypes is quite advanced – it has attracted sufficient attention and should continue to do so – the comparative study of educational systems, the concrete practice of history teaching, the social parameters of educational systems and other significant components of education in the region have been partially neglected. However, as ever greater parts of Southeast Europe are drawn into the European orbit and integration into the EU grows imminent or is at least a declared and cherished objective, requirements on education are, and will be, binding for all Balkan countries, either as directives to member states or as preconditions for accession. Despite the fact that education, representing a »soft« issue, is a rather low priority on the EU agenda, this circumstance nevertheless offers a significant opportunity to reflect upon possible attunements in educational developments among the Balkan countries, as well as the possibility to learn from experiences gained or from examples of good practice. In other words, the European context can do more than prompt individual Southeast European countries to develop in tandem with Brussels or Strasbourg. Rather, it opens for the door to broad and direct educational cooperation among the Balkan states on all levels of educational policy; the possibilities abound, from devising a secondary school history curriculum with a small percentage of its content shared by all countries to building university networks and promoting the mobility of scholars. Even nowadays, travelers wishing to fly from Skopje to Athens usually have to fly via Vienna, as do travelers from Sofia to Split. Doubtless, education cannot develop at the speed of an airplane – it's usually much slower – but perhaps it can challenge its established itineraries.

In this volume, we opted for case studies in which the GEI was, in one way or another, directly involved through project work. The institute was naturally not involved to the same degree in all geographical areas or in all sectors of education. In some cases, as with Bosnia and Herzegovina or Serbia, the institute showed an enduring commitment through continuous project work; in others, contact was maintained either through the countries' educational experts or

through their experts' participation in the institute's activities, several of whom are also contributors to this volume. Moreover, ex-Yugoslavia provided a minimal contextual background for looking at developments from a comparative perspective. As is demonstrated by the different analyses offered here, developments took different paths – often for obvious reasons. Some countries, like Croatia and Slovenia, developed and stabilized their own mechanisms of educational control rather early, while others, like Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, have been more dependent on international intervention in the educational sector. Yet others, such as Moldova, have responded to a state of internal stalemate by literally inviting international intervention (as demonstrated in this volume by Stefan Ihrig's essay). And in still others, like Kosovo and South Serbia, intervention in the form of an evaluation of textbooks (Kosovo) and the drafting of different textbook materials (South Serbia) were persistently resisted and collaboration was obstructed. In both cases, action was perhaps premature and contradicted the agenda of the Albanian educational officials. We have included the case of Moldova in this volume for various reasons, among them the involvement of the GEI along with the Council of Europe in the republic's educational developments for more than four years. There are, however, also good analytical reasons that speak for its inclusion. The first relates to shifts in the European mental maps that have been taking place ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, a process still in the making and not devoid of geostrategic considerations. It raises not only the mind-boggling question, preoccupying many historians, political scientists, and politicians, of where Europe ends, but also the more mundane and practical question – often cloaked in a layer of historicity – of where we *want* Europe to end. Moldova is currently grouped by some international and European organizations under the region of Southeast Europe. Such conceptual realignments, illustrative of the ongoing bickering involved in defining the new buffer zones between Europe and Russia, are in themselves identity building enterprises, where history is multiply instrumentalized. A second reason for the inclusion of Moldova is that this case concerns a multiethnic state in search of an identity where, in the building and consolidation of a political elite, education has been reduced to a major tug of war. Moreover, Moldova represents an identity stalemate, where international intervention on one side or the other may have longstanding and significant implications and effects. Finally, as a case study, its typology is closely related to that of the other cases in this volume: the breakup of communist multinational states/empires and the novel processes of nation-state building.

»Transition« and intervention

Key concepts informing the background of most analyses in this volume are »transition« and intervention. We have included »transition« as a general *technical term* to designate processes of social and political transformation that have been taking place in East and Southeast Europe since 1989. We retain, however, a certain degree of skepticism and apprehension toward the »transitological enterprise,« particularly the normative connotations implied in the term – thus our deliberate use of quotation marks. The starting point of contemporary transition theories is the assumption of a progressive and linear, clearly defined normative development from one condition to another, usually from authoritarian rule to democracy. In contrast to transition theories developed in the late 1970 s and early 1980 s, which adopted a retrospective historical attitude to transition, understanding it as a historical process with undetermined outcomes,[8] postcommunist transition theories have switched this configuration: »instead of an uncertain journey from ›known‹ to unknown, it became a ›certain‹ travel from ›known‹ to ›known‹ – from one clear model to another.«[9] Scholars concerned with the normativity of the concept stress, on the one hand, the fact that societies barely function according to mechanical, quantifiable ironclad rules, while on the other, they cast doubt on the implicit model of a uniform and linear »progress« concealed within the notion.[10] This volume seriously questions the notion of an alleged »normal« and »natural« historical process. On the contrary, developments in education discussed here reveal complex and contradictory processes and trajectories. The period of systemic change following the fall of European communism unfolded somewhat differently in the Socialist Federal Republic of Jugoslavia (SFRJ hereafter) than it did in several Central and Eastern European countries. The existing political system was deposed neither through »velvet revolutions« nor by round-table negotiations between power holders and the opposition. The year 1989 represents no watershed. Rather, »one is left with the impression that [in the case of Yugoslavia] the rhythm of political transition was determined more by the pressure for changes in Eastern Europe and less through the pressure of Yugoslavia's own deep economic and social crisis. These particular conditions in

8 The major work in the field is: Guillermo O' Donnell and Phillipe Schmitter, *Transition from Authoritarian Rule. Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

9 Dejan Jović, »Problems of Anticipatory Transition Theory: From Transition from to Transition to,« (unpublished article from the University of Stirling, UK).

10 Christian Giordano, *Die postsozialistische Transition ist beendet, weil sie nie angefangen hat. Zur Archäologie eines gescheiterten Entwicklungsmodells, Vorträge am Georg-Eckert Institut* (Braunschweig: GEI, 2005).

connection with the state crisis had an impact on the positions of the emerging parties, their type and profile, their political and ideological orientation.«[11] In fact, most of the countries that emerged after the breakup of Yugoslavia did not »transit« from »authoritarian« rule to democracy. It could even be argued that the legacy of the 1990 s was as burdensome as the legacy of the period that preceded it. This is not to say that the communist past did not play a significant role. Yet in many ways, the 1990 s created a wholly new set of realities and problems whose causal connections are directly related to the predicament and the dynamic of disintegration and the concomitant process of nation-state building, adding thus a supplementary layer of complexity to the already existing one. If the decade of the 1990 s is qualified as a »transition,« then what followed needs to be characterized as »transiting« from »transition.«

»Transition« is currently applied both as a yardstick to measure success or failure and as a precarious buffer zone, in which societies are grouped in an incubational no man's land, a kind of »transitory« waiting room. But when does transition start and when is it considered completed? By problematicizing »transition« we wish, on the one hand, to draw attention to the complexity and lability of ongoing processes and, on the other, to warn against expectations of reaching a determined final goal. Structural ruptures are processes containing both change and continuity; they are reconfigurations of social and political forces, lead to the regrouping of old – and the crystallization of new – elites, and often produce collateral effects and contradictory results. Thus our understanding of »transition« here is one of a historical process with undetermined outcomes, the interval between one political regime and another. We would thereby like to direct attention to the necessity for local contextualization in the applicability and sensibility of solutions and interventions. As several contributions to this volume demonstrate, uniform solutions are not suitable in all cases, nor were the paths taken to change necessarily similar. Decentralization in education serves as a good example. Current trends in the organization of educational systems support decentralization (of curricula, governance, decision-making, etc.) as it de facto promises a greater proximity between educational services and stakeholders in education, but also due to its greater efficiency in the delivery of quality in education. While decentralization might be pertinent or appropriate in some contexts, cases like Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia demonstrate that needs and priorities might be adverse to the main trends. In these last cases there is a need to provide for greater harmonization between segregated educational sectors so as to establish the minimum consensual

11 Dubravka Stojanović, »Der Traumatische Kreis der serbischen Opposition,« in *Serbiens Weg in den Krieg. Kollektive Erinnerung, nationale Formierung und ideologische Aufrüstung*, ed., Thomas Bremer, Nebojsa Popov and Heinz-Günther Stobbe (Berlin: Arno Spitz, 1998), 379.

ground necessary for the establishment of statewide education. The contributions by Karge/Batarilo and Pingel in this volume discuss in detail the practical effects and real problems produced by the tripartite segregation, complicated further by the cantonal organization of the educational system in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Whereas decentralization was regarded as a safe solution to inhibit the spillover of conflict, as discussed in this volume in the case of Macedonia, Robert Pichler emphasizes also the ambivalent results of such a solution. He argues that decentralization (the particular way in which it is understood and applied) can lead to a complete segregation of pupils and also runs the risk of creating atavistic ethnic communities that barely need to take notice of each other. In the same vein, while current trends support a less directive role taken by the central state in education, in some cases, such as Serbia, the state's organizational skills, infrastructural capacities, and economic resources are indispensable to managing, executing, and funding wholesale reform designs, as demonstrated in this volume by Augusta Dimou.

The various articles in this volume illustrate no linear path to »transition.« Snježana Koren and Branka Baranović discuss history education in Croatia, arguing that the results of the processes thus far remain ambiguous and unclear. Dubravka Stojanović qualifies the typical Serbian road to »transition« as »one step forward, two steps back.« Peter Vodopivec demonstrates how a »model case« like Slovenia, which in contrast to other ex-Yugoslav republics had successfully avoided the politicization of education and particularly of history education, is currently caught up in such a process. Augusta Dimou shows how a very promising educational reform initiated in 2001 was brought down by politics in the case of Serbia. Denisa Kostovicova makes evident that the end of the war in Kosovo was not a return to the educational situation antebellum, and underscores the ambiguity that arises when treating the parallel educational system in Kosovo as either a parallel state or a parallel society. Falk Pingel discusses the legacy of the Dayton Agreement for education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Though the agreement brought a much-needed end to hostilities on the practical and military plane, by neglecting to simultaneously incorporate provisions on education, it missed out on the chance to include education as a peace-building instrument. The consequences of such an arrangement are painfully felt today. In this respect, the peace agreement meant not a real and effective new beginning in education but rather the deferment of the deadlock through segregation. The argumentation by Robert Pichler for the case of Macedonia goes in a similar direction.

As the various stories of this volume testify, the revision of textbooks or the intention thereof did not come about by identical processes; nor were the actors at the forefront of the action the same. As will be shown, individual textbook authors were catalytic in the case of Croatia. They single-handedly initiated a

slow and progressive revision of the nationalistically oriented curricular prescriptions, challenging thus the official government line. Public criticism of the existing paradigm of history and direct and indirect international intervention were also of assistance in this process. In Slovenia, change was launched by a group of educators and history professors who took upon themselves the initiative of modernizing historical narratives and curricula according to contemporary historical paradigms and European trends in textbook standards, before the official educational authorities would get involved in the process. In the case of Serbia, change has been largely the result of the work by intellectuals and academics organized in NGOs as well as that of local and international NGO groups and organizations in education, seconded perhaps by private publishing houses, which for different reasons have had an interest in challenging the monopoly of the state publishing house. In the case of Bosnia, it has been largely the result of foreign intervention, with the slow incorporation of local actors. The emphasis on education as a major factor in supporting the integrative role of the Bosnian state came about only after the international community realized that, although the Dayton Agreement had managed to maintain peace, the educational system it had constructed was actually undermining the very existence of the state.[12] Intervention here has gone through various stages, from obliterating objectionable material by blacking out sections in the textbooks (1999) to the adaptation of general guidelines for textbook authors (2005). Though initially imposed from the outside, the process has slowly acquired a momentum of its own. Despite its labile and fragile character, sluggish advances, and the uncertainty of its outcome, as well as the major difficulty of reaching consensus on the state level, it has also signaled to segments of the society that education need not necessarily be a one-way, nationalistic street, as Heike Karge and Katarina Batarilo argue in this volume.

The history and the process of the Yugoslav disentanglement are inexorably connected to the issue of intervention on the part of the international community, ranging from diplomacy and military engagement to political intervention and security management. In our case, »intervention« is understood rather generously to imply various forms of interference or involvement, such as those performed by international organizations, governments, and NGOs. Intervention produces multiple results, both foreseen and unforeseen, and leads to the interaction between local and international actors, which is an interesting story in itself. What are the effects, advantages, and disadvantage of this kind of interaction? Is intervention in education a one-way activity or an emancipated negotiation on an equal footing? In the first place, we understand intervention as

12 Ann Low-Beer, »Politics, school books and cultural identity: the struggle in Bosnia and Hercegovina,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 23, no. 2 (2001): 215–223.

the involvement of international actors in a state's education system, be it in the form of policy, reforms, project work, financing of projects, consultation roles, etc. In his contribution, Falk Pingel discusses the case of Bosnia, where the role of the international community has alternated between dictating educational policy and consulting on it. His analysis points to the discrepancy between the pretensions of the international community, on the one hand, to support an independent homegrown process and its practice, on the other, of prescribing and intervening in educational policy. He concludes that in order for the educational system in Bosnia to advance, the international community will have to hand over ownership of the institutional arrangements and negotiation process to the local actors.[13] In his essay on Moldova, Stefan Ihrig demonstrates the difficulties and dilemmas facing international mediation in an ethnically, politically, and geopolitically complex and polarized setting. Augusta Dimou discusses international support for educational reform in Serbia, whereby the initiative for change comes from the local and not the international actors. Intervention is understood in the second place as intervention in education by local actors (institutions, ministries, various authorities, lobbies, public figures, historians, public opinion, etc.) in the home context. In what way do local actors influence, impede, promote, complicate, and transform developments in the home context? What kind of dynamics do they generate and what is the interplay between history and politics? The contributions by Snježana Koren and Branka Baranović, Heike Karge and Katarina Batarilo, Peter Vodopivec, Dubranka Stojanović, Stefan Ihrig, and Robert Pichler all discuss intervention in the home context in its various forms.

In spite of their different focuses, the majority of the contributions tends to confirm the tentative conclusion that the most effective and durable results are achieved in cases where textbook revision and/or educational reform grow largely from within, that is, when change is perceived as a necessity by the local context and can thus develop supported largely by a bottom-up philosophy; in other words, sustainability is most luckily to be achieved when reform and revision become a home grown process with its own internal dynamic, rather than a process brought about by outright external intervention. External intervention appears to have better chances as a short-term solution or when taking up a councelling or supportive role. Correlative to the above is the appearance of local actors with a strong interest in supporting such a home grown process. In conditions of extreme ethnic polarization such as discussed here in

13 Several analyses on managing change and intervention point in the same direction. See: Florian Bieber, »Institutionalizing Ethnicity in the Western Balkans, Managing Change in Deeply Divided Societies,« *European Centre for Minority Issues* Working Paper no. 19 (2004): 16.

the cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina or Moldova, the key to the creation of such a dynamic is the gradual appearance of new expert cadres, unwilling to follow the logic and the established patterns of polarization. Stefan Ihrig refers to such a group in his contribution as »the moderates.« Obviously a lot depends on the grounds upon which such »moderation« is negotiated. If moderation is negotiated solemnly with a political rational in mind, such as discussed in this volume by Robert Pichler for the case of Macedonia, the results are bound to be rather perfunctory; if however, negotiated through the epistemological tools of the historical discipline, the potential of moderation might be far more rewarding.

Multinational states and the end of communism

The demise of the legitimatory framework for multiethnic empires and states that ensued upon the end of communism signified a reconfiguration of power politics. In the previous multinational communist formations, hegemony was exercised through the intertwinement of the political and the ethnic factor, and by engaging in a complex game of checks and balances that allowed for limited ethnic self-determination and simultaneous political control thereof, with the purpose of balancing out both factors. The egalitarian and internationalist pretensions of communist ideology, even if at times only rhetorical, and the monopoly of power inhibited and stultified an overt politicization of the nation, despite the fact that communist regimes often used nationalism as a legitimating instrument. The way communist elites experimented with different models, maintaining equilibrium among ideology, politics, and the nation, is no linear story either, but has a long history in itself. With the end of communist political legitimacy, the ethnic factor became the only device capable of mobilizing populations and legitimizing mass politics, as well as consolidating old/new elites. This holds particularly true for the ex-communist multinational state formations but not exclusively. Additionally confronted with processes like globalization and Europeanization, the nation was back on the political agenda in several »Eastern« but surprisingly also »Western« European countries.[14]

There are no easy solutions to the ethnic conundrum that followed the Yugoslav wars of succession. Identity is both a strategic and positional concept. The compound game of identity politics during and after the Yugoslav disintegration had as its primary goal the territorial demarcation of the ethnic group and/or its »adequate« political representation. A secondary aim was that of achieving le-

14 On the different understandings and representations of Europe in history textbooks, see: Falk Pingel, ed., *Insegnare l' Europa. Concetti e rappresentationi nei libridi testo europei* (Torino : Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 2003).

gitimacy and recognition both within the home and the international context. In this regard, both the prewar Yugoslav legacy of ethnic representation as well as the war itself proved decisive formative moments. Dejan Jović has emphasized the significant disturbance in the equilibrium and configuration of ethnic relations caused by the change of regime. He describes a process where the »fears of losing ethnic status from ›nations‹ or ›nationality‹ to that of a ›minority‹ are to be understood within the context of the collapse of the ideological narrative of self-management, which was not based on the rule of the majority, but on the notion of consensus and ›self-managing harmonization.‹ Destruction of this self-managing narrative of ›no-minority-no-majority‹ and its replacement with one of representative democracy (which included the ›creation‹ of both majority and minority) fundamentally disturbed inter-ethnic relations in Yugoslavia.«[15] It is against this background that many of the existing and ongoing conflicts have to be understood.[16] At stake in the cases of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (and until recently, Kosovo, too) are the definition of the status and the issue of the political representation of ethnic groups within new state formations, particularly in cases where the balance of power does not allow for clear-cut, indisputable majorities or where the status question is contested. In that respect the categories of »majority« and »minority« as applied today differ significantly from the way ethnicity and power were regulated in ex-Yugoslavia. The war and the nation-state building process generated a series of »new minorities« whose legal rights to education had to be redefined. Traditional »nationalities« (old definition) such as Italians and Hungarians in Slovenia have, for example, customarily enjoyed schooling in their mother tongue. »New« minority groups such as Serbs, Croats, and Bosniacs living in Slovenia have no right to attend schools in their own language, a situation that was different before 1990, at least in primary schools. In Croatia, there existed no special schools for Serbs before 1990 due to the similarity of the language.

The difficulty of providing integral historical narratives in multinational and/or postconflict states and societies is considered here in four analyses dealing with Bosnia and Herzegovina (Karge/Batarilo and Pingel), Macedonia (Pichler), Moldova (Ihrig), and Kosovo (Kostovicova). The master narratives of the various ethnic groups inhabiting those states are based on interpretations and evaluations, often of the same historical periods, that are not only in conflict with each other but also mutually exclusive, inhibiting any kind of a synthetic

15 Dejan Jović, »Fear of becoming *minority* as a motivator of conflict in the former Yugoslavia,« *Balkanologie* 5, no. 1–2 (December 2001): 21. Can also be downloaded from http://balkanologie.revues.org/index674.html

16 See: Kevin Adamson and Dejan Jović, »The Macedonian-Albanian political frontier: the rearticulation of post-Yugoslav political identities,« *Nations and Nationalism* 10, no. 3 (2004): 293–311.

approach or the elaboration of a shared historical past based on common experience. What have resulted are incompatible and irreconcilable versions of historical memory. Those parallel views of the past and of what constitutes historical »reality« are also partially accountable for the creation of parallel worlds. If the Ottoman period is considered formative in the case of the Bosniacs, Bosnian Serbs considered it a period of national suppression. Conflicting interpretations also arise concerning the second major imperial legacy in BaH, that of the Habsburg Empire. If the 1992 – 95 war is interpreted as a »civil war« by the Bosnian Serbs, Bosniacs consider it an invasion, while the Bosnian Croats regard it as an aggression to both BaH and Croatia. Similarly irreconcilable are the two existing narratives in the Republic of Moldova. While Moldovanism stresses independence and the diachronically benevolent role of Russia, Romanianism emphasizes the struggle for unity of all Romanians, sees in Russia the greatest foe and oppressor, and attributes the role of benefactor to Romania. The ethnic groups whose co-nationals reside in a bordering nation-state, as is the case with the Albanians in Macedonia, the Serbs and Croats in Bosnia, and the Romanianists in Moldova, usually attune their histories to the grand narratives of their co-nationals by importing narrative structures and forms. As a consequence, the point of reference as well as the center of gravity of their narratives is usually to be located outside of the state in which they reside. The result is double incompatibility: on the one hand, incompatibility related to diverging interpretations and, on the other, incompatibility related to the scales of history applied when constructing their object of study. Naturally, such a choice is not available to everybody. Slavic Macedonians and Bosniacs cannot rely on the option of ready-made narrative forms imported from adjacent nation-states.

The possibilities and limitations offered by innovative textbook writing are discussed by Falk Pingel in his contribution on Bosnia. When it comes to contested histories, expectations are often raised based on the possibilities offered by the implementation of advanced methodological tools such as »multiperspectivity.« Indeed, such tools can and do work for selected contested topics. Still open to discussion, however, is whether they are adequate to deal with diachronic, *longue durée* contested historical narratives, that is, when not only the interpretation and viewpoint on some events is contested but entire narrative structures are incompatible with each other as already discussed above. Multiperspectivity is more than a device allowing for the integration of the perspective of the »other.«[17] It is also an instrument illuminating the methods by means of which we construct history. Due to its emphasis on the methodology and hermeneutics of history, multiperspectivity can help in the understanding of

17 Robert Stradling, *Multiperspectivity in History Teaching: a Guide for Teachers* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2003).

conflict situations and the fact that they often »arise, persist and are shaped also by conflicts of interpretation.«[18] It is possible to imagine diachronically contested histories presented multiperspectively through the simultaneous integration of the viewpoints of both conflicting parties for each contested historical period and event. Wouldn't, however, the end result look like two parallel narratives, which ultimately achieve little more than taking notice, rather than ignoring, each other? Far from presenting a pessimistic conclusion, the above observations go only to remind us that the challenges posed by contested histories invite historians to reflect further on the modes of representation and narration of history.

Minorities

The search for adequate, balanced, and historically grounded narratives is not exhausted in the problems that multinational, postconflict societies and states face. What remains, to a large extent, an unresolved issue for most Southeast European countries is the adequate representation of the historical evolution that led to the modern definition of ethnic majority/ethnic minorities within modern nation-states.[19] Concerning the teaching of history in the case of minorities, the most common practices are either the import of textbooks from neighboring countries or the translation of the official state books to the language of the minority. In both cases textbooks lack an overall framework and concept relating to the state and society in general. In the case of textbook importation, the focus remains on the relationship between the minority and the country with which they identify in ethnic terms; in the case of translation, the minority's history within the state is rarely adequately portrayed, while the perspective is usually that of the majority. As a rule minorities know much more about the history of the majoritarian group than the other way around. Due to the fact that historical narratives and textbooks pay little attention to intercultural relations, the histories produced are more »entrenched« than »entangled.« As in the case of contested histories discussed earlier on, the crux of the matter remains how to create the identity of a civic state on the basis of ethnically divided histories. Southeast Europe is here not alone. Precisely the same problem poses itself in the contemporary construction of a new European history.

18 Ibid., 20.

19 See also: Heike Karge and Andreas Helmedach, ed., »Minderheiten im Schulbuch: Südosteuropa; Minorities in textbooks: South-East Europe,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 23, no. 2 (2001).

It is to be assumed that as long as the process of nation-state building is not explained as a modern but as a teleological historical process and the programs of great national »fulfillment« are not rigorously historicized these problems are bound to persist. Then, from the viewpoint of the majority, any »other« within the state necessarily remains a foreign body or an episode, while from the viewpoint of the minority, their own existence within a given state entity is the supposed result of a »historical injustice« that »robbed« the given ethnic group of its »natural« territorial homeland by failing to include all co-nationals within the same state formation. The fact that in most textbooks of the region, the nation is portrayed as more comprehensive than the nation-state usually provides grounds for apprehension and is reciprocally interpreted as veiled irredentism. The well-known topos of the »lost homelands« thus always carries a semantic ambiguity: on the surface, it is a story about the »legitimate« repository of a historical memory; implicitly, however, it is most commonly a story about »legitimate« and »illegitimate« proprietors of land and historical legacies, about autochthonous rights and villainous usurpations. The recent war and the redrawing of state borders naturally heightened this trepidation.[20] The traditional practice of instrumentalizing the existence of »minorities« as leverages in bilateral relations has not made things easier and has diachronically poisoned the relationships between the Balkan states, contributing to the distrust among adjacent states. Often, from the viewpoint of the majority, minorities represent »Trojan horses,« containing potentially unpleasant surprises. Fear, whether substantiated or not, plays a significant role in determining perceptions. Due to the entangled and multilateral history of Southeast Europe, it is doubtful whether the model of bilateral historical committees is adequate to tackle the problem. Rather, it appears that Southeast European elites would have to make a collective and binding commitment to goodwill by agreeing on a policy of détente concerning this issue. Though the EU framework can have a significantly positive impact in diminishing those fears and in securing stability, it cannot replace the necessary groundwork that has to be laid on a regional scale; otherwise results will have only a superficial and formal character but will not manage to change mentalities.

The protection of the educational rights of minorities in the Balkans has been high on the agenda of the EU and is applied as a yardstick for the EU compatibility of the Balkans.[21] On the one hand, this has had the positive effect of

20 Christina Koulouri, »The Tyranny of History,« in *Teaching the History of Southeast Europe*, ed. Christina Koulouri (CDRSEE: Thessalonica, 2001), 20.

21 It seems also worth pondering whether the prerequisites postulated for accession to the »pantheon« of Europe are not at times based on an ideal type of »Western« society, which, as such, can barely be found in the multitude of European experiences. This is not to say that striving for the better society is not a noble goal nor that examples of good practice do not

contributing both to raising consciousness about the issue and empowering discriminated ethnic groups. On the other, governments tend to comply only *pro forma*; that is, often paying only lip service to the cause but effectively doing little on the level of conrete policy. These two contradictory effects have further repurcussions when translated into identity politics: The belief in the policy »small is beautiful« contains, at times, the risk of a constant »othering« of the Balkan populations. Moreover, minorities as well as majorities are defined as fixed and stable identities, whereas the realities of identity construction for both groups are usually far more complex, dynamic, and fluid. The question has to be raised here whether this kind of identity politics does not in fact arrest identities by fixing them in diachronic historical terms.[22] In other words, it does not take us much further than the familiar static concept of history and identity.

Historical narratives and revisionism

Identity politics and the quest for legitimacy are intrinsic to any regime of historicity and every political order. The desiderata are usually semantic stability and cohesion. Recent research has illuminated the fact that there existed didactically elaborated emotional and heroic commemoration patterns of the Second World War in Yugoslav textbooks.[23] Whether and to what extent these cognitive patterns facilitated or triggered specific patterns of perception, action, and reaction in the recent conflict is an interesting question that needs to be investigated further through the study of the educational system of ex-Yugoslavia and the pedagogical premises upon which it was built. Equally intrinsic to periods of political change are usually an increased need for and production of collective symbols and narratives, which are employed by political actors to compete for legitimacy in the process of reordering political power. While scholarly optimism maintained the »de-ideologization« of history after 1989, experience ever since has defied this optimism. The collapse of the Marxist

deserve to be transferred and referred to. On the contrary. Nevertheless, the automatic assumption that some European societies are devoid of problems, while others, usually in the East and Southeast simply abound with them, deserves to be questioned – as does the assumption that some nations know what it means be European and behave as such, while others still have to learn it. For the application of double standards in the treatment of minorities see: Michael Johns, »Do as I Say, Not as I do: The European Union, Eastern Europe and Minority Rights,« *East European Politics and Societies* 17 (2003): 682 – 699.

22 Several of the remarks above do not apply in the cases of the Yugoslav successor states. Both the propaganda before and during the disintegration, as well as the war itself, served the purpose of fixing identities, a process continued in the »transition« period.

23 See: Heike Karge, *Steinerne Erinnerung – versteinerte Erinnerung? Kriegsgedenken im sozialistischen Jugoslawien* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, forthcoming 2009).

master narrative led rather to a »re-ideologization« of history in the form of a historical revisionism that in the majority of cases elevated the nation and the »return« to Europe to its main reference points. Often branding the communist era as a foreign imposition, most national narratives went on the search for the lost, »natural« path of national history, reordering the semantic, symbolic, and chronological coordinates of the nation as well as its commemorative practices. Habitually strongly connected to political projects, revisionism was »not based on new knowledge or the application of new methods, but rather on the simple turnaround of semantic notions of certain aspects of the past.… In former Yugoslavia, revisionism was usually linked to attempts to delegitimize not only socialist rule but also the entire Yugoslav order.«[24]

The war promoted, polarized, and complicated this process even further. It created the need to retrospectively account for, in diachronic historical terms, both the righteousness of nation-state building and the process of Yugoslav disintegration by linking both processes in an intelligible, linear, and teleological historical construction. History education in the 1990 s became a battlefield of interpretations. Ironically, the new historical versions were a mirror inversion of the eschatological narratives of the previous regime. Whereas before emphasis was laid on the similar historical experiences and the common historical destiny of the South Slavs, the new identities proposed, stressed the absolute incompatibility and the differences among them. For the most part, the public debates on education refer largely to disputes on content or contending versions and interpretations of past events, especially historical periods that contain a particular validity as legitimization thresholds and, for this reason, acquire the significance of a watershed for the development of the nation. Twentieth century history underwent here the most dramatic modifications. Periods such as the first Yugoslavia, the Second World War, socialist Yugoslavia, and the wars of the 1990 s represent such landmarks. The preponderance of the ethnic factor as the principal analytical category of history had a profound conservative impact and several side effects on the development of the historical discipline in the region. Much worst than historical revisionism was the rise of parahistory as a legitimate way of thinking and talking about the past. History became literally »public« and was produced for public consumption, not the least remorseful for the lack of epistemological and scholarly standards.[25]

History textbooks, as the principal medium for the dissemination of the national canon to coming generations, could naturally not go unaffected. Several

24 Ulf Brunnbauer, *(Re)Writing History: Historiography in Southeast Europe after Socialism, Studies on South East Europe, Vol. 4* (Münster: Lit, 2004), 21.

25 For a good overview of historiographic developments in the successor states of SFRJ, see *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino, Zgodovinopisje v državah naslednicah SFRJ [Contributions to Contemporary History, Historiography in the Successor States of SFRJ]*, XLIV-2 (2004).

of the contributions in this volume refer to these »textbook wars« and competing historical narratives. The article by Koren and Baranović provides a good overview of the transformations and tribulations Croatian textbook narratives and curricula have been going though in the last two decades. Dubravka Stojanović discusses two waves of change in the historical narratives on contemporary history in Serbia during the same period. She even demonstrates how parahistory entered the textbook canon, and points at fabricated facts and overzealous interpretations of the past that have never been endorsed, not even by the most conservative professional Serb historians. Denisa Kostovicova's analysis explores the legitimizing technologies of both the Albanian and Serbian historical narratives with respect to Kosovo. The contribution by Falk Pingel elucidates how the recent war was catalytic in solidifying the narrative building blocks of three different histories in Bosnia. The article by Karge and Batarilo discusses the tripartite version of history in the latest generation of textbooks in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Peter Vodopivec identifies the changes, strengths, and weaknesses of the historical narratives on modern and contemporary Slovenian history by examining both curricula and textbooks. A common trend among all narratives of the successor states is the abandonment of the Yugoslav context and, by extension, of the regional perspective as well. Macedonian narratives represent an exception, since they dedicate greater space to regional history. Their aspiration, however, is not so much to adequately represent the region, as it is to uphold the structure of the Macedonian master narrative. In contrast, the narratives of the successor states, as well as the rest of the Balkan states, resort to national, European, and world history paradigms. Paradoxically, the »return to Europe« was not accompanied by an extension but by a diminution of the regional perspective. For the time being – and this can very well change – the road to Europe must pass through the nationalization of histories.

The close nexus between politics and history in the postsocialist era is underscored in the majority of the essays. While most contributions stress the cohabitation between the two, the article by Stefan Ihrig on Moldova goes one step further: he illustrates the limits of such a symbiosis, or otherwise put, of a relationship so complex and enmeshed that it borders on the absurd. He describes a highly politicized historiography that is, in the end, unable to follow the twists and turns of politics. The state of affairs becomes even more complicated through a major discrepancy: while the majority of the population in the Republic of Moldova votes Moldovanism into political power, it is Romanianism that dominates history teaching.

A common feature of most histories of the region is the »politics of one truth.« Representative of the approach to history in the former Yugoslavia – as well as other Southeast European states – the »politics of one truth« was not automatically replaced following the breakup of the country. The concept predates

socialist traditions in textbook writing. It is not so much connected to socialist ideology as it is to the idea of writing the history of a nation as foundational history, that is, constructing a typical, static national narrative that guarantees the continuity of the nation by fixing it in time and space, while simultaneously eliminating complexity, ambiguity, and change from the historical process. As is increasingly acknowledged, the problem with the »politics of one truth« rests not only with stereotypes and prejudices but with the concept, methodology, and paradigms of history applied more generally. As a rule, educational authorities prefer to operate with historical models that seek cohesion rather than with ones stressing diversity. Multiple factors play a role in this, from political expediency and populism to generational differences and exposure to different kinds of knowledge and expertise. Often, the reluctance to accept new and different methodologies is related to fears about the desired outcome. The crux of the issue, as pinpointed by Koren and Baranović in their essay, is whether »it is possible to go beyond a history education that promotes a fixed and uniform identity to one that considers the ways in which history can help pupils reflect on and explore the plurality of their identities.« In reflecting on concepts of history, one must also raise the more fundamental questions: how and for what purposes should history be taught and learned? and what is or should be the primary role of textbook history: should it inculcate, first and foremost, state or ethnic loyalty, or should it cultivate knowledgeable self-reflective individuals? Despite paying lip service to this question, none of the educational systems in Southeast Europe has really settled on an answer. Some have not considered the question at all, while others oscillate between the two positions. Several of the essays in this volume touch directly or indirectly on this issue. Naturally, the starting point of history education varies in the different cases presented and is intricately connected to the issue of nation and state building. Some countries have, in that respect, achieved greater stability, while others are struggling with precarious imbalances. Koren and Baranović illustrate an ambivalent process in the search for a new paradigm in Croatia. Robert Pichler demonstrates how both Slavic Macedonian and Albanian Macedonian historical narratives focus excessively on the question of ethnic origin in the case of the Macedonian Republic. Their ethnocentric histories have to be understood not only in the context of belated nation-building processes in the politically fragile postcommunist environment but also in the context of the ongoing dispute about their respective position within the country as well as within the region. Different ingredients but a similar structural background inform the story Stefan Ihrig tells about Moldavia. Dubravka Stojanović argues convincingly that changes in Serbian history textbooks have nothing to do with changes in historical paradigms and methodologies but rather with changing nationalistic matrixes.

The »transition« also brought a change in the conceptualization of subject

matters and terminology. Ever since the dissolution of the common state, the subjects of history, literature, language, nature and society, geography, and to a certain extent art and music have been »upgraded« and invented as the »group of national subjects.« Having had no equivalent tradition in the Yugoslav educational context, the neologism, which is in use in almost all new states, is not an invention of the international community. Though used broadly in public debates and official documents, the term is not an official technical term either. The term is applied to the subjects taught for the ethnic majority but also for the national minorities, who are taught in their respective mother tongues when it comes to the »group of national subjects.«

The role played by academic historiography and academic culture cannot be emphasized enough. Indisputably, the existence of pluralistic academic discourses is an important precondition for promoting a different kind of history in textbooks.[26] This thesis is confirmed by several of the contributions to this volume. Despite the fact that a large percentage of Croatian academics remain indifferent to history education, Koren and Baranović emphasize the decisive role played by a critical mass of academics who, as textbook authors, have been promoting different narratives in Croatian textbooks as well as fostering public debates on them. Peter Vodopivec shows how academic historians councelling textbook authors deterred the influx of parahistory and extreme revisionism in postwar Slovenian textbooks. However, in some cases the problem is even more precarious than the lack of a pluralistic academic culture. In the cases of the Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia and the Gagauz in the Republic of Moldova, as discussed in this volume, their own local historiographic inquiry is so undeveloped that it hardly allows for a basic representation of their history within the state they currently live in. In the case of the minorities discussed earlier, the solution usually applied is to opt for the grand narrative of their ethnic group outside of the borders of their contemporary homeland. This, of course, is valid for cases where such an ethnic group exists. Its usual expression is the importation of ethnohistory from ethnogenesis to the present. This challenging topic is also tackled by Karge and Batarilo in their essay examining the application of the general guidelines for textbook authors in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which explicitly stipulate that BaH be the reference point for the history of all three ethnic groups. The problem, however, is more complex than that and should not be placed solely on the shoulders of the still existing multinational Balkan states. Rather, it represents a conundrum that concerns the whole region and is ultimately connected to the scales, concepts, and models of

26 Wolfgang Höpken, »History Textbooks in Post-war and Post-conflict Societies: Preconditions and Experiences in Comparative Perspective,« in *Contested Views of a Common Past*, ed. Steffi Richter (Frankfurt/New York: Campus, 2008), 390.

history applied. In her article, Dubravka Stojanovic refers to matrixes of narration, that is, metahistorical patterns that do not hinge on the truthfulness or untruthfulness of facts but on the concept of history itself.[27]

While the matrixes stay the same, the ingredients of the narratives can be reshuffled into new combinations according to the exigencies of the moment, the purposes these narratives are meant to serve, and the »challenges« for which they are supposed to provide »answers.« Reconfigurations serve a double goal: the consumption of history for local/internal purposes on the one hand, and on the other, responses to external challenges or what is perceived as an external or potential challenge. Additionally complicating matters are the »intimacy« with which the history of the Balkan people is interwoven and the belief that any concession to the other side equals a loss of one's own history. In postwar and post-civil-war societies in particular, such as those of the Yugoslav successor states, the problem is even more intricate and emotionally loaded – especially if the question of responsibility is not quite clear.[28] Despite good intentions, the efforts of scholars and historians can be no more than partially successful if not aided by the overall political framework. As emphasized by Wolfgang Höpken, stability and the orientation and commitment of political elites to peace and reconciliation are indispensable preconditions[29] for »disarming« history and avoiding the aforementioned *circulus vitiosus.* To this list of indispensible preconditions, the commitment of educational authorities as an independent body of professional expertise should be added alongside that of the political elites – to the extent, of course, that there exists a distinction between the two. As unfortunately demonstrated in several contributions to this volume, politics usually do override professionalization. For the most part, the interplay among political authorities, professional groups, and civil society tends to follow specific patterns of action. As interest groups, they rarely act in concert. Each tends to intervene (in educational matters, public debates, etc.) whenever its specific interests are affected. Often, there is an »implicit« model of action, where one of these groups predominates over the rest; for example, the politicians ordain the guidelines, the professional groups ensure their implementation, while civil society usually has its say (if any) at the tail end of the process. Cases in which this modality is reversed, such as the Slovenian one (the professional group took the lead and provided the guidelines for action), appear to be the exception. In cases (such as BaH) where civil society plays a minor role, it tends to articulate

27 A similar argument is advanced by Christina Koulouri. She identifies as matrixes the superiority/inferiority complex and the tendency to portray one's own people as victims. See: Christina Koulouri, »The Tyranny of History.«

28 Wolfgang Höpken, »History Textbooks in Post-war and Post-conflict Societies: Preconditions and Experiences in Comparative Perspective,« 380.

29 Ibid., 381 – 385.

itself progressively through the politics of remembrance. The intervention by veteran's associations is a negative example of such memory politics, while the Research and Documentation Center (Sarajevo) represents the positive side of civic engagement.[30] In the cases where the professional group aligns itself and engages with civil society, the two combined can become a significant counterweight to the influence of politicians.

From this standpoint, textbook debates and professional debates on education in general (inspite of their usually distressing and polemical character) should not only be welcomed but are also an indispensible part of a healthy civil sector. As demonstrated by several contributions to this volume public debate is crucial and that for several reasons; in the first place, because history is becoming increasingly »public history.« History can not remain unaffected by the revolution in the means of communication that we are experiencing ever since the last two decades of the twentieth century. In other words, history will no longer be comfortably situated only behind the shut doors of academic institutions or in the protective embrace of the central state. Rather, history will have to accommodate with and position itself in the multi-vocal world of the testimony, the subjective and the blogs. It is more than indicative that the Chicago Manual of Style already provides for guidelines how to cite from web sites, weblog entries and e-mail messages. In other words, the space and the time of exchange, experience, articulation and imagination are changing. In the second, because involving the various stakeholders in education in an open debate and creating an internal agora of professional discourse are essential means in order to guarantee the professionalization and emancipation of educational systems from monopolistic constellations. Finally, as demonstrated by Koren and Baranovic in their contribution, opening up the issue of what constitutes and how to teach contemporary history had in the end effect a positive result, since the polemics got initially started with exactly the opposite objective in mind; that is, to prevent the critical examination of open questions about the past.

In this day and age, the media through which historical memory is transmitted have multiplied, become technologically more sophisticated, and can reach a far greater radius and audience than the textbook. In postwar societies the memory of conflict is fresh and resides both in the privacy of various social milieus as well as in public discourses. What to do with the most recent history? Are moratoriums on the teaching of recent history an effective and realistic measure? Should the history of the recent wars be incorporated into the history textbooks? Is it pedagogically befitting? How recent history should be portrayed and what the experts' and the public's opinions are on these issues are questions

30 For a more detailed presentation of these cases, see the contribution by Falk Pingel in this volume.

that preoccupy, in part, the essays on Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina. Koren and Baranović provide a telling account of the fate of a commissioned supplement for teaching contemporary history in the region of Podunavjle in eastern Croatia, a region cohabited by Croatians and Serbs. The essay by Karge and Batarilo provides evidence of the different attitudes and direct or indirect strategies adopted by the textbook authors of the three ethnic communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina concerning this issue. Moreover, they recount the teachers' ordeals and dilemmas, as encountered in the everyday classroom experience.

Curricula

Curricula provide for the overt or hidden agendas of textbook narratives. What a skeleton is to the human body a curriculum is to the textbook. Though not visible to the naked eye, it is de facto the structure that models and holds together the body of historical knowledge. Textbook development and history teaching are intricately connected to curriculum development since their relationship is both interdependent and symbiotic. Moreover, none of these three areas can be effectively reformed on an individual basis without touching simultaneously upon the other two. The traditional problem with curricula in Southeast Europe was, for a long time, their content-loaded character and their disregard for pedagogical objectives and the development of appropriate skills. Often, curricular reforms were limited to either changing or limiting content. This attitude, however, is being revised in the majority of Balkan countries. Current trends in curriculum design put a greater emphasis on educational aims and outcomes as well as on the cross-linking between disciplines and subject matters. Various contributions to this volume touch upon the topic of curriculum development. Vilma Brodnik presents the latest curriculum revision in Slovenia and explains the logic behind it. Her contribution converses with the contribution of Peter Vodopivec on the same issue. This dialogue makes evident the differences of opinion concerning the curriculum's structure, an issue that is also touched upon in the chapter on the Serbian educational reform by Augusta Dimou. Both cases present different schools of thought when it comes to curriculum development. How determinant curricula were in prescribing the historical narratives of the 1990 s is illuminated by Koren and Baranović in their essay. How problematic the existence of disparate curricula is in the case of Bosnia, how this disparity complicates the writing of textbooks, how it limits the possibilities of a country-wide distribution of textbooks, and how teachers think about all these issues is elaborated in the article by Karge and Batarilo on Bosnia.

Teachers

Several of the contributions draw attention to the role of the often-invisible actors of education, the teachers. Their assistance and support is often the key to the successful implementation of reform strategies and/or the introduction of didactical innovations and child-friendly teaching methodologies in the classroom. They do and can play a significant role in promoting or blocking change and reform, and they represent the human capital that needs to be taken seriously in the consideration of any educational system. Reformers are often guided by the assumption that teachers will immediately respond positively if only given more freedom and a greater creative role. Several contributions in this volume contradict this assumption. Long accustomed to a prescriptive role, teachers often meet innovation with suspicion. Though substantial efforts have been canalized in the training of teachers – organizations like EUROCLIO have shown a persistent commitment in this direction – there are still large armies of teachers in need of training. No matter how good the structure of an educational system may be or how well new textbooks are designed, it is always necessary to gain the trust of teachers and provide them with the time, knowledge, tools, skills, and motivation to become convinced of and feel comfortable with new approaches. It is also essential to pay more attention to promoting and monitoring teacher in-service training as well as their performance in class. There are barely any empirical studies on how teachers use new textbooks and teaching materials in class. The appearance, thus, of innovative or pedagogically befitting materials does not guarantee their effective application unless teachers are equipped with the necessary skills to present these materials appropriately.

A further and rather urgent topic concerning postconflict societies in particular is the necessity to provide teachers with training and support when it comes to teaching controversial issues or the most recent history. As becomes evident in the essay by Heike Karge and Katarina Batarilo, when it comes to teaching such topics, teachers usually resolve to improvisation. Though experienced and charismatic teachers might well be able to tackle such tasks, there is a real necessity to provide systematic training. An example of good practice when it comes to developing appropriate materials is the third volume of the *Additional Materials*, developed by CDRSEE and dedicated to the First World War in the Balkans. Conflict here is approached through the lens of social history, addressing war from the perspective of civilian suffering, for example, or from the »non-heroic« experience of the trenches.

A problem shared by most countries in the region is the fact that higher education responds only slowly to the changing needs of pre-university education. Crucial and pertinent for most Southeast European countries is the upgrading of teachers' university training. Teachers generally held a prestigious

position in the former communist systems. In the process of societal change that took place during the 1990 s, not only were they faced with loss of social status but their incomes diminished substantially. With the exception of Slovenia, where teacher salaries are at a good level, and Croatia, where they are at a satisfactory one, teachers are currently underpaid in most of the countries under discussion.

Textbooks, textbook production, and textbook authors in the postcommunist era

The trajectories of textbook and curricular reform in the postcommunist period display common trends. Naturally, context-specific conditions do and can contain particularities, and as already witnessed, processes of textbook revision do not necessarily run linearly but can also experience setbacks. Furthermore, the starting points of reform efforts can vary to a significant degree. The Slovene example is instructive. When initiating their reforms, the Slovenes could refer back to the model for a secondary school curriculum proposed by Bogo Grafenauer at the end of 1970 s, a circumstance that facilitated their reorientation toward cultural and social history in the 1990 s. Moreover, Slovenia did not participate wholesale in the Yugoslav-wide reform of the educational system of the mid-1970 s. Systematizing the general experience gained thus far, Falk Pingel has distinguished three phases in the revision of history curricula and schoolbooks in the postcommunist period:[31]

1. Initial changes in textbooks witnessed the immediate or progressive removal of the Marxist interpretation of history, which was superseded by a more backward oriented teleological interpretation of how the nation-state was formed.[32] States rediscovered themselves as national entities and rewrote their history in order to comply with the idea of an ethnically homogenous nation-state. There was, however, little change with respect to methodology and content. In addition, history was still being taught with the aid of textbooks that were not only regulated by the state but, as a rule, also published by the old, state-run publishing houses.

31 Falk Pingel »Einigung auf ein Minimum an Gemeinsamkeit. Schulbuchrevision in Bosnien and Heryegowina,« *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 57 (2006): 519 – 533.

32 Croatian and Slovene textbooks switched to the paradigm of national history sooner, in the early 1990 s. Other textbooks, like those of Serbia and Macedonia oscillated–each for different reasons–between the Marxist paradigm and the paradigm of national history pure for almost a decade, before finally adopting the second one wholesale.

2. The gradual liberalization of the textbook market brought about »alternative« textbooks, which were less text heavy and at times also incorporated new methodological approaches. As a rule, changes affected the physical layout, usually resulting in the amelioration of textbook design. Textbooks contained many more illustrations and visuals, increasingly making reference to more varied source materials and thus catering to different and sometimes conflicting interpretations. The inclusion of open-ended rather than closed tasks meant that pupils were encouraged to think independently. Nevertheless, the national narrative and political history retained their predominant status.

3. A cultural and social element (with an emphasis on everyday history to supplement or replace the traditional focus on the organizations at the forefront of the social movement) began to appear alongside political history, which was increasingly underpinned by a European and international/global dimension. Textbooks started focusing on the internal groupings and subdivisions of the particular society, a development that was due either to the exposure and receptivity of local textbook authors to broader European and international trends in textbook writing and/or to the pressure and recommendations emanating from international organizations. Often the stimulus came from both factors. With the introduction of a competitive textbook market, the products of the old state publishers usually fell out of favor. In many countries this shift, which took place over the next few years, was accompanied by a public debate, at times heated, on the aims and objectives of history teaching and other subjects in the field of the humanities. At the same time, there remained a strong feeling that pupils should learn to identify with the state in order to counterbalance the multicultural approach and the emphasis on a European and international dimension.

Some countries, such as Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovenia, experienced this phase as a relatively smooth transition, while in others, such as Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, and Croatia, regressive developments – often the result of governmental interference – could be observed. Advancement was hampered, as a rule, in cases where the road to national sovereignty was blocked by persistent armed conflicts or where ideological disputes concerning the kind of system that should replace communism led to repeated changes in the overall educational objectives. Pingel concludes that the implementation of EU norms and institutional structures common to the EU provide the necessary framework to successfully overcome such delays and setbacks.

As testified by several contributions to this volume, the existence of a plural textbook market can have a significant impact on textbook development. In their contribution Koren and Baranović stress that the correlation between textbook

development and a plural textbook market is procedural. Though an important precondition and a crucial step in the right direction, the existence of such a market does not automatically translate into better textbooks. Several additional factors – the existence of a plural academic historical culture, appropriate curricula, time for experimentation, and accumulation of know-how and experience as well as a rational time frame for the delivery of manuscripts, and competent authors and authors' teams, etc. – do play a crucial role as well. Apparently, the opening up of a textbook market is insufficient if not simultaneously accompanied by criteria and standards for textbook production and approbation. Several contributions point to arbitrariness and a lack of transparency in the selection and approbation procedures as significant shortcomings in Southeast European textbook production. It is not uncommon for textbooks rejected by independent authorities and competent reviewers to get endorsed by ministerial authorities in the end. This goes to show that, despite the existence of market mechanisms, other means of undermining free choice and competition do exist.

The picture concerning the authors of textbooks is quite variegated. Only new textbook authors have been active in Slovenia since 1990; the previous generation has completely departed from the scene. In the case of BaH, new concepts of textbook writing have emerged since 2003, when a new and younger generation of textbook authors started participating in textbook writing. In Serbia older and newer generations of textbook authors exist side by side. In Croatia a new generation of textbook authors has made a marked difference. The trend is also moving from the individual textbook author to teams of two or more authors. In Macedonia provisions on textbook production stipulate that textbooks be written by ethnically mixed authors' teams. Despite the fact that this directive is often overlooked and that it apparently has had little effect on the content of the historical narratives thus far, it certainly represents a positive development. Though it cannot be argued to represent a trend, there are also a few examples of ethnically mixed authors' teams in the case of BaH.

Project work

The GEI's involvement in the region proceeded mainly through the development of projects. Some were devised by the institute, in others we were involved as participants or copartners, while others – a much smaller percentage – were proposed to us by local actors themselves. The world of projects is a buzzing and interactive universe of activity. At times a project is driven by clear notions and objectives and at times by the availability of funds coupled with an indefinite activism (the doer syndrome) lacking in concrete ideas or any long-term perspective on the goals to be achieved. In this approximately ten-year period, our

most fruitful function has been to transmit and mediate expert knowledge between worlds. In the case of BaH we came closer to the political dimension of educational policy through the mediating role of Falk Pingel, who was an active participant in the country's educational reform process, from textbook revision to the development of the Common Core Curriculum and the general guidelines for textbook authors.

As harmless and innocent as the transmission of know-how may sound, the power dynamic of knowledge should not be overlooked. As Michael Foucault indefatigably reminds us in his work, knowledge generates, constructs, institutionalizes, and reconfigures positions of power in obvious or subtle ways. Such a dynamic is inherent to the knowledge-power exchange processes in both the local and international/European contexts. Also involved is the reconfiguration of the power positions of the actors in the two contexts, both within the respective local arenas of knowledge-power and within the international one. To put it more plainly, knowledge and education are not only about the materialization of a project of «enlightenment.« They are also a business and a career ladder for both local and international actors. In addition, intervention in the Balkans and around the globe has created a pool of expertise, where knowledge is utilized more as a management tool and instrument of control and far less as a vehicle for critical enquiry and reflection. This is not to say that there is no virtue in the practical applicability of knowledge. However, an all too close and all too lengthy symbiosis between knowledge and policy can only be to the detriment of the freedom, the imagination, and the self-reflectivity of the first. If there is a tinge of criticism in the above observations, its main purpose is to keep the awareness and self-reflective mechanism of knowledge production adroit.

The dissemination of know-how habitually involves an asymmetrical relationship between the giver and the receiver. In the experience of organizing training seminars or making scholarships available to local actors, we found that through persistent exposure, new ideas and concepts were increasingly accepted over time, and that such encounters had, and can have, a significant impact in changing minds and hearts. Perhaps not insignificant was the fact that these experiences involved a kind of voluntarism and choice rather than straightforward, top-down instruction. This is due in part to the philosophy and the size of the Georg Eckert Institute. Its driving philosophy has been to assist, mediate, and promote processes of textbook revision. It has had neither the intention nor the muscle to impose them. A particularly rewarding and fruitful experience has been the promotion of enterprises conceptualized and instigated by local initiatives, where the GEI has lent support either as an advisor, sponsor, or partner.[33] Training seminars or conferences were usually positively evaluated for

33 Publications that have been sponsored by the GEI include: Ivan Ivić, Ana Pešikan and

bringing regional educational experts in contact with one another, for opening new doors to expertise, and for creating a »neutral« forum of communication among people who, under other circumstances, would not have come together. This sentiment (or impression) was particularly manifest in the heated period of the late 1990 s and immediately thereafter. A positive aspect of all project work conducted in the region, irrespective of the concrete results achieved, is that it has reinforced regional cooperation. We could also observe that local actors were much more positively inclined to accept methodological innovation when tutored by local or regional instructors, that is, by local experts who had fathomed new approaches and functioned as multipliers. This circumstance has nothing to do with xenophobia, but rather with the fact that such a configuration reduces the constellation of asymmetry. Equally positively accepted were approaches by experts of whatever nationality and background who managed to set the right tone. They usually entered the problematic by presenting problems and dilemmas they encountered in their own contexts and maintained a dialogical relationship with their audience, rather than going into the situation with the certainty of knowing all the right solutions. Such self-reflective exercises also reduce the asymmetric position of subjects and contribute to trust building. On the other hand, we also witnessed situations where international experts approached the tutoring as if they were bringing enlightenment the »natives.« Such conditions of obvious and strong asymmetry are strongly resisted and are usually counterproductive. Even if not publicly declared a failure, they are privately completely rejected. In other words, any encounter of this kind is an exercise in intercultural communication whose basic precondition is to meet one's partner on the same eye level. A basic ingredient in the recipe to failure is to underestimate the cognitive capacities of one's partner or to overestimate one's own enlightenment project. Nor does a good-willed missionary vocation automatically justify intervention. Trust is not a given but something that has to be achieved. This is one side of the coin. The other side, as testified by several contributions in this volume, is the fact that international criticism and exposure of the extremities of nationalistic rhetoric had a benevolent impact on the local context. It helped a small critical mass avoid isolation and lent support to counter-nationalistic projects.

Project work has many interesting and unpredictable sides to it. In his essay on the Republic of Moldova, Stefan Ihrig points to the discrepancy between the rhetoric of cooperation and the realities of such projects. Often the language

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Slobodanka Antić, *Vodič za dobar udžbenik: opšti standardi kvaliteta udžbenika [Guide to a good textbook: general standards of textbook quality]* (Novi Sad: Platoneum, 2008); and Bojana Petrić, *Rečnik reforme obrazovanja [Dictionary of educational reform]* (Novi Sad: Platoneum, 2006) among others.

spoken by the local partners is the language of anticipation. It is a language that includes a certain expert vocabulary, like multiperspectivity for example, without however the substance or philosophy that goes along with it. Alternatively, it can also mean the capacity of local actors to fathom the language that the international organization is expecting or would like to hear. An additional complication is the impossibility of controlling the effects of the partnership. Though rare, we also witnessed situations where the institute and its authority were used, or rather misused, by local actors to legitimize opinions or positions that had never been officially endorsed by the institute. In other words, the institute was used as a legitimizing instrument or as cultural capital in local disputes or power configurations of which it was not aware, due to its limited capacity to assess the multiple, complex, and shifting positionalities of the actors within the local context. At times, it is difficult to evaluate the reliability of partners in advance. This was to be our experience in a war-stricken region of the Balkans, where we, through the mediation of an international authority, were brought into partnership with the local educational authorities in order to conduct a long-term project of textbook revision and development. Substantial international funds had been reserved solely for this purpose. The partnership was even sealed through a contract between the GEI and the local authorities. After an initially positive start, our partners soon became disenchanted with critical textbook analysis; this put the brakes on our communication and led to the eventual slumbering of the project. Repeated attempts to rekindle it found no enthusiastic reception from the other side, and we were eventually informed that such a long period of time had elapsed that the funds had become intractable.

A major deficiency of the project work and intervention in education practiced in the region is the absence of coordination between the diverse international and European organizations and institutions. Not only do organizations fail to coordinate their activities, but their mutual relationships often border on the competitive. As a result, they often tend to mix their mandates. One serious consequence of the absence of coordination, or otherwise put, of a rational division of labor among international actors and NGOs is a duplication of projects or a competition for competences in the same area. This absence of coordination often means a squandering of funds and good intentions and, simultaneously, a missing out on possibilities to effectuate sustainable and long-lasting results. If organizations are in need of success stories, then it is a truism that unsuccessful stories receive no funding. Nor can institutions proliferate by arguing that they continue the work of others. Success stories tend to be monopolistic stories.

Competition is even more intense among local NGOs. In conditions of scarce resources, monopolistic networks to international and European networks are crucial as they provide both funds and prestige. The position of local actors in

relation to international or European networks is also relevant for the networks' positioning within the local framework. Local competition for either resources or recognition not only frequently impedes coordination among local NGOs, but usually also means that project work follows the established patterns of existing networks. Moreover, local actors left out of the new system of distribution and its networks usually feel marginalized, a situation that increases the mistrust and polarization among them within the local framework. In cases of direct intervention such as in Bosnia, the creation, and multiplication, of NGOs is regarded by the international community as a foundation and a yardstick for »civil society,« one whose most significant function is to counterbalance ethnic politics. Scholars such as Roberto Belloni have seriously questioned the presuppositions behind such beliefs; firstly, because the Bosnian version of power sharing tends to confirm, rather than hamper, political divisions along ethnic lines to the detriment of a cross-ethic civil society; and secondly, and more importantly, because the heavy dependency of local NGOs on external donors has »a strong impact on their functioning, agendas and effectiveness.«[34] Despite a bottom-up rhetoric, the usual direction of activity is top-down. »Pragmatically, NGOs veer towards a market mechanism that focuses on the provision of services at the expense of genuine political and social participation. The technical delivery of services is given priority over the political articulation of channels of expression for the disempowered and excluded.… Hence, accountability is redirected towards the donor and away from the organization's social base, and the idea of participation and empowerment is squelched by the reality of the externally driven process.«[35] A common assumption, implicit in the »civil society« development model, is that ex-communist societies had no experience with such forms of civic organization and problem solving.[36] Civic conduct is therefore assumed to be a novelty that now has to be started from scratch. Needless to say, such thinking grossly underestimates the dynamics within communist societies. This assumption is all the less valid when it comes to the case of ex-Yugoslavia.[37] Steven Sampson has provided an ingenious portrayal of the »project society« and its bureaucratic language and practices.[38] He even goes so far as to claim that

34 Roberto Belloni, »Civil Society and Peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina,« *Journal of Peace Research* 38, no. 2 (March 2001): 173.

35 Ibid., 173 – 174.

36 See: Maria Todorova, »Was there civil society and a public sphere under socialism? The debates around Vasil Levski's alleged reburial in Bulgaria,« in *Schnittstellen, Festschrift für Holm Sundhaussen Südosteuropäische Arbeiten 133,* ed. Ulf Brunnbauer, Andreas Helmedach and Stefan Troebst (München: Oldenbourg, 2007), 163 – 174.

37 See: Steven Sampson »From *kanun* to capacity-building: the ›internationals', civil society development and security in the Balkans,« in *International Intervention in the Balkans since 1995,* ed. Peter Siani Davies (London/N.Y.: Routledge, 2003), 138.

38 Steven Sampson, 148 ff.

»international intervention has now re-created ›civil society‹ as a bureaucratic funding category.«[39] The essential point here is not that the funds come from abroad, but rather »the fact that outside funding is contingent on foreign perceptions of local needs. It is the donors who determine which region or which issue is ›sexy,‹ and which region or issue represents a ›security‹ problem.«[40]

Projects are rarely conceived based on the existing needs of the societies where the projects are applied, but rather the other way around. Projects are conceived in administrative centers on the basis of assumptions (made in advance) about what these societies are in need of, for example, the specific needs of societies in »transition« (learning civil society, respecting minorities, etc.). This is not to categorically dismiss project work by international and European organizations and NGOs, nor to argue that project work is completely removed from the realities and the needs on the ground. Rare are the cases, however, where the conceptualization of a project is preceded by preliminary explorative work such as compiling background information, exploring the possibilities of the project's application, properly researching local capacities, or exploring the results and effects of similar preceding projects. As a result, organizations often fail to create meaningful synergies among projects and the various sectors in which they intervene. They also miss out on opportunities to make use of accumulated experience as guidance for prospective action. This pretension to monopoly as well as the disregard for previous experience is a weakness of project work on education. In addition, the professionals of these organizations or missions rarely pursue a professional exchange with one another, even when working in the same region, location, or area of specialization.

One of project work's most persistent problems is sustainability. This presents itself as a dual problem of both continuity and professionalization. Projects are initiated and continue as long as there is interest and/or resources from the administrative centers, but are often abruptly terminated when means or interest seep away, for example, when the international community switches its focus to new, more fashionable topics. Also problematic is the tendency of project designers nowadays to tailor projects to follow the interests of the international donors and to ride the waves of fashionable topics; »sustainable democracy,« »civil society,« »governance,« and »Western Balkans« are some of the many catchwords available today. Consequently, results are usually modest, and the experience gained through past projects is lost. To work with a view to how the end result should look, to how results can be anchored in the local context and sustained by the local actors themselves – these would have to become the priorities of all organizations, also the ones working in education.

39 Ibid., 149.
40 Ibid., 153.

One handicap of such endeavors is often the very international personnel that runs or heads them. The indispensable preconditions for the successful enculturation of international personnel are either a thorough knowledge of the local context or a thorough proficiency in the specialization for which the personnel are there to provide expertise. Often one or even both preconditions go unmet. Officials tend to be acquainted with the structures and procedures of their organizations but are insufficiently prepared for specialized tasks. Given the fact that project work is often conducted on fixed-term contracts, experts rarely have the time to work in-depth on an operation before they switch to new positions. This tendency – additionally sustained by the belief that international experts can be deployed in any area – results in insufficiently qualified personnel. Such a conception of project work is clearly a hindrance to effective and efficient involvement. Moreover, due to the fact that personnel change positions regularly, the fate of projects is usually linked to the time in office of specific individuals. This further diminishes the possibilities for long-term planning or for consolidating gains and results. Short-term planning and the changing agenda of international partners also make for obstacles in the materialization of sustainability.

Regarding sustainability, it is crucial to keep in mind that it is usually the result of a long-term process and, moreover, that the time frame in which intervention occurs and the delivery or fruition of possible results thereof might be incongruent (might not necessarily align themselves). In simple terms, results or possible indicators of a positive impact usually take time and are much slower to appear than assumed by planners. In fact, it might be impossible to foresee or estimate what will change, and in what way, or the precise form that change will assume. Social and political processes are unpredictable and their timing often random. In other words, the precise moment when social and political processes might acquire a dynamic cannot be predicted in advance. Consequently, and in conjunction with the aforementioned shifting agendas of international organizations, processes are often left »unfinished« as soon as interest withers away or switches to more »urgent« matters. This currently appears to be the case in Bosnia. Whereas textbook development and education may seem to be moving sluggishly, it is nevertheless possible to observe a movement forward, and the time now appears propitious to taking the next step. International organizations, however, have lost interest in investing any further in this issue.

Although mostly underestimated, time is a significant parameter in intervention. Allowing sufficient time for processes to unfold or solidify and reckoning with setbacks, procrastination, and unpredictability need be the rule, not the exception. Patience is an invaluable virtue in such operations. International organizations often harbor high expectations of fast and efficient results. It is not irrelevant to question whether these expectations are related to contemporary

notions of »transition« (as discussed earlier in this article), for if the end result is already a known, then the only thing needed is to accelerate the path toward its attainment. History would appear to lecture us otherwise. Social and economic processes are related to the *longue durée* and »deep structures« of human development. Societies need time to restructure their social relations and economic activities. They also need time to heal their traumas, confront their histories, or forgive. International actors and local societies need time to create a framework of trust, and new concepts of history need time to become part of a shared ideology in a given society.

Are there models of intervention?

A number of questions arise as natural corollaries of our involvement in the region: Do history education and textbooks play a role, or can they, in reconciliation processes? Are there effective or successful models of textbook intervention? To what extent is it possible to theoretisize about them? What can the role of education in postconflict societies be, and is there a time frame for specific tasks? And finally, which factors play or can play a role in determining whether an intervention will be successful or not?

Textbook development and revision do not take place in a vacuum. Rather, as operations they are embedded in broader social and political processes upon which they are always contingent. Manifold agencies are involved in the transmission of memory in manifold ways, ranging from the oral and personal recountings of family, local community, or social milieu to the more »official« narratives of institutions, media, popular culture, and commemorative practices. In the case of postconflict societies, the existence of transitional justice mechanisms such as tribunals or truth commissions can be added to the above. Textbooks and school history are thus just two among the many transmission belts of memory. What the relationship of the textbook should be to these other sources and media of memory transmission is a question that deserves to be considered more thoroughly.

Sabhi Tawil and Alexandra Harvey[41] have advanced a model proposing an understanding of conflict as occurring in phases. According to this paradigm, each particular stage of a conflict requires a specific type of intervention that has its own specific aims and means: thus, in a pre-conflict or latent conflict situation educational activities should be geared toward prevention; the escalation of conflict requires an education designed for emergency situations; whereas the

41 Sobhi Tawil and Alexandra Harvey, eds., *Education, Conflict and Social Cohesion* (Geneva: Unesco International Bureau of Education, 2004).

postconflict situation is conducive to education aimed at social and civic reconstruction.[42] This model has also been subjected to criticism, particularly because of the presumed artificial and simplistic nature of its delineation.[43] In a thoughtful article[44] dealing with history textbooks in postwar and postconflict societies, Wolfgang Höpken has undertaken a similar task, inquiring into the conditions that determine the potential role of textbooks in shaping processes of reconciliation and conflict resolution. Though Höpken also implicitly distinguishes phases of conflict, his analysis is geared more toward creating a typology of conflict situations and distinguishing the different dynamics of different types of conflict, which in turn also determine the prospects of intervention. He pays attention to variables such as the character and the outcome of the conflict, that is, whether the conflict in question concerns a traditional bilateral war or an internal war; the intensity of the violence that occurred; the outcome of the conflict, that is, whether there are clear-cut winners or losers; the political environment in which textbooks must operate; the degree to which seminal political questions such as status, territory, etc. have been settled; the role and orientation of political elites; the stage of nation building of a given society and the solidification or fragmentation of its identities; and the academic environment available. In other words, he builds into his analysis a whole set of conditions that may determine, facilitate, or restrain educational and textbook reform. He concludes that societies currently in conflict are the most complex to cope with due to their instability, whereas postconflict societies are much more open. The most efficient form of intervention is to be achieved in »pre-conflict« societies, that is, in environments where institutional stability and ethnic coexistence have been eroded but where mobilization mechanisms aimed at confrontation have not yet been established.

Our own experience with intervention would appear to comply to a certain extent with the phases model, though most probably only on a patent and phenomenological (on the level of facts) plane. The GEI inaugurated project work in Bosnia in the year 2000, that is, precisely at the phase of transition out of violence and the moment of entry into the peace process proper. Contradistinctively, our experience with the attempt to develop project work in Kosovo proved far more difficult. The political situation was still unstable and our partners were less inclined and prepared to enter a mediation process regarding the contents of their textbooks and historical narratives. Treating conflict only in

42 Ibid., 11.

43 Marc Sommers, »Children, Education and War, Reaching EFA Objectives in Countries Affected by Conflict,« Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit Working Paper No. 1 (2002): 14.

44 Wolfgang Höpken, »History Textbooks in Post-war and Post-conflict Societies: Preconditions and Experiences in Comparative Perspective,« 373 – 395.

phases, however, simplifies the complexity of situations and seems to disregard a number of variables, already partially addressed by Höpken, such as the nature of the conflict and the enormous differences between conflicts; the significant differences between different contexts and cultures; the ways and means by which conflict was terminated or reduced; the degree to which elites may consider rapprochement profitable or not; the question of whether education is, or has been, included as a peace building instrument in the settlement of the conflict, etc. Thus, the conundrum over how to teach history and what its purpose and content in postwar societies should be as well as how to treat the history of recent conflict in the classroom remains a challenge for the disciplines of both history and pedagogy to ponder and tackle in the years to come.

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Peter Vodopivec

Politics of History Education in Slovenia and Slovene History Textbooks Since 1990

History was considered one of the least popular subjects among elementary and secondary school students in Slovenia in the 1980 s. Overloaded with political facts and abstract quasi-sociological generalizations, twentieth-century history in particular was a subject with indisputable political and ideological messages, intended to secure the legitimacy of communist rule, demonstrate the »brotherhood of the Yugoslav nations,« and glorify the communist resistance during World War II and the development of postwar Yugoslav society toward communism. Slovene history textbooks in the 1980 s did not differ essentially from the textbooks used in other Yugoslav republics. In Slovenia, students in the third grade of secondary school even studied from a Croatian textbook because the authorities were unable to find an author to write a Slovene one. Although a Slovene textbook for the fourth grade of secondary school (dealing with twentieth-century history) came out at the end of the 1980 s, teachers for the most part refused to use it on the grounds that it was too obsolete and one sided, and too much focused on war and political history.[1] All this resulted in striking historical misinformation, as revealed in a 1995 public opinion survey, in which 43 percent of respondents claimed that the Slovenes were included in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918 by decision of the great powers and not by their own will; 35 percent believed the Communist Party had been the strongest political party in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia; and 57 percent had never heard of any of the interwar Serbian or Croatian political leaders – not even Anton Korošec, one of the leading Slovene Catholic politicians of the interwar period.[2]

History curricula and history textbooks in Slovenia, as in other successor states of the former Yugoslavia, could only start changing in the 1990 s, after the

1 Peter Vodopivec, »Drafting Slovenia's new history curricula. History teaching in Central and Eastern European countries,« *Beiträge zur Historischen Sozialkunde* 2 (1996): 18 – 21.

2 Niko Toš, et al., eds, *Razumevanje preteklosti [Understanding the past]. Podatkovna knjiga, Prvi del [Research data, Part I]* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 1996), 40 – 42.

fall of communism and the demise of the common Yugoslav state. In Slovenia, the remodelling of history teaching and textbooks did not excite any particular political or public interest. The Association of Historical Societies, therefore, as a nonpolitical civic organization, initiated a debate on school history education and in 1991 formed two working teams (elementary school, secondary school, and university teachers and experts in didactics), which – without any particular financial and political support and on their own initiative – produced two proposals for new approaches to teaching history in elementary and secondary schools.[3] Due to lack of institutional support, the debate on the two proposals was so protracted that the new elementary school curriculum was approved only in 1994, and the secondary school curriculum only in 1996. The final formulation of the curricula was done according to the formal procedure of the National Curricula Committee for History, appointed by the Ministry of Education[4] and approved by the competent Expert Council for General Education.

In their proposals, authors of the new curricula followed the example of the draft secondary school curriculum already proposed by the Ljubljana University professor of history Bogo Grafenauer at the end of the 1970 s. The 1970 s and 1980 s in Slovenia and Yugoslavia were a period when the communist authorities, more than ever before, reshaped the school history education into a tool of ideological and political indoctrination, due to which the gap between school history and the professional historiography was wider than ever after World War II. As a result, Professor Grafenauer advocated the remodeling of history education in terms of both subject and concept and argued for the coordination of school teaching orientations with academic and expert historiography. The curriculum he conceived of offered a chronological and thematic review of the basic historical processes, phenomena, and institutions that characterize human development in individual historical periods, with the focus of history teaching being the most complex possible presentation of human existence in space and time – a framework within which the historical experience of the Yugoslav space and of the Slovene population should be dealt with. In this respect the Grafenauer curriculum tended toward a clear outline, without ideological bias, of the social and cultural history of the most important periods of human civilization

3 Participating in the dicussions of the working teams were five university professors from Ljubljana University, a university professor of didactics from Ljubljana, four secondary school teachers from Ljubljana, Celje, and Slovenj Gradec, and three elementary school teachers from the surroundings of Ljubljana and Nova Gorica (two of whom were also experts at the National Education Institute).

4 The National Curricula Committee for History had seven members: two university professors, two secondary school teachers, and three elementary school teachers (one of whom was an expert at the National Education Institute). Six of them also participated in the working teams formed by the Association of Historical Societies.

from its beginnings to modern times.[5] The proposed reorientation of school history from the eventful political surface to deeper cultural and social-historical aspects, which focused much more on contrasting historical situations and conditions than on the supposedly perennial (national-ideological) messages and values, and which simultaneously made relativist the notion of »progress« and recognized in »the nation« only another form of human association, was not acceptable to the communist school politicians. They insisted that among the most important tasks of teaching history were the transfer of revolutionary, patriotic, and »progressive« national traditions to coming generations as well and the education of young people in the »Marxist spirit.« Grafenauer's draft of the curriculum was thus rejected, with the argument that it was not sufficiently »Marxist« and »national.«

New history curricula and the problems of their implementation

In Slovenia in the second half of the 1970 s, there was much resistance to the then Yugoslav educational reforms toward career and work-oriented education, but in the early 1980 s the reforms replacing gymnasiums, technical high schools, and vocational schools with multipurpose, comprehensive secondary schools were nevertheless adopted in Slovenia, if in a modified and less radical way than elsewhere in Yugoslavia. In the newly introduced multipurpose secondary schools, the first two years were devoted to general education, while vocational career education was emphasized in the last two. The reform did not – as predicted by its opponents – bear the expected results: Secondary school graduates got less general education than before and were poorly prepared for the university; nor were they ready for vocation either. Immediately after the first multiparty election in the fall of 1990, therefore, an updated version of the former three-part system (gymnasiums, technical high schools, vocational schools) was restored, reinstating the gymnasium as preparatory school for university education.[6] The working teams that, following the fall of communism and Slovene independence, prepared new curricula for history teaching in Slovenia at the beginning of the 1990 s took thus the example of Grafenauer's draft on the one hand and, on the other hand, contemporary, particularly French and German,

5 Bogo Grafenauer, »Problematika izrade programa istorije kao obaveznog predmeta zajedničke programske osnove usmerenog obrazovanja u reformiranoj školi [Some problems with the shaping of history curricula within the framework of the common program in the reformed, vocationally oriented secondary school],« *Pouk Zgodovine – Nastava povijesti* 1 (1979): 2 – 7.

6 Leopoldina Plut-Pregelj and Carole Rogel, *Historical dictionary of Slovenia, Second Edition* (Plymouth, UK: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 118 – 119, 126 – 127.

social and cultural historical literature as well as the materials of the Council of Europe devoted to history education. They proceeded from the following premises:

- History teaching should focus mainly on transformations of human society at different times and in diverse forms. Students should become acquainted with the main trends, institutions, events, situations, ideas, and existential problems in their many forms, durabilities and varieties. Main attention should be focused on Europe as a cultural historical framework, with greater attention paid to national and regional history in primary school. The Slovene heritage, history, and culture should be given special consideration but, wherever possible, set within a broader European, Central European, and Southeast European context.
- History teaching should inform students of events as well as of historical processes. It should encourage them to seek parallels and patterns in the ways people reacted to challenges and pressing needs in the past. At both primary and secondary school levels, teaching should be organized along chronological lines, and gradually change from a more narrative presentation to one more centered on topics and problems. History should certainly not consist of rote learning of names and dates. Rather, it should help to develop an intuitive grasp of time spans, of phenomena changing and enduring. It should never be forgotten that history is essentially a narrative subject and will be convincing and interesting only when presented as such.
- History teaching will be able to address the many questions transmitted and interpreted by the collective memory if individual and group experiences are themselves set in a broader spatial and temporal frame. History as a school subject should therefore be freed as far as possible of ideological and nationalistic catchwords and formulae. Rather, questions and topics should be chosen in such a way as to respond to the fundamental concerns of individuals and humanity. This does not, of course, amount to a rejection of political history. On the contrary, it calls for its integration into social, cultural, economic and, chronological contexts.[7]

On the basis of the above starting guidelines, the working teams designed fairly comprehensive and chronological curricula for history teaching in elementary and secondary schools. At both levels, elementary[8] and secondary, the subject

7 Peter Vodopivec, »Ob novem učnem načrtu pouka zgodovine v gimnazijah [About the New History Curriculum in Grammar Schools],« *Zgodovinski časopis* 48 (1994): 257 – 258.

8 Until 1999 to 2000, basic (elementary) school education in Slovenia was organized in two cycles: The lower encompassed grades one to four, and the upper, grades five to eight with

should cover the entire time span, from the beginnings of human civilization to the modern and contemporary periods, whereby elementary school education should be oriented more toward events and »everyday life images,« and secondary school education more toward a thematic presentation of the most important historical flows and phenomena. At elementary school level, there should be more hours and space devoted to the Slovene (national and regional) past, and at secondary grammar (gymnasium) school level, to European and general history.[9] In European history, certain topics and particularities of Western, Central, and Eastern European history were specifically mentioned, while from the settlement of the South Slavs in the Balkans in the early Middle Ages onward, students were supposed to get some basic knowledge of the history of the Serbs, Croats, Macedonians, and Montenegrins. Similarly, within the framework of the treatment of the Slovene history of the twentieth century, there were extensive chapters devoted to the first and to the second Yugoslavia. At both levels the curricula stimulated broadening the study focus from political history to social, economic, and cultural history, which naturally – considering the number of available lessons – was easier done with earlier periods than with contemporary ones.[10] Particularly the review of twentieth-century history, despite being assigned the most space and lessons (the entire final year at both levels) compared to other historical periods, was still fairly traditionally conceived, quoting events and facts, because the authors of the curricula presumed that the political and historical events of »recent history« marked the »contemporary world« to such an extent that, even for a school account, they could not be simply summarized if one wanted to present them clearly and critically.

As a matter of fact, the curricula for both levels – elementary and secondary – were outlined in a fair amount of detail – not, as openly stated in the introduction, to be realized by teachers in total and verbatim, but mainly to assist them in the defining of development flows and in the selection of topics to be treated in courses. When preparing his annual curriculum, the teacher was

subject instruction. History was a compulsory subject from the fifth to the eighth grade. From 1999 to 2000 basic (elementary) school education was gradually extented from eight to nine years. Since then, history has been a compulsory subject from the sixth to ninth grade.

9 In the original conception of the curricula, the ratio between the topics of Slovene national history and those of European and general history was supposed to be, at elementary school level, approximately 60 percent national history to 40 percent European and general, and at secondary school level, 40 percent national to 60 percent to European and general, but in the adopted version of the curricula, these ratios were not specifically defined.

10 In the four higher grades of elementary school in Slovenia (the sixth to ninth grades), a total of 235 hours are assigned to history; in the general grammar school (gymnasium), similarly, 280 hours are assigned in four years; and in the professional (economic and technical) secondary schools, 210 hours in three years—which means, with the exception of the sixth grade of elementary school, in which history teachers have only thirty-five hours available, seventy hours a year.

supposed to be much more independent and free than he had been previously. During the period of the communist regime up to the end of the 1980 s, a teacher had to obediently and strictly follow the curricula, which specified from one lesson to the next what the students had to be told; under the new teaching guidelines, however, he or she could select topics from the curriculum framework to which to devote more attention, whether due to their topicality or their being of special interest to the students. In this regard, the proponents of the new curricula stated that a properly trained teacher was a competent judge of his or her profession who was able, in terms of content, to independently design his or her annual curriculum and did not need restrictive instructions prescribing the development of the learning process in detail. Such instructions had, after all, deteriorated in the not-so-distant past into a one-sided political and ideological tool, while under the new, more democratic and politically more pluralist conditions, the curriculum was supposed to be founded on contemporary historiographic knowledge and, as far as possible, free of one-sided ideological and political messages. The composers of the new curricula therefore also avoided a detailed enumeration of didactic and teaching goals in individual topics, and only briefly defined general study objectives. As they set it out, history education in elementary and secondary schools was supposed to convey »knowledge of the most important events, phenomena, and processes of world, European, and Slovene history« to students, to shape their capacity to imagine time and space and their relation to the national and general human cultural heritage. It should simultaneously train them in the understanding and respect of »different religions, cultures, and communities« and in the critical judgment of all forms of messages as well as of the contemporary social and political reality. In order to realize these goals, the authors of the new curricula were persuaded that history teaching in the future should be conceived more attractively and closer to life than before. The basic task of history education was not solely the conveying of facts about the past as an indispensable part of general education and of patriotic and national education, but primarily the stimulation of interest in history, the formation of a sense of time, duration, and transformation, and the reinforcement of the knowledge that a critical historical memory is an important resource in the search for social well-being as well as for individual personal life courses and choices.

Although the new curricula proposals and their orientations were supported by distinguished representatives of the profession, history professors at the University of Ljubljana, and the Association of Historical Societies of Slovenia, some elementary and secondary school teachers were at first not very enthusiastic about them. It is true that in the 1980 s teachers loved to complain that the strictly programmed curricula and textbooks hardly left them any freedom and that the teaching of contemporary history was too limited to the political surface

and, particularly in matters of recent national history, utterly politicized. However, the new curricula, which enabled teachers to plan their lessons more or less independently within the outlined guidelines and topics and simultaneously to devote more attention than before to topics of social, cultural, and everyday life, perplexed them. Some teachers therefore found that the new curricula, which did not define in detail the »compulsory« study contents, were »not sufficiently precise«; others also objected to the broadening of the study focus to social and cultural history, claiming that there was more than enough political and factual history that needed to be conveyed at school in the treatment of individual topics and periods, and that there was not enough time for social, cultural, and everyday history topics. The return to a curriculum that would define more precisely the »study contents« and »study objectives« was also supported by the National Education Institute, the central state institution responsible for the development of education. The curricula prepared by the working teams of the Association of Historical Societies were thus, without the teams' approval, furnished with extensive pedagogical and didactic instructions in the style of »the student shall learn,« »the student shall know« and »the student shall be able to describe.« This further perplexed the teachers, already filled as they were with uncertainty by the appeals to plan their lessons more independently and more liberally than before.

As a result, in the second half of the 1990 s, the working teams that prepared the new curricula tried to familiarize teachers with the new study orientations at numerous professional meetings and seminars. Because the school authorities in Slovenia and the National Education Institute, which as the central state institution, was responsible for monitoring the modernization of the curriculum, constantly failed to show any particular interest in subject changes in history education, debate on the modernization of history teaching was promoted by the new curricula authors themselves – at secondary school level primarily within the framework of teachers' preparation to the reintroduction of the secondary school graduation exam. Reintroduced in Slovenia in 1995, the secondary school graduation exam, which the communist authorities had abolished at the beginning of the 1960 s and replaced with a rather less ambitious (prevailingly internal school) final examination, now took the form of a (state external) final exam required to complete grammar school. One of the possible credit subjects in the modernized exam was history, and a team of university and secondary school teachers created the program for the exam's history test. The material that the students had to master was composed of ten to twelve topics from all historical periods, while the exam comprised only two of them – one from national (Slovene) and one from general history.[11] The then government

11 Students sat for the secondary school graduation exam in writing, answering questions and

coalition, headed by the Liberal Democrats, gave great importance to the reintroduction of the secondary school graduation exam, as it expected this would accelerate the modernization of grammar school education. The school authorities therefore assigned substantial funds to the training of the teachers who prepared students for the graduation exam. The creation of educational programs and their realization was ceded to the committees that had drafted the graduation exam programs and tests, whereby the authors of the new curricula also sat on this committee. Under their influence, the professional seminars and courses being held within the framework of preparations for the graduation exam grew into well-attended professional meetings, dealing with a variety of open issues of history teaching and of new history study orientations. In its organization of teachers' education, the committee for the graduation exam relied on, among other things, the recommendations and materials of the Council of Europe intended for history teaching, while some of its members and teachers also actively participated in the programs and seminars held by the Council of Europe on history education. In 1999, a group of teachers that had attended Council of Europe symposiums and conferences founded the History Teacher's Association which listed concern for teachers' education among its priority tasks. The first major conference, organized in 2002, was devoted to »myths, stereotype judgments, and legends« in the study of national history.[12] On the initiative of the History Teachers' Association, the National Education Institute in 2004 also published a translation of the manual of the British author Robert Stradling, »Teaching Twentieth Century European History,« which had been published three years before by the Council of Europe.[13]

Through the increased attention paid to the training of teachers[14] and through discussions on the difficulties caused to teachers by the new study orientations, the circle of teachers who rejected the new curricula notably diminished. Simultaneously, history again became a popular school subject, as shown not only by the growing participation of elementary and secondary school teachers at

performing tasks prepared annually by the graduation exam committees in the form of test sheets. The test sheets, coded, were evaluated by special evaluation teams—consisting mostly of secondary school history teachers—for the entire state.

12 »Vloga mitov pri poučevanju slovenske zgodovine [The role of myths in Slovene history teaching] I.« Zborovanje učiteljev zgodovine [1st Conference of history teachers], Ljubljana: History Teachers' Association, 2003.

13 Robert Stradling, *Teaching 20th Century European History* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2001).

14 There are, according to the data of the National Education Institute, around 750 history teachers teaching history (some of them also other subjects) in Slovene elementary and secondary schools. Around 450 of them are elementary school teachers, around 150 are teaching in secondary schools (gymnasiums), and approximately another 150 teach in technical and vocational schools.

annual competitions in the knowledge of history, but also by the fairly large number of secondary school students who decided to take the history test in their secondary school graduation exam. In the second half of the 1990 s, 30 to 40 percent of all secondary school graduates selected history for their graduation exam each year. However, the graduation exam tests revealed that the history knowledge of students, even after the introduction of the new curricula, was rather weak. It turned out that although teachers had, for the most part, successfully abandoned the simplified ideological-political interpretative schemes applicable in the time of the communist regime, a not negligible number of them still resorted to historicist and one-sided nationally (even nationalistically) colored treatments of the subject. Students continued to encounter numerous details in the study of history, even at secondary school level, that they were unable to make sense of or put into a broader context – spatial or temporal. They generally had great difficulties with time and space orientation, and they did not understand or did not know how to explain such basic notions as feudalism, capitalism, liberalism, absolutism, parliamentarism, religious tolerance and freedom, and citizenship. A specific problem was the teaching of national history, which was mostly limited to a national-political presentation of the development of the Slovene national community, to various aspects of its struggle for national recognition, and to the struggles with a variety of opponents that had made more difficult and slowed down the process of national emancipation.

The unexpectedly poor results of history tests at the secondary school graduation exams was further proof to the critics of the new curricula that it had to be remodeled to define more precisely the topics the teacher should (more or less compulsorily) convey to students. Advocates of the new study orientations and of greater teachers' independence, on the other hand, believed these results served as an additional argument for more intensive professional training of and discussions with teachers. However, at the National Education Institute and other institutions charged with training teachers, the general pedagogues and didactic experts, who thought teachers needed primarily more practical, didactic, and pedagogical skills in order to raise the quality of teaching, prevailed. Since 1991, the National Education Institute has published the magazine *History at School*, edited by its history advisers and some outside associates, as well as several manuals for history teachers. While the *History at School* magazine and the published manuals familiarized teachers with recent historiographic interpretations of individual, mostly contemporary, history topics[15] and with

15 These manuals treated topics such as: Europe and Slovene provinces in the period from 1815 to 1848, the European economy in the eighteenth century and the beginnings of modern industrialization in England (active learning methods), the mass emigration of Slovenes to the United States, etc.

methods of »active learning,« they did not pay much attention to other problems caused by the new subject orientations of history teaching. There were thus not a few open issues, starting with postcommunist interpretations of the so-called recent history. Although Slovene historiography, after the fall of communism and the demise of Yugoslavia, tried fairly steadily to challenge the long-prevailing communist interpretations of conditions on Yugoslav and Slovene territory during World War II, and of the postwar Yugoslav and Slovene political and social reality, different views of the »recent past« incited sharp public polemics. The authors of the new curricula advised the teachers to rely on the latest findings of historiography in the treatment of the recent, as well as of the more distant, past and, as far as possible, to avoid subjective (political) judgments. They recommended that the teachers also listen to the students' viewpoints and commentaries and try, should the students through their emotionally and politically colored views move too far from historical facts, to point out differences in the understanding and evaluation of historical processes and events, and the causes for these differences. There was, however, no precise information about how teachers under the new political conditions after 1990 and after the adoption of the new curricula were dealing with the essence of teaching history in schools. Analyses performed by the National Education Institute and other pedagogical institutions were again devoted mainly to the pedagogical and didactic aspects of teaching, and were interested only in the contents thereof in terms of formal compliance with the curricula. Under such conditions, efforts to create a closer link between history education and education for citizenship failed. Citizenship and ethics is a compulsory subject only in the seventh and eighth grades of elementary school (in the ninth grade, civic culture is an elective subject). At the secondary school level, however, civic education is supposed to be implicitly present in subjects such as history, geography, sociology, and philosophy. Nevertheless, there are, at least for history, no clear recommendations given on how to include the civic-related approach, how to teach civic-related topics, or how to reflect upon them in order to make them part of the curriculum – all of which could substantially contribute to the transformation of history from a still overly traditional, historicist, and nationalistically oriented school subject into an open, citizenship-based one.[16]

16 A manual consisting of translated as well as Slovene papers on education for citizenship in teaching history, geography, and Slovene language, prepared by the Institute of Pedagogy in 2003, met thus almost no response among history teachers and school polticians. Janez Justin and Sardoč Mitja, eds., *Državljanska vzgoja pri pouku zgodovine, geografije in slovenščine [Education for citizenship and the teaching of history, geography and Slovene language]* (Ljubljana: Družba za založništvo in izobraževanje, 2003).

Some characteristics of the history textbooks published after 1990

Most of the problems and difficulties that accompanied the modernization of history teaching in Slovenia after the demise of Yugoslavia and the independence of Slovenia were also reflected in history textbooks edited after 1990. Since the beginning of the nineties in Slovenia, there have no longer been legal restrictions on the publication of school textbooks, and they can be published by both large and small (state-owned or private) publishers, although only textbooks approved by a special state committee can be used in schools by teachers and students. This committee has again evaluated textbooks primarily from the viewpoint of their linguistic and didactic suitability and their conformity with the curricula, but its standards have often been rather loose, since history textbooks that undoubtedly lacked the necessary didactic and professional qualities were also approved as suitable. It has thus been possible to select among several textbooks for each subject and for each study level, while the final decision about which textbook is to be used has mostly been adopted by teachers.

History textbooks published in the 1990 s and since 2000 have certainly been more up-to-date and more attractive in graphic and pictorial aspects than their »socialist« predecessors. Their authors have mostly succeeded in doing away with so-called Marxist (in reality, however, simplified and schematic communist) terminology and stereotypes.[17] In particular, textbooks dealing with Greek and Roman (classical), medieval, and early modern history have devoted more attention than before to social and cultural history and to everyday life in the past. There has also been more Western European and non-European history, and in some of the new textbooks, national, i. e. Slovene, history has been treated more from the cultural and social point of view than from the strictly ethnonational one. Nevertheless, authors who took pains to design school texts in a more dynamic/narrative and less dry/factual way have been the exception rather than the rule. Most authors have not followed the aforementioned guidelines from the beginning of the 1990 s even in didactic terms: Their textbooks have remained overly extensive, overburdened with facts and information, and for the most part have not rendered the historical contents in a synthetic way, presenting problems and encompassing an extended period of time. The second »generation« of history textbooks, published from the end of the nineties, was less comprehensive, but not much less factual. There is even a tendency among the most recent elementary school textbooks to create the shortest possible texts, limited to actual facts, rendered in the form of questions and answers. However,

17 The authors of the textbooks are university professors, secondary and primary school teachers, and special didactic experts.

this is in clear contradiction to the recommendations of the guidelines adopted at the beginning of the 1990 s, i. e. that unpopular school history be transformed into a narratively conceived subject that is »friendly and fun.«

In accordance with the new curricula, in the school textbooks for the first secondary school level dealing with classical, medieval, and early modern history, general European and non-European topics undoubtedly prevail, linked to the development of European civilization, while national (Slovene) history is presented in special chapters, with more or less modernized emphases. Authors describing conditions on Slovene territory during the time of the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire thus write about »Slovene territory under the Romans,« and they present the inhabitants of early medieval Carantania, which Slovene historiography had until recently proclaimed a Slovene state, not as Slovenes but as Alpine Slavs. It is true that some textbooks mention that the Alpine Slavs were the predecessors of the Slovenes and that Carantania was an »independent duchy« of the Slovene forebears, but even elementary school textbooks no longer designate the Carantania Slavs simply as Slovenes. In the context of early Slav history, more attention is devoted to Eastern and Southeastern Europe, i. e. to Great Moravia, Kiev Russia, and to early medieval political formations on what is now Croatian, Serbian, and Macedonian territory.[18] Presentation of the migrations of the Slavs in the early Middle Ages is, however, limited exclusively to an outline of the settlement of the Slavs in the Eastern Alps, i. e. on (the present) Slovene territory.

In terms of content, textbooks for the second grammar school level dealing with the Middle Ages and early modern history are conceived similarly to textbooks dealing with the classical period and the early Middle Ages, except that there is even less military and political history; rather, they focus on Western European social, economic, cultural, and religious-ecclesiastical currents and developments. Compared with textbooks used during the time of the second Yugoslavia, there is notably less history of the Balkans and of the South Slavs (Croats, Serbs, and Bulgarians); these are, for the most part, mentioned briefly in synthetic chapters on European and world conditions (and in some textbooks, no more extensively than as regards conditions in India and China). Surprisingly little space, much less than to the Arabs and to Islam in the early Middle Ages, is devoted to the Ottoman Empire and to the Ottoman expansion into the Balkans, while »Turkish invasions on Slovene territory« are portrayed in more detail in special sub-chapters dedicated to the national (Slovene) history.

18 Croatia under King Tomislav is believed to have become one of the strongest countries on the Balkan Peninsula in the tenth century, and a special sub-chapter is also dedicated to the Macedonian Slav state under the rule of the »emperor« Samuel. Stane Berezlak, *Srednji in novi vek, Zgodovina za 2. letnik gimnazij [Middle ages and new ages, History for the second grade of grammer schools]* (Ljubljana: Modrijan, 2002).

In the entire period treated by the textbooks for the second grammar school level (i. e. the period from the tenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century), Slovene history is presented primarily in terms of the administrative, political, ecclesiastical, cultural, social, and economic development of regions inhabited by the Slovene-speaking population.[19] This approach is in compliance with the orientation of contemporary Slovene historiography, which rejects a one-sided attributing of modern national concepts to periods in which there was still no national identification, but it obviously causes considerable difficulties to the authors of the textbooks as well as to students and teachers. Textbook authors designate as »Slovene« the Austrian crown lands that had a majority Slovene-speaking population, but nowhere do they explain in more detail what this means or point out clearly that so-called Slovene provinces were never homogenously ethnically »Slovene.« It is true that it can be understood from some chapters that for a long period, from the tenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Slovene-speaking people were mostly subjects and peasants, while the nobility and the middle classes were mainly of German and Italian origin, but what is not explained in detail is the relations among the different groups of the population, the usage and function of the languages spoken by each group, and what the various language practices represented in the relations among these people. Nor do authors pay any attention to what the loyalties of the population prior to the emergence of modern nations were and what bonded the inhabitants of »Slovene provinces« at the time. One can therefore conclude that the authors were trying to consider the viewpoint of professional historiography – which opposed a generalized national concept of history in the pre-national period – but they were, at the same time, having considerable difficulty adopting more modern concepts.

The textbooks also do not pay any particular attention to the formation processes of modern nations, to the gradual affirmation of modern national awareness, or to the question of why modern nationalism represents such a break with traditional sentiments of belonging and loyalty. Nations and national movements first appear, quite suddenly and without detailed explanation, in the textbooks' outline of the beginning of the Slovene cultural movement at the end of the eighteenth century – a »Slovene national rebirth«[20] that apparently ini-

19 The titles of chapters themselves certainly indicate this focus: Slovene lands in the high and late Middle Ages; Development of Slovene lands; Slovene lands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; Slovene territory at the transition to the nineteenth century. See: Stane Berezlak, *Srednji in novi vek, Zgodovina za 2. letnik gimnazij.*

20 In Slovene historiography, the notion of rebirth or renewal is no longer used to designate the beginning of the Slovene cultural and literary movement of the eighteenth century, because a rebirth/renewal implies that something that already existed is reborn. In contemporary historiography, the opinion prevails that the Slovene cultural movement starting in the

tiated trends toward the introduction of the Slovene language in schools, in literary works, and in public. Textbooks for the third grammar school level dealing with the history of the nineteenth century present in more detail the national movements in Central and Western Europe in the first half of the century and state that »people speaking the same language, having the same culture and feeling connected through history, wanted to live together in their own states.« One of the latest textbooks for the third secondary school level, published in 2004, referring to the German historian Hagen Schulze, also maintains »how the national idea captured the masses and materialized itself…cannot be told in simple words.«[21] But, as far as the emergence of nations goes, this is almost all that's mentioned.

In the treatment of the history of the nineteenth century, a little more space than in the context of the previous periods is devoted to the Ottoman Empire and to its tendencies toward modernization. Within this framework, the first and second Serbian uprising and the origin of an independent Greek state are also presented. The textbooks dwell only briefly on the history of Croatia in the first half of the nineteenth century, in the presentation of the Illyrian movement, and they touch only briefly and incidentally on Croatia in the second half of the nineteenth century, in chapters devoted to the Habsburg monarchy and to its national problems. The textbooks again return to Bosnian, Montenegrin, and Macedonian history in the »Restless Balkans« chapter, conceived particularly in a political-historical way and ending with a military presentation of the Balkan wars.

Despite the guidelines recommending that textbooks and teachers pay more attention to social, economic, and cultural conditions in dealing with nineteenth century history in schools, political and factual history remains prevalent even in the most recently published history textbooks dealing with this period. The great social, economic, and cultural changes caused by modern industrialization in Europe and the rest of the world are presented in chapters encompassing merely 15 to 25 percent of the total text; Slovene history, meanwhile, is also primarily presented from a political and factual point of view, with a presentation of the economic, social, and cultural transformation in the so-called Slovene provinces included only in the outline of said history. In secondary school textbooks dealing with the nineteenth century, slightly more than 40

eighteenth century is a completely new phenomenon, without precedence in previous periods.

21 In the chapter entitled »National Movements, « the textbook published in 2004 presents the German, Italian, Belgian, Polish, and Irish national movements of the first half of the nineteenth century in a brief and factual way, while it also mentions the independence movement of the then Spanish colonies and Brasil in South America. See Janez Cvirn and Andrej Studen, *Zgodovina 3 [History 3]* (Ljubljana: Državna založba, 2004), 18.

percent of the text is dedicated to Slovene history and approximately 10 percent to the Habsburg monarchy, while quite a lot of attention is paid to the national issue.[22] The picture of the Habsburg monarchy, framed in the light of national oppositions, still remains dark and one-sided, while the Slovene movement after 1848 is rather uncritically represented as a relatively mass movement, and mainly from the aspect of Slovene national-political demands, opinions, party divisions, and individual political achievements. The goal of the Slovene national movement in the second half of the nineteenth century was the realization of the program, adopted in 1848, of the unification of all Slovene-populated regions into a single administrative and political unit within the Habsburg monarchy. The textbook authors represent this program as a sort of national ideal, without asking themselves what it actually meant to the then Slovene-speaking population or how the people viewed their leaders and politicians. The nation and the national identification are also apparently so self-evident that neither needs special explanation. More explanations are devoted to the Yugoslav idea, espoused by the Slovene political parties at the beginning of the twentieth century, and to the Yugoslav movement in Slovene regions before World War I – both of which are supposedly the result of a Slovene fear of German and Italian nationalism and the numerical smallness of the Slovenes, who, because of their small number, »were not supposed to contemplate their own national state.« According to the authors of the textbooks, the Slovene Yugoslav movement tended toward the unification of the South Slavs of the Habsburg monarchy into a special state unit, while ideas of what this state was supposed to look like, and what the relations among its nations were supposed to be, were fairly unclear up to the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (SCS hereafter) in December 1918. A few shorter chapters address the world outside Europe (United States, India, China, Japan, and Africa), and the latest textbook, published in 2004,[23] for the third secondary school level, also highlights the Jewish question, family transformations, and the condition of women in the nineteenth century. All textbooks are typically overburdened with data and facts, and only occasionally indicate sustained development processes in a more synthetic and narrative way.

This is also characteristic of textbooks for the fourth secondary school level dealing with the twentieth century.[24] Their basic structure of topics and content

22 For example, to the revolutions of 1848, which are still primarily and stereotypically represented as the »Spring of Nations.« Special chapters are also devoted to the unification of Germany and Italy, while national issues are extensively treated in the chapters about the Habsburg monarchy. See Janez Cvirn and Andrej Studen, *Zgodovina 3.*

23 See Janez Cvirn and Andrej Studen, *Zgodovina 3.*

24 Božo Repe, *Naša doba, Oris zgodovine 20. stoletja [Our Age, an outline of 20th century history]* (Ljubljana: Državna založba, 1995); Božo Repe, *Naša doba, Oris zgodovine 20.*

does not substantially differ from textbooks used in the last decade of socialist Yugoslavia. It is true that more attention is paid to economic, social, and cultural historical issues, but political and factual history still strongly prevail. The new textbooks, published after 1990, naturally differ from their socialist predecessors in their interpretations of the two Yugoslav states (the Yugoslav Kingdom and communist Yugoslavia), the Slovene position within their framework, the relations among individual Yugoslav nations, and the history of communism and of World War II on Yugoslav and Slovene territory. In all textbooks, the Kingdom of SCS (and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia) is primarily treated from the standpoint of major internal differences and disputes, and oppositions. The textbooks suggest that the Kingdom of SCS, founded in 1918, was formed under Serbian, centralist premises and that upon adoption of the 1921 Vidovdan Constitution, the state was literally broken in half by the advocates of centralism – among whom the Serbs were the majority – and the advocates of federalism – comprising, supposedly, mostly Croats and Slovenes. Centralism was intended to provide the Serbs with power »over the economically and culturally more advanced Croats and Slovenes,« while Serbian centralistic policy supposedly experienced collapse in the first half of the thirties, with the assassination of King Alexander. In the mid-thirties, as a result of the internal Yugoslav and general European crisis, presumably »most of the Serbian intelligentsia realized that unification of all Yugoslavs according to the Serbian model was impossible,«[25] and therefore they themselves started striving for the reorganization of the country. In this light, the Banovina of Croatia was intended to be the first step toward federalization, but even that encountered great opposition in Serbia, according to the textbooks. This is more or less all that students can learn from the textbooks about Serbian and Croatian history between the two world wars (while the Macedonians, Bosnian Muslims, and the Montenegrins are mentioned only incidentally).

All other chapters dealing with the history of the first Yugoslavia are devoted to Slovene history. In political terms, their attention is focused mostly on internal Slovene political divisions and on national tendencies and conceptions. There is a more extensive presentation of Catholic autonomist policy and projects, and the opposition of the intelligentsia to the pressures of »Yugoslav cultural unification.« In the chapters dealing with Slovene economic and cultural development, it is unequivocally stated that the Slovenes experienced significant economic and cultural progress in the Yugoslav Kingdom, although the dark

stoletja [Our Age, an outline of 20th century history] (Ljubljana: Modrijan, 2000); Ervin Dolenc and Aleš Gabrič, *Zgodovina 4 [History 4]* (Ljubljana: Državna založba, 2004).

25 Ervin Dolenc and Aleš Gabrič, *Zgodovina 4 [History 4]*, 91.

picture of the first Yugoslav state, as painted by the textbooks, can no longer be substantially changed.

World War II on Slovene territory is a historical subject that has caused particularly sharp polemics among the public since the fall of communism. From the mid-1980 s onward, the one-sided image of the Yugoslav and communist past, as created during communist times, started changing in the realm of historiography, at first slowly and then more and more rapidly. The majority of professional historians engaged in critical re-interpretations based on balanced and systematic research and opposed to the extreme politically and ideologically motivated revisionism of the World War II and post–World War II Slovene and Yugoslav history,[26] This had, and still has, an important impact on the textbooks, since their authors, confused by new presentations and interpretations, avoided and avoid – when dealing with recent history issues – more specific judgments through an impersonal chronological enumeration of facts and data. There is thus no longer an apologetic depiction of the partisan resistance, typical of the textbooks of the 1970 s and eighties, and no longer a one-sided negative judgment of all those who opposed the partisan movement. All textbooks, whether for elementary or secondary schools, positively estimate the resistance against German and Italian occupation, while they simultaneously mention that one of the reasons for collaboration and the civil war was revolutionary communist radicalism. Conditions in the various regions occupied by the German, Italian, and Hungarian armies are presented in detail, as well as relations in the Liberation Front and in the anti-resistance (anticommunist) camp. The authors mostly agree that the communists »took over power« during the war itself, and conclude that the clergy of the Catholic Church was as divided as the rest of the Slovene population in relation to the resistance, while only the Church authorities in Ljubljana, »due to the revolutionary violence,« occasionally collaborated with the occupation forces. The larger Yugoslav framework of wartime events and resistance movement is extensively presented in textbooks published in the 1990 s, but much less so in textbooks published after 2000, as these are mostly interested only in Slovenia. What picture students get from textbooks of World War II on Slovene territory is naturally a question all on its own, and one whose answer is fairly unclear. The communists, who are presented as a minority among participants of the anti-occupation resistance, are simultaneously and without any special explanation represented as heroes, liberators, revolutionaries, and mass murderers.

The recreation of Yugoslavia in 1945 is – even in recent textbooks – presented as a self-evident fact, with no need for further explanation. However, conditions

26 Peter Vodopivec, »Historiography in Slovenia today,« *Slovene Studies, Journal of the Society for Slovene Studies* 1 – 2 (2003): 11 – 14.

in the wider Yugoslav framework are again treated only in chapters defining the postwar communist regime or dealing with its transformation and national relations in the state, while the main attention is focused on Slovenia and on the position of Slovenia within the Yugoslav federation. The authors highlight that, until 1948, Yugoslavia was a very close partner of the Soviet Union, and describe in detail the communist take over in the Slovene case. Within this framework, they also mention the postwar communist violence: the mass killings of wartime and postwar opponents of the communists, political trials, nationalization, farm collectivization and its consequences, and communist economic policy. The break with the Soviet Union in 1948 is considered the »pivotal point in the development of the second Yugoslavia,« and the main reason for it is said to have been Soviet ambitions for hegemony. In this regard, the textbooks teach that, after turning away from the Soviet Union and gradually opening to the West, Yugoslavia had to »carry out several democratic changes,« owing to which it »developed unlike other communist countries« from the beginning of the fifties onwards. The characteristics of Yugoslav socialism are supposed to include a »higher standard of living« than in other communist countries or the Soviet Union, »greater freedom in cultural and scientific life,« »more intense contacts with Western countries,« and »workers' self-management,« which in textbooks published in the nineties, is even presented in some detail, although with a critical commentary that »self-management democracy« was essentially political manipulation, as the communists continued to hold all authority in their own hands.

Also in the outline of the history of the second, communist Yugoslavia, the textbook authors pay particular attention to the national issue and national relations in the Yugoslav federation. In this respect they uniformly mention that Yugoslavia was a »federal state« only in name, but actually »very centralized« throughout the postwar years. Thus, as in the first Yugoslavia, there was permanent antagonism in the second Yugoslavia between »centralists« and »federalists,« which was supposedly reflected in all areas: politics, the economy, and culture. This time, too, centralistic tendencies were greatly supported by the Serbs, and federalist tendencies by the Slovenes and Croats, as well as Macedonians. The »centralists« were hereby successfully opposed, especially by Edvard Kardelj, one of the chief Slovene communist leaders and principal ideologists of the Yugoslav political system. Among the several Yugoslav constitutions, the textbooks highlight in particular the 1974 constitution, which was supposed »to have strengthened the state identity of the republics and thereby also of Slovenia,« while its detrimental impact on the solidity of the common Yugoslav state and its institutions is not mentioned. A new fatal event, which opened the gate to the final disintegration of Yugoslavia, according to the authors of all textbooks, both elementary and secondary, was the death of Josip Broz Tito

in 1980. Slovene textbooks depict Tito as an authoritarian, Bolshevik-oriented, but charismatic, political leader. One could even say that he is treated with sympathy and respect. Presented in this light, the decade-long disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1980 s, which is again described very much in detail, stemmed primarily from the economic crisis, Serbian nationalism, and unsolved national issues, while the final crisis and the disintegration of the country were also brought about by the controversial political activities of the nondemocratic communist regime.

If it is asked what students can learn from textbooks about the history of not only their own, but also of other, South Slav nations, the answer has to be very little: Even in the outline of Yugoslav history since 1945, contemporary Slovene textbooks treat the Serbs, Croats, and members of the other Yugoslav nations only in the context of the development of the common Yugoslav state, while more extensive chapters are dedicated only to Slovene history. It is clear from these chapters that only in the second Yugoslavia did the Slovenes finally develop into a modern, pluralistic, and industrial society, open to Europe. Nevertheless, the question of contributions resulting from their having lived in communist Yugoslavia is not specifically dealt with, while Slovene independence and the origin of the Slovene state are presented as a logical finale of Slovenian discontent with communism and Yugoslavia and its inability to provide a more sustained balance in the relations among the nations.

To summarize: Slovene history textbooks published after 1990 are undoubtedly more attractive in terms of their form, more abundant in their content, and from the political and ideological point of view, more pluralistically conceived than the socialist textbooks from the 1980 s. However, the most recent textbooks also contain much too much factual information, and very little real life. Only a few textbooks, particularly those dealing with the earlier history periods, are conceived in a more narrative way; textbooks dealing with the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are mostly designed in a strictly chronological and fact-recording positivist form. This is a natural result, on the one hand, of the traditional tendency of Slovene historiography toward facts and positivism and, on the other hand, of the modest tradition of popular professional writing, and of undefined ideas about what the actual goal of teaching history in schools should be. It seems, therefore, unsurprising that even contemporary history textbooks are criticized in public and by professional historians mainly for what »they are still lacking and what they do not treat with sufficient precision,« and not for their lack of communication and their overburdening of students with information.

Forty-five percent of respondents of a Slovene public opinion poll conducted by the Institute for Public Opinion Research at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana, as late as 2003, claimed that they learned everything they knew about

history at school, from their history teachers and textbooks. Moreover: Josip Broz Tito was one of the most popular politicians among respondents; more than 40 percent had positive memories of former Yugoslavia; and more than 73 percent were convinced that they had lived well in the era of Yugoslavia.[27] However, to elementary and secondary school students in Slovenia today, according to their teachers, Yugoslavia seems as far away as the most distant historical periods. If these students ever get an opportunity to respond to public opinion research similar to that mentioned above, their views of Yugoslavia and communism, based on school textbooks, will be much grimmer and more negative than were the replies of the respondents in 2003, who formed their opinions on the basis of their own experience.

The reform of the reform of the history curricula in 2007–2008: Back to the future?

In 2004 – a little more than five months after Slovenia became a member of the European Union – an important political turn occurred. The previous government coalition, which had been led by the Liberal Democratic Party for almost twelve years, lost its majority at the October 2004 parliamentary elections, and the new coalition, led by the Democratic Party, took over the government. Rather paradoxically, considering the very recent membership in the European Union, the new coalition declared, among other things, that it would pay substantially more attention to the Slovene national interests in all areas, including education, than its predecessors. Whereas the liberal democrats, during the twelve years that they held the leading political position in the government, underestimated the political relevance of history issues and interpretations, the leaders of the Democratic Party advocated populist, anticommunist views concerning Slovene twentieth-century history, Slovene and Yugoslav resistance during World War II, and the post-communist World War II Slovene and Yugoslav past. Thus, already in the spring of 2005, the new minister of education gave a press interview in which he named the historians who were especially close to him in their views on national history and simultaneously stated that, in history teaching, more attention should be paid to topics that would fill students with »national pride« and which could have a positive impact on strengthening the Slovene »national identity.« History teaching was in his opinion (particularly concerning World War II and the Yugoslav communist period) too »old-fashioned,« i.e. too

27 Niko Toš, ed., *Vrednote v prehodu III, Slovensko javno mnenje 1999–2004 [Values in Transition III, Slovene Public Opinion 1999–2004]* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 2004), 468–477.

communist, and certain views should be more extensively presented at school – views that academic historiography had already defined as mythical.[28]

Concerning the reintroduction of mythical content into history education, the minister managed to slightly correct himself in the autumn of 2006, when, in his opening address at the conference of the Association of Historical Societies, he supported critical debate on »the mythical and stereotypical in Slovene history.« However, the new school authorities advocated a profound rewriting of the elementary and secondary school curricula adopted at the beginning of the 1990 s. They entrusted care of history education to experts who believed the applicable curricula and textbooks paid too little attention to »national history,« key events in the process of Slovene national emancipation, and to the Slovene independence of 1991, and simultaneously »too positively« and »uncritically« represented the period of the second Yugoslavia and Yugoslav communism. The topics of South Slav history were supposedly interfering with nationally more important Slovene historical issues and stealing the time teachers needed for an adequate treatment thereof.[29] After a scrutiny of curricula and textbooks, the critics of history education who accepted such an evaluation mostly limited themselves to the individual enumeration of topics, events, and persons with which the students »had to be familiarized« but »about which they knew nothing,« while in a generalized and controversial way, they claimed that history education and historiography in Slovenia were not completely cleared of »judgments inherited from the Yugoslav and communist period,« and only once more attention was instead devoted to national and patriotic educational goals, would history education and historiography again become what they were

28 In particular: the myth of the early medieval political formation of Carantania, a principality centered on the territory of Carinthia (in today's Austria), which was supposedly a »Slovene state«; and the myth, invented only after 1945 but still believed by some Slovene politicians, that the reports on the rite of installation of the dukes of Carantania decisively influenced one of the authors of the United States' Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, and the Declaration of Independence itself—a myth built on the simple fact that Jefferson, in his copy of the book *Les six livres de la République,* by Jean Bodin, marked the spot mentioning the rite of installation of the dukes of Karantania and/or dukes of Carinthia. See: Joseph Felicijan, *The Genesis of the Contractual Theory and the Installation of the Dukes of Carinthia* (Klagenfurt-Cleveland: Hermagoras/Mohorjeva, 1967), 12.

29 »What is the goal of teaching history that places the knowledge of [Serbian] Dusan the Powerful before the [Slovene] installation on the Prince's Stone, the first Serbian revolt before the idea of united Slovenia, the Antifascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia before Slovene independence?« was the question asked by the new president of the state textbook committee at the conference on citizenship and patriotic education, held by the State Council of the Republic of Slovenia in 2005. Stane Granda, »Državljanska ali domovinska vzgoja? [Citizenship or patriotic education?],« in *Državljanska in domovinska vzgoja [Citizenship and partriotic education], Collection of papers*, ed. by Andreja Barle Lakota and Erika Rustja (Beja: Slovenska Bistrica, 2006), 35.

supposed to be: basic shapers of the new »patriotic culture« and »conveyors of European civilization values.«[30]

Teachers were naturally unenthusiastic about the repeated transformations of curricula and textbooks, as not even a decade had passed since the last renovation of the study content and orientations of the nineties; nor did the new school politicians' requests for an increase in the volume of »national history,« »patriotic contents,« and topics and chapters devoted to »Slovene independence« enjoy any noticeable support among them. As a result, seminars for teachers that, at the incentive of school authorities, dealt with the process of the Slovene split with Yugoslavia and of Slovene independence from 1988 to1991 were not largely attended. There was, in contrast, much more interest in conferences on the history of the European idea, teaching European history, and the inclusion of human rights topics in history education, held by the History Teachers' Association cooperation with the European Association of History Teachers (EUROCLIO).[31] The opinion that »national« (Slovene) history was assigned enough space in the textbooks and that there was no need to increase its volume to the detriment of European and world history subjects also prevailed among the participants of a conference on citizenship and patriotism education, organized in the Slovene Parliament in 2005.[32] A similar standpoint was taken by a group of teachers, didactic experts, and school counselors, who prepared a new, »modernized« draft curriculum for history education in grammar schools in November 2007. In the same breath, however, they advocated radical changes in history education at secondary school level and therefore deviated not only from the study orientations adopted and confirmed in the 1990 s, but also from the long-term tradition of history education in Slovenia.

The new draft curriculum partly left out a chronological, and introduced a subject, approach, whereby it divided the topics to be treated by teachers and students at school into obligatory and optional. Among obligatory topics, to which 60 to 70 percent of available hours are supposed to be allotted, there prevail topics of political history, development of different forms of government, states, and empires, and in the recent period, the emergence of modern national

30 Milan Zver, »Da ne bi bili tujci v lastni kulturi [Not to be a foreigner in one's own culture],« in *Državljanska in domovinska vzgoja [Citizenship and patriotic education],* ed. Andreja Barle Lakota and Erika Rustja (Beja: Slovenska Bistrica, 2006), 18 – 21.

31 In March 2007 the History Teachers' Association together with EUROCLIO, and with the support of the Ministry of Education, also organized European conference for history teachers on »teaching human rights in history education.«

32 Erika Rustja, »Nova vloga zgodovine, učbeniki in državljanska vzgoja: primer učbenikov zgodovine za 2. letnik gimnazij [New role of history, the textbooks and citizenship education: the case of the history textbooks for the 2nd grade of the grammar schools],« in *Državljanska in domovinska vzgoja [Citizenship and patriotic education],* ed. Andreja Barle Lakota and Erika Rustja (Beja: Slovenska Bistrica, 2006), 139.

movements, democratic political institutions, and parliamentarism; economic, social, and cultural issues are given much less attention and are mostly included in the optional topics. Teachers are supposed to devote 30 to 40 percent of available hours to optional topics, and therein cover the most important social, economic, and cultural issues and, for some historical periods, issues of religion and everyday life as well. Simultaneously, in each historical period, the obligatory and optional topics are divided into two blocks: a general and European history block, and a Slovene (national) history one. The general and European history block, designed very generally, and mostly from the Western European point of view, does not stimulate teachers to focus on a more concrete presentation of differences in the development of various parts of Europe and of the world. In this respect, the new curriculum also does not anticipate a detailed presentation of the history of Southeast Europe and of the South Slav nations. As far as Europe is concerned, a more in-depth treatment is recommended on the conditions of only some of the major nations and states, while the South Slav nations should only be dealt with in the context of the first and the second Yugoslavia; and these two should, above all, be presented from the point of view of the »Slovene nation.« Similarly, the new curriculum no longer anticipates topics that would direct teachers to a more extended treatment of the history of both Yugoslavias and Yugoslav communism; nevertheless, teachers are supposed to shed light on the crisis of communist Yugoslavia in the 1980 s – without special reference to its previous history – and relate it to a presentation of the Slovene independence movement. Generally, little attention is paid to communism, communist movements, and communist regimes; more specifically it is stated that teachers should treat »communism« within the topic »Totalitarian systems: fascism, national socialism, bolshevism,« and in the presentation of the »communist takeover of power« in Slovenia and in Yugoslavia after World War II.

The new draft curriculum for history education in grammar schools was supposed to be publicly debated as of the end of November 2007, but because only some teachers and experts were familiarized with the proposed changes, there has been almost no debate. Moreover, the period anticipated for debate (end of 2007 and beginning of 2008) was unfavorable and brief. As a result, primarily advocates and authors of the study orientations adopted in the 1990 s have responded to the new curriculum with critical objections, declaring that the new curriculum represents a »step backward« since – through obligatory topics – it both limits teachers' hard-won independence and freedom and brings political-historical topics back to the fore in history teaching, while simultaneously pushing social, economic, and cultural-historical themes into the background by listing them under optional topics. Among the proposed content changes, they also criticized the reduced volume of »Yugoslav history« and the reduced at-

tention to the »recent Yugoslav and Slovene communist past,« while in conceptual terms, they reproached the authors for their partial abandonment of the chronological approach and clearer highlighting of long-term development flows and processes, thereby making it even harder for young people to form clear notions of time and chronology – an area of history education with which students have already shown significant difficulties. However, the governing school politicians felt that the new draft curriculum for history education in grammar schools fulfilled their expectations. The competent Expert Council for General Education therefore adopted and approved the new curriculum for history education in grammar schools in February 2008, without any particular discussion.

Consequently, at the beginning of 2008, history education in Slovenia is still in a period of transition. The changes in history education in grammar schools will probably soon be followed by changes of curricula in elementary schools, and the textbooks will be adjusted to the proposed study orientations. For the time being, it is thus not possible to say anything more definite about what history education in Slovene schools will be like in the future.

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Vilma Brodnik

Revision of History Curricula in the Republic of Slovenia (2006 – 2008)

Introduction

History curricula have been revised four times since the establishment of an independent Slovenian state in 1991. The following article discusses the most recent revision of the history curriculum, which took place in the period from 2006 to 2008, nearly ten years after the previous curricular reform of 1996 – 1998. Within this ten-year period, the instruction of history has experienced great changes both in Slovenia and abroad, mostly due to new trends in the teaching of history. Some of these new approaches had already been incorporated into history lessons in Slovenia. The Council of Europe, the United Nations, and the European Union have all issued various documents and publications relating to the teaching of history and education in general. Through the »Monitoring Curricula« project, the National Education Institute has been supervising general upper secondary school history instruction since 1998. In 2003 and 2004 curricula were revised in several European states. Due to changes that occur within the individual disciplines as well as in the field of didactics, it has become a standard practice to revise the curricula for individual subjects every five years. In addition, a more regular inclusion of new insights and experiences of good practice in the curricula was proposed by many Slovenian history teachers at various educational meetings.

In 2006, members were appointed to the State Committee for the Revision of Curricula, which drafted the guidelines and goals of the curricular revision. This demanding task was entrusted to the National Education Institute, which has been working on, among other things, the revision of curricula and monitoring their implementation in class and in the various forms of in-service teacher training ever since its foundation in 1956. Soon, committees for the revision of curricula in various subjects in primary and secondary schools were appointed, while the committee entrusted with the revision of the general upper secondary school and primary school history curriculum was appointed in mid 2006. Members of this committee included advisors for history teaching from the

National Education Institute, history professors from the universities in Ljubljana and Maribor, representatives from the Association of Slovenian History Teachers, and also primary school and general upper secondary school history teachers. Members of the committee reviewed the guidelines and goals for the revision of the history curricula and accordingly agreed upon the concept for the curricular revision, which was confirmed by primary and general upper secondary school teachers at various educational meetings.

The starting points for the history curricula revision were: inclusion of new findings from all historical periods, new trends and approaches to the teaching of history, monitoring the effects of the 1998 curriculum on history lessons, an international comparison of the new history curricula used in Austria and Finland, the »Didactic Renovation« and »European Classes« project of the National Education Institute, inclusion of international documents relating to history lessons and education, and the modernization of the university program on history didactics. To this end, the latest history curricula of Austria and Finland, which represent two different types of history curricula and two different approaches to history teaching, were carefully reviewed. The statewide principles of the curricular revision were determined in a document entitled »Guidelines, principles and goals of revising the curricula,« dating from the beginning of 2007. This document lists the following principles of revision: autonomy of the teacher and the school, clear leading idea of the subject, didactically targeted and process-developmental model of classroom work, openness and selectivity (flexibility of the didactic process), competitiveness, quality of knowledge, developmental review of pupils' achievements, and connection of subjects and disciplines.[1]

Below we of the State Committee for the Revision of History Curricula present the foundations on which the general upper secondary school history curricula were revised and the main new developments of the revised curricula.

1 Amalija Žakelj, *Smernice, načela in cilji posodabljanja učnih načrtov,* Zavod RS za šolstvo, *[Guidelines, Principles and Goals of Revising the Curricula]* (Ljubljana: The National Education Institute of Slovenia, 2006), 7.

The foundations of the general upper secondary school history curricula revision

The »Monitoring Curricula« project of the National Education Institute from 1998

We received important feedback on the impact of the curriculum in class by monitoring the curricula for all four years of the general upper secondary school and all three years of the professional upper secondary school. This qualitative and quantitative supervision was performed in the period from 1998 to 2002. Quality monitoring was performed at a quarter of all general upper secondary schools. We tried to determine the impact of the new curricula by supervising lessons, interviewing history teachers and students after lessons, reviewing teachers' records on consecutive lessons performed, and by asking them to complete questionnaires on the curriculum during the school term, while at the end of the school year, we gathered their overall impressions on the curricula and analyzed annual and sequential preparation for lessons and both oral and written tests of pupils' knowledge. On the basis of this we prepared detailed analyses with specific emphasis on all four years of the general upper secondary school. In the course of the wider monitoring project, quantity-based monitoring was performed on a sample of 50 percent of all general upper secondary schools. The main findings of the monitoring of the history curricula were that since the curricula are wide in scope, history lessons are not just difficult to plan, but it also proves difficult to include modern teaching techniques that require an active role of the students.[2] In the lessons we attended, the frontal method of teaching and a combination of the lecturing and discussion method were predominantly practiced, resulting in the active role being assumed by the teacher and the pupils assuming a passive role.

Teachers rarely included different historical sources in class work and even then only to liven up the class, rather than to provide a more detailed, in-depth problem-oriented view of the subject matter. Teachers also stated that they had not been introduced to contemporary approaches on how to conduct history lessons during their studies. In addition, we did not see any interdisciplinary work, even in discussions of didactical approaches to content where inter-

2 Vilma Brodnik, »Analiza spremljave učnih načrtov v prvem letniku gimnazije [Analysis of the monitoring implementation of renovated history curricula in the first class of general upper secondary school],« *Zgodovina v šoli* 9, no.1 (2000): 7 – 22 and Vilma Brodnik, *Interno gradivo o spremljavi prenovljenih učnih načrtov za gimnazije*, Zavod RS za šolstvo *[Internal memo concerning analysis of the monitoring of implementation of renovated history curricula in the second, third and fourth class of general upper secondary school]*, The National Education Institute of Slovenia, 2000 – 2004.

disciplinary work would normally have been expected. For example, we witnessed a history lesson discussing Renaissance art where the history teacher simply listed Renaissance artists and their work, rather than conducting the lesson together with the arts teacher. Such a methodology would have enabled the class to analyze suitable excerpts from humanistic works and discuss the historical background of the Renaissance under the guidance of the history teacher, and then continue with an analysis of Renaissance artworks under guidance of the arts teacher. Our research showed that history lessons are generally based upon the teachers' explanations of historical events, phenomena, and processes. Students are expected only to reproduce the knowledge they gain rather than to build their knowledge through analysis, synthesis, and interpretation of the historical sources concerning different historical events, phenomena, and processes. The curriculum did not offer an overview of different historical events, phenomena, and processes from different points of view, nor did it promote the strengthening of an individual's identity and independent decision making. Analysis of written and oral tests as well as evaluations demonstrated only the capacity to reproduce knowledge at the lower levels of the subject matter. As a result, students would quickly forget the discussed items, since their knowledge had not been deepened through active study allowing them to build permanent, high-quality knowledge.

In the past, curricula were designed in an encyclopedic manner and included comprehensive history from prehistoric to present times. A further characteristic of the previous curricula was the content-target planning of history lessons, which could not accommodate interdisciplinary lessons, but simply provided loose correlations. The history curricula would allow teachers to choose up to a fifth of the subject matter and goals; however, due to the encyclopedic design of the curriculum, such selectivity was not predominant in school practice. The »Monitoring Curricula« project also showed that the majority of history teachers took the view that all topics in the curriculum are important, and they even suggested widening the scope of history lessons, while quite the reverse could be seen in practice: a tendency toward the reduction in the number of hours devoted to history lessons. It was also observed that due to the encyclopedic design of the curriculum and the teachers not following the elective principle of the curriculum, teachers would record enormous setbacks and would not be able to discuss history of the twentieth century in full. It was quite common for history lessons to finish with the Second World War, while in some instances, lessons were completed with the First World War and therefore contemporary history would not be discussed at all, except at additional lessons with students who had chosen history for their baccalaureate exam (*matura*) at the end of general upper secondary education. The conclusive finding of the project was that the revised curricula had not realized the main goals of the curricular renovation, which

were as follows: to introduce varied forms and methods of working, thus enhancing the motivation and participation of the individual pupil; to prevent overburdening and excessive workloads of teachers; to ensure a higher level of connectivity in disciplinary knowledge; and to develop capacities for individual creative and critical thinking and judgment, thus equipping pupils to face and overcome life problems with self-confidence.[3]

International comparisons of history curricula

A detailed examination of the latest Austrian and Finnish history curricula used in schools comparable to Slovene general upper secondary schools proved extremely worth-while. The curricula examined represent examples of completely different types and designs of curricula. The Austrian curriculum dating from 2003 is an example of an encyclopedic curriculum, similar to the one previously used in all general upper secondary schools in Slovenia, and as such it includes all history from prehistoric to present times.[4]

The Finnish curriculum dating from 2004 is an example of an exemplary curriculum, which determines specific wider themes, both mandatory and elective, that are not assigned to specific years. History is a mandatory subject in both countries during high school education, and in Austria the last reform reduced the hours devoted to history from eight to six hours per week. The subject matter of the Austrian curriculum is divided into four years of study, and while the contents are determined loosely, with an emphasis on processes, the curriculum retains the traditional chronological scheme, where older historic periods are discussed in lower years and recent periods are discussed in senior years. The more precise determination of substance matter is left to the history teachers implementing the (school) curriculum. The Finnish curriculum used in history lessons in secondary schools comparable to Slovenian general upper secondary schools prescribes four mandatory wider themes and two specialized optional wider themes. Emphasis is given to understanding the characteristics of the various historical periods, their problems and processes, as well as present and past changes both in Finland and abroad. The Finnish curriculum is composed of loosely conceived wider themes that can encompass several historic periods at the same time and is not divided into individual years. This allows history teachers to teach history in accordance with the school's work plan. It is possible to divide the subject matter into three years of study; however, both

3 Nacionalni kurikularni svet, *Izhodišča kurikularne prenove [Starting Points for the Curricular Revision]* (Ljubljana: The National Curricular Committee, 1996), 13 – 15.

4 Austrian Schools Internet Platform, http://www.schule.at.

mandatory and elective themes must be taken into consideration. The mandatory core content of national history encompasses the recent periods of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[5]

In comparison, the Austrian curriculum is very similar to the Slovenian curriculum from 1998. What we wanted to achieve was a shift from the traditional encyclopedic design of the curriculum and history lessons that hinder the introduction of contemporary approaches due to the abundance of subject matter, and acquire more time for active individual learning. However, in our opinion the Finnish curriculum insufficiently discusses the individual historical periods, while the wider topics are also too loosely defined. On this basis we decided to design a thematic exemplary curriculum with wider topics defined within individual wider historic periods (rarely would an individual wider topic encompass two or even three historic periods).

The »Didactic Renovation« and »European Classes« projects of the National Education Institute

Important foundations of the curricular revision were the National Education Institute's »Didactic Renovation of General Upper Secondary Schools« and »European Classes« projects, in the course of which we instructed general upper secondary school teachers of all subjects on new approaches to classroom lessons. The important goals monitored and introduced into history lessons were, among others, reliable teaching, encouraging intercultural dialogue, team lessons, establishing inter-subject links,[6] a didactically targeted and process-developmental approach to lessons, promotion of the active role of students in class, use of diverse didactic techniques and methods in class, introduction of new alternative methods of reviewing and evaluating knowledge, etc.[7]

Both projects, which by 2008 were already into their seventh year, included twenty-five general upper secondary schools (28.4 percent of all grammar schools), including schools that took part in the »Monitoring Curricula« project. Both the »Didactic Renovation« and the »European Classes« project were an upgrade of the »Monitoring Curricula« project of 1998, while the experiences and instances of good practice of the »Didactic Renovation« and »European

5 Finnish National Board of Education, *National Core Curriculum For Upper Secondary Schools* (2003), 180 – 186.

6 Katja Pavlič Škerjanc, *Evropski oddelki. Pristopi k posodobitvi kurikula [European classes. An approach to curriculum innovation]* (Ljubljana: Zavod RS za šolstvo, Ministrstvo za šolstvo in šport, 2008), 3 – 22.

7 Zora Rutar Ilc, »Didaktična prenova gimnazije: podpora šolam in učiteljem [Didactic renovation of general upper secondary schools],« *Zgodovina v šoli* 16, no. 3 – 4 (2007): 4 – 8.

Classes« projects were included in the revised general upper secondary school history curriculum. The history teachers included in the committee for curricular revision were selected from the schools participating in the abovementioned projects. These projects will hopefully continue to help train more teachers and strengthen the updated history curriculum through their convincing, proven methods of good practice concerning the use of new approaches in history teaching.

Modernization of the university program of history didactics

The modernization of the study program of history didactics at the University of Ljubljana, which has taken place for the past six years, also contributes significantly to the efforts of updating the curricula, as it allows future teachers to learn contemporary approaches to conducting history lessons during their undergraduate education.[8]

International documents

During our update of the history curricula, we also considered the recommendations of international documents and publications that concern the teaching of history or education in general. We considered major points from the Council of Europe document entitled »Recommendation Rec (2001) 15 on history teaching in 21st-century Europe.« We also included in the new curricula all eight key competencies for lifelong education, which were adapted from European Union recommendation. These competencies are defined as a combination of knowledge, skills, and relations, the command of which is key for personal fulfillment and development of the individual, for an active citizenship, and for social integration and employment.[9] We also considered recommendations by UNESCO, which defines the four pillars of education and upbringing as follows: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, learning to be.[10]

8 Danijela Trškan, »Didaktika zgodovine na Oddelku za zgodovino Filozofske fakultete [History didactic on the department of history in the faculty of art],« *Zgodovinski časopis* 61, no. 3 – 4 (2007): 509 – 517.

9 »Recommendation of the European Parliament and Council dated December 18, 2006 on key competencies for life-long learning,« *Official Journal of the European Union* 962 (30. 12. 2006).

10 Jacques Delors, *Učenje: skriti zaklad [Learning: The Treasure Within]* (Ljubljana: The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, 1996), 77 – 89.

Finally, we also studied analyses of history lessons' trends and history curricula renovations in Europe, drafted by the contributors of EUROCLIO.

The concept for updating general upper secondary school history curricula

On the basis of our guidelines, findings, and experience, the members of the committee entrusted with updating the grammar school curricula determined the concept of updating the general upper secondary school history curricula. We decided that the content concept of lessons would remain unchanged. Therefore, elements of the anthropological concept, which was introduced for the first time publicly in 1973, are included, while a strong impact of cultural history can also be felt. The anthropological concept is characterized by a comparative presentation of human civilization in its various forms. The anthropological model was further developed by including the cultural history paradigm of the 1980 s, with its emphasis on the history of everyday life.[11] The main feature of this new concept is the comparative treatment of national and world history and/or history of human civilization in various forms – in the field of the economy, the social organization of different societies, political organizations, and activities as well as cultural, artistic, and spiritual observance, while including the history of everyday life.[12] This content concept was already used in the previous renovated history curricula from the reforms of 1996 and 1998. At that time, as in the first reform of 1991, the ideological tendencies of the former communist system were also removed from the history curriculum, which is evident from a comparison of the didactic goals and contents of all three curricula and clearly displays the »transition« from a communist to a liberal/democratic state model.

The first curriculum from 1991 was drafted after Slovenia's independence. Even though new circumstances required the curricula to be revised, the reintroduction of plural democracy in Slovenia, which had occurred the year before, together with the establishment of the new Slovenian state, were not mentioned in the new history curricula. Furthermore, the curricula from 1991 failed to state as a goal the significance of respecting human rights and plural democratic society; however, they did mention that while historical phenomena

11 Peter Burke, *Kaj je kulturna zgodovina [What is Cultural History?]* (Ljubljana: Založba Sophia, 2007), 8 – 9, 35 – 37.

12 Bogo Grafenauer, »Zgodovina v skupni programski osnovi usmerjenega izobraževanja, [History in the common core of target education],, *Vzgoja in izobraževanje* 9, no. 5/6 (1978): 9 – 12.

and processes should be critically assessed, they should no longer be assessed in the spirit of Marxism. The meaning of Slovene national conscience was emphasized, yet the curriculum still listed the history of Yugoslav nations as one of the top priorities, even though Yugoslavia no longer existed at that time. The role of economic, cultural, and social history was also stressed. In the realm of social history, emphasis was still placed on the history of the working-class movement.[13]

The didactic contents of the revised curricula from 1996 also included national, world, economic, and social history, cultural heritage, religion, and spirituality as well as intellectual history; however, the history of the middle classes was reintroduced. The history of women also gained emphasis, as did the examination of different ideological, philosophical, and political courses of history, while the work of Slovene politicians from the so-called conservative wing was regarded more objectively, resulting in their no longer being depicted solely in a negative light. Yugoslav history was replaced by Slovene history, and the history of Southeast Europe and the former Yugoslavia were discussed within the context of world history. The aim was therefore to distance the curriculum from ideology as much as possible.[14]

The 1998 history curricula have placed greater emphasis on the meaning of the Slovenian nation and its achievements. The importance of developing a Slovenian national consciousness, identity, and sense of affiliation with the Slovenian state is stressed. The teaching goal related to valuing cultural heritage gives history an additional aim in that pupils should be taught European and social life values, which brings a European dimension into lessons. In addition, history teaching should promote a tolerant society, as pupils should respect different beliefs, cultures, and communities, gain insight into the struggle for human and civil rights, and realize why these rights should be respected. During lessons, specific attention should also be given to the development of communication skills, including how to go about using the school's library.[15]

However, the main development is that the general upper secondary school history curricula have been upgraded and modernized. In accordance with the guidelines for revision, the main novelties are: thematic and elective orientation, autonomy of the teacher and the school, clear leading idea of the subject, di-

13 National Education Institute [Zavod RS za šolstvo in šport], *Gimnazijski program [History curriculum for general upper secondary schools]* (Ljubljana: National Education Institute, 1992), 126 – 130.

14 National Education Institute, *Učni načrt za zgodovino v gimnaziji [History curriculum for general upper secondary schools]* (Ljubljana: National Education Institute, 1996), 1 – 6.

15 National Education Institute, *Učni načrt za zgodovino v gimnaziji: Zavod RS za šolstvo [History curriculum for general upper secondary schools]* (Ljubljana: National Education Institute, 1998), 2 – 5.

dactically targeted and process-developmental model of classroom work, openness and elective approach (flexibility of the didactic process), competitiveness, quality of knowledge, developmental review of pupils' achievements, and connection of subjects and disciplines.[16]

Thematic and elective approach to the curriculum

For the first time in the two hundred years of public general upper secondary school education in Slovenia, we introduced a thematic and elective approach to the general upper secondary school curriculum. In the existent general upper secondary school curricula from 1998, we defined within the broader historic periods (and, in a few instances, within several broader historic periods) the following key mandatory and elective wider themes:

1. Prehistory and antiquity

A. **Mandatory wider topics:** Why is history important? From city-states to the first empires, prehistoric and antique cultural heritage in the territory of Slovenia;
B. **Elective wider topics:** Meeting points of cultures, history of everyday life, from the first artists to the first scientists, from magic to religion;

2. The Middle Ages, humanism, and Renaissance, the period of absolutism, the beginnings of industrialization

A. **Mandatory wider topics:** Different models of rule; ethnic, social, and economic changes; development of historical countries and the Slovenes;

B. **Elective wider topics:** Meeting points of cultures, how dark were the Middle Ages in reality? Medieval religious wars, ways of life in the countryside and towns situated in the territory of Slovenia from the eleventh to the eighteenth century;

16 Amalija Žakelj *Guidelines, Principles and Goals of Revising the Curricula [Smernice, načela in cilji posodabljanja učnih načrtov]* (Ljubljana: The National Education Institute of Slovenia, 2006) 7.

3. The nineteenth century

A. **Mandatory wider topics:** The ascent of the bourgeoisie and the introduction of parliamentary democracy, restless waters: from national movements to the First World War, the Slovene national movement;
B. **Elective wider topics:** Glamour and misery of industrial development, everyday life in the nineteenth century, social development in Slovenia in the nineteenth century, meeting points of cultures: the Far East, Northern and Latin America in the nineteenth century;

4. The twentieth and twenty-first centuries

A. **Mandatory wider topics:** The development of democracy, cooperation and conflicts in the twentieth century, the development of the Slovene nation in the twentieth century;

B. **Elective wider topics:** Civil movements, social movements and human rights, migrations of population, science and technology in the twentieth century, changing ways of life in Slovenia after the Second World War.[17]

This curriculum is an example of an exemplary curriculum with a clearly determined chronological progressive approach and clearly defined mandatory and elective wider themes. The titles of the wider themes display the representation and correlation among all types of history: social, cultural, political, and economic history as well as the history of various ways of life. The curriculum therefore allows for a detailed comparative treatment of the history of human civilization, historical phenomena and processes, as well as the main problems and tendencies characteristic of particular historical periods. The ratio between the different types of history – as apparent from the titles of the wider topics and the portions categories into which the wider topics are divided – is approximately 50 percent political history to 50 percent social, cultural, and economic history. The ratio between world, European, and national history amounts to approximately 60 percent world and European history to 40 percent national history. The common thread of the content is the wider topic entitled »meeting points of cultures,« which discusses world history and promotes in-

17 The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport [Zavod RS za šolstvo, Ministrstvo za šolstvo in šport], *Učni načrt za zgodovino v gimnaziji [History curriculum for general upper secondary schools]* (Ljubljana: The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, 2008): 3 – 4 and 11 – 43.

tercultural dialogue not only at the European but also at the world level. In addition, the importance of local history has been emphasized, and it is recommended to include examples from local history wherever possible. Regional history is particularly pertinent in the case of the curricula to be used for Hungarian and Italian national communities, as these will discuss the history of Istria, a region divided among the Republic of Slovenia, Italy, and Croatia, along with the history of the two border regions Prekmurje and Porabje. In the goals for curricula used for both the Hungarian and Italian national communities, we also recommended including references to the historic events and circumstances that brought the neighboring nations together (for example, cultural flows and exchanges) as opposed to dividing them (nationalistic movements, the First and Second World Wars) and creating historic resentments and stereotypes. The emphasis given to the importance of discussing the history of national communities and minorities in Slovenia (also the German community exiled after the Second World War and the newly establishing communities of nations of the former Yugoslavia) as opposed to only discussing Slovenes outside the motherland, as was the previous practice, represents another new addition to the curricula.[18]

The scope of the individual wider themes is broad enough to allow teachers to make an independent and professional decision concerning the number of lessons they will devote to each individual theme when planning lessons. The scope of the subject matter as determined in the revised curricula amounts to only half of the previous curricula, while the content is not assigned to individual years, thus allowing a greater degree of flexibility in the didactic process and larger autonomy of teachers and schools when planning individual lessons and when implementing the curriculum at the school level. The general upper secondary school curriculum encompass twelve mandatory wider topics; teachers can, considering the interests of the students and in accordance with their own expert judgment, choose between four and eight wider topics.[19]

The modules intended for the Italian and Hungarian communities include various adaptations and the inclusion of content from the national history of both communities.[20]

18 The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, *History curriculum for general upper secondary schools*, 3 – 10.

19 Ibid., 3 – 4.

20 The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, *Učni načrt za zgodovino v italijanski gimnaziji.[History curriculum for Italian upper secondary schools]* (Ljubljana: The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, 2008), 3 – 12; The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, *Učni načrt za zgodovino v dvojezični slovensko-madžarski gimnaziji. [History curriculum for bilingual Slovenian-Hungarian upper secondary schools]* (Ljubljana: The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, 2008), 3 – 12.

The module intended for classical general upper secondary schools adapts the didactic substance and the curricular goals to include more in-depth history of antiquity, humanism, and the Renaissance.[21]

While the mandatory topics used in professional upper secondary schools are the same as those for the general upper secondary schools, the non-mandatory topics relate more closely to the professional profile of the school in question. Non-mandatory wider topics from art history are included in the curricula for artistic upper secondary schools; the curriculum for technical upper secondary schools provides greater emphasis on the history of science and technology; and in the case of the economic upper secondary schools, the non-mandatory subjects include economic history. There are twelve elective wider themes in the professional upper secondary schools curriculum. Teachers should choose three to six wider themes they will discuss in class, taking the interest of students into consideration and exercising their own expert judgment.[22]

The same mandatory topics are discussed in all the general upper secondary schools modules due to the fact that the baccalaureate exam (*matura*) is the same for all general upper secondary schools regardless of the module they use. During the course of our modernization, we suggested that the external (state) part of the general history *matura* encompass content from the mandatory wider themes, while the internal (school) part encompass elective wider themes.

The new curricula contain 60 to 80 percent mandatory and 20 to 40 percent elective wider themes and thus allow a greater degree of flexibility in the didactic process. It is now recommended that elective topics be substantially included, while the former curriculum allowed no more than one-fifth (20 percent) of the subject matter to be elected by teachers themselves. With the thematic design and compulsory selection of some topics, we aimed to relieve the curricula and to gain valuable time for introduction of contemporary approaches to history lessons, which require more time but have been proven to provide greater quality and sustainability of the students' knowledge. We also aimed to increase students' motivation and participation within history lessons by including them in the process of choosing the elective wider themes.

21 The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, *Učni načrt za zgodovino v klasični gimnaziji [History curriculum for classical upper secondary schools]* (Ljubljana: The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, 2008), 7.

22 The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, *Učni načrt za zgodovino v strokovni gimnaziji [History curriculum for professional upper secondary schools]* (Ljubljana: The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, 2008), 3 – 7.

The didactically targeted and process-developmental class model

Content and partly didactically targeted planning are characteristic of preliminary, »transitional« curricula. In the updated curricula we introduced a didactically targeted and process-developmental design and class model. Characteristic of the target-process concept, and of the related lesson-planning, is active teaching, which allows active history learning and a larger scope of different student activities. The general objectives of the subject and the objectives of the wider themes are harmonized and described in a concrete and explicit manner. The possible activities for achieving these goals are communicated through the verbs with which we have planned the general and thematic goals. These goals include, for example, the following possible activities for higher levels: reasoning, explaining, establishing, arguing, comparing, analyzing, viewing a certain event from different points of view (multiperspectivity), role-playing, forming one's own conclusions, standpoints, and opinions, searching for knowledge, and researching, as well as the following possible activities to be used on lower levels: listing, explaining, describing. However, the main goals are acquisition of lifelong knowledge, including knowledge and understanding of historic events, occurrences, processes, ideas, problems, relations, and concepts; analysis of historical sources; synthesis of the collected data; interpretation and formulations of one's own standpoints and attitudes. In the curricula from 1998, the didactic goals were mostly general goals, such as that the student know something, know how to do something, or understand something, and were also based on lower knowledge levels.[23]

An additional novelty in comparison to the curriculum from 1998 is that we divided the didactic goals into three larger groups: firstly, didactic goals relating to knowledge and understanding of historic events, phenomena, and processes; secondly, goals relating to the development of skills and know-how; and thirdly, goals relating to the development of relations, treatments, attitudes, and standpoints.[24]

Through such a classification we aimed to emphasize the importance of developing different types of knowledge, namely content, skills, and know-how, as well as knowledge that allows individual pupils to develop into responsible citizens of a plural democratic Slovene and European society. In comparison, previous curricula emphasized only the importance of content knowledge. The new curricula gives students, for the first time, the possibility to independently

23 The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, *History curriculum for general upper secondary schools,* 55 – 58.

24 The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, *History curriculum for professional upper secondary schools*, 6 – 7.

choose, decide, and form their own views on history with respect to the democratic values of our European cultural heritage and with consideration of the relativity of historic information. By learning from multiperspective sources, students develop a readiness to accept different views and interpretations and an ability to question why they appear, with an openness to new ideas and reluctance to express judgment. The significance of education in achieving equality between the sexes has also been recorded for the first time. We furthermore emphasized the importance of overcoming prejudices and stereotypes, the importance of developing an individual and European identity in addition to a national one, and finally, the idea that crimes against humanity, genocide, holocaust, and all other forms of mass human-rights violations should be condemned. The importance of including information and communication technology in history lessons is emphasized for the first time, as are the positive cultural impacts within the Slovenian nation and with neighboring nations, thereby encouraging a positive attitude toward diversity, multiculturalism, and different social models.[25] We take the view that the updated curricula see an end to transition, as they show – in terms of a didactically targeted and content point of view – all the characteristics of history curricula in states with a long established democratic and liberal tradition. It goes without saying that the goals of the revision will be achieved only when the curricula begin to be put into practice in all schools. Both models of lessons are being intentionally developed within the »Didactic Renovation« project of the National Education Institute. Together with the general upper secondary-school history teachers engaged in the project, we have for several years prepared teaching materials that include carefully planned goals to provide content knowledge, skills, and know-how; the didactic contents through which these goals are to be realized; the student activities through which the goals and content knowledge are to be achieved; the criteria for checking and evaluating student knowledge; activities for checking and evaluating knowledge; and finally, descriptive criteria for such checks and evaluation. We have encouraged the active role of students through the introduction of critical thinking in classes. Even though critical thinking was listed as one of the goals of all history curricula after the Second World War, the curricula used in Yugoslavia would only allow critical thinking within the framework of a Marxist worldview. And even though the curricula lost their ideological note after 1991, students' critical thinking could not be encouraged due to the teacher's lecturing and storytelling. Therefore, critical thinking is encouraged in history classes as part of the »Didactic Renovation« and »European Classes« projects of the National Education Institute through an in-

25 The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, *History curriculum for general upper secondary schools*, 6 – 7.

dependent analysis of different historic sources and views concerning the same event or phenomenon, by separating historic facts and opinions, and by deducing which interpretations concerning the same event or phenomenon are more convincing and why they differ. In this manner, the didactic modernization of curricula has introduced the encouragement of students' critical opinion.

Competence-oriented approach

The competence-oriented approach is an important novelty in the updated general upper secondary school history curricula and is apparent from all eight European key competences that should be developed and encouraged through history classes: communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology, digital competence, learning to learn, social and civic competences, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, and finally cultural awareness and expression.[26]

Key competences have also been included in the general goals of the curriculum and in the goals of the wider themes. A competence-oriented approach was also promoted by the »European Classes« project. Accordingly, history teachers have already been encouraging communication in foreign languages by planning and performing team class work with foreign language teachers. For example, a history teacher would discuss, in Slovene, the fortified walls of the Roman Empire and their presence in Slovenia, while a German-language teacher would discuss, in German, the presence of such walls in an area of Germany. Through these discussion, as well as class excursions, teamwork, and presentations on cultural heritage, students would learn the history curriculum actively and reliably, and at the same time develop competencies relating to communication in their mother tongue and a foreign language (German). The competency of communicating in foreign languages and the cultural competences developed and encouraged in intercultural dialogue would be promoted through international exchanges, a form of authentic learning involving student exchange visits (exchanges with Spanish schools, for example, have become very common). Thus, through intercultural dialogue and communication in a foreign language as well as authentic encounters with students from other cultures, Slovenian students learn to appreciate the meaning of cultural diversity.

26 »Recommendation of the European Parliament and Council dated December 18, 2006 on key competencies for life-long learning,« *Official Journal of the European Union* 962, (30. 12. 2006) L. 394/13.

Linking subjects and disciplines

The curriculum of 1998 simply provided loose correlations between the various subjects. However, in the updated curriculum we have provided concrete recommendations for subject interlinking and cross-cultural connection for every wider theme. Subject interlinking is possible at the level of contents, the level of goals, and the level of concepts, while the cross-cultural themes encompass information on communication technologies, the use of libraries, civic education, environmental education, professional education, cultural education, and teaching of learning, all of which are incorporated within individual didactic goals and the contents of wider themes. The 1998 curriculum, for example, while discussing the theme »prehistoric images,« offered a correlation in the form of a museum visit.[27] The updated curriculum from 2008, on the other hand, recommends within the scope of the wider theme »prehistoric and antique cultural heritage« a specific link with biology and the theme »evolution,« as well as a link with geography and the theme »creation and composition of the Earth.«[28] In the process of updating the curricula, we also reviewed the curricula of both related and unrelated subjects and recorded specific opportunities for inter-subject connections. In the case at hand, we chose to propose an inter-subject connection on the content level; however, we could also have recommended connections on the level of goals, such as that students develop a positive attitude toward the preservation of our cultural heritage through history lessons and also our natural heritage through geography lessons. Furthermore, we could have proposed links on the level of concepts, such as the division of history and prehistory into eras for history lessons and the determination of different geological periods for geography lessons. Museum visits, excursions, and historic fieldwork have also been encouraged within the frame of contemporary approaches to history lessons.

27 The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, *Učni načrt za zgodovino v gimnaziji [History curriculum for general upper secondary schools]* (Ljubljana: The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, 1998), 20.

28 The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, *History curriculum for general upper secondary schools* (2008), 14.

Quality of knowledge and developmental monitoring of students' achievements

Thematic goals have been determined for each wider theme and comprise all three groups of goals that can be realized through the anticipated contents of the wider themes. Specific mandatory and elective contents have also been determined. All students must demonstrate a command of the mandatory knowledge, while specific and elective knowledge will be provided to students in various degrees and in different detail. We have also included for all three groups of goals the expected achievements that form the frame of knowledge; these constitute a shift from the previous standards and strictly defined final knowledge as determined in standards of knowledge, to a model that considers students' individuality and their learning outcomes. The instructions for evaluation of knowledge allow teachers to set criteria and descriptive criteria for monitoring and assessing student learning outcomes. In order to avoid students' gaining purely content knowledge, we separately determined for each wider theme the key concepts that express the main idea, ideas, and characteristics of activity in the individual historic periods, and also allow interaction between subjects and planning of common classes by teachers of different subjects. We divided the key concepts into three groups as follows:

a) basic historic concepts, such as human rights, democracy, totalitarian systems, revolution, the republic;
b) concepts allowing a deeper understanding of history, such as causes and consequences, facts and opinions, changes and continuity, resemblances and differences;
c) concepts that follow from the nature of the historical discipline, such as chronology, evidence gained from historic sources, interpretation, and multiperspectival approach.

The planned introduction and development of different types of knowledge is another novelty of the current curriculum from 2008. Instead of the previously dominant content knowledge, we have introduced skills and know-how (procedural knowledge) as well as knowledge concerning relations, attitudes, standpoints, and treatments. All three groups of goals together represent lifelong knowledge provided by grammar school history lessons.[29]

29 The National Education Institute and Ministry of Education and Sport, *History curriculum for general upper secondary schools* (2008), 44 – 53.

Conclusion

In the period from 2006 to 2008, six general upper secondary school history curricula have been updated. The content concept of lessons has remained unchanged, with a comparative treatment of economic, social, political, and cultural history and history of ways of life. The main development is that we have for the first time introduced in the general upper secondary school history curriculum the thematic-chronological-progressive approach. Instead of an encyclopedic curriculum we have introduced exemplary curricula such as those used in a significant portion of other European countries. We estimate that the updated curricula enjoy the support and approval of approximately 70 percent of general upper secondary school teachers, together with a significant portion of the academic public. The curricula have also received positive academic reviews, positive reviews from a didactic point of view and also from teachers and representatives of both national communities. General upper secondary school teachers were introduced to the updated curricula by training, through an online virtual classroom, and via e-mail, with 88 percent participation. Teachers were given the opportunity to express their opinions concerning the curricula at educational workshops, through both classical and Web-based questionnaires and surveys, and through an online forum. Our main goal was to ensure a higher quality of history lessons in the Republic of Slovenia. At the same time it was anticipated that this would achieve higher quality and permanent lifelong knowledge of history through larger participation and motivation of students, while the thematic and elective approach were intended to grant teachers a larger degree of autonomy and enable them to nurture their own professional development.

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Snježana Koren
Branislava Baranović

What Kind of History Education Do We Have After Eighteen Years of Democracy in Croatia? Transition, Intervention, and History Education Politics (1990 – 2008)

Introduction

When communicating knowledge about the past through education, history curricula and textbooks interpret or construct the meaning of past events and at the same time influence the understanding of present societal life and its developments. As socially constructed knowledge, the content of history is significantly determined by social forces and producers of »official histories« and »official culture,« that is, by those who are »entitled« to define social reality, including its past. Therefore, such history usually serves the interests of those who dominate the society.

This particular feature of history as socially constructed knowledge becomes even more transparent in transitional societies. In most transitional countries, where new political and social forces have come into power, there has evidently been a tremendous effort to redefine national culture and to rewrite history, or to produce a new official culture and new history.[1] As a powerful socializing medium, school education is one of the most important tools in their dissemination. Attempts to influence the construction of students' individual and collective identity through attachment to affective values, such as common language, culture, and memory, are among the most important aspirations of subjects such as literature and history.[2] Accordingly, in most transitional countries – and especially in those that are facing the problem of (re)defining their identity (e. g. national, political identities) – changes that have occurred in curricula of these subjects reflect political influences, as well as the manner in which each nation represents itself and its ideals through history.[3]

1 James, V. Wertsch, »Consuming Histories,« *Issues in Education* 4 (1998): 251 – 252.
2 Aleida Assmann, Arbeit am nationalem Gedächtnis: Eine kurze Geschiche der deutschen Bildunsidee (1993) [Serb. translation: Rad na nacionalnom pamćenju: Kratka istorija nemačke ideje obrazovanja] (Beograd: Biblioteka XX vek, 2002), 41 – 52.
3 Branislava Baranović, »History Textbooks in Post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina,« Intercultural Education 12 (2001): 16.

The process of post-socialist transformation in Croatia, in contrast to that of other countries, was additionally burdened by the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia and the war among the newly constituted nation-states. In such circumstances, history education has once again served as a tool of re-examining and redefining national identity. It underwent significant, extensive, and often contested changes that were politically introduced at the beginning of the 1990 s and were significantly influenced by the dominant ideology of ethnic nationalism.

Several aspects of this ideology are particularly important for understanding the changes that have happened in history education and textbooks. The new national strategy of post-socialist transition based on the ideology of ethnic nationalism implies the ethnic definition of the new state, where ethnicity is used as a political instrument. These claims are made in the name of the »core nation,« which is culturally defined and regarded as the legitimate owner of the state that has an exclusive right on its ethnic territory. In multinational federal states, such as former Yugoslavia, (re)defining or reinterpreting the concept of the nation and the state also implies redefining the inner borders of territories where different nations lived.

Furthermore, the above-mentioned definition involves an understanding of the state and its power as an instrument of the core nation, one used to promote interests of the nation that were previously, as a rule, inadequately provided for, or jeopardized, by other ethnic communities.[4] By emphasizing the ethnic purity of the state, ethnic nationalism has proved to be a very conflicting politics, stressing differences between, and a separation of, ethnic groups, that has resulted in ethnic homogenization and even fighting over territory among new nation-states, as was the case in former Yugoslavia.[5] In general, the intention to establish an autonomous and ethnically homogenous nation-state in the context of what was formerly a federal and multinational state implies a fear of, and resistance to, national minorities and supranational structures.[6]

4 Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Eric J. Hobsbawm, »Nationalismus und Ethnicität,« *Die Neue Gesellschaft-Frankfurter Hefte* 39 (1992): 612 – 618.

5 The political nature of ethnic conflicts, including those in the territory of former Yugoslavia, was emphasized by Srđan Vrcan in »Znakovita zbrka oko etničkog [Indicative confusion concerning the ethnic],« in *Kultura, etničnost, identitet*, ed. Jadranka Čačić-Kumpes (Zagreb: Institut za migracije i narodnosti, Naklada Jesenski i Turk and Hrvatsko sociološko društvo,1999), 15 – 39. He claims that they are the »result of nationalistic political strategies« backed by »identifiable political actors and their deliberately chosen political strategies with their more or less recognizable key political goals, and with deliberately chosen means for their realization.«

6 About the characteristics of ethnic nationalism as an ideology of national integration in European countries, see more in Nenad Zakošek, »The Problem of Democracy and the Na-

Ethnic nationalism is a community ideology, based on the idea of the organic unity of the nation. By promoting such a concept of the nation, it emphasizes not only differences between one's own and other nations, but is also equally inclined to suppress and eradicate differences (especially in opinion) among members of the same nation. Therefore, the ideology could serve as a justification for the establishment of an authoritarian political system or even a dictatorship.[7] It has been proven that the dominance of politics based on ethnic nationalism results not only in ethnic homogenization and conflicts, but also in the reduction of the proclaimed democratization and liberalization. More specifically, the protection of the nation usually manifests itself as the protection of interests of the ruling party, which acts in the name of freedom of the nation and its state, such as the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ hereafter) in Croatia.[8] The post-socialist transition in Croatia was by and large based on the ideology of ethnic nationalism, which characterized developments in the country from 1990 until 2000. Only after the 2000 parliamentary elections, when the ruling HDZ lost the elections for the first time and a new political elite came into power, did political changes take place.

This paper will analyze how these processes have influenced the field of history education, as well as how historians and history educators have reacted to and coped with them. The analytical focus will be on the period from the end of conflict in 1995 to the present. During this period, history textbooks were in the spotlight of public debates on several occasions, but they have been only the most visible aspect of much broader issues. It is therefore our intention to analyze the textbooks in the wider context of several additional underlying factors that have influenced the development of history education. Among them, we consider as most important the educational policy of the state, the pedagogical tradition of history teaching, and – as an overarching element in all these debates – the way the purpose of history teaching and its role in the education of young generations has been perceived by historians and history educators, as well as in the political sphere and in public opinion. This is the question of how and why history should be taught and learned – the question of how it might influence the shaping of pupils' identities, which remains one of the most important, but also the most controversial, goals of history education.

Another comment is needed at the beginning of this text in order to clarify our

tional Integration of Croats and Serbs,« in *Politics and Economics of Transition*, ed. Žarko Puhovski, et al. (Zagreb: Informator, 1993), 163.

7 Ivan Prpić, »Communism and Nationalism,« *Politics and Economics of Transition*, ed. Žarko Puhovski, et al. (Zagreb: Informator, 1993), 106 – 7.

8 Vesna Pusić, »Diktatura s demokratskim legitimitetom [Dictatorships with democratic legitimacy],« *Erasmus* 1 (1993): 8 – 17.

position. As with every text, this one is written from a certain perspective. Ours is not only that of interested observers, but also that of active participants in some of the events we describe and analyze (especially in the period after 2000), either as authors of some of the mentioned textbooks or members of different textbook and curricula commissions. Therefore, our account is partly a personal and autobiographical one.

The post-socialist transition, educational changes, and history teaching in the 1990 s

The first multiparty elections in Croatia, held in 1990, were won by the right-nationalist Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ); it also won subsequent parliamentary elections in 1992 and 1995, which enabled it to maintain the monopoly in decision making about all relevant issues of societal life through the entire decade of the 1990 s.[9] Although HDZ's political program originally involved ideas of liberal democracy (pluralistic democracy, private property, civil society), in reality the process of post-socialist transformation was much more focused on the creation of the new state and the promotion of the ideology of ethnic nationalism.[10] The predominance of the ideology of ethnic nationalism was possible, especially in the first half of the 1990 s, due to the lack of democratic institutions and civil society,[11] the institutional weakness of the opposition, and the additional radicalization that followed the 1991 – 1995 war. Ethnic nationalism resulted in the postponement of the proclaimed processes of democratization and liberalization of the society and could therefore also serve as a justification for the establishment of the authoritarian political system that was characteristic of Croatia in the 1990 s.

A particularity of the socialist system that is relevant to understanding the

9 HDZ won in 68.8 percent of mandates in the Croatian Parliament in 1990, 63 percent of mandates in 1992, and 59.1 percent of mandates in 1995. (Vlasta Ilišin, »Hrvatski sabor 2000: strukturne značajke i promjene [Croatian parliament 2000: structural features and changes],« *Politička misao* 38 (2001): 48.

10 Ivan Prpić, »Communism and Nationalism,« 95 – 110; Žarko Puhovski, »Nationalism and Democracy in the Post-Communist Key,« in *Politics and Economics of Transition*, ed. Žarko Puhovski, et al. (Zagreb: Informator, 1993), 85 – 94; Srđan Vrcan, »Znakovita zbrka oko etničkog,«15 – 39; Nenad Zakošek, »The Problem of Democracy and the National Integration of Croats and Serbs,« 163.

11 According to Prpić, (»Communism and Nationalism,« 105 – 106) the glorification of the nation as a supreme value and the promotion of nationalism in the post-communist system appeared as a relatively suitable and easy replacement for the abolished communist ideology. The nation as community was, under the given circumstances, able to establish the necessary cohesion because its unity was based on evident or obvious elements of commonality, such as language, common history, religion, culture, etc.

educational changes in post-socialist Croatia is the predominance of politics over other areas of the societal life. Because of this inherited power structure, the HDZ was, after winning the parliamentary elections, able to take over leading positions in education, to define a new concept of education in accordance with its vision, and to control the process of its transformation. In other words, the HDZ consolidated its hegemony by retaining the highly centralized educational system, where all primary and secondary education is regulated by the Ministry of Education.[12]

The new political strategy of societal transformation, its programmatic new orientation, and the legal foundations of the educational changes claimed their origins in the principles of liberal-democratic doctrine (individual and school autonomy, decentralization, market-economy principles, opening of private schools) instead of in the inherited education based on collectivism, unified secondary education, etc.[13] In reality, there were no changes in the institutional structure of compulsory education[14] but only modifications of educational content in the so-called national subjects. Though in the 1990 s there were several attempts to initiate an overall and thorough systemic reform of compulsory education – all having in common endeavours to extend compulsory education from eight to nine years – none were implemented. This left Croatia as one of the rare transitional countries with only eight years of compulsory education and an organizational structure that did not experience major changes post-1990. Bigger changes – both institutional and curricular – occurred in secondary education at the very beginning of the 1990 s: The unified and vocationally directed system of secondary schools inherited from the socialist period was diversified. The elite four-year high schools – gymnasiums – were reinstated (they were abolished during the reform conducted in the mid-1970 s, under the motto: eliminating education from »bourgeois dualism«), as were the

12 The Ministry of Education has, since 1990, changed its name and its field of activities several times. It has been to referred to as the Ministry of Education and Culture; the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports; the Ministry of Education and Sports; and, since 2004, the Ministry of Science, Education, and Sports. Hereafter in this text, it shall be referred to as the Ministry of Education.

13 More on the programmatic characteristics and legal foundations of educational changes in post-socialist Croatia, see Branislava Baranović, »Promjene obrazovnog diskursa u post-socijalističkoj Hrvatskoj [Changes in Educational Discourse in Post-socialist Croatia],« *Revija za sociologiju* 25 (1994): 201 – 211.

14 Compulsory education in Croatia is equalized with eight-year primary education (ages 6 – 14/15), consisting of four lower and four higher grades. History is taught as a separate subject from the fifth grade on, although some history topics are already addressed in the third and fourth grades, as part of the integrated subject »nature and society.« Secondary education (ages 14/15 – 18) is not compulsory. History is taught in all grades of high schools (gymnasiums), in the first two grades of four-year vocational schools, and in the first grade of three-year vocational schools.

various types of four- and three-year vocational schools. The number of lessons and courses in general education was increased in gymnasiums, but significantly reduced in vocational schools (especially in three-year vocational schools for skilled workers and craftsmen). Furthermore, subjects that transferred socialist ideology and Marxist viewpoints were replaced by new subjects from the social sciences and humanities, as well as with religious education.

In this context, curricula of the so-called national subjects (literature, history, geography, music) in both primary and secondary schools were changed. Not only were they adapted to new circumstances, but they were also charged with the task of supporting the process of nation and state building and the fostering of Croatian ethnic identity. Religious education (mostly Catholic) was introduced as an elective subject.[15] Croatian culture was defined through differentiation from the cultures of other Slavic nations, especially those with whom Croatia was in conflict (Serbs). The process of cleansing the Croatian language of foreign words[16] took place within the general political tendency to promote a pure Croatian language as a basic element of Croatian national identity.

As a »national subject,« history education, along with its textbooks, is among the areas where this political influence has been most perceptible. In the beginning of the 1990 s, national history was rewritten anew, in historiography, political documents (such as a preamble of the 1991 Croatian Constitution), public discourse, as well as in history textbooks. New educational authorities perceived history teaching primarily as an instrument for promoting national identity founded on an ethnic basis, which resulted in the ethnocentric and self-contained perspectives that remained one of the most prominent features of the Croatian history curricula and most textbooks during the 1990 s. But it was the simultaneous »triple challenge,« in the words of W. Höpken, that made textbook development in the first half of the 1990 s in Croatia, as in most Yugoslav successor states, distinctive and particularly difficult: overcoming the legacy of communism, adjusting textbooks to the new status of nation-state, and coping with the war.[17] All three factors went hand in hand, although some were more characteristic of certain periods of the 1990 s than others. »De-ideologization« – by which was usually meant the removal from textbooks of interpretations in-

15 Information technology and the instruction of a second foreign language were also taught in most schools as optional subjects. A second foreign language has only recently been introduced as a compulsory subject.

16 Dubravko Škiljan, »Procesi ideologizacije u jeziku [Processes of ideologization in language],« unpublished research report from Centre for Transition and Civil Society Research, Zagreb, 1994.

17 Wolfgang Höpken, »Between civic identity and nationalism: History textbooks in East-Central and Southeastern Europe,« in *Democratic Transition in Croatia. Value Transformation, Education and Media*, ed. Sabrina P. Ramet and Matić Dubravka (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2007), 166.

spired by the Marxist view of history, as well as other ideological layers of the communist regime – was characteristic of the first changes in textbooks (1991). But, in the end, this process mostly signified something else: the replacing of one ideology with another, now nationalistically determined.[18] The war and the proclamation of independence (1991 – 1992) created new circumstances in which supporting the process of nation and state building was given priority over the necessary pedagogical reform of history education. »Singling out the Croatian history from the Yugoslav context« became the motto of the changes conducted in the new generation of history textbooks produced during the school year 1992/93. Their publication was preceded by the first big textbook affair in spring 1992, when history textbooks became a topic of debate in the Croatian Parliament and the press.[19] Textbook authors were put under strong political pressure. The existing curricula[20] and textbook content were now additionally controlled by the newly established office of the ministry's special consultant for history textbooks, who had the final say in the approbation of textbooks.[21]

History education was once again employed to establish continuity with a »suitable« historical past. In the new interpretative framework, the independent Croatian state became the entity of highest value, the main purpose and outcome

18 Branislava Baranović, »Promjene obrazovnog diskursa u postsocijalističkoj Hrvatskoj,« 201 – 211; Wolfgang Höpken, »History Education and Yugoslav (Dis-) Integration,« in *Öl ins Feuer? —Oil on Fire? Schulbücher, ethnische Stereotypen und Gewalt in Südosteuropa. Studien zur internationalen Schulbuchforschung, Band 89*, ed. Wolfgang Höpken (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1996), 112 – 117; Snježana Koren, »Slike nacionalne povijesti u hrvatskim udžbenicima uoči i nakon raspada Jugoslavije [Images of national history in Croatian textbooks before and after the breakdown of Yugoslavia],« *Historijski zbornik* LX (2007): 259 – 261).

19 Some of the older textbooks came under political attack because of their »pro-Yugoslav content,« and the Ministry of Education and the minister himself were accused of »failure to cleanse textbooks from everything that is not in the service of the Croatian state.« As a result, the minister resigned, part of the history program was suspended, and some textbooks were withdrawn, under the official explanation that they were »obsessed with Yugoslavia« and »imbued with the Yugoslav unitarian spirit and based on Marxist-materialistic ideology and class consciousness« (Snježana Koren, »Slike nacionalne povijesti u hrvatskim udžbenicima uoči i nakon raspada Jugoslavije,« 261 – 261).

20 Textbooks published during the school year 1992/1993 were strongly influenced by a political report on history textbooks submitted to the Croatian Parliament in June 1992 by the new deputy minister of education (who was simultaneously a high-ranking official of the HDZ and president of the parliamentary committee for education). The report's interpretations of some events and persons from nineteenth- and twentieth-century Croatian history served as guidelines in shaping textbook content; in some cases, passages from the report found their way directly into textbooks (Snježana Koren, »Slike nacionalne povijesti u hrvatskim udžbenicima uoči i nakon raspada Jugoslavije,« 262 – 265).

21 Snježana Koren, »Slike nacionalne povijesti u hrvatskim udžbenicima uoči i nakon raspada Jugoslavije,« 261 – 271.

of all historical development – which, by the way, was just a mirror version of the same teleological approach inherited from the previous period, only the state in question was different. National history was predominantly understood as the history of Croats (the majority ethnic group), not only those living in Croatia, but also those in the neighboring countries, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ethnic minorities were, for the most part, not seen as an integral part of the national narrative, and their contribution to national history was largely ignored.[22] Where textbooks before emphasized similar historical experiences and the common historical destiny of the South Slavic people – which was still characteristic of the textbooks of the late 1980 s – now they constructed identity by stressing the differences among them, and the total separation of Croats from their former compatriots. A further consequence was the reduction of content matter dedicated to the history South Slavs, which was either completely omitted (e. g. Macedonians) or significantly reduced. The only exception was the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which retained its former volume but was mostly included in units on Croatian history. It was the presentation of twentieth-century history, however, that underwent the most drastic modifications, offering a significant change of content and perspective. The whole Yugoslav experience was evaluated negatively, and through the biased selection of negative examples, the Yugoslav episode was stripped of any positive historical memory. Probably most contested was the way the history of the Second World War and the National Liberation Struggle were dealt with; the way these changes were conducted has become, since mid–1990, one of the main points of controversy in debates about history textbooks. It will be debated in more detail in a separate chapter. The strong ethnocentric approach advocated by the 1992 textbooks was finally sanctioned by the 1995 curriculum, which determined the ratio of world history to national history at 40 percent to 60 percent and prescribed that »we study our historical relations with the world in both past and present times from the standpoint of national history.«[23] This basically meant that most national history events that had a wider regional, European, or world context were perceived only from a very narrow national perspective. Some historians, however, emphasize that this tendency to overstress national and neglect regional and general history is characteristic not only of textbooks, but also of Croatian

22 Snježana Koren, »Minorities in Croatian history and geography textbooks,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 23, no. 2 (2001): 183 – 199 and Snježana Koren, »Promjene u nastavnom planu i programu za osnovne škole u Republici Hrvatskoj tijekom posljednjeg desetljeća [Changes in the teaching program for primary schools in Croatia during the last decade].« *Povijest u nastavi* I, no. 2 (2003): 155 – 163.

23 *Nastavni plan i program za osnovne škole u Republici Hrvatskoj (izmjene i dopune) [National curriculum for primary schools in Republic of Croatia]* (Zagreb: Zavod za školstvo Ministarstva prosvjete i kulture Republike Hrvatske, 1991), 5.

historiography, especially when dealing with topics of contemporary Croatian history.[24]

Thus the war contributed to the radicalization of narratives and forestalled all necessary discussions about the methodology and aims of history teaching as well as the basic underlying values promoted through history education. Under these circumstances, educational issues were primarily treated as political ones and authors of history textbook continued to adhere to the »official« version of history controlled through detailed and prescriptive history curricula and the textbook approbation procedure. The pedagogy of history teaching constantly received less attention than the content of the history curriculum. There was also a great deal of continuity in methodological assumptions and pedagogical approaches, as well as in the perception of the purpose of history teaching, with the history teaching and textbooks from the communist period. Consequently, calls for changes in history education, which have intensified since 1995 and have offered a different understanding of what history education is all about, have, to a great extent, meant coping with both the heritage of the communist period and that of the first half of the 1990 s.

History education in Croatia in the second half of the 1990 s

The period from the end of the war in 1995 to the death of President Franjo Tudjman in December 1999 has been described by different authors as a prolonged period of undemocratic policies and practices and internal isolation.[25] However, as W. Höpken has pointed out, »textbook development in Croatia in some sense even went ahead of the general political development, with more ›modern‹ history textbooks already appearing in the late 1990 s and counter to

24 Neven Budak, »Post-socialist historiography in Croatia since 1990,« in *(Re)Writing History—Historiography in Southeast Europe after Socialism*, ed. Ulf Brunnbauer (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2004), 161; Damir Agičić, »(Re)konstrukcija suvremene hrvatske/ jugoslavenske povijesti u pregledima/ sintezama nakon 1991. godine [Reconstruction of contemporary Croatian/ Yugoslav history in overviews/ synthesis after 1991],« in *Revizija prošlosti na prostorima bivše Jugoslavije*, ed. Vera Katz (Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju u Sarajevu, 2007), 59.

25 See Ivo Goldstein, *Croatia. A History* (London: Hurst & Company, 1999); Tvrtko Jakovina, »Between the two worlds. Croatia from 1991 to 2000. Croatia from 2000 to 2006 and onwards,« in *In-Between. A Book on the Croatian Coast, Global Processes and How to Live with Them*, ed. Saša Randić and Idis Turato (Rijeka: K.LJ.B., 2006), 172 – 177, 180 – 193; Ludwig Steindorf, *Povijest Hrvatske. Od srednjeg vijeka do danas [History of Croatia. From the Middle Ages to the present]* (Zagreb: Naklada Jesenski i Turk, 2006); Marius Søberg, »Croatia since 1989: The HDZ and the Politics of Transition,« in *Democratic Transition in Croatia. Value Transformation, Education and Media*, ed. Sabrina P. Ramet and Matić Dubravka (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2007), 31 – 62.

the still authoritarian political climate of the late Tudjman era.«[26] Indeed, developments in history education in the second half of the 1990 s confirm both Höpken's statement and that of the other authors: There were two distinctive directions in history education that reflected the different interests and pressures affecting and shaping history teaching, and especially textbook development, in the second half of the 1990 s.

On the one hand, educational authorities endeavored to consolidate history education exactly on those foundations that were laid in the first half of the 1990 s. The ethno-national paradigm that had been built since the beginning of 1990 s got its most rigid expression in history curricula from the mid-1990 s and in some textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education in the second half of the 1990 s, especially those dealing with twentieth-century history. These developments wrap up this specific period, when interventions in history education were more reflective of political changes and party directives than of historiographic or pedagogical trends. History curricula for primary and secondary schools introduced in 1995 (with some minimal changes in 1997 and 1999) have been among the main factors to have a long-lasting negative impact on history education. They were written single-handedly by the ministry's special consultant for history textbooks, which effectively meant that one and the same person had almost complete and simultaneous control over the creation of history curricula and textbook approbation. However, probably the most peculiar aspect of the 1995 curricula was the way in which they were pieced together from titles and subtitles of textbooks published after 1992. Thus they reproduced the structure and ideological presumptions of these textbooks, which consequently was reflected in both textbooks and classroom approaches in the following years. It is worth noting that secondary school curricula developed in 1995 are still in force.[27]

On the other hand, debates that erupted in the second half of the 1990 s started to question the nationalist exclusiveness and xenophobic nature of history education. These calls for change originated from, and were influenced by, various internal and external pressures, among them the emergence of the system of multiple textbooks, public criticism of the existing paradigm, and direct and indirect international intervention.

The system of multiple textbooks per grade for both primary and secondary schools was introduced for the first time in the school year 1996/97; previously there had been only one history textbook per grade. In 1996, the ministry

26 Wolfgang Höpken, »Between civic identity and nationalism: History textbooks in East-Central and Southeastern Europe,« 164.

27 For the perspective of the program's author see: Ivana Kalođera-Brkić, »Pomirenje Hrvata u udžbenicima [The Reconciliation of Croats in Textbooks],« the interview with Agneza Szabo in *Večernji list*, June 1, 1996.

approved two textbooks for the seventh grade of primary school, one of them originating from the first half of the 1990 s and another that was new (in the ministry's documents, these textbooks were referred to as »parallel«[28]). In the next couple of years, the ministry gradually introduced the system of multiple textbooks in all other grades of primary and secondary schools. Though the use of multiple textbooks per grade eventually came to signify an important step forward in history education, for the first couple of years its impact was quite limited. The emergence of alternative textbooks also did not immediately result in the introduction of a free textbook market or the diminution of state control over textbook production. For another couple of years, state control remained substantial: the Ministry of Education kept the process of textbook approval in its hands and continued to use the office of special consultant as a means of overturning the decisions of the textbook selection commissions. By administrative decision, the ministry allocated textbooks to individual publishers, and in those subjects and classes where parallel textbooks were approved, each book was printed for half the total number of pupils (for example, in a school with four seventh-grade classes, one approved textbook was used in two of the classes, another approved textbook in the other two).[29] Only after the free textbook market was introduced in 1998 were teachers given the freedom to choose among different textbooks. It is also important to emphasize that there was no alternative twentieth-century history textbook in primary schools up to 2000. In secondary schools, some of the most controversial and most criticized twentieth-century history textbooks were used,[30] and only in 1999 was the first textbook[31] approved that to a certain extent stepped out of the existing paradigm.

Some historians who participated in this process, either as textbook authors or as members of textbook approval commissions, emphasized that the introduction of multiple textbooks was the result of an incidental situation and a compromise rather than that of a thought-out educational policy that had

28 See: »Odluka o nakladi i distribuciji usporednih udžbenika u osnovnoj školi u školskoj godini 1996/97 [The decision on printing and distribution of parallel textbooks in primary schools in the school year 1996/97],« *Glasnik Ministarstva prosvjete i športa*, no. 3 (1996): 7 – 8.

29 For decision on textbooks see official bulletins of the ministry: »Naputak o besplatnim udžbenicima i priručnicima za osnovne škole u školskoj godini 1996/97 [The instruction on free-of-charge textbooks and manuals for primary schools in the school year 1996/97],« *Glasnik Ministarstva prosvjete i športa*, no. 8 (1996): 2 – 4.

30 In the fourth year of gymnasium, two parallel textbooks were used: those of I. Vujčić and I. Perić. Different textbooks by I. Vujčić were also used in vocational schools, and that of I. Perić was the only textbook without an alternative in primary schools (Ivo Perić, *Povijest za VIII. razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Alfa, 1998)).

31 It was a textbook for the fourth year of high school: Ivan Vujčić, *Povijest. Hrvatska i svijet u XX. stoljeću. Udžbenik za četvrti razred gimnazije* (Zagreb: Birotehnika, 1998).

pedagogical pluralism as its aim.[32] When the textbook selection commission in January 1996 chose the new textbooks, its decision was overruled by the special consultant, who preferred textbooks that had been rejected by the commission. When authors complained, the Ministry of Education decided to approve parallel textbooks for the sixth and seventh grades of primary school.[33] However, the approval for one of the sixth-grade textbooks[34] was withdrawn following a negative evaluation by the special consultant, who disapproved of some of the book's interpretations of early medieval Croatian history.[35] Contrary to most debates about the misuse of history that had to that point concentrated only on contemporary history, the matter of dispute this time concerned topics from the medieval period. It was usually contemporary history that was deemed more susceptible to political manipulations, due in part to the way it had been researched and taught in the Communist era. In the 1990 s, this resulted in some attempts to reduce the space in the curricula dedicated to the twentieth century (e. g. in the history curriculum that was introduced in 1993 and revoked after a couple of months) and, consequently, to increase the space dedicated to Croatian medieval history. However, the case of the textbook on medieval history tangibly demonstrated that no historical period was spared from the political interference and misuse of history for everyday political purposes. There was a public polemic between one of the authors, an acknowledged expert on medieval history, and the minister of education; the case also had a political dimension to it as the textbook was eventually given for additional review to a highly ranked official of the HDZ, who also happened to be a history teacher.[36] For the next

32 For example: Damir Agičić, »Kako do europske nastave povijesti [Which way to European history education],« *Hrvatska revija* 4 (1998). Also: Željko Krušelj, »Udžbenici bez ideologije i demagogije [Textbooks without ideology and demagogy],« the interview with B. Vraneš Šoljan in *Večernji list*, September 20, 1998.

33 The sixth-grade history curriculum covers the Middle Ages and early modern history, and the seventh-grade the period from the end of the eighteenth century to 1918. See also textbooks: Damir Agičić, *Povijest 7. Udžbenik za sedmi razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Profil, 1998) and Neven Budak and Vladimir Posavec, *Rađanje suvremene Hrvatske i Europe od seobe naroda do apsolutizma: udžbenik povijesti za šesti razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Profil, 1997).

34 Neven Budak and Vladimir Posavec, *Rađanje suvremene Hrvatske i Europe od seobe naroda do apsolutizma: udžbenik povijesti za šesti razred osnovne škole.*

35 For the ministry's decisions see official ministry bulletins: *Glasnik Ministarstva prosvjete i športa,* no. 2 (1996) and no. 5 (1996). Also: The letter of complaint from the group of textbook authors and reviewers to the minister of education, received on 3. 12. 1997 (courtesy of Damir Agičić).

36 For the ministry's decisions on the textbook, see official bulletins of the ministry: *Glasnik Ministarstva prosvjete i športa,* no. 2 (1996), no. 5 (1996) and no. 8 (1996); *Vjesnik Ministarstva prosvjete i športa* no. 1 (1997), no. 3 (1997), no. 6 (1997), no. 8 (1996). Also: Protocol from the meeting in the Ministry of Education and Sports on 23. 10. 1996 (courtesy of Damir Agičić). For textbook author's perspective see: Željko Krušelj, »Tomislavova

couple of months, the textbook was by turns included on the list of approved textbooks and removed from it, and finally entered schools a year later. This case was significant not only because it shows to what extent textbooks in the mid-1990 s were subjected to governmental control, individual influences, and particular interests, but also because it received considerable attention in the media, which opened up public discussions about history textbooks and curricula produced in the first half of the 1990 s.

During the second half of the 1990 s, a number of historians and journalists criticized the government's policy toward history education.[37] Several issues were repeatedly raised: the critique of the history curricula, the procedure of the textbook selection, and the content of several textbooks. Journalists primarily focused on textbook content and problematic aspects in various textbooks, especially those dealing with the twentieth century.[38] Historians – mostly from the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb – viewed the impact of the government on history education as predominantly negative, but their opinions were largely ignored by the educational authorities. The historians repeatedly pointed to the curriculum as the main problem; they saw it as the cause of the inferior quality of textbooks and criticized the Ministry of Education for the nontransparent procedure of textbook selection and the role played by the special consultant for history textbooks. Among the charges they leveled at the curriculum was that it dedicated an unreasonably large amount of space to Croatian history, and isolated it from world history, which was, for some historians, an indication of the larger isolationist trends in Croatian society and politics at that time.[39]

The introduction of multiple textbooks, however, was greeted with mixed feelings. Even among those who strongly criticized the government, opinion was divided about the role the state should play in determining the content of history education and in the process of textbook selection. On the one hand, some

krunidba ne ugrožava Hrvatsku [The coronation of king Tomislav does not endanger Croatia],« the interview with Neven Budak in *Večernji list*, October 5, 1997. For the textbook review see: Vladimir Posavec, »Povjesničari i ›povjesničari‹ (Historians and ›historians‹),« *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 30 (1997): 308 – 317.

37 These debates were analyzed by Brigitte Le Normand in her unpublished paper from 2003: »*The present reflected in the past: Debates over history education in Croatia, 1996 – 2000,*« (working paper, History Department UCLA). The next couple of paragraphs are partly based on this analysis.

38 For example, see newspaper articles by Ivica Radoš: »Povijest za pučkoškolce: mitologija u službi politike [History for primary school students: mythology in the service of politics],« *Jutarnji list*, October 15, 1998 and »Nacionalna povijest prilagođena Tuđmanovoj biografiji [National history adapted according to Tuđman's biography],« *Jutarnji list*, October 16, 1998.

39 For historians' opinions see: »Između mitologije i povijesne istine. Kakvi su nam udžbenici? [Between mythology and the historical truth. What kind of textbooks do we have?]« in *Vijenac*, November 5, 1998, 24 – 25.

historians saw textbook pluralism as a step toward democracy, although some of them emphasized that, at that particular period in time, alternative textbooks mostly meant a choice between good and bad textbooks, not between two or more equally good texts. On the other hand, some of the critics who objected to the way textbook selection was conducted nonetheless believed that the state must determine the textbooks from which students learned.[40] The prevailing attitude among Croatian historians and educationalists in the field of history teaching at the time was that it was not up to textbooks to debate historiographic problems and different interpretations.[41] Discussions were still largely focused on the content of history education and mostly neglected to address the inseparability of content reform and the reform of pedagogy of history teaching. Only rarely was there criticism from the pedagogical and methodological point of view, calling for the inclusion of historiographic controversies and different interpretations into history education as a means of developing students' analytical and critical-thinking skills. Any such criticism came from individual historians and history educators who participated in international seminars and conferences about history education.[42] However, their calls for change garnered little response at the time; it would take another couple of years before didactical innovations would appear in Croatian history textbooks.

Despite these limitations and controversies, the appearance of multiple textbooks in the second half of the 1990 s was without doubt encouraging for history education. Although these alternative textbooks were still written on the basis of prescriptive and ethnocentric curricula and were mostly traditional in their methodological approach and subjected to rather strict control by the ministry's appointees, gradually they offered improvements in textbook design, more moderate language, and in many cases, a more complex, leveled, and balanced presentation. Certain sensitive topics, i. e. the Holocaust and the sufferings of the Italian and German minority in the former Yugoslavia after World War II, were first introduced in textbooks at this time (in the1999 textbook for the fourth year of gymnasium) and appeared only afterward in curricula (not before 2006). The textbooks' narrative was in some cases working against the official version of history promoted through history curricula. Thus, by encouraging innovations in history education, textbook authors and publishers

40 Ivo Goldstein, »Povijesni izolacionizam [Historical isolationism]« *Vijenac*, November 5, 1998, 25.

41 Željko Krušelj, »Tomislavova krunidba ne ugrožava Hrvatsku [The coronation of king Tomislav does not endanger Croatia]« *Večernji list*, October 5, 1997, 11.

42 Ivo Rendić Miočević, »Nerješivi problemi nastave povijesti [Unsolvable problems of history education]« *Vijenac*, November 5.11, 1998, 24.

gave the first impulses to step out of the framework imposed in the first half of the 1990 s.[43]

During this period, there were also certain influences that came from abroad. Representatives from the Ministry of Education as well as a number of academics involved in writing history textbooks regularly attended seminars and conferences organized by the Council of Europe, or UNESCO.[44] Of certain importance were also analyses of Croatian textbooks from abroad; one regularly referred to in academic circles was the collection of essays *Oil on Fire?*[45] One can only speculate whether the changes at the very end of the 1990 s (such as abolition of the role of special consultant and liberalization of the textbook market) were partly the consequence of these influences. Whatever impact might have come from abroad, the ministry nevertheless approved a textbook in 1998 that accused the international community and Western diplomacy of putting obstacles in the way of Croatia's acceptance to the EU and of conspiring to press the country into some new regional associations that would supposedly replace the former Yugoslavia.[46] Direct intervention in Croatian history education by the international community only came with the signing of the Erdut Agreement and the moratorium on teaching contemporary history in the Danube basin region, but these developments will be dealt with in a separate chapter.

History education after 2000: Coping with the heritage of the 1990s

The electoral defeat of the HDZ and the coming to power of the coalition government led by the Social Democrats in January 2000 marked the beginning of a new phase in the Croatian transition.[47] Various authors who have written about

43 Wolfgang Höpken, »Between civic identity and nationalism: History textbooks in East-Central and Southeastern Europe,« 187; Snježana Koren, »Slike nacionalne povijesti u hrvatskim udžbenicima uoči i nakon raspada Jugoslavije,« 281.

44 For example, the Council of Europe seminar on preparation and publication of new history textbooks for schools in European countries in democratic transition, in Warsaw, November 1996, and UNESCO's conference Disarming History, on combating stereotypes and prejudice in history textbooks in Southeast Europe, in Visby, September 1999.

45 Wolfgang Höpken, ed., *Öl ins Feuer?—Oil on Fire? Schulbücher, ethnische Stereotypen und Gewalt in Südosteuropa. Studien zur internationalen Schulbuchforschung, Band 89* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung 1996).

46 Ivan Vujčić, Povijest. Hrvatska i svijet u XX. stoljeću. Udžbenik za četvrti razred gimnazije (Zagreb: Birotehnika, 1998), 240–241.

47 In the 2000 parliamentary elections, the HDZ reached 30.5 percent of mandates, while the majority of mandates were won by the coalition of six political parties, among which the three strongest parties were: Social Democrats with 29.8 percent of seats, Social Liberals with 15.2 percent of seats, and Croatian Peasant Party with 11.3 percent of seats in the Parliament. (Vlasta Ilišin, »Hrvatski sabor 2000: strukturne značajke i promjene [Croatian parliament

these political changes emphasize their positive effects, primarily the increased opening and democratizing of Croatian society, the diminished ethnic tensions, the overall economical progress, and the significant strides made toward accession to the European Union.[48] Although some negative trends also continued (high unemployment and corruption among them), the positive changes demonstrated a shift from the formerly closed, ethno-national politics toward a more pro-European-oriented vision of societal development.

These political changes also provided impulses for new governmental initiatives regarding a comprehensive reform of compulsory education. As previously mentioned, in the 1990 s, Croatia remained one of the rare transitional countries that kept the organizational structure of its compulsory education intact (other than the switch to ideological premises in the form of »national subjects«). With Croatia's membership in the European Union now pronounced one of the new government's most important strategic goals, the new educational authorities made preparations to adapt Croatian school education to European standards. Their developmental program for compulsory education envisaged interventions that were fundamental in both institutional structure and curricula. Plans included an extension of compulsory education from eight to nine years (with six years of primary education); substantial curricular changes (with a focus on information and communication skills, foreign languages, entrepreneurship, etc.); and the updating of outdated educational content. Also introduced was the idea that learning outcomes should be the basis upon which teaching and learning requirements were defined and textbooks developed. Consequently, the need for a more integrated curriculum was identified.[49] Although the curriculum changes were only generally outlined and had retained the subject-based model of the national curriculum, they established some basic elements for further improvements of the educational system. However, these ideas were strongly opposed by the then-oppositional HDZ, and the extension of compulsory education and the new curricula became an important matter of political dispute, eventually bringing educational reforms to a halt. As a result, in the period of the coalition government (2000 – 2003), only

2000: structural features and changes],« 48). For the first time, the Ministry of Education was not headed by the HDZ, but by the Croatian Peasant Party.

48 See Ivo Goldstein, *Croatia. A History*, 1999; Tvrtko Jakovina, »Between the two worlds. Croatia from 1991 to 2000. Croatia from 2000 to 2006 and onwards,« 2006; Ludwig Steindorf, *Povijest Hrvatske. Od srednjeg vijeka do danas*, 2006; Marius Søberg, »Croatia since 1989: The HDZ and the Politics of Transition,« 2007.

49 Vladimir Strugar and Ivan Vavra, ed., Strateški ciljevi i program razvoja odgoja i obrazovanja u Republici Hrvatskoj [Strategic goals and developmental program of education in Republic of Croatia] (Zagreb: Ministarstvo prosvjete i športa, 2003).

certain superficial didactical improvements were implemented, mostly connected to the reduction of content and the updating of subject curricula.

History education in Croatia since 2000 has been burdened with many, and often conflicting, expectations. History textbooks were supposed to overcome the historical revisionism of the 1990 s and assist in the process of reconciliation between Croats and Serbs. History teachers were expected to serve as agents of social change, helping students to become critical thinkers and engaged, responsible citizens. At the same time, there was still an overwhelming pressure on history teachers to conform to prevailing social and political norms; especially promoted was the notion of history teaching as the main agent for fostering national identity. With such contradictory viewpoints, reaching a consensus about the purpose and goals of history education naturally proved difficult, and the changes made were contradictory and inconclusive and, to a certain degree, still subject to political and individual influences.

The political changes of 2000, moreover, initiated public debates about coming to terms with the heritage of the 1990 s; they also reignited polemics about school history textbooks from the Tuđman era (1990 – 1999), which had frequently been criticized inside and outside Croatia for their ambivalent treatment of the problematic aspects of Croatia's past during World War II. Furthermore, the simultaneous existence of these textbooks (and their successors) and the new textbooks, which mostly accepted a critical position toward the Ustaša puppet regime, meant that textbook narratives since 2000 have continuously reflected the clash of interpretations and the divided memory about World War II that exists in Croatian society.

A number of Croatian historians strongly advocated comprehensive changes of curricula and textbooks from the 1990 s, some even calling for the »detuđmanization« of history education.[50] Their call was part of a wider debate in the society about the heritage of the Tuđman period, especially about its problematic aspects, such as dubious privatization, the democratic deficit and authoritarian regime, as well as restrictions on the freedom of the media and war crimes. In that context, »detuđmanization« signified coming to terms with the negative heritage of the 1990 s; in history education, it usually meant dealing with the problematic aspects of curricula and textbooks from that period, especially their treatment of World War II. However, any critique of the Tuđman period was met with resistance from those who strongly identified themselves with the Tuđman administration, or had actively participated in it. They denounced »detuđmanization« as an attack on the very foundations of the Croatian

50 For example: Goran Pandža, »Jesu li hrvaski udžbneici kroatocentrični i ksenofobični? [Are Croatian textbooks Croatocentric and xenophobic?]« *Vjesnik*, April 28, 2000, 3.

national state, laid during Tuđman's presidency, calling it a »de-Croatization« of Croatian society itself.[51] The debate pointed to the strong polarization of Croatian society, and the term »detuđmanization,« frequently used after 2000, has had different meanings for different groups – both positive and negative. The topic incited not only bitter debates, but sometimes also violent reactions, especially in 2001 and 2002, when some oppositional parties (including the HDZ) organized demonstrations to protest cooperation with the International War Crimes Tribunal, thus putting strong pressure on the coalition government at a time when it already faced such pressing problems as the restructuring of the economy and a high unemployment rate.

In April 2000 – three months after the elections – the Ministry of Education established the Commission for the Evaluation of History Textbooks inherited from the 1990 s.[52] Its members consisted of historians, mostly from the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, and history teachers. The commission was additionally charged with the task of suggesting measures for the improvement of history education.[53] Although the head of the commission insisted in his public appearances on the apolitical nature of the commission and described its task as merely the evaluation of the quality of the existing texts,[54] in public, the commission's work was denoted as a »textbook revision« and its activities put in the context of »detuđmanization« – in both meanings of the word. Attacks and threats from various groups and individuals made the commission's task especially difficult and most likely prompted its insistence on the apolitical nature of its work. Those who had played an important role in defining history education in the 1990 s were particularly outspoken in denouncing the new government's measures as contrary to true Croatian interests: »an attempt to destroy the newly created Croatian national state.«[55] The panel on history education at the first Congress of Croatian Historians, in Zagreb on May 5, 2000, was a

51 See papers from the symposium organized on the third anniversary of the death of President Tuđman. Articles are published in: Miroslav Tuđman, ed., *Doktor Franjo Tuđman – neoproštena pobjeda. Rasprave sa simpozija organiziranog u povodu treće obljetnice smrti prvoga hrvatskog predsjednika* (Zagreb: UHIP, 2003).

52 Debates regarding the history textbook commission in 2000 were also analyzed by Brigitte Le Normand, »*The present reflected in the past: Debates over history education in Croatia, 1996 – 2000.*«

53 The first report of the commission for textbook revision from June 7, 2000 (unpublished) courtesy of Nikša Stančić, the chair of the commission.

54 For example, see the newspaper article written by the chair of the commission: Nikša Stančić, »Nije riječ o reviziji udžbenika [It is not about the textbook revision]« *Vjesnik*, May 12, 2000, 14.

55 See, debates about education and history textbooks at the symposium organized on the third anniversary of the death of President Tuđman, published in: Miroslav Tuđman, ed., *Doktor Franjo Tuđman – neoproštena pobjeda. Rasprave sa simpozija organiziranog u povodu treće obljetnice smrti prvoga hrvatskog predsjednika*, 2003.

scene of a heated debate, with the ministry's former special consultant for history textbooks and her supporters denouncing the work of the commission as promotion of »pro-Yugoslav conceptions« and »Yugo-communism.«[56] Unsurprisingly, newspaper coverage depicted the activities of the commission within a framework of de-ideologization, as a struggle between »true« history and ideology. This reflected the widely spread conviction (in public discourse but among some historians as well) that it is possible to reach, through a complete separation of history and ideology (»professional objectivity and neutrality«) as well as a disconnection of past and present (»past and present must be kept separated«), the »objective truth« about the past.[57] These convictions also reflected the dominant approach in history education at the time, which accepted the existence of only one »true« interpretation of the past and did not recognize the constructed nature of meanings attributed to past events.

The public debate prompted by the commission's activities triggered an epistemological argument not only about the nature of history, but also about the purpose of history education. As can be expected, the major division was between those who believed the most important task of history teaching to be the »national upbringing of the Croatian youth« and those who advocated that children be trained to think critically and to accept that there can be many versions of history.[58] The former perceived the main purpose of history education as the inculcation of patriotism – in the words of one textbook author, »we should be able to raise our children in the Croatian spirit«[59] – while the latter argued that »studying history should enable students to acquire the ability of critical thinking, to analyze and interpret information efficiently and responsibly, to recognize the complexity of problems, and to appreciate cultural differences.«[60] These were but the two opposite poles willing to publicly express their opinions; between them, there was a silent majority of history teachers for whom it was difficult to say what they thought and felt about the measures taken by the government or about the polemics that raged on their behalf.

56 See: Tvrtko Jakovina, »Ideološko etiketiranje povijesti [Ideological labelling of history]« *Vjesnik*, May 8, 2000, 13 and Nikša Stančić, »Nije riječ o reviziji udžbenika [It is not about the textbook revision],« 14.

57 For example: Goran Pandža, »Partizani i ustaše ponovo ratuju u udžbenicima povijesti za osnovnu i srednju školu? [Partisans and ustaša wage war again in history textbooks for primary and secondary school?]« *Vjesnik*, April, 27, 2000, 13.

58 Both of these viewpoints were declared during the panel on history education in May 2000. See: Tvrtko Jakovina, »Ideološko etiketiranje povijesti [Ideological labelling of history]« *Vjesnik*, May 8, 2000, 13.

59 See interview with Ivo Perić: »Zar svoju djecu ne smijemo odgajati u hrvatskom duhu? [Shouldn't we raise our children in the Croatian spirit?]« *Slobodna Dalmacija*, April 21, 2000.

60 Ivo Rendić-Miočević, »Nerješivi problemi nastave povijesti [Unsolvable problems of history teaching],« *Vijenac*, November 5, 1998, 24.

Although the commission did try to outline measures for the modernization of history education, it simultaneously defined the study of history primarily through the affective domain: values that should be acquired and conveyed via history content. As the key educational goal, the commission emphasized »the affirmation of Croatian national identity,« at the same time asserting that such a goal was compatible with other values pupils should acquire – principles of democracy, openness, multiculturalism, and tolerance.[61] Demands for history teaching that stimulated students' critical-thinking and analytical skills – as had been expressed by certain historians and history educators since the mid-1990 s—did not find their way into the commission's report. Interestingly, some of the new textbooks published in 2000 already gave indications of a different understanding of what history teaching should be all about, with an increased focus on promoting plural patterns of historical interpretation. Thus, the commission's conclusions not only lagged behind what was already present in the educational discourse, but also demonstrated the difficulty of stepping out of what was a deeply ingrained paradigm for understanding the aims and purpose of history education.

In the end, the establishment of the commission incited a fierce public debate (in newspapers as well as in round tables), rather than resulting in changes in history teaching. In its cautious report of June 2000, the commission negatively evaluated some textbooks from the 1990 s and proposed, as a temporary measure, the thorough rewriting of the most problematic ones. The commission also recommended – as a more permanent solution – the creation of new history curricula during the following year and, subsequently, of new textbooks. It also suggested seminars for the authors of curricula and textbooks, with the participation of international experts and study trips abroad. Ultimately, almost none of these moderate requests were implemented, and all that came of the commission's efforts was the opening up of the debate.[62] As the commission emphasized in its second report in January 2001, most publishers ignored these recommendations, and the Ministry of Education took no further steps after the report was submitted.[63] During the mandate of the coalition government, history curricula were not changed, nor were any of the textbooks that the commission denoted as most problematic withdrawn.To be fair, the approbation for some of

61 The second report of the commission for textbook revision, January 22, 2001 (unpublished), courtesy of Nikša Stančić.

62 The first report by the Commission for Textbook Revision from June 6, 2000 (unpublished), courtesy of Nikša Stančić. Also: Goran Pandža, »Ministarstvo nije povuklo nijedan udžbenik povijesti za osnovne i srednje škole [The ministry has revoked none of the primary and secondary school textbooks]« *Vjesnik*, June 24, 2000, 5.

63 The second report of the commission for textbook revision from January 22, 2002 (unpublished), courtesy of Nikša Stančić.

these textbooks was annulled after they obtained less than 10 percent of the market share for three years, a process enabled by provisions of the new Law on Textbooks (2001).[64] However, the drop in market share must be attributed to teachers who ceased to choose the textbooks, rather than to the determination of the ministry to have them withdrawn. The ministry's reluctance to deal with any »hot potatoes« that could additionally charge the already tense political atmosphere was clearly due to the other political problems the coalition government had to deal with. Thus, in the second part of the mandate of the coalition government, the reform of history education lost its momentum.

Nevertheless, the ministry did continue with the more liberal policy of textbook approval that facilitated a departure from the rigid framework imposed by the 1995 curricula, and carried out some projects that brought about changes both in content and didactics. Already the new generation of textbooks that appeared in spring 2000 was directed toward didactical innovations (many of their authors were elementary- and secondary-school teachers), and some of the textbooks started to systematically incorporate multiple perspectives and focus on promoting students' critical thinking. During this period, the explosion in the number of textbooks that were produced sometimes caused chaos in the process of textbook selection and occasionally resulted in books of questionable quality – graphically polished and full of colors and elements created to amuse and attract pupils and teachers, but otherwise didactically unambitious and sometimes factually inaccurate. Due to pronouncedly negative media coverage on the system of multiple textbooks, the public perceived it as one of the bigger problems of the Croatian educational system, ignoring the positive aspects of the introduction of new textbooks.

Meanwhile, the intensified international activities of the ministry signified the end of the isolationist trends characteristic of the late 1990 s. In October 2003, the decision was made to commemorate January 27 as the Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust and for the prevention of crimes against humanity.[65] The ministry also prepared two seminars on history teaching in cooperation with the Council of Europe and EUROCLIO: One was held in April 2003 and another in January 2004, immediately after the coalition government lost elec-

64 See: »Zakon o udžbenicima za osnovnu i srednju školu [Law on textbooks for primary and secondary school]« *Narodne novine*, no. 117 (2001), http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/233527.html. The 2001 Law on Textbooks was the first such law after 1978. It regulates textbook approval procedures, standards for the textbook production and the textbook selection procedure.

65 The decision was made by the Ministry of Education on October 30, 2003 under the title: *Decision on the implementation of the Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust ad for the prevention of crimes against humanity.* For English version see: http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?art=5528 (accessed February 6, 2009).

tions and the HDZ returned to power.[66] Both seminars yielded very critical judgments on the state of affairs in history education, as well as suggested measures for its improvement; it is hard to say, however, how much the seminars actually influenced educational policy and everyday teaching practice.

In this period, there were also increased initiatives in the field of history education by different domestic and international NGOs, institutions, and private publishers. The Croatian history teachers' association was founded in 2003 with the help of EUROCLIO; a journal *Povijest u nastavi* (*History in Teaching*) was launched by the Society of Croatian History; and some books that were published by the Council of Europe and UNESCO were translated into Croatian in the next couple of years.[67] The South-East Europe Textbook Network, a common project of the Georg Eckert Institute and the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, was conducted in 2001 to 2002. Moreover, several textbook authors and a number of academics and history teachers have been involved in regional projects and initiatives that have brought together historians and history educators from countries of Southeast Europe, for example the Joint History Project, initiated by the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) in 1999, or the common regional project of history teachers' associations from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia that started in 2004. These projects have so far resulted in several publications that either analyze problematic and controversial issues in history education[68] or offer some additional teaching materials that promote a more inclusive history of the region (see footnote 57). Although the impact of additional materials still remains to be seen, these initiatives have intensified regional cooperation not only among academics but also among history teachers' associations and history teachers in the region, which in the future might have a more direct influence on everyday teaching practices.

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66 There are two reports published in English: Damir Agičić, *Seminar on »History teaching in Croatia,«(report presented in Zagreb 4 – 5 April 2003,* Council of Europe); *Seminars »Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust and for the prevention of crimes against humanity with the Awarding Ceremony of Yad Vashem Righteous among the Nations« and »Teaching the history of 20th century,«* (report by Snježana Koren, Council of Europe, Strasbourg 2004). Full papers from both seminars are published in Croatian in the journal *Povijest u nastavi* 2 (2003), 135 – 187 and *Povijest u nastavi* 3 (2004), 9 – 111, 158 – 163.

67 Among them, Falk Pingel's *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision* was translated in 2000, Robert Stradling's books *Teaching 20th Century European History* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2001) and *Multiperspectivity in History Teaching: A Guide for Teachers* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2003 and 2005), and Ruth Tudor's book *Teaching 20th Century Women's History: A Classroom Approach* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2005).

68 Christina Koulouri, ed., *Clio in the Balkans. The Politics of History Education* (Thessaloniki: Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, 2002). Croatian translation: *Klio na Balkanu. Usmjerenja i pristupi u nastavi povijesti* (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2005).

History education after 2004: New garments and old ghosts

Positive trends begun in the period of the coalition government have mostly continued since the 2004 return to power of the HDZ[69] – now to a certain extent transformed and reformed into a conservative Christian-Democrat party. A political consensus at the national level has been reached about membership in the European Union as the fundamental strategic goal. Since Croatia has recently gained the status of candidate country, central to political life is the process of institutional adjustment to the standards and requirements of the European Union. This process is slow and hindered by many difficulties inherited not only from the socialist period, but also from the period of post-socialist transformation, which was, for the most part, based on an ideology of ethnic nationalism whose creators and actors still hold high positions in key sectors of societal life, including education.

In the field of education, the new government has rejected the reform proposal of 2003; another view has prevailed, according to which the existing eight-year system of compulsory education should not be changed, but improved. New curricula introduced in compulsory education in 2006 brought about certain improvements that include a shift toward defining learning outcomes, a further reduction in the content load, and a moderate content update.[70] The process was undertaken with the intention of reducing the content of overloaded curricula and creating content catalogues for all subjects; in time, these content catalogues developed into new subject curricula. Although the educational authorities have regarded these modifications in curricula as a development of the Croatian national educational standards, the changes might better be seen as a rough cleaning before the start of meaningful curriculum reform. Some of the recent steps taken by the Ministry of Education (now known as the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports)[71] – such as the introduction of an external national

69 The HDZ won parliamentary elections in 2003 and 2007. It won 43.3 percent of seats in 2003 and 43.1 percent in 2007 (Vlasta Ilišin, »Hrvatski sabor 2003: modeli političkog regrutiranja parlamentarne elite,« 63); The State Electoral Commission, 2007). Although the HDZ in both cases formed a coalition with several other parties (e.g. Social Liberal, ethnic minority parties, Democratic Center, etc.), it remained the dominant party. The Ministry of Education was also headed by a minister very close to the HDZ; at the end of his first mandate, he formally joined the HDZ.

70 In contrast to the 1990 s, when foreign language was taught from the fourth to the eight grade, in 2006 the first foreign language was introduced in the first grade, and the second foreign language as an optional subject in the fourth grade. Early learning of foreign languages was introduced at the expense of mathematics and instruction in the mother tongue. The number of classes in the mother tongue was reduced from six to five per week during the first four grades of schooling, and the number of mathematics classes from five to four classes. (Ministry of Education and Sport, 1999; Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, 2006).

71 After 2004, the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Science merged;

evaluation of secondary schools, the establishment of new independent agencies in the area of education,[72] the establishment of the Council for National Curriculum, and the development of a new strategy for curriculum changes in 2007 – indicate the political intention to develop a national curriculum that will meet the European Union's demands of Croatia as a candidate country. This is an ambitious task and it demands thorough and in-depth changes in compulsory education, raising the problem of the feasibility of such a strategy in the given political and social context.

Although there was no reversion to the positions of the 1990 s after the HDZ returned to power, its educational policy in the field of history education has generally remained ambivalent – either out of pragmatic or ideological reasons. Some recent cases demonstrate this ambivalence, especially as regards changes in the process of textbook approbation, the introduction of new history curricula for compulsory education, and some current debates on history textbooks.

One of the first initiatives of the new authorities was aimed at changing the procedure of textbook approbation and eventually reducing the number of textbooks. This resulted in the adoption of the new Law on Textbooks (2006)[73], which has limited the number of parallel textbooks to three per grade. Recent cases, such as that of the 2007 approbation procedure of history textbooks, indicate that the provisions of the new law, in comparison with those of the previous one (2001), have increased the possibilities of state intervention and political interference (see chapter »Debating the Homeland War: The most recent history in curricula and textbooks«). Furthermore, the Ministry of Education has not shown much interest in the approval of supplementary teaching materials produced by different non-governmental organizations. Some of the materials have been published in Croatia since 2000,[74] mostly as a result of some

consequently, the ministry has changed its name to the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports.

72 In the period from 2004 to 2007, several agencies in the area of education (covering primary, secondary, and tertiary education) were established: the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education (established in 2005), which is in charge of external evaluation of compulsory and secondary education quality (e.g. national exams and state *matura*); Education and Teacher Training Agency (established in 2006 in place of the former Institute for Education), which is the most important institution for in-service training of teachers and principals.

73 »Zakon o udžbenicima za osnovnu i srednju školu [Law on textbooks for primary and secondary school],« *Narodne novine*, no. 36 (2006), http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/126650.html.

74 First among the additional materials were the books *Childhood in the Past* (2001) and *Women and Men in the Past* (2002). CDRSEE has produced four sourcebooks under the common title *Teaching Modern Southeast European History: Alternative Educational Materials;* they were

of the above-mentioned regional projects in Southeast Europe, but none of them could easily find their way into classrooms, either because they are difficult to acquire or teachers were not encouraged to use them. Overloaded curricula leave little space for teachers to introduce additional content, and officially approved textbooks are still perceived as a key resource for instruction. To be fair, there are no bans on these materials on the part of the educational authorities; however, there's also no enthusiasm to promote them. Most of the time, they are simply ignored and their usage depends on the initiatives of individual teachers. The ministry's reserved response to the materials is probably due in part to negative reactions from right-wing circles, which perceive in such regional initiatives the threat of bringing Croatia back to some new Balkan associations. For example, in 2005, the four sourcebooks of the Center of Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe were criticized – before they were even translated into Croatian – as an attempt of the Stability Pact to impose »common Balkan textbooks« on Croatia. Some historians, as well as some members of the Croatian Academy of Science and Arts, were leading exponents of such critiques.[75] The impression therefore remains that education authorities are still inclined to pay much more attention to these reactions than to regional projects that promote more multiperspective and inclusive approaches to history education.

There is a similar ambiguity in the latest history curriculum introduced in 2006 for the higher grades of primary school as part of the so-called Croatian national educational standards. By decision of the ministry, a history commission was formed in 2004; among its members were academic historians, history teachers, and history textbook authors.[76] It developed a proposal for the new history program by June 2005.[77] However, in the summer of 2005, during the heated polemics about the teaching of contemporary Croatian history (see chapter »Debating the Homeland War: The most recent history in curricula and textbooks«), the ministry appointed a new commission behind the screens; this commission drafted a new proposal that made changes to the original version,

published in Croatian in 2007. A project of three history teachers' associations resulted in the 2008 publication of a resource book under the title: *Jugoslavija između Istoka i Zapada. Obični ljud u neobičnoj zemlji. Svakodnevni život u Bosni i Hercegovini, Hrvatskoj i Srbiji 1945 – 1990.* [Yugoslavia between east and west. Ordinary people in an unordinary country. Everyday life in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia 1845 – 1990].

75 Such attitudes are, for example, expressed in a book by Josip Pečarić, *Za hrvatske vrednote [For Croatian values]* (Zagreb: self-published, 2007). Also: Stojan de Prato, »Zajednička balkanska povijest u hrvatske škole [Common Balkan history in Croatian schools]« *Večernji list*, March 9, 2006.

76 Among them, Snježana Koren.

77 Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa, *Nastavne teme od 5. do 8. razreda osnovne škole predmet: Povijest.* (Zagreb: MZOS, 21.6.2005). http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=2221 (accessed May 5, 2008).

mostly to its content structure. This second version was introduced as experimental in a small percentage of schools during the school year 2005/2006. Finally, a third commission developed a final version, similar to the second one, which entered all schools in the school year 2006/2007.[78] Juxtaposing these three versions allows one to observe their differences, which originate from two types of contradictions: one related to content – how to define certain topics, i. e. what to include and what to exclude from content matter – and the other pedagogical – how to teach history in terms of methodology. In the end, both contradictions reflect previous debates about history education in the society and emerge from different perspectives on its purpose in schools.

The new history curriculum shows some progress in comparison to the previous (1995) one. Although political history remains dominant, the curriculum has put more emphasis on previously neglected fields of history (cultural history, gender history, etc.). These changes are reflected in the new generation of textbooks published in 2007. The ambitiously defined goals of history education, developed by the first commission, have mostly been retained; among them are multiperspectivity, multiculturalism, working with sources, teaching about interpretations, and the development of critical thinking. However, there are several cases that reveal how much easier it is to define these goals than to implement them coherently as curriculum components, let alone in teaching practice. For example, the introduction of the curriculum emphasizes that »it is possible to understand history only if pupils learn both about the results of historical research and methods that historians use when studying history,« but the learning outcomes are defined only on the factual level, i. e. only on the level of data reproduction. In addition, although the curriculum is less prescriptive than the previous one and provides teachers with more freedom when shaping their individual syllabi, it remains overloaded with content, which significantly reduces the use of active methods of teaching that are emphasized as one of the new curriculum's most important components. And, in another contradiction, the 2006 curriculum shows a certain detachment from the notion that history education »forms« and »builds« students' »national consciousness,« determining its role as »helping pupils to understand their own cultural and national roots and to nurture their national identity.«[79] However, suggestions included in the first version of the curriculum, such as an exploration of the more

78 Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa, *Nastavni plan i program za osnovnu školu [National curriculum for primary school]* (Zagreb: Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa, 2006). http://public.mzos.hr/default.asp?ru=1166&sid=&akcija=&jezik=1.

79 Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa, *Nastavni plan i program za osnovnu školu [National curriculum for primary school]* (Zagreb: MZOS, 2006), 284. http://public.mzos.hr/default.asp?ru=1166&sid=&akcija=&jezik=1.

complex nature of identity building (multiple identities), were not reflected in the final version, which defines identity exclusively as a national one.

Furthermore, although »preparing students to live in a multiethnic and multicultural society« is defined as one of history education's important goals,[80] very little effort has been made to put added emphasis on the content that was already neglected in the previous curriculum, such as the history of ethnic minorities or regional history. This has again left the initiative – or lack thereof – in the hands of textbook authors. Consequently, in some of the current textbooks, published in 2007, authors pay more attention to minorities or the region; in others, there is less coverage than ever before, especially on regional history. Textbooks tend to take two main approaches to minorities: They either dedicate special lessons to their histories[81] or integrate them into mainstream texts and lessons on Croatian history[82]; either way, however, content on minorities is more often the exception than the rule. Thus, intercultural relations are insufficiently present in the current curricula and textbook standards, and the majority group still learns very little about minorities. Regarding regional history, an interesting difference exists between newly written textbooks and those that are modified versions of older textbooks written according to a previous history curriculum. In the former, there is less regional history than ever – neighboring countries are in most cases only geographical names on maps.[83] In the latter, there are still a couple of pages dedicated to the region, but more as remnants of the old curricular concept from the 1990 s than of a thought-out educational decision.[84] Differences also exist regarding the treatment of the history of the two Yugoslav states: In some textbooks, its portrayal remains predominantly negative, in tradition with the 1990 s textbooks, while in others the narrative has become more complex and less negative.

There are also some quite peculiar modifications in the curriculum, especially in light of Croatia's strivings to gain accession to the European Union: The topic of European integrative processes after the Second World War, which was pro-

80 Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa, *Nastavni plan i program za osnovnu školu [National curriculum for primary school]*, (Zagreb: MZOS, 2006), 284. http://public.mzos.hr/default.asp?ru=1166&sid=&akcija=&jezik=1.

81 For example: Mira Kolar-Dimitrijević, et al., *Povijest 8. Udžbenik iz povijesti za 8. razred osnovne škole* (Samobor: Meridijani, 2007).

82 For example: Damir Agičić et al., *Povijest 7. Udžbenik za 7. razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Profil, 2007).

83 For example: Željko Brdal and Margita Madunić, *Tragom prošlosti 6. Udžbenik povijesti za 6. razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2007); Krešimir Erdelja and Igor Stojaković, *Tragom prošlosti 7. Udžbenik povijesti za 7. razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2007).

84 For example: Neven Budak and Marija Mogorović Crljenko, Povijest 6. Udžbenik s CD-om za povijest za 6. razred osnovne škole (Zagreb: Profil, 2007); Damir Agičić et al., *Povijest 7. Udžbenik za 7. razred osnovne škole*, 2007.

posed in the first version of the curriculum, was left out in the final one. However, most revealing are traditionally »difficult« topics such as World War II and the contemporary period. Here, differences between the initial and the final proposal reflect current debates in Croatian society and tensions in interpreting the significance of these periods for Croatian history. These two examples will be dealt with in more detail in following chapters.

History curricula, history textbooks, and teaching about World War II

In the first half of the 1990 s, no topic in history textbooks underwent such dramatic changes as the history of the Second World War and the National Liberation Struggle (NLS hereafter), which has consequently rendered it a major point of controversy in debates about history textbooks. The topic was of particular significance in socialist Yugoslavia because the oft-cited idea of the »common struggle of all Yugoslav nations against occupying forces and collaborators« was a key element in the dominant ideology of »brotherhood and unity.« Similarly, emphasizing the unity of the NLS and the socialist revolution served the purpose of granting legitimacy to the Yugoslav Communist regime.[85] Textbooks in the 1980 s still paid extensive attention to the NLS – about 40 percent of the 1984 history curriculum was dedicated to it, and the textbook narrative was marked by belligerent terminology and emotional language. In such a narrative, there was no place for memories about the war other than the official ones – for example, the mass killings of war prisoners and death marches that happened after the war never found their way into the textbooks.

The reconstruction of memory about the war that occurred after 1990 was

85 Wolfgang Höpken, »Der Zweite Weltkrieg in den jugoslawischen und post-jugoslawischen Schulbüchern,« in *Öl ins Feuer?—Oil on Fire? Schulbücher, ethnische Stereotypen und Gewalt in Südosteuropa. Studien zur internationalen Schulbuchforschung, Band 89*, ed. Wolfgang Höpken (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1996), 159 – 178; Wolfgang Höpken, »War, memory, and education in a fragmented society: the case in Yugoslavia,« *East European Politics and Societies* 13, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 190 – 227; Magdalena Najbar-Agičić, »Promjene u prikazu Drugoga svjetskog rata u hrvatskim udžbenicima povijesti u posljednjih četvrt stoljeća [Changes in presentation of World War II in Croatian history textbooks in last 25 years],« in *Dijalog povjesničara-istoričara 4*, ed. Hans-Georg Fleck and Igor Graovac (Zagreb: Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, 2001), 213 – 230; Holm Sundhaussen, »Jugoslawien und seine Nachfolgestaaten. Konstruktion, Dekonstruktion und Neukonstruktion von ›Erinnerungen‹ und Mythen,« in *Mythen der Nationen. 1945—Arena der Erinnerungen*, ed. M. Flacke (Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum, 2004), 373 – 413; Snježana Koren, »Slike nacionalne povijesti u hrvatskim udžbenicima uoči i nakon raspada Jugoslavije [Images of national history in Croatian textbooks before and after the breakdown of Yugoslavia],« *Historijski zbornik* LX (2007): 247 – 294.

only partly the consequence of these blank spots and suppressed topics; it was also the result of efforts by the new elite to reinterpret history to advance their political ambitions. The HDZ leadership, together with President Tuđman, promoted the idea of »national reconciliation« among former war adversaries (»sons of former Ustaša and sons of former partisans,« as the phrase goes) as the basic precondition for creating an independent Croatian state. The so-called reconciliation involved a synthesis of state-building elements from different political and ideological options originating from World War II. (Tudman's idea also partly solved the problem of personal biographies for many members of the new establishment, including Tuđman himself, who had been active participants in the previous regime.) The manner in which this entire question was treated served as a strong impetus for historical revisionism regarding the Independent State of Croatia (ISC hereafter) and the Ustaša movement, not only in politics, but in public discourse as well. Among historians, a small group actively supported the authorities in shaping the new historical memory about the Second World War and two Yugoslav states.[86] Some of these historians had a strong impact on history teaching because they were actively engaged in the creation of new textbooks and curricula.

Consequently, the new interpretative framework of the 1990 s textbooks was based on the ideology of Croatian statehood: Every Croatian state, including the ISC, became a positive historical fact, something cherished by all Croats regardless of their political affiliation. Ustaša atrocities were not neglected, but they were marginalized and glossed over, while those committed by Četniks and partisans against Croats were given greater focus. At the same time, textbooks paid considerable attention to the Croatian antifascist movement; it was, however, separated from the wider Yugoslav framework and the rest of the National Liberation Movement and placed primarily in the context of creating the Croatian state inside the Yugoslav federation. This division of the partisan movement along ethnic lines served several purposes: It fitted well within the context of »reconciliation,« made possible the cleansing of Croatian antifascism from communism, and last but not the least, enabled the attribution of atrocities at the end of the war only to »Tito's partisans,« thus marking the communist regime as primarily anti-Croat.[87]

86 Neven Budak, »Post-socialist historiography in Croatia since 1990,« in *(Re)Writing History—Historiography in Southeast Europe after Socialism*, ed. Ulf Brunnbauer (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2004), 154 – 158, 164; Iskra Iveljić, »Cum ira et studio: Geschichte und Gesellschaft Kroatiens in den 1990er Jahren,« in *GegenErinnerung. Geschichte als politisches Argument. Schriften des Historischen Kollegs Kolloquien 61*, ed. Helmut Altrichter (München: Oldenbourg, 2006), 201 – 2.

87 On the role that the Second World War played in history education in former Yugoslavia, see

The ambivalent way in which Croatian textbooks dealt with World War II and especially the ISC in the 1990 s has frequently been criticized inside and outside Croatia, by both Croatian historians and international experts. This criticism has obviously had an impact, because most textbooks published since 1999 have adopted an unambiguously critical position toward the ISC and its crimes. The changes in textbooks preceded those in curricula and were due mostly to the initiatives of individual textbook authors, but also to a change in society's climate: the decentering of the Second World War from its focal position in political disputes. Furthermore, since 2003, Croatia has followed the international practice of commemorating January 27 as the Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust and for the protection of crimes against humanity, which includes seminars for teachers (with participation of experts from Yad Vashem and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum) and various school activities. However, World War II has not lost its potential to create ideological conflicts; bitter memories of the war, and the way it used to be remembered in the 1990 s, still haunt Croatian history education. Recent changes in history curricula, as well as the approval of some textbooks that to a certain extent still reflect the problematic heritage of the 1990 s,[88] have pointed to the ambivalent attitude among some members of the Croatian political and intellectual elite toward the heritage of the Second World War.

The 2006 history curriculum for primary school, in contrast to the 1995 one, explicitly mentions the suffering of Serbs, Jews, and Roma during the war, as well as those of the Italian and German minority after the war, thus following upon the path paved by textbooks published after 1999. But there are some significant differences between the first and final versions of the curriculum that point to tensions still extant in society. In the case of Serbs, Jews, and Roma, the qual-

Wolfgang Höpken, »War, memory, and education in a fragmented society: the case in Yugoslavia,« 1999.

88 In 2004, a textbook was approved that covered concentration camps in the ISC in three sentences (out of three pages dedicated to the ISC, including descriptions of thriving cultural activities), describing them as transit and working camps where »opponents and unwanted persons« were imprisoned and »worked and lived in most inhuman conditions,« and going on to claim that »Besides killings, inmates died from hard labour, contagious diseases and bad hygienic conditions etc.« Among the victims of the Ustaša atrocities, Jews and Roma are explicitly mentioned only in the context of the racial laws, while Serbs are not at all mentioned. (Josip Jurčević and Marija Raić, *Povijest za 8. razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Alfa, 2004), 82–83). In the teacher's manual accompanying the textbook, teachers are instructed to describe how the ISC was supported by »the people« and to »evaluate the significance of creating the Croatian state for the first time after 1102« (*Povijest 5, 6, 7, 8. Metodički priručnici koji sadržajno prate udžbenike iz povijesti za V., VI., VII. i VIII. razred osnovne škole.* CD-ROM (Zagreb: Alfa, 2004.) The textbook was withdrawn after two years not because of its content, but because it obtained less than 5 percent of the market share during this period (under the provisions of 2001 Law on Textbooks).

ification of genocide that existed in the original proposal of the curriculum in 2005 has been removed from the final version in 2006: The sentence »politics of terror against Croatian citizens and genocide against Serbs, Jews and Roma« has been replaced with the »politics of terror against all Croatian citizens (especially Serbs, Jews and Roma).«[89] By such means, terms like »the Holocaust« and »genocide« are mentioned in the history curriculum only when they refer to general history, and not in the context of the ISC.

Interestingly enough, in the new generation of eighth-grade textbooks published in 2007, there are different readings of the 2006 curriculum guidelines. In some aspects, the textbooks' narratives are much more attuned to one another than those of previous textbooks: The language is moderate, there is no belligerent terminology, and they rather put an emphasis on political aspects of the war and the sufferings of civilians than on military operations. All of them state that the ISC was a fascist dictatorship and totalitarian state, and none of them explicitly advocates chauvinism or ethnic intolerance. However, while most of them pay more attention than before to atrocities committed by the Ustaša regime, some still contain underlying assumptions that to a certain extent reflect contested and controversial interpretative paradigms from the 1990 s. In the case of one textbook, more attention is still paid to crimes where Croats are victims, especially those committed by Četniks or partisans, than to those committed by the Ustaša regime against Serbs, Jews, and Roma, and the latter are given less narrative space than the territorial organization and cultural life in the ISC.[90] The biggest interpretative difference among textbooks lies, however, in terminology used to describe Ustaša crimes: Some speak of them as »the Holocaust« and »genocide«[91]; some depict them as »Ustaša terror«[92]; and the above-mentioned

89 Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa, *Nastavni plan i program za osnovnu školu [National curriculum for primary school]* (Zagreb: MZOS, 2006). http://public.mzos.hr/default.asp?ru=1166&sid=&akcija=&jezik=1.

90 Stjepan Bekavac, et al., *Povijest 8. Udžbenik za 8. razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Alfa, 2007), 88–91, 101, 121, 129. In the aforementioned 2007 textbook, Ustaša crimes are described under the neutral title *Ustaša regime,* while the chapters about Četnik and partisan crimes bear the value-laden titles *The četnik terror in Croatia* and *The fall of the ISC and the tragedy at Bleiburg*—which very much resemble titles in the textbook issued by the same publisher in the second half of 1990 s. In 2008, the new edition of the textbook was approved by the ministry for the school year 2008/2009. Somewhat more attention is paid to the sufferings of Serbs and Jews in this edition than in the 2007 one; nevertheless, all examples of sufferings in the ISC are still only those in which Croats are victims, and the ISC itself is presented as a victim of the Axis powers. Furthermore, there are several stories about those who received the honor of the »righteous among nations« for saving lives of Jews during the war, but no stories about the victims themselves. As a novelty, considerable attention is paid to the Italian occupation and the atrocities committed by the Italian forces. (Stjepan Bekavac, et al., *Povijest 8. Udžbenik za 8. razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Alfa, 2008), 99, 101–102; 103–104).

91 Mira Kolar-Dimitrijević, et al., *Povijest 8. Udžbenik iz povijesti za 8. razred osnovne škole*

textbook refers only to the »repressive politics« of the Ustaša regime.[93] Interestingly enough, all these textbooks were approved by the ministry's commission that was chaired by a historian who was at the time a member of the Croatian team on the international task force for teaching about the Holocaust![94] Thus, current history textbooks reflect the divided memory about World War II that still exists in Croatian society and reveal that coming to terms with this part of the Croatian past is far from resolved.

Debating the Homeland War: The most recent history in curricula and textbooks

For most of the years since1990, World War II has been at the center of polemics about history curricula and textbooks. However, in the last couple of years, there has been increased concern about way in which the wars of the 1990 s are presented and taught, which, like that of World War II curricula, is very much determined by contemporary political debates and controversies.

Narratives about the recent war in Croatia (1991 – 1995) entered the textbooks very soon: Already a 1992 history textbook for the eighth grade of primary school[95] included emotional descriptions of a conflict still in progress. The textbook narrative was very much attuned to the official memory and did not change much during the 1990 s. The term »Homeland War,« which is today widely accepted in textbooks, historiography, and public discourse, did not appear in textbooks before 1999, and then, for the first time, in the alternative textbook for secondary schools. Until then, textbooks used terms such as »the war of Great Serbian forces against Croatia« or »Great Serbian aggression against Croatia.« Sufferings in the war were attributed to only one side. Croatia was indeed largely the victim of aggression; nevertheless, the possibility that others might have been victims as well was ignored.

In the years following the Homeland War, the conflict has acquired an important place in the Croatian collective memory: It has been portrayed as one of

(Samobor: Meridijani, 2007), 122 – 124; Snježana Koren, *Povijest 8. Udžbenik za 8. razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Profil, 2007), 127 – 129.

92 Vesna Đurić, *Povijest 8. Udžbenik za osmi razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Profil, 2007), 90; Krešimir Erdelja and Igor Stojaković, *Tragom prošlosti 8. Udžbenik povijesti za 8. razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2007), 127 – 130.

93 Snježana Koren, *Povijest 8. Udžbenik za 8. razred osnovne škole*, 91. The 2008 edition uses the same terminology, but now also explicitly mentions »mass killings of the Serbian population« (Stjepan Bekavac, et al., *Povijest 8. Udžbenik za 8. razred osnovne škole,* 101).

94 Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research.

95 Ivo Perić, *Povijest za VIII. razred osnovne škole* (Zagreb, Školska knjiga, 1992).

the key events in Croatian history, a victory of the Croatian defenders over the Serbian aggressors that ensured the very existence of the independent Croatian state. Numerous war veterans associations have been created and war events publicly commemorated. Especially since 2000, increasing significance has been attached to the Homeland War in political discourse: For many, no longer is it the synthesis of state-building elements of different ideologies originating from World War II, but – as the saying goes – the »values and virtues of the Homeland War,« that provide the foundation for today's Croatia.

However, the end of the war has also served to direct attention to a number of questions still burdening Croatian society. Among them, a split memory about the war and different evaluations of war events (not only between Croats and Serbs, but also among Croats and among Serbs) have most influenced the textbook debates that intensified after 2000. Independent media and NGOs, in particular, have raised the public debate on war crimes committed by both Serbs and Croats and have played an important role in truth-seeking initiatives and Croatia's coming to term with the recent past. Additional impetus for these debates has come from the prosecution for war crimes,, especially after the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the Hague brought charges against some of Croatia's senior army officers. Croatian authorities resisted handing over the officers for some time, thereby slowing the Croatian path toward the European Union, but in the last couple of years, the state has become more pragmatic about these issues, and cooperation with the International Criminal Court has improved.

This cooperation, however, has met strong resistance from part of the population, especially among politicians and war veterans associations who regard it as their duty to protect what they refer to as the »dignity of the Homeland War.« Many denied that such crimes had happened, claiming that those who are defending themselves cannot commit war crimes. In response, the Croatian Parliament issued a couple of declarations attempting to define the character of the war, most important among them the Declaration on the Homeland War (2000)[96] and the Declaration on Operation Storm (2006).[97] Although their public

96 In the Declaration on the Homeland War from October 13, 2000, it is stated that »the Republic of Croatia led a war that was just and legitimate, defensive and liberating. It was not an aggressive and occupational war against anyone. Croatia defended its territory inside its internationally recognized borders from the Serbian aggressor«. See: »Deklaracija o Domovinskom ratu,« *Narodne novine,* no. 102 (2000). http://www.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeno/2000/1987.htm.

97 In the Declaration on Operation Storm from June 30, 2006, the conflict is described as »legal by international law.« Operation Storm is depicted as a »decisive, glorious, and victorious battle« in which the Croatian army liberated occupied territories and ended the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, this operation »should not be forgotten« and should become a »part of the Croatian past, useful for future generations.« See: »De-

impact is irrelevant, such declarations are harmful in many ways, not least because they try to monopolize interpretations of the past and offer an ultimate narrative intended to put an end to legitimate debates about the war. There are some other examples demonstrating how politically and ideologically important this topic has become. In 2001, the Croatian government made a decision to initiate scientific research about the Homeland War,[98] and in 2004 it founded the Croatian Memorial-Documentation Center of the Homeland War, whose main task is defined as collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the archive materials from the war period.[99]

Given this political climate, it was not until 2000 that some textbooks cautiously began offering narratives that went beyond the simplified, black-and-white depictions of war events characteristic of the 1990 s. At the same time, there were increasing demands by some war veterans associations and politicians to dedicate more space in curricula and textbooks to the topic. However, the curricular treatment of the Homeland War really only came into public focus after 2003, when the Ministry of Education had to deal with the end of the moratorium on teaching recent history in Podunavlje.

When, in 1995, Croatia regained control over the most of its territory, only the eastern-most part – Podunavlje (the Danube region) – remained under the control of the local Serbs. In November 1995, with the assistance of the international community, the Erdut Agreement was signed between the Croatian government and local Serbs, placing Podunavlje temporarily under the jurisdiction of the UN Transitional Administration, until 1998, when Croatia regained full sovereignty over its entire territory. In 1997, a letter of agreement was signed as an addendum to the Erdut Agreement, which ensured the educational rights of the Serbian minority. The agreement included the implementation of a five-year embargo (»the moratorium«) – from school year 1997/98 to 2002/2003 – on teaching contemporary Croatian history in classes of Serbian pupils.[100]

Podunavlje is one of the Croatian regions most affected by the recent war. It is not surprising, therefore, that after the signing of the Erdut Agreement, the process of reconciliation and (re)construction of social life was accompanied by many difficulties – primarily the consequence of war destruction and the deep ethnic divide and mistrust between Serbs and Croats. Most were not ready to

klaracija o Oluji,« *Narodne novine,* no. 76 (2006). http://www.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeno/2006/1787.htm.

98 Nikica Barić, *Srpska pobuna u Hrvatskoj 1990.–1995* (Zagreb: Tehnička knjiga, 2005), 11.

99 About the Croatian Memorial-Documentation Center of the Homeland War: http://www.centardomovinskograta.hr/o_centru.html.

100 »Odluka o moratoriju na predavanje sadržaja povijesti koji se odnose na bivšu Jugoslaviju [Decision on the moratorium on teaching the contemporary history of former Yugoslavia],« *Vjesnik Ministarstva prosvjete i športa*, no. 8 (1997), 4.

accept the idea of living and working together with former neighbors of different ethnic origins. At that point in time, in classrooms where the history curriculum was based on exclusiveness and ethnic nationalism (whether that of the Croats or the Serbs), it proved too difficult to achieve consensus on how and what to teach. The moratorium was intended, therefore, to avoid situations where history education might be used as a means of separation and promotion of intolerance, and subsequently contribute to new cycles of violence.

With the moratorium's five-year expiration date approaching, the Ministry of Education organized several meetings and consultations with experts on intercultural education, teachers, and political parties from the region. The decision to end the moratorium was reached, but none of the existing history textbooks was acceptable to the representatives of the regional Serbian community. The Ministry of Education therefore appointed a commission (January 2003)[101] whose members consisted of Croatian historians, experts on intercultural education, and representatives of the Serbian community and of the ministry. The commission decided to fill the curricular gap in contemporary history materials with a supplement to the existing textbooks; this would serve as temporary until new textbooks were developed. It was decided that the supplement should be source-based, inclusive, and peace-oriented, and offer multiple perspectives on recent history; the concept was officially accepted by the educational authorities. The issue was also an important one politically, as the Ministry of Education had made a commitment to the international community to develop the supplement by the end of 2003, when the moratorium would end.

The commission's decision regarding the supplement was also influenced by the findings of empirical research among history teachers in the Danube region (ordered by the commission), on their opinions on the revocation of the moratorium and on history teaching in general.[102] The research findings revealed that the two groups of teachers, those teaching in the Serbian minority programs and those teaching in the majority programs, had different perspectives on three crucial issues: the existing concept of history education and its social impacts, the moratorium revocation, and the extent to which minorities should be represented in the curriculum. In contrast to the minority program teachers, sig-

101 The full title is: *The commission for developing proposals regarding the teaching of history of former Yugoslavia since 1989 in the schools of the Croatian Danube region.* Branislava Baranović was a member of the commission.

102 The research was carried out in July 2003, on a sample of twenty-nine primary- and secondary-school history teachers (which, at 88 percent, indicates high response rate). The research findings are presented in more detail in the article by Branislava Baranović, et al., »Teaching history in a post-war social context: The Case of Croatian Danube region,« *Intercultural Education* 18 (2007): 455 – 471.

nificantly fewer majority program teachers felt that the existing concept of history teaching contributed to the division between people and the lack of tolerance between Serbs and Croats. The teachers in the majority programs were also less willing than their colleagues in the minority programs to accept an approach that more substantially included the histories of national minorities in history teaching. The difference was also evident concerning the revocation of the moratorium: teachers in the majority program were more inclined to its revocation than teachers in minority program; the latter would have rather prolonged it until new history curricula and teaching materials for recent history were developed. Yet, on a general level (when the history of the relationship between Serbs and Croats was not discussed), both groups of teachers supported a liberally oriented concept of history teaching, including a multiperspective, multicultural, inclusive, and objective approach, with more attention paid to such topics as peace education, the European dimension, and issues from social and cultural history. The statements shared by both groups of teachers pointed to an initial common ground for history teaching and signaled their good will to teach history in a way that was attuned to a more pluralist and tolerant conception.[103] However, the research also showed that history teaching was still a very sensitive issue and that lack of balance, disregard of viewpoints, or stereotyping from any side could reignite the conflict.

After two failed attempts at creating the supplement in 2003, and the change of government at the beginning of 2004, which temporarily brought the work on the supplement to a halt, the commission assigned the job to another team of authors at the end of 2004.[104] The text – entitled »Supplement to the textbooks on current Croatian history« – was eventually finished in April 2005 and accepted after certain changes were made by the commission, whose members served as de facto reviewers. It was decided at that point that the supplement should serve not only for pupils in the Danube basin region, but for those everywhere in Croatia. The ministry then decided to have the text additionally reviewed by various institutions and individuals (among them, the history department of the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, the Croatian Institute for History, and some members of the textbook approbation commission); this resulted in quite a divided response, with some reviews evaluating the text very positively, and others very negatively. Even before the reviews reached the authors of the supplement, the negative ones appeared in the media and incited a fierce public debate that unfolded in a charged atmosphere of war crime trials as well as the

103 Branislava Baranović, et al., »Teaching history in a post-war social context: The Case of Croatian Danube region,« conclusion.

104 Authors were Snježana Koren and Tvrtko Jakovina from the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, and Magdalena Najbar Agičić, a history textbook writer and editor.

commemoration of the tenth anniversary of Operation Storm. All told, more than sixty articles about the supplement controversy appeared in the press. The supplement came strongly under attack by some politicians, right-wing media, and various war veterans associations, as well as some historians; most of those who criticized the text never actually read it, but only reacted to the reporting in the press. The attempts to introduce a multiperspectivic approach to the teaching of recent conflicts and to address crimes committed by Croat forces were condemned as education »without any value guidelines,« a »distortion of the historical truth about the Serb aggression,« and an attempt »to show Croats as equally guilty for the war as the Serbs.« The ministry was also criticized for tolerating such work under its roof.[105]

Negative publicity eventually resulted in the ministry's decision to give up the project; its efforts to produce a different type of history textbook about the recent conflict had evidently proved premature.[106] Other events of the time, however, shed more light on the ministry's decision, offering additional explanations. In May 2005, the Serbian community agreed to use one of the already existing textbooks (nota bene, one of those originally rejected in 2003), a decision that, from the perspective of the ministry, now made the supplement redundant. Furthermore, as echoes from the debate about the supplement still reverberated, numerous changes were made to the new history curriculum for compulsory education, which was at the time under construction. The recent war was exactly the topic that underwent the greatest modifications: new details were added, making it the most extensive topic in the new curriculum.[107] For example, pupils are asked to precisely define how the war started and who was the aggressor and who the victim; to describe the course of military operations;

105 As examples of opposite views on the supplement controversy see: Zvonimir Despot and Irena Kustura, »Agresija na Hrvatsku postala građanski rat [Serbian aggression on Croatia transformed into the civil war],« *Večernji list,* July 7, 2005, 5 and Vlado Vurušić, »Hoće li udžbenici pisati i o mrljama nakon Oluje? [Will textbooks write about the stains left after Operation Storm?],« *Jutarnji list,* July 28, 2005, 16. For the full list of articles, and a selection of press clippings and documents on the case see: Maja Dubljević, ed., *Jedna povijest, više historija. Dodatak udžbenicima s kronikom objavljivanja [One past, many histories. Supplement to textbooks with the chronology of its publishing]* (Zagreb: Documenta—centar za suočavanje s prošlošću, 2007).

106 The supplement was later published as a part of the book Maja Dubljević, ed., *Jedna povijest, više historija. Dodatak udžbenicima s kronikom objavljivanja [One past, many histories. Supplement to textbooks with the chronology of its publishing],* 2007.

107 At the same time, the Croatian Ministry of Education also approved a proposal by a group of former special police officers to allow war veterans to teach about the 1991–1995 war in primary schools. After negative public reactions, the ministry did not officially revoke the approval, but eventually left the whole initiative to silently fade away. For newspaper coverage see, for example: Vlado Vurušić, »Sat domovinskog odgoja [Lesson on patriotic education],« *Jutarnji list,* September 10, 2005, 40–41.

and to name distinguished Croatian defenders.[108] At the same time, the topic was whitewashed of any events that could interfere with the official memory of the war: the sentence from the original curriculum proposal (2005), which mentioned the exodus of the Serbian population after Operation Storm, was removed in the final version (2006). Thus, this case makes evident that the intention of the curriculum authors is to offer not only content, but also a clear and unequivocal evaluation of recent events: The content of this curricular topic serves as a memento of patriotic values and a catalogue of events through which the Homeland War should be remembered.

Another cycle of debates was sparked in spring 2007, when some of the new textbooks, written according to the new curricular standards, nevertheless offered interpretations of the recent war that differed somewhat from those in the curriculum, including some strategies and approaches very similar to those used in the supplement two years previously.[109] Although this did not come without problems – the ministry's commission demanded some modifications of content and interpretative changes – and though public reactions were similar to those to the supplement two years before – the ministry eventually accepted all five textbooks. Again, the passage of time since war's end and a more favorable political context have proven to be crucial factors for teaching recent conflicts. However, reactions to both the supplement and the 2007 history textbooks have clearly illustrated the political importance still attached to history education, and have also revealed different and competing conceptions of the purpose of school history and its potential role in the formation of pupils' identity. As these two examples clearly show, the introduction of multiple perspectives in history teaching is not at all simple when open questions and different interpretations of the past – especially those applied to topics considered of special national importance – still provoke uneasiness among not only state authorities and many teachers, but also some historians. Most revealing in this sense, were the comments of some professional historians, who criticized either the supplement and some textbooks for not being attuned to the parliamentary declaration on the Homeland War[110] or the authors themselves for failing to recognize that »except

108 Ministarstvo znanosti, obrazovanja i športa, *Nastavni plan i program za osnovnu školu [National curriculum for primary school]*, 291.

109 For example, the newspaper article: Ivana Kalođera Brkić, "Udžbenik koji prešućuje ili navodi srpske žrtve u Oluji [The textbook that suppresses or mentions Serbian victims from Operation Storm]« *Jutarnji list,* April 4, 2007, 2 – 3.

110 For example: Zvonimir Despot, »Ovaj Dodatak nije za nastavu [This supplement is not for schools],« the interview with Stjepan Matković in *Večernji list,* July 30, 2005, 36 – 37. Also, in some reviews (in author's possesion).

scientific and pedagogical standards, history textbooks should also acknowledge national and state criteria.«[111]

The recent events have indicated that the Ministry of Education has not given up its intention of intervening in history textbook narratives, which are still perceived by educational authorities primarily as instruments for strengthening national identity. The events also show, however, that the society has become open enough that the ministry cannot so easily keep its monopoly over interpretations, nor promote only the official memory of the war. Equally significant is the opening up of such issues as the teaching of contemporary history to public debate, because these polemics – as many others about history education in the past eighteen years – started with exactly the opposite aim, to prevent the critical examination of open questions about the recent past.

Additionally, the example of the 2007 textbooks reveals the very different strategies used by textbook authors when asked to deal extensively with the most recent wars in a post-conflict society, that is, in a situation where they are faced with not only varying interpretations but also strong institutional and public pressure to conform to official memory. Some authors find their way out with dull narratives and elusive descriptions; others try to bring in different perspectives and consequently present more complex narratives, especially when addressing the sufferings of civilians on all sides of the conflict. In some textbooks, nevertheless, the teaching units on the recent past are still regarded primarily as a tool for promoting patriotism and loyalty to the state. The techniques usually employed are strong and emotional language, detailed descriptions of battles (including numerous illustrations of soldiers and weapons), of the sufferings of one's own group, and of military victories, as well as portraits of war heroes, which are offered to pupils as role models.[112] The strategies used in these textbooks, as well as in the 2006 curriculum, largely resemble those used in the communist textbooks when dealing with the Second World War.

111 A group of historians and members of the Croatian Academy of Science and Arts, sent an open letter to the Croatian government asking for the withdrawal of some of the new textbooks. They received an answer from another group of historians, appealing for the kind of history education that fosters a culture of critical thinking about historical heritage. Both letters are published in *Povijest u nastavi,* 1 (2007): 5 – 11.

112 This is most characteristic of the textbook *Povijest 8,* Zagreb: Alfa 2007 (chosen by ca. 20 percent of the teachers), and especially of the 2008 edition. Changes to the 2008 edition show influences of the latest debates: in contrast to the 2007 edition, it mentions crimes where Serbs were victims. At the same time, however, it takes great pains to stress why »our« and »their« victims differ. For example, it explains in great length why »it is not appropriate to equalize Serbian refugees from 1995 with the Croats exiled from their homes in 1991«. (Stjepan Bekavac and Mario Jareb. *Povijest 8. Udžbenik za 8. razred osnovne škole*, 212 – 215) According to source information provided in the book, this unit is developed with the assistance of the state-founded and financed Croatian Memorial-Documentation Centre for the Homeland War.

As both the examples of the supplement and the 2007 textbooks demonstrate, teaching sensitive and controversial issues from recent history in societies that have recently experienced war and violence – and moreover doing so by including multiple perspectives – is a difficult task. Teaching controversial issues from the recent past involves strong emotions and invokes painful and traumatic memories; many often feel that their sufferings are not sufficiently emphasized in the condensed accounts necessary for a textbook. There is a question not only of »how much ambivalence students and parents can be confronted with, when the legacy of the past violence is still vivid,«[113] but also of how committed the political and intellectual elite are to using history education as a tool to promote reconciliation, tolerance, and respect for diversity. But there is a lesson to be learned from the two recent curricular debates: History education and textbooks cannot change significantly without the necessary social and political consensus; once this consensus is reached, however, education can be an important factor in contributing to the above-mentioned goals of reconciliation, tolerance, and diversity.

In search of a new paradigm?

In the last eighteen years, history education in Croatia has come a long way: from a paradigm predominantly determined by the ideology of ethnic nationalism, to the first steps toward a different understanding of education's purpose in the teaching of young generations. The appearance of multiple textbooks, modest improvements in history curricula, and increased public discussion about controversial issues in the teaching of contemporary history have signaled the first breakthrough in history education and have, along with other factors, indicated that Croatian society is opening up. However, the results of these developments in history education have remained ambivalent, and the general direction is still unclear.

On the one hand, the appearance of multiple textbooks in the second half of the 1990 s, and especially after 2000, has given a certain impetus to the modernization of history education. Textbooks have generally become more attractive in their look and challenging in their didactical dimension; narratives are reduced in favor of illustrations, sources, and questions for students. Although the nation is still the focus of the identity promoted in curricula and

113 Wolfgang Höpken, »History textbooks and reconciliation—preconditions and experiences in a comparative perspective« (paper presented at World Bank meeting, November 11th, Washington 2001), 11.
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTSEERD/Resources/EDUCwolfganghopken.pdf.

textbooks, there are some indications – more in textbooks than in curricula – that this identity is presented as more open and inclusive than in the 1990 s. While curricula remain under state jurisdiction and, as the latest changes show, educational authorities still prefer educational models that seek cohesion rather than those that stress diversity,[114] the system of multiple textbooks – regardless of all obstacles – has opened up possibilities for textbook authors to question to a certain extent the ethnocentric narrative and, consequently, to render it more balanced in some aspects.

On the other hand, there are several factors that limit the modernization of history education and demonstrate why the role of multiple textbooks should not be overestimated. Firstly, there are significant differences among textbooks in their methodological approach, which point to very different understandings of the purpose of history education. Some textbooks systematically incorporate different perspectives on the level of both textbook narrative and non-narrative materials (sources, illustrations), using the latter to encourage students' independent and critical thinking. Some, however, use sources almost exclusively to support or illustrate the author's narrative; in others, sources are even followed by the author's commentary, with instructions as to their »appropriate« interpretation; in still others, the parts of the texts that authors consider important are underscored in advance. Needless to say, these approaches are mainly characteristic for topics of national history considered too important to be left unguarded.

Secondly, there is very little knowledge on how teachers use these new textbooks in the classroom, or whether the in-service training (controlled by state agencies) prepares teachers to deal with historical interpretations and multiple perspectives. There are indications that a number of teachers, even when using new textbooks, continue to teach in the same way as before. Among some, pedagogical innovations are met with distrust: for them, teaching about interpretations, perspectives, and controversies is not appropriate for schoolchildren and only confuses pupils. Furthermore, teachers are often reluctant to apply multiple perspectives when it comes to teaching controversial and sensitive topics or, as in the case of the most recent conflicts, avoid teaching them altogether (an oft-heard excuse: »there is no time because of the overloaded curriculum«).

114 A recent comparison with history curricula of other European countries has shown that the Croatian curricula are among the most prescriptive and directive ones—a circumstance that remains one of the major obstacles to the modernization of history education (Snježana Koren and Magdalena Najbar-Agičić, »European experience ant the history curriculum in compulsory education,« *Metodika. Journal of theory and application of teaching methodologies in pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education* 8, no. 15 (2/2007): 344 – 372).

Thirdly, the contribution of Croatian historiography to the development of history education has also remained ambivalent. Some historians have been included in the development of new and innovative textbooks and have contributed to changes in history education through public polemics and critique of the existing model. However, a significant number has only a superficial or no interest in history education; for them, it belongs entirely to the jurisdiction of the educational authorities, not to the domain of historiography. Furthermore, as debates about the teaching of contemporary history have revealed, some historians consider multiple perspectives perhaps a good approach at the university level, but not in primary or secondary schools, where history lessons should pursue other objectives. In the end, this is an attitude toward history education in which the nature of history – as a constant search, debate, and ever-shifting interpretation – has no intrinsic value; rather, history is seen only »as a tool for contemporary ideological use,« to cite the words of the eminent Croatian historian Mirjana Gross.[115]

Finally, there are divided perceptions of parallel textbooks in the public opinion, even among historians and history teachers. For some, the emergence of textbook pluralism has been both important and positive, because it has not only brought pedagogical improvements, but has also eroded the attitude that textbooks should transmit only the official history. For others, multiple textbooks are considered – exactly for the same reason – a problem: It has been claimed that because of them, children learn different stories about the past, regardless of the »historical truth« and »historical facts« – a perception firmly rooted in the notion of a uniform history education. Therefore, the system of multiple textbooks has been disputed from time to time, especially among those that perceive deconstruction of the traditional ethnocentric narrative as a danger to Croatian national identity.

The Croatian example shows how difficult it is to change deep-rooted perceptions about a kind of history education that transmits simplified explanations and undisputed evaluations in order to advance preconceived conclusions about the past. It also demonstrates that, in such a context, history education can easily turn into a political battlefield due to its capacity to shape pupils' identities. At this particular point in time, the question is whether it is possible to go beyond a history education that promotes a fixed and uniform identity, to one that considers the ways in which history can help pupils reflect on and explore the plurality of their identities. It might be said that history edu-

115 Mirjana Gross, »Plaidoyer za profesionalnu historiografiju« [Plaidoyer for professional historiography],« *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 29 (1996): 7 – 10, quoted in Neven Budak, »Post-socialist historiography in Croatia since 1990,« in *(Re)Writing History—Historiography in Southeast Europe after Socialism*, ed. Ulf Brunnbauer, 128 – 164 (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2004), 163.

cation in Croatia is currently in a kind of interspace, where the old paradigm is partly abandoned but the new one is not yet entirely formed. It remains to be seen in which direction history education is heading: Much will depend on teachers, on what they are ready or not to do, but also on the kind of encouragement they will get from both the educational authorities and the historiographical community, as well as from the society as a whole.

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Dubravka Stojanović

Slow Burning: History Textbooks in Serbia, 1993–2008

In Serbia, both historiography and the teaching of history have served more as forms of preparatory military training than as scholarly disciplines of critical thinking. They have often been used to adjust history to the ongoing social changes, to »change« the past and justify the present, or to put present motifs in an appropriate (if unreal) historical context. History ceased to be a mere supplier of myths important for creating national identities, it also became a part of »war arsenals« – it helped justify, solidify, and later, celebrate the wars of the 1990 s in the former Yugoslavia. Hence, in Serbia and its neighboring countries, history textbooks, which have always reflected the values of society, became active participants in creating »new societies« and »new consciousness« – and in many ways, even an »avant-garde,« because they presented marginal ideas as historical truths.

Dramatic developments in Serbia in the last two decades directly influenced the changes in the ways in which history is taught. These changes were related, first and foremost, to the country's two nearly revolutionary political changes in domestic politics: In each case, the newly established authorities sought, through shifts in the education system, to gain historical legitimization for themselves, as well as to construct a particular type of tradition. The first political change occurred in 1987, when Slobodan Milošević came to power in Serbia. According to many analysts, the regime that he instituted was controversial and this had direct repercussions for history textbooks. In an ideological sense, through collectivism, egalitarianism, and populism, he remained close to his communist roots, but the ideology in the name of which he ruled presented an essential discontinuity with the previous one. All of his politics, rhetoric, and dominant discourse were, from the late 1980 s, inserted into the nationalist ideological matrix, creating a strange mixture between extreme left- and the extreme right-wing ideas. The political programs and wars that he conducted for the sake of the Yugoslav legacy during the 1990 s were a direct consequence of this shifting ideological pattern, and were started in the name of nationalist aims.

After thirteen years of Milošević's exploits, which led Serbia from one war to another, and from Slovenia to Kosovo, a new revolutionary change happened, one that also prompted a change in the history textbooks. Following a victory in the presidential elections in September 2000, the opposition came to power. However, this wide-ranging coalition of Milošević's former opponents was quite diverse in its political views. It brought together almost all parties that had any relevance in Serbia, but there were some deep ideological divisions among them. Soon after the coalition came to power, these divisions resulted in the blocking of reforms as well as complications in Serbia's road toward a democratic European society. They also prevented the country from initiating an essential process of dealing with its own past and with the nationalist project that had brought Serbia to the lowest point in its entire history. At the same time, lacking firm ideological basis and consensus about the most important issues, the new authorities began to look for their own identity exclusively in anticommunism.

This lengthy introduction to the internal political situation in Serbia is necessary in order to explain the changes in history textbooks, which were so closely related to the two revolutionary shifts as well as to their somewhat confusing and controversial ideological foundations. Each of these ideologies required the production of »its own historical truth« in order to secure for itself a needed and pertinent tradition; as a result, history textbooks have gone through two processes of complete change in the last two decades. The first happened in 1993, during the rule of Slobodan Milošević, at the height of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.[1] The second major change happened after Milošević's fall from power, after the »transition toward democracy« had already begun. In both cases, changing the textbooks was politically motivated. The first time, the change was dictated by a need to adjust past history to the one currently unfolding, to place the ongoing war in a historical context – and thus was intended as a justification of sorts. The second time, major textbook changes were a direct consequence of a hit-or-miss search for a new democratic identity, believed to be attainable primarily through a complete rejection of all preceding paradigms, which were linked to an »anti-people's regime« and thereby relegated to the »obsolete history.« Thus, in both cases, the revision of history textbooks was experienced as a legitimating of newly established historical conditions, as a defense of the principles on which the Serbian government was at the time based. The fact that Serbia is, at the present time, among the last countries in its region to still have the state monopoly over the publication of history textbooks, that it still has no open, equal-opportunity calls for their submission, nor any other possibility of choosing among several alternative texts, reveals that both the

1 Ruzica Rosandic and Vesna Pesic, eds., *Warfare, Patriotism, Patriarchy* (Belgrade: Center for Antiwar Actions, 1994).

former and the present holders of political power have assigned to the teaching of history in public schools an important role in the creation of the Serbian state. It is this point that lends particular significance to the analysis of Serbian history textbooks.

Shifting ideological and identity matrixes

Both in Milošević and post-Milošević times, the creation of new textbooks was intended to shift the ideological framework as well as to force a new identity matrix that included changes in national and historical consciousness. Because Milošević's regime made a deep ideological cut with regard to the previous political order, new textbooks were supposed to include essential changes in the interpretation of the past. All of this was necessary in order to put the new political order, created in Serbia in the late 1980 s, into an adequate mythical context. Since the order created after the second major shift in internal politics, after 2000, retained a part of Milošević's political and nationalist framework, ideological shifts in the state's educational tools were more moderate than those in the early 1990 s. In accordance with the new needs, the shifts were primarily related to a strong anti-Yugoslav and anticommunist interpretation of events – which was obviously not the case during the years of Milošević's rule. Thus, the textbooks did not undergo a fundamental shift; rather, the major changes that were made related to the represention of both Yugoslav states as well as of the two world wars that led to their creation. These are changes in facts, and I will present them in more detail in later parts of this paper.

Shifts in ideological and identity matrixes during Milošević's rule had the aim of placing Serbian history within a nationalist mythic framework necessary to justify the wars of the early 1990 s in the former Yugoslavia. It was necessary to reconstruct a new national and historical consciousness that was a blend of delusions of grandeur and self-pity, of national arrogance and self-victimization. All of this was explained as a process of »return[ing] to oneselves« following the communist period, which according to this interpretation, had as its principal goal erasure of national consciousness and memory. As a result, the teaching of history became extremely important. It was understood as one of the principal tools in »liberating the suppressed« and rediscovering »the truth about ourselves« as well as about »others.« This necessitated a series of changes in historical facts: the deletion of many of them, a reduction in the importance of others, and additionally, the stressing of still others. Hence, this was not just a shift in interpretation but also a distortion of facts, necessary to establish a mythical narrative.

This mythical narrative had several key components. »The people,« or more

precisely, »Serbian people,« were declared to be the main protagonists of history. This was an essential shift with regard to the previous era, where history was understood as class struggle. »The people« were essentialized as a »unique being,« almost like a biological community, an organism with clearly defined common traits that deny any individuality, particularity, or pluralism. Even though both cases present a collectivist ideological matrix, the difference in relation to the previous, communist model was an essential one: As part of the »working people,« individuals were, during communist times, included in the »ongoing revolution,« in a continuous struggle for a »better tomorrow.« In this new matrix, individuals had to be subjugated to the nationalist entity; they had to be left to national destiny in a fatalistic concept of fixed »truths« about the nationalist past. The reinterpretation of the past therefore gained crucial importance.

Historical facts had to be changed in order to build an image of »the people« that was »historically correct« – a people that never led wars of conquest and never strove for something that belonged to others. In order to achieve this, events contrary to this message were thrown out of the history curriculum, or their importance was blatantly reduced. For example, there is very little left about the Serbian government's policies toward Kosovo and Macedonia in the nineteenth century; there is no explanation of the attack on Bulgaria in 1885, nor of the several attempts to annex Northern Albania during the Balkan Wars[2] Serb national politics were presented only in a defensive manner – a mythical framework necessary for creating a new identity, a framework that was also used in the ongoing wars: Building the character of the main hero, »the Serbian people,« was necessary to place the wars of the 1990 s in a continuity of defensive efforts, thereby leading to an acquisition of a moral capital, a kind of guarantee that Serbian people were, just as in previous historical circumstances, »on the right side of the history.« According to this narrative, »the people« clearly recognize this right position in any new situation. Thus-formed mythical constructs (*mythemes*) are additionally helped by the interpretation that Serbia's neighbors were on wrong sides in the two world wars, and it was »us« (the Serbs), due to our own right position, who later enabled them absolution and brought them to the side of the winners, thanks to the creation of Yugoslav states. The present textbooks include the following statement: »Toward the end of the First World War, Serbia joined the group of war winners. Among other things, through this, she enabled other Yugoslav peoples to leave the side of the defeated

2 Dubravka Stojanović, »History textbooks Mirror their Time,« in *Warfare, Patriotism, Patriarchy*, ed. Ruzica Rosandic and Vesna Pesic, (Belgrade: Center for Antiwar Actions, 1994), 81 – 111; Dubravka Stojanović, »Construction of Historical Consciousness: The Case of Serbian History Textbooks,« in *Balkan Identities: Nation and Memory*, ed. Maria Todorova (London: Hurst, 2004), 327 – 339.

ones and join the victors, through formation of the Yugoslav state.«[3] This substantial distinction between »us« and »them« at the same time meant the building of an arrogant component of national identity, as evidenced in factographic manipulations showing that »we« have always been on the victorious side of history. By not mentioning Serbia's own defeats, or by engaging in »creative interpretations,« creators of new textbooks engineered a victorious mentality and spirit, particularly important in the times of the conflict. Essentially, it all comes down to the idea of one's own superiority and, therefore, opponents' inferiority, which was the key ingredient in the creation of a psychological basis for war.

Another important topic is that of the nation-victim. This starts from the premise that, despite their own historical righteousness, »the people« were the historical victim of all neighboring, and even some more distant, peoples. This special challenge, which »the people« must contend with, grants them the mantel of martyrdom, most frequently displayed through the use of the term *Golgota* in describing different historical events. Biblical metaphors were implemented to strengthen the components of historical and national self-awareness that shaped the image of a nation-victim distinct from all the others, and therefore also »the chosen one,« for despite all the suffering, the nation-victim remained »just.« Crimes of other peoples against the Serbs are described in the most graphic terms, from the early grade textbooks onward, helping to create an image of the people as »victim[s] of genocide,« thereby granting the people a sort of preventive historical indulgence. This was especially important during the wars of the 1990 s, for it strengthened the image of a people who should be excused at any price, after having suffering so much throughout history.

This can be seen in the chapter titles of the textbook for nine-year-olds on the subject of »Nature and Society,« from the years of Milošević's rule. At this age, children acquire their first knowledge about the past; here, they are offered the following information as part of the curriculum: »Our Ancestors,« »The Turkish Invasion,« »Enslaved by the Turks,« »First World War,« »The Liberation of Serbia,« »Second World War,« »Serbia Under Occupiers and their Collaborators,« »The Liberation of Serbia,« and »Renowned Freedom Fighters.«[4] It is obvious from these chapter titles that the past is represented as the sum of wars and suffering, and the first information the children receive does not include anything but suffering. This can also be seen in the selection of illustrations in the book, which confront children, without any preparation, with horrors from the national past. They include: Monuments to the People Killed in Different

3 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (Belgrade: Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika, 2005).
4 Borislav Vlahović and Branko Mihajlovic, *Priroda i društvo za 3. razred osnovne škole* (Belgrade: Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika, 1997).

Wars, The Kosovo Battle of 1389, The Monument to the Kosovo Heroes in Kruševac, People Fleeing the Turks, Leaders of the Serbian Uprisings, Famous Serb Military Leaders from the First World War, Retreat Across Albania, Belgrade in Ruins Following the 1941 Bomb Raid, and Monuments to the People Killed in the Second World War. One could add to this a linguistic analysis of the graphic, unsparing language used to describe crimes against Serbs in the textbooks for teenagers – language that helps instill fear in young minds, and breeds future anxiety and aggressiveness. For example, the textbook for fourteen-year olds, from which almost ten generations of students have learned, includes the following: »The inmates in Jasenovac [concentration camp] were slaughtered with knives, killed with different tools, axes, hammers, sledgehammers, and iron bars, shot and burned in the crematorium, cooked alive in cauldrons, hanged, tortured with hunger, thirst and cold, for they lived in camps without food or water«[5]

Emphasis on such images from the past enabled a particular relationship with death, which formed an important part of the national myth. A »martyr's death« – of an individual or of a member of the collective – became a pattern of behavior wished for, and recommended. The message was conveyed in various ways. When it came to individuals, there was the glorification of the deaths of those who had heroically sacrificed themselves for freedom. This led, for the first time, to the historical presentation of Gavrilo Princip, the assassin who killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo in 1914, as a Serbian hero.[6] The already much-known and celebrated Stevan Sinđelić, who had blown himself up along with his whole regiment to avoid being captured by the Ottoman Turkish Army in the early nineteenth century, was overshadowed by a new hero who emerged during the 1990 s. This was Major Gavrilović, who, according to the myth, declared to his troops during the 1915 defense of Belgrade that their regiment had been erased from the list of the living by the supreme command and that, therefore, they should not take care for their lives: »Soldiers, heroes! The supreme command has deleted our battalion from the roll. Therefore, forward to glory!« – and this was celebrated in the latest history textbook of the Milošević era.[7] The only thing missing from the account was the fact that Major Gavrilović died of old age, some thirty-years following this event. Through such examples, the principle of sacrificing oneself for the nation is declared to be of the highest value and thus serves as an important motivational factor, particularly during the times of conflict.

5 Nikola Gaćeša, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (Belgrade: Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika, 1993), 143.
6 Nikola Gaćeša, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred*, 97.
7 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 3. i 4. razred srednjih škola* (Belgrade: Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika, 2003), 76.

Another way of constructing the cult of death through history textbooks was by referring to a »scorn for death,« a call to heroic way of behaving, in which dying for one's own nation was represented as the essence of life. During Milošević's rule, this idea was already promoted in the third grade (nine-year-olds), through the use of quotes from such indisputable national authorities as Vuk Karadžić. By quoting Karadžić and his archaic language, the creators of this new matrix were able to add a sense of authenticity to, and thereby strengthen, their argumentation. Through celebrating *hajduks* (outlaws) and their fight against the Ottoman authorities, the textbook suggested a right way of dealing with death: »When they catch someone, take him away, and impale him on the stave, he sings from the top of his lungs, showing that he does not care for living.«[8] The relationship toward death remains unchanged in the latest generation of textbooks, published after 2001. The conditions during the First World War are described in especially pathetic terms, again with enormous praise for death and self-sacrifice: »In many parts of Serbia, everyday life turned into the epical resistance to occupiers. Many people condemned to death, as noted by the occupation authorities, behaved ›like heroes, and this was not mere posturing, but the sign of determination, spiritual anger, and despising of the enemy‹ (…) There is a report from Valjevo that the death sentence ›was accepted with calm by both men and women.‹ Thus, the enemy in Serbia had to confront a tremendous political morality of the subjugated population, unprecedented in modern European history. The death sentence lost any efficacy. No one was afraid to die.«[9]

New textbooks thus demonstrated a deep ideological connection with those from the time of Milošević, primarily based on the mythical relation to the past, and the celebration of collectivist, nationalist, and premodern values. Through education, the society remained caught within an authoritarian and patriarchal identity matrix, which denies the individual and presents history as destiny and metaphysical evil, leaving no room for choice. The duty of an individual remains clearly defined as subjugation of the self to the collective and to one's »historical destiny,« which cyclically repeats itself. This excludes any possibility for multiperspectivity, or the presentation of history as a field of choice and competition among different points of view. A monolithic image of »the people« is cultivated, erasing any concept of personal responsibility, because individuals are immersed into the collective and completely subservient to it. This shapes an attitude toward the past, as well as toward the present, that is irrational, and the moment of confronting the past is postponed yet again.

8 Borislav Vlahović, and Branko Mihajlovic, *Priroda i društvo za 3. razred osnovne škole* (Belgrade: Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika, 1997), 56.

9 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 3. i 4. razred srednjih škola* (2003), 82.

The politics of historical facts

As noted above, historical facts were the first victims of the political changes that Serbia went through. Actions of the government at the time were given historical legitimacy through alterations, replacements, emphases, or minimizations of historical facts. Both generations of textbooks underwent these profound changes, but in accordance with specific political needs, the factual interventions were performed within different historical periods, and with different goals.

The most important changes made in the textbooks during Milošević's rule were for more distant periods of history. Given the fact that the task of history textbooks was, under Milošević, to place the wars of the 1990 s in an appropriate context, it was essential to depict the history of the Yugoslav peoples as a history of conflict. When an image of the past is created in which conflict is the natural state of affairs, any notion of togetherness is bound to be viewed as a negation of that image. To this end, all instances of inter-ethnic cooperation and community interest were »dropped out of history.« Being a part of Yugoslavia had to be represented as something that virtually had nothing to do »with us,« making it imperative to write the following sentence in the eighth-grade history book from 1993: »The Yugoslav idea was not widespread in Serbia at the beginning of the twentieth century because the First and the Second Serbian Uprising victories had created conditions for an independent political and cultural development.«[10] This manner of eliminating something from history just because it did not fit the current agenda amounted to fabricating one's own past. Moreover, representing Yugoslavia as the result of mere chance, not to mention somebody else's decisions, was likely to further reduce the ability of the Serbian public to rationally confront recent Serbian history and, particularly, the causes of the collapse that took place at the close of the twentieth century.

This was an essential rupture with regard to the previous, communist »brotherhood and unity« ideology, so the information about the relationships among Yugoslav peoples, especially between Serbs and Croats, had to undergo substantial alterations. The formerly idealized image of a collection of peoples always striving toward the creation of a common state was replaced by the image of peoples whose only natural relationship was that of conflict. The beginning of this »fatal chain of events« was traced back to 1525,[11] a date that earlier historiographers were apparently »unaware of.« Examples of cooperation and collaboration were left out, while conflicts were particularly emphasized, creating a

10 Nikola Gaćeša, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (1993), 49.
11 Mirko Perović, *Istorija za 7. razred* (Belgrade: Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika, 1992), 53.

framework in which the wars of the 1990 s could be placed as a natural consequence of »the chain of events.«

Nevertheless, even if the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918 was stripped of its historical context, in the 1993 textbook, the way the war itself and the creation of Yugoslavia were interpreted remained basically unchanged. Milošević's ambivalent propaganda, which vacillated between an interpretation of his government's policies of the nineties as a defense of Yugoslavia, on the one hand, and a representation of them as a struggle for a state in which »all the Serbs would live together,« on the other, did not go so far as to renounce the very ideal of Yugoslavia; thus, in the history books of the Milošević years there remained the earlier favorable interpretation of the creation of Yugoslavia.

The textbooks that came about after Milošević's fall, in 2000, introduced even broader changes to the way the First World War and the creation of Yugoslavia had earlier been understood. For example, in the twelfth-grade textbook, these two historical events are clearly physically separated from one another. A whole set of issues, from the Niš Declaration to the Proclamation of Unification (December 1, 1918), are dealt with only *after* all the international events of the interwar period – including the Balkan act of 1937, the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, or let us say, the advent of abstract art – are covered. By being placed where it is in the book, the text about the creation of Yugoslavia remains closely linked with the history of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, but is taken out of the context of the First World War. This raises the question of whether this move is justified, for it will certainly have a negative educational effect. It is plausible that this was done in order to dissociate Serbian First World War military victories, somewhat mythologized by the pathos with which they are depicted in the book, from their end result – the creation of a common Yugoslav state – which is nowadays deemed unfortunate by the ruling Serbian elite.

A more recent eighth-grade textbook, published in 2005, goes a step further. The book's interpretation of the unification boils down to ideas and rhetoric that even the Serbian elite who took part in the creation of Yugoslavia had, despite numerous accusations of standing for Serbian hegemonic aspirations, never explicitly formulated and that Serb historians, even those critical of the unification, never treated as the only view of Yugoslavia held in Serbia. In other words, the authors of today's history textbooks have written of the Serbian unitary hegemonic rule in a language more open and bold than that of any historical document on the subject of unification. Take, for example, the eighth-grade textbook's depiction of the past unification as the »annexation of southern Slav regions of Austria-Hungary by the Serbian state.« The book further states that »for the politicians in Serbia, ›unification‹ meant primarily ›the unification of all the Serbs.‹« The authors present the common state of Southern Slavs in the following way: »It was thought that the only means of completely resolving the

Serbian national question was the Yugoslav program. That is to say, the future larger state was going to be a state of the Serbian people in which they would live together with Croats and Slovenians.«[12]

Further along in this textbook, it becomes clear that even this concept of a Serb Yugoslavia, based on hard-line Serb hegemony, does not satisfy the authors. Going above and beyond their call of duty as textbook writers, they openly favor a solution known as the Greater Serbia. As historical foundation for this position, they have introduced a myth according to which a secret agreement, signed in London in April 1915 between the powers of the Triple Entente and Italy, offered Serbia the so-called Greater Serbia, whose territory, according to that agreement, would have spread to the Adriatic coast, south of Zadar. Despite the fact that the actual London agreement contained no such provision, this myth is occasionally brought up in public, most often as a narrative of missed opportunity. Even though this interpretation cannot be found in a single historiographic work, it did find its way into a school history textbook whose writers leave no doubt about their wholehearted approval of it. In the twelfth-grade manual, one can read the following: »In the second year of the world conflict, a chance for Serbian unification through the creation of *Greater Serbia* presented itself.... The Allies were offering Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slavonija, Srem, Bačka, Southern Dalmatia, and Northern Albania.«[13] Although a public outcry resulted from this depiction of the Greater Serbia myth as a fact, a new eighth-grade history text nevertheless states, with regret, that »even though the London agreement represented a danger to the Yugoslav agenda, *it was offering a good solution to the Serbian question*« (emphasis mine).[14]

Such interpretations and factual alterations fundamentally change the relationship toward the Yugoslav state and its creation. This historical phenomenon is openly declared a historical error, something quite uncommon for either history itself or history textbooks. Instead of trying to explain and understand this complex and in many ways controversial event, textbooks writers reached for debates outside of history, discussions that were up until then mostly the subject of social chats, or literary reminiscences of some Serb authors. Arbitration over historical events and personalities was thus dramatically introduced into schools as a means of »rooting out Yugoslavism,« and cracking down completely on that now inimical ideology. The expulsion from the teaching of Serbian history of all personalities who believed in the idea of shared traits with other Yugoslav people – from Dositej Obradović to Vuk Karadžić, Svetozar Marković, Vladimir Jovanović, and Prince Mihailo – not to mention of all po-

12 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (2005), 91 – 94.
13 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 3. i 4. razred srednjih škola* (2003), 106.
14 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (2005), 92 – 93.

litical parties from the first decade of the twentieth century, resulted in a falsification of history and further removed the possibility that history be understand in a rational way.

The alterations in the interpretation of the Second World War were far more drastic than those applied to the interpretations of the First World War. The most important goal, and therefore the resulting change to textbooks, of the new authorities after the fall of Milošević was the securing of an »anticommunist ancestor,« that is, the establishing of a continuity between their new regime and the forces that had fought the communists during the Second World War. This was achieved through a major intervention in the historical facts, one far more extensive than that undertaken by Milošević's regime. When it came to the Second World War, the textbooks of the 1990 s were an expression of the ideological confusion that reigned during the Milošević era. In the interpretation of the partisan and the Chetnik movements, a curious ambivalent amalgamation took place between the old communist and the new nationalist ideology, which came into its own in the early nineties, so that the spotless image of Tito's movement was mechanically coupled with an idealized image of Draža Mihailović's Chetniks. The two movements were put on an equal footing as having been antifascist and having fought against the German occupation, and the drama of the Yugoslav civil war within the Second World War was thereby completely sidestepped. Thus, for the purpose of establishing a superficial balance and »patching up« of history, the two sides' problems, goals, and agendas were left unclarified, and would remain so until the arrival of some clearer and better defined interpretation in the future.[15]

The history textbook for the final years of high school (published in 2002) and the one for the final year of elementary school (published in 2006) have as their primary goal the reinterpretation and revision of the Second World War. The way in which it is perceived and discussed in these textbooks is in complete opposition to how it was viewed and interpreted during the communist period. The most important change is in the discussion of Chetniks and partisans; the assessment of the collaborationist government of Milan Nedić changed as well. General Milan Nedić, the Serbian prime minister under the occupation, is presented as a man »well respected« among the Serbs, who was saving »the biological substance of the Serbian people.« His actions are presented as justifiable in that »he thought that Germany was too powerful at the time, and that he must cooperate with the occupiers in order to stop the further suffering of the Serbian people. Because of the terrible reprisals against the civilians, he was against all the ill-conceived actions against the occupying army.«[16] New text-

15 Nikola Gaćeša, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (1993), 103.
16 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 3. i 4. razred srednjih škola* (2003), 147.

books also considerably soften the assessment of Dimitrije Ljotić and his Serbian Volunteer Corps, who were the main allies of the SS and Gestapo in mass arrests and crimes all over Serbia. Without mentioning the volunteers' actual role, the textbooks present them with a sentence that hides more than it reveals: »Their ideological fanaticism was greater than that of the communists.«[17]

However, the most effort was put into changing the image of the Chetnik leader Draža Mihajlović and that of his military units. In order for partisans and Chetniks to switch places as good guys and bad guys, it was necessary to make significant alterations to three basic issues: 1. The interpretation of the relations between Chetniks and partisans; 2. the issue of collaboration; and 3. the issue of crimes against the civilian population. The essence of the changes was to present the Chetniks as the only true representatives of Serbian national interests and to claim that they were a movement of antifascist resistance, eventually betrayed by the Western Allies. This »betrayal by the Allies« remained unexplained, but was presented as the only explanation for the defeat of the Chetniks. Chetniks were depicted as the only true movement against the occupiers, as »the core of the Serb civic resistance,« which, »contrary to the communists, who wanted to split up the Serb ethnic space, assumed Montenegro, the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina, part of Dalmatia including Dubrovnik and Zadar, the whole of Srem, including Vukovar, Vinkovci, and Dalj, Kosovo and Metohia, and South Serbia (Macedonia).«[18]

As for changes in the interpretation of the relations between the Chetnik and partisan movements, although they are described as two equal resistance movements, a number of details reveal which movement lies ideologically closer to the textbook writers. For example, even though it is claimed that these movements were formed at the same time, the first part of the text discusses Chetniks, while partisans appear only some pages later. Or the more obvious example: A picture of Josip Broz Tito does not appear until the eighth page of the chapter on the Second World War in Yugoslavia. In the comparative biographies of the two leaders, Dragoljub Mihailović is depicted as »a man who was educated in France and who loved French literature,« while Tito is equally briefly introduced as »the notorious agent of the Commintern.«[19]

In order to obscure the essence of the civil war in Serbia and the Chetnik attacks on the liberated territory established by partisans around Užice in the summer of 1941, it was necessary to change some historical facts. Thus the authors mention the liberated territory but never say that it was liberated by partisans and controlled by them, as that would mean acknowledging partisan

17 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 3. i 4. razred srednjih škola* (2003), 147.
18 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (2005), 143.
19 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 3. i 4. razred srednjih škola* (2003), 139.

military success. The authors, wanting to use this part of history only to create an impression that partisans first attacked Chetniks and thus initiated the civil war, conceal the fact that the Chetniks together with the German army attacked the liberated territory, and thereby helped end the fighting in Serbia.

The next question that presented itself as a problem for the textbook writers was the issue of collaboration. In order to remove the responsibility for collaboration from the Chetniks, a number of rhetorical strategies were used, and a number of historical facts hidden. In the 2002 textbook, there were no examples of Chetnik collaboration, but after criticism from the public, the 2006 textbook presented a number of arguments that essentially justify collaboration. One of them is the repeated insistence that all the participants of the war collaborated with occupiers. However, this is apparently not justification enough for the Chetniks' actions, so in another instance a textbook claims: »Many Chetnik commanders were of the opinion that the Italian army was far less dangerous than the Ustaša, so they should cease fighting [against them]. The Italian occupation was the best ›war solution‹ for the preservation of the very existence of the Serbs, especially in the regions of Lika, Northern Dalmatia, and Herzegovina, and Italian soldiers were the least of the evils they had to face.«[20]

As far as the historical reinterpretation of collaboration is concerned, a particularly difficult problem for the textbook authors was the Battle of the Neretva (river), when the Četniks, alongside the Italian troops, attacked the partisans from the surrounding hills, as the partisans were transporting their wounded across the river. In an attempt to avoid having to account for this battlefield situation, the authors write: »And thus came about the most dramatic moment in the relationship between the two armies, in which the Četnik commanders found themselves in a moral dilemma as to the fate of a multitude of civilian refugees present in the area should a decisive battle take place. The partisan commanders had no such dilemmas.«[21] The subsequent Četnik and Italian assault on the partisan fighters and civilian refugees is never mentioned.

The partisan collaboration, on the other hand, is depicted as much more successful and differently motivated than that of the Četniks. According to the textbook, partisans had no intention of taking care of the people as the Četniks and Nedić's forces did; rather, their collaboration with the Germans was motivated by clear military goals. Because the partisans' primary aim was supposedly the defeat of the Četniks, collaboration with the occupiers would serve them »to focus their main thrust onto the Četniks.«[22] In addition, the partisan military strategy and cooperation with the Germans is depicted as a serious war policy

20 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (2005), 153.
21 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 3. i 4. razred srednjih škola* (2003), 163.
22 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (2005), 154.

that endangered interallied agreements among the great powers. Here the textbooks portray the partisans as enemies not only of the Četniks, but of the United Kingdom as well. The partisans are allegedly the force that wished to impede the Allies' plan of landing in the Balkans. Assuming that the landing would have brought a victory for the Četniks in the Second World War, the textbook authors writes: »A high-ranking partisan delegation suggested [to the Germans] a cessation of hostilities in the mutual interest. And the mutual interest of partisans and Četniks at the moment was to prevent the English landing on the Adriatic coast.« It is noted that there were around forty meetings, and that the partisan delegation »traveled with valid Ustaša passports, and with German escort.«[23]

The third issue that led to a major change in the textbooks was the issue of war crimes. In the first textbook after 2000, it is stated that, in the liberated territories, partisans »imprisoned, tortured, and put before firing squads, not only those suspected of having collaborated with the occupiers but also those whom they thought of as potential class enemies.« Meanwhile, of the Četniks, it is said only that they also were »involved in a merciless civil war.«[24] Their crimes against non-Serb populations in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are never mentioned. Following criticisms from the public, the same authors solidified their stance in the new eighth-grade textbook. They still do not mention Četnik crimes against other Yugoslav peoples, only against, as they put it, »people who hid and helped communists« – which supposedly absolves them of their crimes. It is emphasized that these crimes were committed by renegade Četnik units that were not under anyone's control. The authors also add that »one of the most commonly used methods of intimidation among the Četniks was beating.«[25]

In contrast, they claim that the partisans left behind »dog cemeteries,« that is, unmarked mass graves of their opponents, and that common people feared the partisans, whose »military tribunals condemned people to death without any hesitation…. Murders in secret and in the open of prominent people and peasants, revenge killings, and murders of Communist Party members who opposed such practices took place on an almost daily basis.«[26]

In a section with the subheading »The Offensive Against Serbia,« it is made clear that the very end of the war and the partisan victory, which had, until recently, been called a *liberation*, is now better deemed a »communist occupation.« As the main reason leading to the partisan victory, the textbook authors cite the Allies' support of the partisans, while their number, organization, and military successes are never mentioned. The unification of the Četnik, Nedić,

23 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (2005), 154.
24 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 3. i 4. razred srednjih škola* (2003), 162.
25 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (2005), 152.
26 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (2005), 152.

and Ljotić forces against the partisans, when they crossed into Serbia in the summer and fall of 1944, is explained as a necessity resulting from the fact that the Allies abandoned their old allies, the Četniks, turned to the partisans, and thus caused the resistance of Draža Mihailović's units, forcing them into collaboration: »As a result of the advantage the Allies gave the partisans, very politically distant armies now found themselves on the same side: Četniks, Ljotić forces, Germans, and Bulgarians.«[27] By placing emphasis on the Allies' responsibility for Četnik collaboration and on the previously very »distant« politics of the collaborating forces, the authors again avoid calling collaboration by its true name and deny the ideological affinity of these movements.

With the depiction, in the new textbooks, of the Četnik movement as the only one that expressed »Serb national interests,« the very end of the Second World War acquires a wholly different meaning. It is through the defeat of the Četniks that Serbia found itself on the side of the defeated in the Second World War – or so the textbooks claim, as demonstrated by this final statement (in bold font in the original): »**In the Second World War, the Serbian citizenry was destroyed, the national movement shattered, and the intelligentsia demolished.**«[28] The Četnik defeat is equated with the defeat of Serbia, thereby depriving it of its partisan and antifascist tradition and denying the fact that, along with other Yugoslav peoples, Serbia found itself on the side of the victorious forces at war's end. Hence, the textbook authors were even ready to change the outcome of the Second World War, and to place Serbia among the defeated forces, in order to put forward their own, Četnik-friendly version of events.

Alternative challenges

As stated before, Serbia is among the last countries in Southeast Europe where the state publishing house, which maintains close ties to the Ministry of Education, still holds a monopoly over textbook publication. This means that there have been no alternative history textbooks in the past twenty years, and that each grade has a single, obligatory textbook. Some of those textbooks, especially those for earlier historical periods, have been much improved in the last few years, particularly in a didactical way. As for the materials dealing with the twentieth century, however, the only possible response to the state monopoly by the people interested in improving the teaching tools was the production of additional materials, usually consisting of compilations of historical sources. This response was possible because the Ministry of Education's approval was not

27 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (2005), 156.
28 Kosta Nikolić, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred* (2005), 159.

required for additional materials and because the teaching plan stipulated that up to 30 percent of classes should be open, that is, the teachers could develop methodologies as they saw fit. Thus there existed a real opportunity to improve teaching through the use of these edited collections of sources and the introduction of topics missing in textbooks, particularly those concerning cultural history, history of everyday life, and gender relations.

The problematic state of history education as well as the needs of teachers for additonal materials and new teaching methodologies encouraged the creation of wider, regional projects, resulting in three collections of historical sources in recent years. With the caveat that I participated in all of these projects, I will briefly present them here, as they represent efforts to overcome the conflicts of Southeast Europe. They also form part of the current stream of European trends in history curricula – which share the belief that confronting the past helps build a new, more rational relationship among peoples who used to fight one another.

These three international projects started from different methodological, professional, and political premises. The first one, initiated in 2000 in cooperation with the universities in Graz, Belgrade, and Blagoevgrad, started from the premise that the historical-anthropological approach is not present in academic programs and that history textbooks lack data related to it. This was the main impetus for creating two volumes of additional teaching materials. The first one, *Childhood in the Past*, was published in Belgrade in 2001, and the second one, *Men and Women in the Past*, in Blagoevgrad in 2004. These books were translated into all the Southeast European languages, and at least in Serbia, there were several workshops for teachers who accepted the new approach. Project leaders believed that historical-anthropological topics were the least controversial, that childhood and gender relations have always and everywhere been burdened by problems in the past, and that these areas were the easiest for initiating acquaintance with neighboring peoples with whom conflicts had been resolved only a short while ago. It is interesting to note that the need for the production of teaching materials helped the creation of the scholarly volumes, which served as an important incentive for dealing with these topics in Southeast Europe.

The second project was initiated by the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe in Thessaloniki. The initial work on the project, which involved the analysis of history textbooks from all eleven countries in the region, began in 1999, and following a series of comparative studies, the book *Clio in the Balkans: Politics of History Education*, edited by Christina Kouluri, was published in 2002. The analyses revealed the very disturbing content of the history curricula used in these countries and provoked discussions about how to change the aim of history teaching from »conflict training« to »reconciliation training.« The conclusion reached was quite different from that of the first regional, historical-anthropological project, for the starting premise had been

that students in Southeast Europe needed to be confronted with the most sensitive aspects of the common political and military history – precisely the topics that proved to be the most controversial. Therefore, four books that are part of the collection of additional materials have been dedicated to the following themes: The Ottoman Empire, The Creation of National States, Balkan Wars, and The Second World War. The methodology used involved both a comparative and an interdisciplinary approach. The aim was to gather sources about certain controversial topics from all the countries involved and thereby demonstrate how different sides interpreted the same events in different ways; this plurality in viewpoints on historical controversies was deemed good for developing a critical relationship to the past and for promoting the skill of critical thinking in the education process. The books were first published in English, and then translated into Serbian, Greek, Croatian, Bosnian, Albanian, and Macedonian. A Turkish translation is in the works. In some countries, like Greece and Serbia, the books caused a violent reaction among political and professional elites, who saw them as a »road toward cultural homogenization,« »an assault on memory,« or even, as concluded in a Greek newspaper, »a crime of peace.«[29] In support of the project, one should note the very favorable reactions of the teachers undergoing training, most of whom thought that the books could help them in teaching the most sensitive issues from the past.

The third project, whose results were published in Spring 2008, is »Ordinary People in an Extraordinary Country,« undertaken by the European Association of History Educators (EUROCLIO). It united sources from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia that related to the period of socialist Yugoslavia. Essentially, the project started from the premise that the time post-1945 is the most poorly covered in the existing textbooks, and that it is usually entirely skipped over in teaching (as it falls toward the end of the academic year), and that it includes many sensitive topics. A volume of supplementary materials dealing with everyday life in the three former republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was therefore published. The intention was to provide students with more a balanced picture of that period than the one they currently have, and also to present the reasons for the breakup of the common state.

These alternative approaches are very important for »refreshing« a stale education system in history teaching that has, as I have demonstrated here, changed very little since the 1990 s and that lags behind the already delayed reforms Serbian society is now undergoing, in its peculiar transition model of »one step forward, two steps back.« However, these efforts have no power to dominate the existing pattern of history education, enforced through a monopolized market of »historical truth.« This pattern retains an identity matrix

29 »They are rewriting our history!« *To Paron*, November 12, 2006.

from the last decade; aggressive and conflict models of national identification were simply moved from one part of the stove to another, where they continue to burn, albeit on low flame.

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Augusta Dimou

Politics or Policy? The Short Life and Adventures of Educational Reform in Serbia (2001–2003)[1]

Education is a neuralgic domain in the social reproduction of society. It epitomizes both a social organism and an administrative structure, multifariously interlaced with the social, administrative, and fiscal systems of the state. In periods of systemic change all the aforementioned connections in education become seriously challenged. What accounts for this »turmoil« is the combination of three fundamental processes. In the first place, the transformation of political systems; in the second, efforts to overcome deep structural crisis by constructing new economies; and in the third, broader modernization attempts and adjustments to global changes.[2] Moreover, the interdependence between economic and structural transformation on the one hand, and reforms of the public services on the other, inevitably affect the educational sector seriously.[3] The aspects influencing the modalities and trajectories of »transition« include: the legacy of the preceding period; the fragile nature of democratization; the dramatic changes in the economic system, accompanied by the rapid transformation of the socioeconomic status of great masses; and finally, the redefinition of the role of the state and the uncertainty of values that usually accompany systemic convulsion.[4] The following study analyzes an experiment in educational reform that came to a standstill before it could properly bear fruit. The case of the educational reform in Serbia between 2001 and 2003 is an instructive case study about the fragility of reforms in the context of unstable and mutating political conditions.

Taken from a strictly historical point of view, the title of this article would appear anachronistic. There existed no »Serbia« in 2001. The country to which

1 I would like to express my gratitude to Ms. Biljana Stojanović (MoES) for her help regarding the interviews that were conducted for this study. Her assistance was indispensable for identifying possible interviewees and establishing the necessary contact with them.

2 Petér Radó, *Transition in Education. Policy Making and the Key Educational Policy Areas in the Central-European and Baltic Countries* (Budapest: Open Society Institute, 2001), 11.

3 Ibid., 16.

4 Ibid., 11.

»Serbia« will be referring in this analysis changed its name twice, once during the period covered by this article and then again in 2006. The state formation that came about after the disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) in 1992 was designated FRY (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). In 2003 it was renamed the Federation of Serbia and Montenegro. By 2006 two different states, Serbia on the one hand, and Montenegro on the other, had come into being. As this article is being written, we are already referring to three states that came out of the initial FRY. The educational reform that will be the subject of the present analysis affected only Serbia. Montenegro, which disposed of its own Ministry of Education, had embarked on a reform agenda earlier on, while the Albanian population in Kosovo had established its own educational institutions as a result of the discriminatory policies of 1990 s.[5]

The FRY, like most countries that emerged from the dismemberment of the former Yugoslavia, was constituted as a result of armed conflict and war, a circumstance that largely determined both the process of »transition« and the prospects of democratization. The regime that was established in the 1990 s employed a political technology that was typically populist in nature. It was based on the principle of the mobilization and homogenization of the masses, and different mechanisms were employed to this end: »in the first place, a massive mobilization (the Happening of the People), inciting thus a national movement of the people. During this period social energy was transformed into a nationalistic public hysteria, as people were confronted with the historical necessity of transition and the collective fears of change and an uncertain future .... In the second, the kindling of civil war in ex-Yugoslavia... The regime exploited the circumstance of war and Serbia's involvement in order to obstruct processes of inner-societal differentiation, democratization and modernization.«[6] As a result of the above, public national sentiments were inflamed, bolstering the omnipresence of nationalism and the centralization of power. Minority rights and civic liberties were curtailed, while the rule of law and democratic processes were effectively put on the back burner.[7] It is the concept of »metamorphosis,« rather than that of »transition,« that seems best to apply to the political engineering that took place in Serbia during the 1990 s.[8] The es-

5 See »The Albanian Parallel Education System and Its Aftermath,« by Denisa Kostovicova, in this volume.

6 Marija Obradović, »Der Krieg als Quelle politischer Legitimation. Ideologie und Strategie der herrschenden Partei,« in *Serbiens Weg in den Krieg*, ed. Thomas Bremer, et al. (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 1998), 360 ff.

7 UNICEF, *Comprehensive Analysis of Primary Education in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia* (Belgrade: UNICEF, 2001), 20–21.

8 On Serbian politics during the 1990 s see: Robert Thomas, *Serbia Under Milosevic: Politics in the 1990 s* (London: Hurst, 1999).

tablishment of a multiparty system was accompanied simultaneously by the expansion of a one-party hegemonic rule. Though permitted, democratic forms were utilized in an authoritarian manner in order to conceal the permanent monopoly of the structural control of the ruling political group over the state, the economy, and other spheres of social life. Concurrently, the new pluralist political system that was installed did not effect a separation of state and the party. On the contrary, the ruling SPS (Socialist Party of Serbia) not only inherited the structures and financial resources of the pervious regime but rather »functioned as a state-dependent agency of power.«[9] Especially after 1998, a series of legislative interventions – such as the greater repression of independent media (Law on Public Information of the Republic of Serbia), the University Law, which substantially diminished university autonomy, and the Law on Local Self-Government, which reduced further the independence of communities and towns with respect both to finances and the selection of personnel – aimed quite bluntly at restricting civic freedoms.[10] Post-socialist change in FRY was thus highly particular in some of its features, as for example in »the persistence of the former government-party establishment that consolidated its position capitalizing on the primacy of ethnic urgency and in the name of national defense, a slow and sporadic privatization process, obstruction of political transition and democratization processes, the strengthening of etatistic tendencies.« Strong tendencies toward centralization and etatization were prominent in the FRY. In fact, »the degree of centralization in certain domains was larger than in the era of socialism.«[11] The tendency toward centralization and etatization also affected the educational sector. All these factors acted as significant obstacles to the process of democratization and the potential of education to aid the promotion of democratic values.

The legacy of the 1990 s was complex and burdensome. Not only were the few elements of civil society that existed during that period seriously debilitated by growing nationalism and increasingly authoritarian government, but the war created unfavorable societal conditions, including large-scale pauperization, deep economic crisis, criminalized government, and all the negative consequences of legal insecurity. The educational sector was multiply affected by these circumstances. Nationalistic tendencies in the curricula and the oppression of the political opposition working within education were further consequences. History education and everything that goes along with it, such as

9 Ibid., 422.

10 See: Obrad Savić, »Destruction of University in Serbia,« *Serbian Elite* (2001): 89–105; Vladimir Goati, »The Nature of the Order and the October Overthrow in Serbia,« in *Revolution and Order: Serbia After October 2000*, ed. Ivana Spasić and Milan Subotić (Belgrade: Institute for Social Theory, 2001), 29.

11 UNICEF, *Comprehensive Analysis*, 21.

curricula, history textbooks, and teaching, were strongly instrumentalized to serve the needs of the situation.[12] The prevailing revisionism targeted, in the first place, the progressive nationalization of an entangled and shared past, aiming to bring the past in tune with the needs of the present.[13] In the second place, and even more significantly, history was endued with a specific prescriptive ethos, instructing pupils how to think and act as national subjects and how to define themselves in relation to the »others.« Analyses of textbooks have amply demonstrated the operationalization of history in order to ensure the dissemination of specific messages, first and foremost by promoting a bellicose model of socialization. Among the most poignant of the employed themes are the fostering of patriotic feelings; the imperative of the physical survival of the nation; an emphasis on heroic deeds without limits; an underscoring of the purpose of a righteous war; the glorification of people's sufferings; the creation of a feeling of constant jeopardy; the augmentation of militant themes, where dying for the nation is considered a matter of honor; the assignation of the victim role to one's own people, due to the suffering of great injustices throughout history; and the idea of a sacrificial people.[14]

Alongside the upsurge of nationalism and the effects of multiethnic conflict and strife, several political and socioeconomic aspects, such as the general poverty of the country, the pressing problem of refugees and internally displaced persons, a significant brain drain of the country's young and educated population, the strengthening of centralist tendencies, and the deterioration of the country's infrastructure, also affected the field of education. The impoverishment of society brought about the worsening of all social parameters of the

12 On the fortunes of history textbook narratives in Serbia see: Dubravka Stojanović, »History Textbooks Mirror their Time,« in *Warfare, Patriotism, Patriarchy*, ed. Dijana Plut, et al. (Slovograf: Belgrade, 1994), 81–110; Dubravka Stojanović, »Stereotypes in Contemporary History. Textbooks in Serbia as a Mirror of Their Times,« in *Öl ins Feuer? Oil in Fire? Schulbücher, ethnische Stereotypen und Gewalt in Südosteuropa*, ed. Wolfgang Höpken (Hannover: Hahnische Buchhandlung, 1996), 125–135; Dubravka Stojanović, »Construction of Historical Consciousness: The Case of Serbian History Books,« in *Balkan Identities: Nation and Memory*, ed. Maria Todorova (London: Hurst, 2004), 327–338; see also Stojanović's contribution in this volume.

13 Augusta Dimou, »The Present's Past: The National History of Socialism or the Socialist Period of the Nation? Representations of Communist Yugoslavia in the Textbooks of the Successor States,« in *Zwischen Amnestie und Nostalgie, Die Erinnerung an den Kommunimus in Südoesteuropa*, ed. Ulf Brunnbauer and Stefan Troebst (Köln: Böhlau, 2007), 131.

14 See: Dijana Plut, et al., ed., *Warfare, Patriotism, Patriarchy.* See also: Plut, Dijana, Ana Pešikan, Jelena Pešić and Slobodanka Antić, »Democracy in Education: Representation of the Democratic Values in Education (Textbook Analyses),« in *Democracy in Education – Education for Democracy. University of Belgrade, Institute of Psychology Report,* edited by Ivan Ivić (Belgrade: University of Belgrade), 21–56. http://www.see-educoop.net/portal/id_serbia.htm.

educational system, the drastic decrease in teachers' salaries, and the resulting lowering of the quality of education.[15] Due to poor economic performance the overall spending on education was low, both in terms of the amount spent on education relative to the available national resources, and the amount of public spending that was allocated to education.[16] Low salary levels provided for considerable frustration and poor morale and undermined accordingly the quality and integrity of instruction, resulting even in corruption. Moreover, an increasing number of teachers took up additional jobs in order to make ends meet.[17] All the above provided for unfavorable conditions when it came to recruiting a future generation of good and motivated teachers.

Not least, the wars also had a profound impact on the demographic picture of the country. Declining birthrates brought along a decline in the size of the primary school-age population. Between 1991 and 1998 this population decreased in size by 8 percent. Natural losses were partially equilibrated by the influx of refugees and internally displaced children into the school system.[18] Their numbers in 1998/99 were estimated at approximately 40,000.[19] Migration from villages to cities further altered the demographic structure, resulting not only in an increase in the average age of the rural population but also in a disproportionate geographical distribution of school buildings, with an excess of school space in rural areas and a shortage in the cities. The result was a dual system in the network of schools: a large number of tiny schools in villages and a small number of gigantic schools in the cities.[20] Changes in the structure of the national economy also had an impact on secondary education. Vocational training suffered the most due to its outdated structure. Not only were graduates of professionally oriented high schools barely able to find professional integration, but it also became increasingly apparent how obsolete parts of the educational system had become. Although the metal industry had completely

15 UNICEF, *Comprehensive Analysis*, 118.

16 Ibid., 48. The funding levels for education followed the general fortunes of the economy, with a definite low during the period of hyperinflation (1993) and a relative recovery after that. The total eductional spending as a percentage of GDP fluctuated between 3 and 4.5 percent throughout the decade. Particularly desolate was the salary situation for teachers, whose average net salary in September 2000, for example, amounted to 46 USD per month, barely enough to cover the basic subsistence needs of a family.

17 Ibid., 53. On the condition of teachers during the 1990 s see also: Ruzica Rosandic, et al., *Teacher Education and Professional Development. Suggested Changes (2002 – 2005) Report of the Committee for Teacher Education and Training* (Belgrade: MoES, 2001), 5 and 7. http://www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/teacher_ed-yug-ser-enl-t02.pdf

18 Ibid., 18.

19 Ibid., 34.

20 See: Aleksandar Bogojević et at., *Optimization of the Network of Schools in Serbia* (Belgrade: UNICEF, 2003), 12.

collapsed during this period, for example, many schools continued to train metal workers.[21]

The economic context was thus altogether inconducive to democratic development: The middle class, previously an important bearer of democratic tendencies, practically disappeared; the priorities in the perception of human rights changed; great possibilities arose for populist and even authoritarian political projects, etc. With scarce resources and the state's priorities reshuffled, the investment in education remained low.[22] Equally decisive was the fact that the country, and the educational sector in particular, remained internationally isolated during that whole decade. Sanctions affected all levels of society and prevented exchange with the outside world, exposure to new practices, exchange of experiences, and the ability to keep abreast of the latest developments in the international community. Altogether, the context of the 1990 s had profound conservative and centralizing effects on education, whereas the government's main educational strategy had been to conserve and to control. With the aim of strengthening the central government and its decision-making powers, a series of legislative changes were instituted, among them the abolition of important educational powers formerly given to the autonomous provinces; the legalization of private education at all levels except the primary level; changes in school curricula in 1992; the passing of a new law pertaining to universities in 1998, and the abolition of Pedagogical Institutes formerly entrusted with the task of pedagogical advising, supervision and in-service teacher training. As a consequence, the educational system became overregulated. Legislative measures in the post-1992 period concentrated all decision-making power in the Ministry of Education, greatly augmenting its competences and discontinuing professional institutions dealing with the improvement of the teaching and learning process. The combination of the abovementioned factors led to substantial enfeeblement of the educational system.[23]

Achievements in the field of education during the socialist period (1945–1990) are for the most part evaluated positively.[24] These included the establishment of a compulsory, universal and free, high-quality education for the whole population, an attempt that was by and large successful; high enrollment rates in preschool as well as in primary and secondary education; and the development of a wide network of educational institutions for all levels of education, including a network of educational support institutions (training and

21 Ivan Ivić, »Education Reform in the Republic of Serbia« (unpublished paper prepared for UNESCO, 2006), 45.

22 UNICEF, *Comprehensive Analysis*, 23.

23 Ibid., 26.

24 For a broad evaluation of education during socialist times, see: Petér Radó, *Transition in Education*, 23.

in-service training for teachers, research institutions, institutions for the publishing of textbooks and educational literature). This process also included the creation of a professional cadre of teachers and other pedagogical staff, while education belonged to the government's budgetary priorities. Finally, during the 1960 s, educational infrastructure was significantly expanded. As a result the general quality of education rose. Nevertheless, serious problems persisted. From the mid 1960 s onward »education ceased to be a budgetary priority; the curricula were highly ideological and politicized; there was a centralized elaboration of educational programs and an ensuing uniformity in education; problems appeared in the implementation of the right to education, for example with respect to ethnic minorities, while quality was never adequately defined, measured or monitored.«[25] The absence of a culture of evaluation represented one of the feeblest points of the socialist educational culture. More troublesome appears to have been the prevailing pedagogical concept of the times. It aimed not so much at the development of critical skills as at a model of socialization that »was to a great extent backward-looking, that is, how to transmit tradition to the next generation. Its purpose was to assimilate the individual into the collectivity, create stability and reproduce the social order. Its characteristic was inertia and it aimed at molding a certain character: compliant, uncritically thinking, accepting hierarchical roles and learning to manipulate and instrumentalize the system in order to compete successfully within the hierarchy. Its foremost aim was to build certain social skills that fitted the system but were insufficient when it came to the cognitive development of children.«[26]

Following the political changes of 2000, the Serbian educational system was subjected to evaluations by international organizations (OSCE, UNICEF, and the World Bank), conducted throughout 2000 until January 2001. The findings of the reports served as the basis for identifying problems and deficits, and more or less charted out the areas where intervention and reform were most urgently needed. As a whole, the educational system had inherited certain mechanisms that guaranteed the right to education. Both its size and level of development were adequate, allowing for improvement and upgrading. Among its greatest assets were the right to compulsory, universal, free primary education for the duration of eight years and the right of minorities to be educated in their native language in elementary and secondary education and, in the case of Hungarian, Slovak, and Romanian nationalities, even in higher education. The establishment of educational rights for nationalities was a tradition dating back to the 1950 s and represented, for Balkan standards, a significant innovation.

25 UNICEF, *Comprehensive Analysis*, 18 – 19.

26 Interview with Aleksander Baucal, Psychologist: Department of Psychology, University of Belgrade, recorded December 20, 2006 in Belgrade.

The surveys underscored the element of extreme centralization as one of the gravest deficits of and a serious obstacle toward the democratization of the educational system. It was most apparent in the decision-making procedures, the administering of education, the system of financing, and the school curriculum. The ministry supervised schools and acted both as administrator and expert supervisor. In other words, expert evaluation and the services that administered education were not separated competences. The minister of education had, in the course of time accrued extensive decision-making and executive powers over almost all relevant areas. It lay within his discretion to determine the unique teaching plan and the textbooks to be used, the school calendar for all schools, the program of exams, the grading methods, the requirements and qualifications for teachers and expert associates, and to appoint the school principals. Centralization was furthermore manifested in the concentrated competences of the ministry: It decided the founding, closing, and financing of schools, defined space standards, and appointed headmasters, faculty deans, and rectors. This excessive concentration of power seriously impeded the capacity of the system to democratize itself and promote democratic values. Educational institutions had very limited autonomy in decision-making and were under very rigid control. Teachers had little say regarding even such strictly educational matters as the choice of textbooks, and pupils had little opportunity to acquire democratic life experience at school, since the school itself did not function as a democratic institution.[27]

The 1990 s also represented a caesura with respect to the financing mode of the educational system. Both the allocation of resources and the system of financing were subject to centralization measures. During socialist times and up to the early nineties, education was funded largely in a decentralized manner and through a municipal body, called SIZ,[28] which collected and relegated local funds. »The SIZ thus constituted an institutional interface between a set of (production-focused) purchasers of educational services, as it were, and those providing educational services. Given the centralized character of the curriculum and educational policy development, this funding system did not result in municipal or regional variations in terms of educational content or methods. However, the proximity between financing and service delivery did entail a different ability to fund education according to the municipality's resources. To offset this, there was a Republican fund designed to raise the level of develop-

27 Ivan Ivić, *Democracy in Education – Education for Democracy?*, 8–9.

28 The SIZ (»Self-management community of interests«) was a municipal body that on the one hand collected funds through contributions from wages and that, on the other hand, financed the budget on education. It consisted of delegates from the Basic Organization of Associated Labor, which represented the direct local production units like farms, factories, etc.

ment in relatively poor municipalities.«[29] In fact, there is a striking similarity between this organizational and funding model and the current policies of the European Union. This funding system was ultimately abolished in 1992, with a small interim period between 1990 and 1992 that represented a transitional phase between the extremely decentralized SIZ and the subsequent, extremely centralized system, dominated by the Republican budget and central decision making. Limited competences like the construction, maintenance, and operation of schools remained the responsibility of the municipal authorities. According to local needs, these authorities obtained the possibility of applying to the ministry for funding with a developmental plan. There existed, however, no legal provisions regulating this procedure.[30]

A further shortcoming was identified in the uniformity or inadequate diversity displayed in the educational system. As a rule identical solutions were applied to all educational institutions, regardless of a school's size or the composition of its pupil population. The rigidity by means of which this uniformity was maintained not only contradicted the country's ethnical, cultural, regional, and local heterogeneity, but also inhibited the employment of the creative potential of certain regional and local conditions and specificities.[31] It was finally concluded that the educational system was overregulated, resulting in efforts to strictly control all important aspects of its functioning. Regarding curricula, for example, content was defined down to the smallest possible level of detail. The quest for curricular control not only resulted in dogmatic and inflexible programs for all subjects, but boiled down to detailed prescriptions of the weekly schedules for all school subjects. These kinds of strict and detailed determinations of all educational parameters were serious obstacles to pedagogical initiative and the creative work of teachers. They also hindered the possibility to adapt the pedagogical process both to specific working conditions and the individual characteristics of students.[32]

Altogether, the educational system functioned with a restricted concept of education. Rather than being understood holistically, as an integrated set of different institutions, programs, and partners, the educational system was reduced simply to the school system. Legal provisions defined the school and its functioning as an institution isolated from its social and cultural context. Whereas legal regulations referred to important components like the curricula, teachers, and headmasters, they tended to ignore important stakeholders like parents, families, NGOs, local communities, associations of teachers and pa-

29 UNICEF, *Comprehensive Analysis*, 42.
30 Ibid., 42.
31 Ibid., 38.
32 Ibid., 39.

rents, etc.[33] Furthermore, the system was too focused on the goals of education and school curricula and not enough on the pupils themselves. Finally, the educational system was too focused on quantitative participation in education and insufficiently on the quality and efficiency of education. The absence of striving for quality and efficiency was manifested in the lack of mechanisms for control and evaluation of educational quality and often resulted in misleading indicators of school achievements such as a large percentage of students with excellent grades or extremely small repetition rates.[34] These circumstances additionally supported the general public belief that the educational system was highly competent and thus required no intervention or amelioration. What's more, the absence of an information system that would allow for a more accurate collection of data on education was responsible for the fact that most interventions were designed according to concepts or ideas but not based on actual knowledge of the needs and deficits of the system. The existing antiquated and inadequate information system hampered a genuine analysis of the system's efficiency, while simultaneously impeding a rational targeting and distribution of resources.[35]

The evaluations of the international organizations along with the concomitant recommendations served as the basis for conceptualizing the reform that was initiated in 2001. Their findings were corroborated complementarily by the realization that the new conditions brought about after the political changes made it impossible to stick to the familiar old attitudes. In general, post-communist educational reforms in Central-East and Southeast Europe had to reckon with two important new contexts: firstly, the new European context, which was characterized, on the one hand, by broad tendencies toward harmonization and attunement of policies and, on the other, by the requirements for EU accession or the eventual prospect thereof; and secondly, the new and rapidly changing global environment. The awareness of a tension between the inherited system and global developments is attested in the form of an apposite metaphor by one of the interviewees and participants in the reform process: »It was like continuing to train people to play football, while the world had switched to playing basketball.«[36] The change of context »brought about the realization that education cannot serve only to transmit the experience and wisdom of previous generation, but needs to help children develop competencies enabling them to cope with new and unpredictable challenges in a proactive, collaborative, and creative way; and rather than just informing children about knowledge and technology,

33 Ibid., 33.
34 Ibid., 41.
35 UNICEF, *Comprehensive Analysis*, 32.
36 Interview with Aleksander Baucal, Psychologist: Department of Psychology, University of Belgrade, recorded July 30, 2008 in Belgrade.

it must help them become competent and intelligent users and developers thereof. If we differentiate between the two functions of education – »to socialize the new generation to fit to the existing order« (education oriented toward the past) and »to equip youth for their future« (education oriented toward the future) – we can say that awareness of the big changes that happened globally put pressure on education to find a better balance between these two functions. Before, education was oriented mostly toward the past, and now it needs to take into consideration the future dimension as well.«[37]

Particular to the reform design was that it was based on an all-encompassing, structural approach to systemic change. Consciously avoiding the »fragmented approach,«[38] in which the reform of different educational sectors is truncated into individual problems that are superseded in time and priority by reforms to the administration and the economy, the Serbian reform strategy treated sectors rather as components of a coherent edifice. As additionally emphasized by P. Radó, in circumstances of thorough structural reform »the traditional ›improvement‹ oriented patterns of educational policy can hardly be applied. Not only because of the depth and speed of the necessary change in education itself, but also because the broader context of education (public administration, economy and labor market, political system, public service, stratification of the societies, etc.) is a ›moving target.‹ «[39] Intervention thus aimed at all major pillars of the educational structure, which were treated as inter-dependent components of a holistic, communicating system. The intention was to create an internal dynamic, with different synergetic effects from the various areas and components of the educational system coming together to support the new structure. In its conceptualization the reform was ambitious and aspired at moving from a »command driven« to a »demand driven« educational system.[40] In its executing

37 Interview with Aleksander Baucal, December 20, 2006.

38 Ministry of Education and Sports, *Quality Education for All. Challenges to the Education Reform in Serbia. Ministry of Education and Sports, Section for Education Development and International Cooperation in Education, Department for Strategic Education Development* (Belgrade: MoES Report, 2004). http://www.see-educoop.net/portal/id_serbia.htm.

39 Petér Radó, *Transition in Education*, 19.

40 The main characteristics of a »command driven« system are: teaching is at the center of pedagogy and teachers are at the center of policies; it focuses on resources, control processes, and is not particularly interested in outcomes; it gives preference to institutional and structural policies; it focuses on the amount of financial resources employed for educational provisions; policy is driven by political and/or ideological agendas; the educational system is centralized and controlled; the flow of information is blocked and reduced; the absorptive capacity of »educationalists« is low at both middle and grassroots levels (obedient system); the number of circles involved in policy development is small; and stakeholders are not organized. On the contrary, the characteristics of a »demand driven« system are: learning is at the center of pedagogy and students are at the center of policies; it focuses on learning outcomes, improves the quality of processes, and adjusts resources; it gives preference to

logic, it aimed at a major reorganization of the foundations of education, either by building in innovation where change was needed or by creating new structures that would be able to carry through and support a different educational philosophy. Envisioned was, moreover, the creation of a series of wholly new institutions, whose existence would secure both a modern and efficient educational system, and most importantly, an educational policy exercised strictly on the basis of expertise and, as far as possible, independently from the vagaries of party politics.

The new Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES hereafter), which was to head the reform, was inaugurated in February 2001 by combining the structures from three existing ministries (Education, Higher Education, and Sports). A further reshuffling within the ministry, which saw the merger of two independent ministerial divisions – the department for international educational cooperation with the department for educational development – provided the new structure with an additional dynamic. The first priority of the reform ministry was to nominate the expert committees responsible for developing the reform agenda. Thus, the Educational Reform Council (ERC hereafter) was established in summer 2001, consisting of approximately forty experienced educational experts from various faculties, NGOs, and other institutions. This was followed by the creation of expert groups (EGs hereafter) charged with the design of the reform agenda in specialized areas. The EGs comprised approximately 150 people, including scholarly experts, NGOs, and ministerial experts, as well as educational practitioners. They were responsible for the following seven domains: democratization; decentralization; teacher training; quality assurance, assessment, and evaluation; vocational training; adult education and lifelong learning; and preschool education. The EGs developed their suggestions through a process of multiple consultations. Drawing and deliberating on diverse examples of good practice from other countries usually resulted in a second round of consultations and the finalization of the EGs' recommendations. These proposals were then discussed and adopted by the ERC. The feasibility of instituting the reformatory machine and of unfolding its creative potential can largely be credited to the minister of education at the time, Dr. Gašo Knežević: »He was aware that he was not an educational specialist. He therefore opened up the ministry to expertise. Many of the specialists he engaged were not ministry people; rather, they came from a variety of institutions, such as diverse

functional policies (improvement and development); it focuses on the cost effectiveness of educational provisions; policy is driven by analysis and bargaining; the educational system is decentralized and liberalized; the flow of information is free and fostered; the absorptive capacity of »educationalists« is high at all levels; the number of circles involved in policy development is big; stakeholders are organized; and bargaining is institutionalized (Ibid., 24).

departments of the university, NGOs, schools, etc. He initiated and engaged in consultation processes with them. He built a reliable team and he stood behind them in good and bad times. He also made efforts to communicate the reform process to the public.«[41]

Due to the country's dire economic situation and, therefore, its lack of funds for the reforms, the government and the MoES approached the international community to secure the necessary funding. The reforms were conceptualized and designed with local impetus, but were supported by international expertise and were financed through loans and donations from various international organizations and governments. The establishment of regional teachers centers was, for example, financed by the Swiss Development Center, while the World Bank provided loans for the building of the electronic management system as well as for decentralization, school development plans, and assessment. The necessary know-how and capacity building were provided by UNICEF, UNESCO, OECD, Council of Europe, FOS-YU, Open Society Education Programs – South East Europe, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe: Task Force Education and Youth, European Training Foundation, World Bank, CRS – Serbia and Montenegro, and the governments of Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

The real meaning of reform during »transition« is managing systemic transformation.[42] Innovative and unprecedented in the history of educational reforms in Serbia was the fact that the reform was largely conceptualized in tandem with the base. By turning to the users and practitioners of the educational system and allowing them to voice their opinions and needs, the ministry engaged in long-term consultations with various stakeholders in education. The reform thus combined both available approaches to reform: the bottom-up as well as the top-down strategy. The bottom-up approach aims at a decentralization of management; democratic legitimacy is its main concern. It is based on a philosophy that emphasizes choice and provides space for diverse programs. The top-down approach aims at a deconcentration of management; professional legitimacy is its main concern. It supports the gradual transformation of the system of administrative control to a system of quality control and envisages the establishment of institutional frameworks for different educational services.[43] The consultations with stakeholders constituted part of the initial reform phase and were concerned with setting the agenda and formulating a corresponding policy. They had a double purpose: on the one hand, to collect feedback (suggestions, attitudes, expectations) and organize a flow of information about the

41 Interview with Aleksander Baucal, July 30, 2008.
42 Petér Radó, *Transition in Education*, 32.
43 Ibid., 32.

course of reform from participants in debate with decision makers, and on the other, to set a precedent for an open educational system. The ministry simultaneously endeavored to send a different signal, indicating what a democratically oriented educational system should strive for. Due to the fact that such a collaborative reform process was a complete innovation, great efforts were made during 2001 and partially in 2002 to set up and stabilize the system of reform consultations. The substantial energy directed toward efforts to communicate the intentions and the goal of the reforms notwithstanding, it would be proven retrospectively that the information campaign was nevertheless insufficient to rally massive public sympathy when the reform was brought to a halt.

The first round of discussions, the »Roundtables on Reform« (RoR), took place during autumn 2001 in eighty-five locations. The more than 9000 participants included pupils, teachers, pedagogical experts, parents, principals, and members of school boards. Suggestions were collected on the democratization of education, teacher education, curricula, and quality monitoring and evaluation. Building on this first wave, the »Us in Reform« (UiR) consultations took place from approximately May to October 2002. Their aim was to provide information on the work in progress, constructively exchanging opinions, gathering feedback, and resolving expected difficulties. Participation was voluntary, and the fact that more than 600 schools applied for participation is worth noting. Discussions were held in 420 schools with 14,460 participants. These consultations focused on the school as a unit and included the entire school community and members of the school boards. A third wave, carried out during October 2002, involved the »Discussions on Curricular Reform.« Members of the Commission for Curriculum Development visited regional school authorities and discussed the proposed solutions for curriculum development in compulsory and general secondary education. Around 12,000 people participated in these discussions, and more than 4000 questions, suggestions, and comments were collected. The meetings were organized jointly by the commission, school authorities, and union representatives.[44] Finally, a second round of UiR consultations and discussions, with 285 schools and 11,300 participants, took place between December 2002 and January 2003. They centered on the national curriculum framework and the new roles of school and staff in the reform process. During this entire period, four large international conferences on educational reform were organized devoted to general conceptual matters, as well as sixty specialized conferences and professional gatherings during which specific areas of educational policy were deliberated.

Intervention aimed at securing five basic assets for the educational system: (1) openness, (2) fairness, (3) measurability, (4) efficiency and effectiveness, and

44 MoES, *Quality Education for All* (2004), 14 – 15.

(5) regulation. The reform design was to be effectuated in three overlapping waves, covering distinct areas of education: The first encompassed the most pressing areas for reform, like decentralization and democratization of education, teacher professional development, entrance examinations and quality assurance, education for democratic citizenship, and secondary vocational and higher education. The second involved the principles and goals of education, the curriculum structure, the structure and organization of the educational system, the implementation of the curriculum, higher vocational education and training. The third and last was to deal with the development of minority education, the education of Roma children and children with special needs, and the evaluation and accreditation of higher education.[45]

By redefining the role of the central administration as well as upgrading the role of the regional and local educational authorities, the decentralization of the educational system targeted two strategic goals: on the one hand, to improve the system's efficiency and, on the other, to strengthen democratic decision-making processes by transferring as much authority from the central to the local and school levels as possible. The objective was to ensure the involvement of several stakeholders (educational employees, pupils, parents, representatives of local government, union and social partner/interest groups) in the decision-making process. The ministry was to relinquish much of its directional role by allowing for creative innovation and by dispensing, that is, strengthening, the autonomous responsibility of the various sectors of the system. By distributing competences according to a division-of-labor principle, the ministry would give up its up-to-date political-administrative governance and take on rather the function of the strategic guidance of the educational system. Several newly created departments, like the Department for the Strategic Development of Education, the Department for Information Technology and Educational Statistics, and the Department for International Cooperation, would take on a coordinating role.[46]

In order to increase the openness and the proficiency of the educational system, governance was transferred to different intermediary levels and independent institutions. A wholly new institutional framework was created, consisting of councils and centers: the Educational Council, composed of experts in education, science, arts, sports, the environment, human rights, standardization, unions; the Council for Vocational and Adult Training, composed of experts in education, science, the environment, the economy, employment, standardization, and unions; the Council for Consensus Building in

45 Gordana Miljenić, *A Brief Tour through the Educational System Reform in the Republic of Serbia, January 2001 – June 2003 and Beyond* (Belgrade: MoES Report), 6.

46 MoES, *Quality Education for All* (2004), 25.

Education, composed of representatives of the Republic, the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, local governments, national minorities, religious communities, teacher vocational associations, universities, pupils, parents, and unions. Seven independent centers were created. These consisted of centers for teacher professional development; evaluation; accreditation of institutions and programs; vocational education; curricula and textbooks; children with special needs; and artistic education. Though dealing with distinct areas of competence, the centers were expected to coordinate and attune their efforts and lend support to the educational system primarily on a national but also on a regional level. In their professional competence, they were highly autonomous from the ministry. As institutions they were in charge of development and would perform advisory, research, and professional tasks for which they were directly accountable. They could be consulted directly by all levels of the educational system, thereby guaranteeing that professional and qualitative advice became the basis of decision-making.

Regional competences had been seriously curtailed during the 1990 s. School authorities had been turned into a mere extension of the administrative arms in Belgrade, while their fiscal autonomy was significantly limited. In the new scheme, the role of regional school authorities was considerably upgraded. They were to become equal partners to both schools and the ministry, and thereby serve a key function in the implementation of reform through various developmental programs. Regional school authorities were entrusted with the professional development of teachers, education quality assurance, database maintenance, and participation in preparing the education development plan for a given area as well as monitoring its realization. The arrangement opened up space for dialogue with social partners and other interested groups on a regional level, which in turn meant a greater efficiency in meeting the educational needs of a specific area.[47] The competences of the municipalities, particularly with respect to preschool and primary education, were also upgraded in the new decentralized scheme. The municipalities were to play a key role in the optimization of the school network, that is, in ensuring that the demographic developments and infrastructure were in harmony and that the maintenance and equipment of institutions were up-to-date. After appropriate training, they would be charged with the inspection of schools and would finance teachers' professional development. As of 2002 the appointment of school boards and principals (the latter had traditionally been appointed directly by the ministry) was transferred to the competences of the municipalities.[48] Governance at the school level was also substantially strengthened. The composition and com-

47 Ibid., 26.
48 Ibid., 27.

petences of the school boards were changed. School boards would consist of an equal number of employee, parent, and local government representatives, while in secondary schools pupil representatives would be able to participate in the work of school boards but without voting rights. The inclusion of the local government in school governance structures was meant to allow a direct connection between the needs and interests of the local community and the school itself. Equally, the role of the parent council was enhanced and parents included on the school boards. According to the new legislation, the personnel charged with decision-making competences at the school level would have to undergo additional compulsory training in basic managerial skills. The distribution of competences would pursue the following scheme:[49]

	National	Regional	Municipal	School
Curriculum	Framework	Support for implementation	Cooperation in the preparation of the school curriculum	School curriculum
Teacher professional development	Accreditation licensing	Support for the coordination, support	Funding	Selection, Implementation
Evaluation and assessment	Assessment system, Monitoring	Coordination, Support		Implementation
Quality assurance inspection	Guidelines	Implementation		Self-evaluation
Legal inspection	Second level	Implementation	First level	
Information system	Development, Use	Implementation	Implementation	Implementation
Funding by pupil	Formula, Guidelines		Implementation	
Facilities			Ownership, Maintenance	

Teachers were given an enhanced role in the reform. The aims of the changes were twofold: on the one hand, to ensure the professionalization of the teaching cadres according to current international standards and, on the other, to provide teachers with the necessary incentives so as to motivate them to voluntarily embrace the task of the continuous professionalization of the teaching profession. Teachers' competences were redefined according to a different philosophy, which placed the end users of the system, the children, at the center of all

49 Gábor Halász, *Education Reform and Regional Level Educational Administration in Serbia* (Budapest: National Institute of Public Education Report, 2004), 14. http://www.see-educoop.net/portal/id_serbia.htm

efforts. Teacher training had already been identified as a problem area. Up to that point, it focused predominantly on training by subject matter, paying little attention to the simultaneous development of pedagogical and methodical skills. Moreover, teacher education was fragmented and non-standardized. A problem shared commonly with other countries of Southeast, Central and Eastern Europe is the fact that higher education responds only slowly to the changing needs of pre-university education. A turning point had come in the early 1990 s, when several nongovernmental organizations and academic institutions had launched a series of seminars and alternative programs for teacher professional development, most of them geared towards civic education and children rights programs. Though these efforts had lacked coordination and a coherent systematic policy, they nevertheless served as a fruitful basis upon which to build. The new system for teacher standards made continuous teacher training mandatory for professional development. The choice of courses, however, was not prescribed but left up to the free selection of individual schools and teachers as corresponded to their needs. A system of accreditation of professional development programs was set up, and those interested in offering such courses were encouraged to apply under open competition conditions. A catalogue of accredited courses was created in order to inform schools and teachers of the possibility of choosing the professional development they needed most. A certain level of professional development became obligatory for all teachers (one hundred hours over five years, which boiled down to one three-day seminar per year). Teacher motivation to invest further in continuous training beyond this legal minimum was encouraged in two ways: (1) by introducing teacher licenses renewable on the basis of, among other things, professional development, and (2) by introducing criteria and procedures for career advancement within four levels, where professional development played a crucial role. This package was linked to a salary ladder, which also rewarded teachers in material terms for making the extra effort.[50]

Accountability and quality assurance had to become inherent to the educational culture, both in the school and the system as a whole. This task went beyond the traditional practice of school inspection and grading. In the first place, the achievements of the school's practitioners (teachers and pupils) were to be monitored through assessments based on objective indicators and standards. In the second, it meant a far higher responsibility on the part of educational employees. They were required to switch to a philosophy of practice, in which they were directly responsible for educational achievements. Furthermore, it implied a continuous striving toward improvement, which meant schools must get accustomed to a practice of regular evaluations at all levels,

50 MoES, *Quality Education for All* (2004), 38 – 41.

from school self-evaluations to external ones. The Evaluation Center was instituted precisely for this purpose and was in charge of devising an adequate set of instruments for the evaluation of educational achievements as well as implementing evaluations and interpreting their results.

School curriculum is something like the »software« of educational policy and, as such, understandably occupied a central position in the educational reform. School curricula were subject to frequent change during the 1990 s, and due to their politically sensitive character, they were more often controlled by politics than by educational policy. It therefore follows logically that the curriculum was one of the reform areas most subject to heated debate. New scholarly research results affected the curriculum conception. Current theories of learning emphasize the active role of the pupil as the organizer of his/her own knowledge, as well as the importance of specific social interaction in this process.[51] Equally, changes in international curriculum theory now emphasize the decentralization of curriculum creation, the increase in the professional autonomy of schools and teachers, and the need to develop a dynamic, flexible, and responsive curriculum that takes into account the results of evaluations and the changes of the educational environment. The feedback collected from public consultations provided the second point of departure for the conceptualization of the curriculum reform. Its findings could be summarized as follows: The teaching plan and curricula were nonfunctional, overly extensive, rigid, and anachronous; the teaching matter was unrelated, both horizontally (among related areas of knowledge) and vertically (systematically and meaningfully becoming more complex with chronological and educational age); the teaching matter and methods were not adapted to the age, cognitive characteristics, and abilities or the needs of children; and finally, frontal teaching dominated the classroom, while other more contemporary and stimulating forms of learning were neglected.[52] Teachers had no autonomy, but were obliged to follow centrally devised syllabi, with very limited or no power to influence decisions. Pupils were usually expected to reproduce the contents, while little attention was paid to the actual acquisition of skills, applicable knowledge, or lifelong learning and the connection between knowledge and real life.

In spring 2002 the MoES charged the Central Commission for the Development of Curricula and its several sub-commissions with the design of the new curriculum. Their labor was finalized by the end of 2002 and published in April 2003 as the »National Curriculum Framework.« It consisted of a draft legal document that defined and regulated the school curriculum at the national level and was to serve as the basis for the development of the individual school

51 See: Ivan Ivić, et al., *Active Learning 2.*
52 MoES, *Quality Education for All* (2004), 30.

curricula. The most significant change in the philosophy of the new curriculum was that it shifted the focus from content to educational aims and outcomes. Further, the hitherto minutially prescribed *plani program* (syllabus) was replaced by the »National Curriculum Framework,« which provided for considerable autonomy for schools and teachers and was meant to serve their interests and needs. As a framework it was also flexible enough to be upgraded, developed, and changed. Instead of prescribed and mandated curricular contents for each subject, only a framework was defined, allowing each individual school to design its own operational programs according to the general guidelines. It gave more space to the autonomous and accountable professional initiative of the teachers and schools through the possibility to devise a school-based curriculum in line with the requirements and responsibilities at the national level. Up to 30 percent of the curriculum could be school based.

As is often the case, there are diverging opinions concerning the curriculum's structure. Expert critics of a different school of thought maintain that it is less the traditional, serious, demanding, and academically ambitious curricula that jeopardize the quality of education. Rather, the quality that is lacking »is the social relevance of what is learned, relevance for [the] everyday life of the young generation, including learning the life skills in a broader meaning that encompass communication and interpersonal skills, decision-making and critical thinking skills, coping and self-management skills etc.… Therefore, the problem in [the] educational system in Serbia is related less to *what* is being taught, and much more to *how* it is learnt. Many studies … indicate that Serbian schools traditionally focus on the quality of the curriculum rather than on the student's acquisition of that curriculum; on *teaching*, i. e. how the teacher deliver[s] the subject content, rather than on learning, i. e. how the student learn[s] when [interacting] with a serious academic content. The school inspections, too, focus on whether the curricular contents were delivered, instead of whether or not the students assimilated these contents.«[53] According to this school of thought, the reforms ought not to alter the principle of serious curricular contents. Welcomed, however, was the introduction of learning standards defining what students should know at the end of a certain school cycle. Training teachers in modern pedagogical methods was also bound to contribute to the amelioration of the quality of pupils' achievements.[54] Other voices also underscore the significance of the pedagogical aims of an educational system. They emphasize, however, the necessity to maintain a balance between knowledge and skills: »In socialist times there was an insistence on the acquisition of broad knowledge. The model was input oriented: a lot of knowledge and no emphasis on skills.

53 Ivan Ivić, *Education Reforms in the Republic of Serbia,* 49 (emphasis in original).
54 Ibid.

Now we've moved to the other extreme: no emphasis on knowledge, but rather on ways to operationalize knowledge, only pragmatic, only training – no education. However, knowledge is a construction. First you need to acquire knowledge and then develop the skills.«[55]

The curricular reform additionally contained significant changes. Education would now be based on educational areas instead of unconnected subjects. Five educational areas were defined: social sciences and philosophy; language, communication, and literature; sciences, mathematics, and technology; arts; physical and health education. Following broader European trends, the composition of elementary and secondary education changed. Before, compulsory elementary education consisted of eight years and was followed by an additional four years of secondary education. Now one more year was added to compulsory elementary education, elevating the number to nine. In fact, the years of pre-university education remained the same, altogether twelve; what changed was their internal composition. The new formula saw the creation of three cycles, each consisting of three years (nine years) for compulsory elementary education, plus three years of secondary.

Planned was a long-term, successive, step-by-step implementation of the new curriculum, in which two additional grades would be included each year. Its realization would start 2003/4 for the first grade of compulsory education, 2004/5 for the second and seventh, 2005/6 for the third and eighth, 2006/7 for the fourth and ninth, and 2007/8 for the fifth grade of compulsory education and the first grade of the general three-year secondary school. The creation of the National Center for Curriculum and Textbooks would support the institutionalization of the whole procedure, supervising curriculum development, textbook preparation, and publishing policy. The center would furthermore lend support and consult teachers and schools when it came to developing the school-based curricula and related activities.[56] Elaborate training would precede the implementation of the new framework. In early 2003 curriculum implementation teams were formed to develop the implementation strategy and the teacher training programs, while preparations for piloting the curriculum reform in gymnasiums were also started. The aims of the preparation were to sensitize and inform gymnasiums on entering the reform, to ensure that the general reform strategy and its predicted outcomes were understood, to provide for capacity building where needed, and finally, to obtain input on the problems that might arise when putting the reform into practice.[57]

55 Interview with Ana Pešikan, Psychologist: Institute of Psychology, University of Belgrade, recorded December 14, 2006 in Belgrade.

56 Gordana Miljević, *A Brief Tour through the Educational System*, 21.

57 Ibid., 20.

As can be deduced from the above, the reform was comprehensive and addressed almost all relevant areas of education simultaneously: the structure of the educational system and its financing; the management of the system; the data collection and information system; the school curricula and textbook production; the professional development of the educational cadres; the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating pupils' achievements; the development of educational institutions, the system of lifelong learning. The reforms were operationalized in the Law on the Foundations of Education, usually referred to as Umbrella 1 Law, and were adopted by the Parliament in June 2003. The law aimed at a legislative regulation of the new nine-year compulsory education, decentralization, compulsory teacher training, the introduction of the new curriculum, starting with the first grade of compulsory education at the beginning of the year 2003/4, and the establishment of a quality assurance system.

The assassination of Zoran Đinđić (March 2003) and the elections later that year brought a new government from oppositional parties into power. In addition, political changes early in 2004 saw the replacement of the leading personnel of the Ministry of Education. One of the first measures of the new ministry was to annul and abolish several of the novelties introduced by the previous ministry, mainly out of ideological reasons. The »changes to the changes« were materialized in the Amendments and Additions to the Law on the Foundations of the Educational System in Serbia, usually referred to as Umbrella 2 Law, which were passed in Parliament in late May 2004.[58] The government that followed was conservative and its main tenet was the preservation of values. The discourse that brought down the reform claimed it incompatible with Serbian traditions: Education was and had traditionally been very good and a source of national pride; the reform was substituting good Serbian education with a foreign import. Nowhere was this philosophy incarnated more pointedly than in the face of the new minister of education, Ms Liljana Čolić, who, to put it mildly, was less reformist in orientation. She acquired international notoriety with her intention to remove the theory of evolution from the school curricula and her demand that creationism (the belief that God created this world) be taught parallel to Darwin's theory. She pledged to discontinue the subject »from play to the computer,« which she deemed harmful to children's health, and considered impeding the import of textbooks for the various national minorities on the grounds that they »destroyed Serbian spirituality.«[59]

58 See: Reformski obrazovni krugovi, »Serbian Education Reform Step Back, Bulletin of Events No. 1,« Belgrade, June 1, 2004 and Reformski obrazovni krugovi, »Serbian Education Reform Step Back, Bulletin of Events No. 2,« Belgrade, June 14, 2004.

59 »Kuda ide naša škola,« *Vreme*, no. 715, September 16, 2004. http://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=391022.

The Umbrella 2 Law annulled practically all the structural changes in the educational system and, with a few exceptions, essentially put the system back where it had been. The areas most affected were the planned division of labor through a distribution of competences to different institutions, and the structure of the curriculum. The structural changes regarding the curricula (the curriculum conceived as a general framework targeting specific outcomes and objectives, more flexible curricula, and relative freedom for schools to partially construct their own curricula) were reversed. Not only were the traditional school programs reinstated, but the new ministry also prescribed an even greater number of curricular contents as mandatory.[60] Changes were also introduced to the organization, responsibilities, and jurisdictions of the independent professional organizations formed by the previous ministry. The reform had envisioned the creation of seven independent centers. The new ministry retained two. The State Institution for the Evaluation of Quality in Education (*Zavod za vrednovanje kvaliteta obrazovanje i vaspitanje*) was retained due mostly to the pressure of the World Bank, which had been the main sponsor of the project. The second institution, the State Institution for the Improvement of Education (*Zavod za unapredivanje obrazovanje i vaspitanje*), basically consisted of the remaining six institutions but with a considerably different mission and mandate. The fact that the centers were still to carry the appellation of »*zavod*« rather than »center« is indicative of the attitude of the ministry and characteristic of a philosophy of nondirective users. Finally, the National Educational Council (NEC) was formed as an autonomous professional body in charge of all major educational policy decisions. The fate of these institutions will be discussed in more detail later on.

Politics explain why such an ambitious and elaborate modernization attempt should end so ungracefully. Also demonstrated is the fragility and dependency of the reform on the political context: »The future of the reform was closely connected to the political constellation Koštunica-Đinđić. They represented two diametrically different philosophies on how to go about constructing future Serbia. It could be framed in terms of the dilemma continuity-discontinuity. Đinđić wanted the year 2000 to be the ›year zero,‹ a complete break with the past and a swift move forward. Koštunica wanted continuity, to keep the distribution of power as it was, to change things slowly and minimally. The people from the previous regime saw Koštunica as hope, as a chance to survive.… Đinđić wanted a proactive and fast break with the past, Koštunica wanted a more traditional passage to democracy, leaning strongly on traditional and conservative elements, not dismantling completely the previous condition.… After Đinđić's

60 Ivan Ivić, *Education Reforms in the Republic of Serbia,* 25.

assassination the reform was left without political backing and it was dismantled because Koštunica wanted to keep continuity with the previous system.«[61]

The reformers had had propitious conditions from the start. Political changes had come about as the result of the efforts by a galvanized citizenry and of the country's positive atmosphere. The climate immediately after 2000 was conducive to change. When the reform started, the political momentum was such that there was an authentic quest for real changes.[62] Considered retrospectively, only eight years later, what remains of this euphoria and explosion of positive energy is more than melancholic. How different the current climate is and how crucial the ideological orientation that elites give to a society is attested once more: »The situation now is very different from the spirit at the turn of the century. If one were to make a radical reform now, it would need to be marketed and communicated as a ›continuation of our good traditions.‹ It would be necessary to stress gradual changes, for a holistic systemic reform taken in one step, such as the previous one, would no longer be possible. It was a very different time before Đinđić's assassination. Even if you made a small ›surface‹ change then, people wanted to think of it as a radical break with the Miloševic era. That's why it seems that the death of Đinđić was the main reason why the reform stopped.«[63] The change of government brought along a renewed politicization of education. It also substantially weakened the international connections and networks that had, through a great investment of time and effort, so far been established. Training seminars for history teachers sponsored by the Council of Europe, for example, were discontinued: »The state of education exhibits a great dependency on the political situation. When the government changed, everything stopped, was taken back. The main tenet was: we need no interference; you will not teach us Serbian history. The last seminar took place in May 2004. There is no continuity. Everything falls into disarray as soon as the personnel changes.«[64]

There is little doubt that political expediency was the main factor that arrested the reform. Beyond this obvious fact, however, a series of additional components played a role in determining the receptivity, or lack thereof, for the proposed design. The reform targeted the educational system as a whole and, as such, had to face strains and challenges that often posed limits to the openness of the system. One such crucial factor was the time- and timing-components of the reform. Time considerations had already informed the reform philosophy of the

61 Interview with Aleksander Baucal, July 30, 2008.

62 See also Sabine Rutar, »Bildungsreform in der Republik Serbien,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 24, no. 3 (2002): 315 – 321.

63 Interview with Aleksander Baucal, July 30, 2008.

64 Interview with Marko Šuica, Historian: Department of History, University of Belgrade, recorded December 15, 2006 in Belgrade.

main actors. As was the case in most Central-East European countries, the transition was viewed as a unique opportunity to catch up by immediately implementing the know-how developed and tested in other countries.[65] For the Serbian reformers the wish to accelerate reform was based on the well-founded desire to make up for lost time. Indeed, Serbia entered the arena of global educational development with a double disadvantage. Other Central-East European countries such as Poland, Hungary, or the Czech Republic had already gone through an initial reform. By the late 1990 s they were developing a »second generation« of strategies, which were the result of a decade-long learning process. The new policy formulations were based on partial reconsiderations and improvements of previous strategies and on a much better understanding of these kinds of processes.[66] Serbia already lagged a decade behind. As pointedly phrased by the chief responsible for the reform: »It was as if we had made a strategic decision at the very beginning: the empty space that stood between Serbia and a normal state should be crossed as swiftly as possible. [That] is, on the run. With this we wanted to shorten the time in which the country is exposed to dangers, surprises of all sorts, [the condition of a void].«[67] The reform was driven by the will to compensate for lost time. On the way, it was confronted with the pragmatic sequences of real time in changing conditions. Education is a human system involving multiple stakeholders in manifold interdependent and complex relationships to one another. »Transition« and reform demand changes on the part of all constituent components of a system. »The change is for each group and each individual in it, actually a human change, a forgoing of some accustomed habits, of some parts of the routine, a learning of new forms of behavior and partly reorganization of an automated way of thought. Such a change takes place in real time, it can not be condensed or speeded up, and it can neither be uniformed, since like all children, all other persons in this complicated system learn at their own pace and in their own way.«[68] The reformers were thus faced with the strenuous act of having to condense that which under »normal« conditions would be sequential, with concurrent activity. Conceptualizing and operationalizing the reform was taking place simultaneously with the task of capacity building, that is, at the same time as instructing people how to execute the new tasks. A consequence of the above was the development of different speeds within the reform. While certain regional authorities were

65 See: Petér Radó, Transition in Education, 11.
66 Ibid., 39.
67 MoES, Introduction to *Quality Education for All* (2004), 6.
68 Ibid., 20 – 21.

quick in implementing changes, others seemed less capable of catching up with the reform's pace and dynamism.[69]

Influencing an organism to the point that it understands and accepts a new message also requires time. Instructive are the reflections of the minister of education himself on this issue, not least because his deliberations are also illustrative of his way of thinking: »When you are up close with a great system (over one hundred thousand people work in education), your first task is to grasp the proportions of [its] greatness, to understand that you are communicating with something that is the largest thing in Serbia, in addition to healthcare. This fact alone shapes the resistance of the system to external stimuli, [explains] the weaker reflexes, the slower response, as with all [bulky entities]. It even borders [on] inertia and phlegm. Touching the system is transmitted in waves through its mass, so that you find yourself frequently surprised by the time it requires. There is a consequence: no matter how well you organize your own communication channel…even using state-of-the-art technology, you must not assume that a prompt reaction will follow an impulse. The transfer of the motivation signal is in itself a process that takes time. This becomes understandable when you see the small towns, villages and hamlets where schools or their units are located;…with its slowness and inertia, the system resists innovations, [no matter whether] they [are] positive or negative from the point of view of development. The system fears the errors of those governing it. On the one hand, this protects it from negative influences, from degradation and degeneration, but on the other, unfortunately, it also slows down its own development even when it is [would be] positive, in the historical sense. These are the two sides of the coin, which you face as soon as you accept the coin. You must accommodate yourself to them and accept them as given.«[70] The problem with the transmission of the message was twofold. Sometimes it took more time than initially expected until the message reached the recipients. Sometimes the message was purposely distorted on the way so that additional communicating skills were required in order to repair the damage inflicted.

Benevolent critics of the reform have observed that the time schedule, particularly the implementation phase, was tight and insufficiently thought out. Changes in educational policy were taking place in a highly unstable political context, characterized by many and often opposing tendencies. Being aware of the intricacies of the context, the reformers should have planned correspondingly. According to Ivan Ivić, there was a »striking imbalance between the long-

69 Gabor Halasz, *Educational Reform and Regional Level Educational Administration in Serbia*, 23 ff.

70 MoES, Introduction to *Quality Education for All* (2004), 7 – 8.

term targets and realistic practical solutions.«[71] The reformers consumed the greatest part of their three-year mandate in consultations and the conceptualization of the reform; as a result, the implementation phase started late, in the last six months of their mandate. When they started transferring their ideas into tangible actions (passing the appropriate legislation, creating the independent professional institutions, implementing the new curricula, etc.), they ran out of time. The reforms never had enough time to take root and were thus easily eradicated or pushed aside.[72] In contrast to the conceptualization phase, which was strongly based on a philosophy of mass participation, the implementation phase was short and inadequately assessed in terms of both the existing capacities to carry it out and what its potential outcomes would be. Though constant reflection concerning possible obstacles had characterized the initial phase, the implementation phase most likely had a shock effect on the structure. Running out of time, the reformers had no choice but to opt for swift action, which generated confusion, uncertainty, and probably resistance, even among initial supporters. The implementation of Umbrella 1 Law started speedily, without providing schools sufficient time to prepare. The existing laws on primary and secondary education as well as on textbooks were still in effect, containing clauses that were partially in contradiction with the new law.[73]

Resistance to change, nevertheless, had deeper roots. The reform cast doubt on popular certainties about the nature and quality of the educational system and shook up the »habitus« of many of its practitioners. People's beliefs about the content and purpose of education had an impact on their attitude toward change. From its inception, the reform was confronted with implicit theories of education, that is, generic beliefs about education that have developed through time and that shape value judgments about education. »In…time[s] of transition and reform, such implicit theories can easily come to [the] surface and shape discourse, affect discussions and debates, sometimes even more strongly than scientific knowledge. Consultation processes are not exempt from this form of influence, and the openness of the education system bears the permanent risk of the traps implicit [in] education[al] theories.«[74] Due to the above and other reasons, the process of opening up the system is also a source of conflicts, arguments, and continuing struggle, and carries the burden of establishing consensus, especially if consensus has to be established anew on each issue and each level of the educational policy. Reflecting retrospectively on the whole process, G. Knežević identifies two mechanisms that can be helpful in assisting a

71 Ivan Ivić, *Education Reforms in the Republic of Serbia,* 27.
72 Ibid., 26.
73 Ibid., 18.
74 MoES, *Quality Education for All* (2004), 20.

process of change: The first is the existence of an information system necessary for making valid and fact-based (rather than assumptive or impression-based) decisions. The second is the building of human resources with a good understanding of all significant educational matters.[75] If inherent beliefs on the nature and quality of education implicitly shaped the public discourse, the philosophy of practice advocated by the reform signaled an explicit break with past practices: »There was a clash between the built-in culture of the reform and the culture existing in schools. The reform was not suited to the cultural environment of Serbia, it asked for its change. Dominant culture in schools was authoritarian and hierarchical (students must obey the teacher; teachers the school principal; the school principal the guy above him; etc.), and the reform demanded that, for example, the teachers become more autonomous and professional, which at the same time, meant to become accountable. This demand provoked fear and resistance to reform.«[76] Some of the new measures were based on a mental framework completely different from that, which had existed. Understanding the new philosophy was indispensable to accepting the practical changes it brought along. One such example was the introduction of a new system of grading prepared by the center for evaluation. The new system would replace the traditional grading system of numerical marks with a system of assessment based on standards. Teachers would have to fathom the learning standards of their subject in order to evaluate the degree to which their pupils had achieved those standards in their academic performance. Given the fact that traditional grading methods are deeply rooted in Serbia, the change of attitudes required by, and the consequent success of, such a measure was in any case bound to be very slow and difficult.[77]

Therefore, before establishing and institutionalizing change, »the crucial factor is awareness and interest building. In other words, teachers and other actors in education need to become aware of the need for change, to find their own interest for change. Only then should a new model of practice be introduced and implemented, and the necessary support provided for the actors. Without awareness and interest building, teachers are alienated and they treat new models of practice as something that endangers them.«[78] Summing up the lessons that are to be learned from this reform experience: »In order to make a reform succeed, (1) it is indispensable to create a good and reasonable schedule and to plan accordingly; (2) one has to provide the key actors (for example, the teachers) with incentives to get them really involved in the process of change;

75 Ibid, 21.
76 Interview with Aleksander Baucal, July 30, 2008.
77 Ivan Ivić, *Education Reform in the Republic of Serbia*, 52.
78 Interview Aleksander Baucal, December 20, 2006.

and (3) it is important to support them in trying out and experimenting with new practices.«[79]

For some educational experts the problem lay rather with the fact that the reform design neglected to building upon the existing strengths of the system. Critics have pointed out that the reform was geared more toward a desired end result, and less toward stimulating the immanent capacities of the system for change. »Just like the educational reforms in many other countries in transition in this region (except Slovenia, perhaps), the reform was obviously conceptualized in the spirit of [the] etic rather than [the] emic approach.«[80] This means that the reform, rather than following the inner logic of the system itself, its characteristics and potentials, focusing on spontaneous growth of changes, and using the strengths within the system (an emic approach), operated the other way around, that is, by introducing changes that fit some theoretical model (an etic approach). This latter approach takes an exterior model as a starting point and imposes changes upon the system. In plain terms, the solutions were conceptualized theoretically and then tried out within the system.[81] The absence of a feasibility study has been underscored by both sides, adherents and critics, as a serious omission. »The reforms moved too fast, yet all things need to mature. That's why brilliant ideas didn't succeed. The ministry set new standards. It was also under pressure, since it needed to demonstrate positive results to the international donors. There was also a need to conduct a feasibility study, that is, what can be done, who will be affected, and how. The stakeholders grew afraid. However, there were also social problems, like the unemployed teachers. When you engage in an undertaking like this, you need to treat it not just as a reform but also as a system. Toilets first!!! You also need to calculate the side effects.«[82]

Though the ministry went to great pains to communicate its intentions to the public, the logic behind certain measures was not sufficiently explained. Missing was, for example, an adequate explanation concerning the necessity to change the structure of the educational system. This was the case with the additional year of compulsory primary education (nine instead of eight) and the simultaneous reduction of secondary education from four years to three. »The possible consequences (financial, organizational, personnel-related) of such major changes were never thought of. What would happen with the surplus of teachers in high schools when they become three-year programs (before they [were] four-years)? How do we handle the deficit of teachers in primary education when [it is extended] another year? The surplus or shortage of physical space in schools?

79 Interview Aleksander Baucal, December 20, 2006.
80 Ivan Ivić, *Education Reforms in the Republic of Serbia,* 17.
81 Ibid.
82 Interview with Vida Grahovac, Educational Psychology Specialist, recorded December 19, 2006 in Belgrade.

The possible increase in drop-out rates in primary education caused by the extension of compulsory education and the introduction of more demanding general curricula? The problems that would befall the rural elementary schools?«[83] The curricular reform also brought along changes, which required more preparation and time to be properly digested. For example, a second foreign language was introduced as early as the first grade, without serious prior assessment of the capacities of schools to respond to such a demand. And in place of the separate courses for various scientific disciplines (physics, biology, chemistry), a new general science course was introduced at the second primary school cycle, without taking into account the needs of teachers forced to suddenly switch to this new subject.[84]

It has been argued that greater sustainability for the reforms might have been achieved through the immediate implementation of measures of a more strategic nature. In a certain way, this objection relates back to the unstable political context and the preventive measures that could possibly counterbalance the uncertainties related to the contextual fluidity. The critique concerns a series of short-term measures that could have ensured even greater public backing for the reformers' agenda. One possibility would have been the definition of an educational policy that skillfully combined the long-term developmental plan with concrete, practical measures that would offer immediate visible results without necessarily contradicting the long-term goals; for example, the instantaneous implementation of the teachers' career ladder, linked to a salary increase. Though this was envisioned as a measure in the reform package, it was not skillfully used as an enticement for the ministry's reform program. In addition, measures could have been introduced that provided for evident results, such as the immediate amelioration of the schools' ailing infrastructure, the procurement of new books for school libraries, and the supplying of schools with equipment and teaching aids. A reward system for teachers who immediately introduced new approaches in their classrooms would have provided extra motivation.[85] A more pragmatic attitude toward the reform would probably have dictated a splitting of the reform package into sensible parts, that is, a separation of sensitive political issues, such as the curricula, from politically and nationally more neutral ones, such as didactical issues, teaching and evaluation methods, the creation of child-friendly schools, etc. Such a division of tasks would have facilitated the acceptance of certain measures and provided for the sustainability of politically neutral measures, precisely because they were politically neutral.[86]

83 Ivan Ivić, *Education Reforms in the Republic of Serbia*, 20.
84 Ibid.
85 Ibid., 28.
86 Ibid., 28.

Critics have also pointed to the fact that the ministry should have reached out for an even greater coalition of allies, by including, for example, educational institutions that operated independently and engaging in an expert dialogue with them. By the same token, a broad democratic debate on politically sensitive issues with the participation of more nonaligned experts should have been encouraged. On the one hand, such a strategic approach would have meant facing up to more criticism from the side of independent educational institutions; on the other, however, this same pool of expertise could have served as a buffer zone to a political counterattack.[87] Though multiple stakeholders were included in the consultations, one of the most effective ways of emancipating an educational policy »is the opening of the policy making field to external interests and views at all levels of the system. It means the involvement of organized interest groups or individuals who have a stake in education, the building of an *internal ›agora' of professional discourse* [emphasis mine] within the sector and open public debate in general.«[88] What happened in the case of Serbia is a well-known cyclical pattern. The reform government legislated changes that were immediately annulled by the opposition party that followed in government through counter-legislation. By marking the reform as a political program of dubious and unwanted »Europeanization,« rather than a necessary policy of modernization, the opposition brought down the reform with a counter populist program celebrating the superiority of indigenous traditions.

Finally, with a view toward sustainability, small-scale measures like small pockets of reform with a self-perpetuating dynamic could have been encouraged instead of opting only for the implementation of the big reform design; for example, a network of schools independently implementing some of the changes, or a network of individuals invested in the process, such as individual teachers or experts or people who had their own reasons to organize among themselves, could have created receptacles of change in various regions. Such mechanisms would be more likely to assure the sustainability of measures even after the mandate of the ministry was terminated.[89] Furthermore, reservations have been voiced as to the financial capacity of the country to correspond to such an ambitious reform plan. Envisioning the creation of seven additional centers was institutionally meaningful, as was the division of labor and the professionalization that came along with them. Whether they would have been affordable for the state budget, however, is questionable.[90] In fact, the state budget had no supplementary financial sources to support the educational re-

87 Ibid., 28.
88 Petér Radó, *Transition in Education*, 57.
89 Ivan Ivić, *Education Reform in the Republic of Serbia*, 28.
90 Interview with Vida Grahovac, December 19, 2006.

form. The percent of GDP allocated to education during the period was even lower than before; in 1997 it was 4.5 percent, in 1998 – 3.79 percent, in 2002 – 3.2 percent, and in 2003 – 3.4 percent. The reform was thus heavily dependent upon external financial help.[91] What its fate would have been once international support ebbed is open to debate. Finally, in certain domains the educational reform outpaced that of the state administration itself. The reform envisaged a thorough decentralization, when such an arrangement did not correspond to the functional organization of the state. This does not necessarily imply that the measure was wrong. On the contrary, similar decentralization measures have been planned or are being currently implemented in many Southeast European countries.[92] As such, the measure reflected the spirit of its times, had serious practical and organizational advantages, and testifies to the farsightedness of the reformers. It was nevertheless ahead of and in contradiction with the existing administrative realities. Teacher training, for example, was to be financed by the municipalities, yet they often lacked the means to put the measure into practice.

As is often the case when moving from programmatic intentions to concrete practice, at times the implementation phase included unpredictable incidents and dissatisfactory outcomes. Such was the case with the school development plans, which were based on the initiative of the local schools themselves. The schools were given the opportunity to determine their own improvement plans and then apply to the ministry for a relevant grant. The problem was the absence of evaluation procedures. Thus, without any monitoring mechanisms in place, support was given in all cases. »The idea as such was very good, but its implementation did not include some important mechanisms.«[93] Putting decentralization measures into practice also faced shortcomings. According to the new regulations, the ministry no longer nominated school principals. Rather, the ministry had only the jurisdiction to approve the choice made by the school boards, which in the new scheme comprised three school representatives, three parents, and three community representatives. In practice, however, the political parties in charge of local municipalities often appointed the majority of school board members from their echelons, inhibiting de facto a real depoliticization and democratization of the system, as targeted by the initial measures.[94]

Despite the fact that the subsequent ministry cancelled out the greatest part of the reform efforts, three institutions were retained. The blueprint for the creation of the National Educational Council (*nationalni prosvetni savet*) had already

91 Ivan Ivić, *Education Reform in the Republic of Serbia*, 19.

92 See: Alexandru Crisan, »Education Policy in South East Europe: Current Development and Prospects,« www.edupolicy.net/explorer/streamer.php?dwn=144.

93 Interview with Aleksander Baucal, Psychologist: Department of Psychology, University of Belgrade, recorded March 3, 2007 in Belgrade.

94 Ivan Ivić, *Education Reform in the Republic of Serbia,* 19 ff.

formed part of the reform agenda. The idea grew out of the already existing Educational Reform Council, envisioning its transformation into a new body, though the National Educational Council (NEC) was to be a truly upgraded independent institution, in certain respects even more powerful than the Ministry of Education. The aspirations of that vision were retained even after the change of ministry; in practice, however, the NEC barely fulfills the manifold tasks ascribed to it. On paper, the National Education Council is an independent institution with the mandate to determine the direction of development and the improvement of quality in preschool, elementary, and high school education. It participates in the legislative process, develops educational curricula and syllabi, and classifies educational standards according to levels and classes. Furthermore, it defines the standards of qualification, professional improvement, and licensing of teachers, qualified personnel, and directors, and the accreditation of institutions, etc. It is excluded from the regulation of higher education, which is the task of Council for Higher Education (*Savet za visoko obrazovanje*). The National Educational Council consists of forty-two members. They are elected by the Serbian Parliament according to the delegation principle and based on candidate lists supplied by professional institutions and societies, the university, the communities of the secondary schools and gymnasiums, the church, the various religious communities, the councils of the national minorities, the syndicates and the national organizations of labor. The mandate of its members lasts six years altogether, whereby every three years, half of its delegates change and are replaced by a newly elected team. It also consists of expert teams (five to six people) charged with specialized tasks. The council is expected to report at least once a year to the Parliament on the conditions in education.

The idea behind the initial draft was to minimize the influence of politics on education. The intention was to give the council a mandate long enough – beyond the life span of a government – to guarantee continuity in policy, or in other words, to minimize the risk that a change of government would affect the course of education. »The NEC was initially supposed to consist of less than twenty experts. Now it consists of forty-two people.… The board is too big. Initially it was also meant to be an independent institution stronger than the ministry. It would make all-important decisions on curricula, strategic development, etc. The idea was to minimize the influence of politics on education. Now all efforts are directed toward centralization again. Competences are directed back to the ministry. There are efforts to centralize the power of the ministry.«[95] Though its competences are legally defined, up to this point, the NEC has barely started its work. Party politics appear to play no insignificant role in the occupation of positions. »They are predominantly trying to control

95 Interview with Vida Grahovac, December 19, 2006.

the NEC through the budget. It has no means at its disposal,«[96] while its board members are apparently not always people whose experience is related to education.[97]

The fate of the other two institutions that survived governmental change is not significantly different. Both the State Institution for the Improvement of Education as well as the State Institution for the Evaluation of Quality in Education are usually manned by different party »friends,« who are rewarded with positions based on their political connections rather than on considerations related to their qualifications. Moreover, both institutions are financially completely dependent upon the ministry. Their plans have to be approved by the ministry first, before being forwarded to the government. Despite all these setbacks, experts have appealed to the two institutions to take up their roles more seriously. The institutions already exist, have determined competences, and are staffed. A limited attempt to build up the existing human resources through training seminars has also been observed. »There is a need for the ministry take a proactive attitude toward these institutions and demand input from them.«[98] The political character of institutions and the lack of cooperation among them provides for the enduring systemic deficit in education.

Apparently, what survived of the reform was largely due to relations and obligations toward international organizations, either in the form of contracts, donations, or credits. Such was the case with the development of standards, a World Bank contract that terminated in 2006; the project on the self-evaluation of schools, national assessment, and the development of standards, all somehow still relevant, if on the backburner; the development of professional criteria for teachers due to a contract with and a donation from the Swiss Agency for Development; and the reform of vocational training through a CARDS and GTZ contract in 2002.[99] The evaluation of the contribution of international actors to the reform process is altogether positive. From the local perspective there were minor issues that at times resulted in dissonance between the proposals by international experts and the local conditions. One such issue concerns the priorities. International organizations are primarily interested in providing for the technical skills and seeing the materialization of a project. They pay insufficient attention to how to make the project fit meaningfully into the local context: »Most international organizations lay the emphasis on capacity building, but engage little in making it sensible for society. Capacity building is

96 Interview with Ana Pešikan, Psychologist: Institute of Psychology, University of Belgrade, recorded December 14, 2006 in Belgrade.

97 Interview with Natalija Panić, Executive Manager of the Textbook Department at the Publishing House »Kreatvni Centar,« recorded December 18, 2006 in Belgrade.

98 Interview with Aleksander Baucal, July 30, 2008.

99 Interview with Vida Grahovac, December 19, 2006.

very important because without capacity you can do nothing, but if you do not understand the meaning of capacity you will neither learn nor use it.«[100] At times international proposals were inappropriate for the local conditions: »The international actors played a predominantly positive role. Some of their proposals, however, were not suitable for the local conditions. For example, regarding the decentralization of education and the autonomy of schools. How do you go about executing this when there is as yet no decentralization of the state? Another example was the suggestion of the Canadian Agency for Development, which supported the Active Learning Project in Serbia. It offered to bring its retired teachers to teach.… Or the Project of the Finnish government, aimed at a reform of the basic education for teachers. It was too early, the university resisted strongly. It is impossible to go against the law. In the framework of international cooperation you need to respect the local conditions or local legislation. You have no mandate to undertake a reform of the university.«[101] Regarding international engagement in education in relation to the NGO sector, the estimation is that »international intervention had a positive effect. It did not change things, but there was constant pressure to move things. It was a great help for teachers, because it connected them to the world and gave them a perspective. On the other hand, after the initial phase, one often got the feeling that international trainers simply came in order to receive their fee. It was the same people and they used the same materials.«[102]

The reform also touched upon the crucial topic of textbook production and accreditation. The changes aimed, on the one hand, at ending the monopoly of the state publishing house and pluralizing the production of textbooks and, on the other, at ameliorating the quality of textbooks by defining qualitative standards and procedures for the accreditation of textbooks. Unfortunately little has changed in this area. In the 1993 Law on Textbooks there is a provision for only one publisher, and the state publishing house has largely retained its privileged position. Choosing among various textbooks is only possible for the first four grades of primary school (that is, until the fifth grade) and for preschool education. The most problematic issues remain the general absence of rules concerning textbook standards and the process of accreditation. Due to the lack of standardized criteria, different publishing houses apply different benchmarks, whereby they often rely on their own opinion or house expertise. The same goes for the process of accreditation of textbooks. In the first place, there is no definition of what is expected of textbooks. In the second, there is no

100 Interview with Aleksander Baucal, December 20, 2006.
101 Interview with Vida Grahovac, December 19, 2006.
102 Interview with Dubravka Stojanović, Historian: Department of History, University of Belgrade, recorded December 18, 2006 in Belgrade.

definition or regulation of accreditation procedures. The greatest problem was and remains arbitrariness: »For example, textbooks that failed the evaluation of the department of psychology managed to pass through the accreditation procedure of the ministry. The same goes for additional materials. It is unclear if schools are allowed to use them or not. It usually depends on the choice of individuals. So there is arbitrariness on all levels, and nobody possesses the authority to define the appropriate procedures.« Often much too much depends on the will of the minister of education, that is, »what will move and will not.«[103] There is, however, »a need to develop national standards in order to guarantee a minimum of quality. It is also an illusion to believe that the liberalization of the market will automatically lead to an amelioration of quality if no quality standards or criteria are developed simultaneously.«[104]

The legal framework does not help provide for a real separation of interests, defining, for example, what should be the competence fields of the state, and what of the private publishing houses. The textbooks for minority education provide a good example of the need to regulate interests. »On the one hand, the production of textbooks for minorities does not bring economic profit; on the other, it does not make sense to have a choice of twenty textbooks for such a small contingent of the population.«[105] In the case of minority education it would be wiser if the task were taken up by the state publishing house. The greatest problem, however, is the conflict of interests: »There is not enough separation between the ministry, the ministerial experts, private and public publishing houses. In Croatia, for example, the conflict of interests is resolved legally. If somebody is a ministry official, the same person cannot be a textbook author or be member of an independent board; or again, if one is part of an accreditation committee, one cannot simultaneously be a textbook author. In Serbia, deputy ministers are authors of textbooks.«[106] At the same time, the ministry is not willing to lend support to the private publishing houses. Their attitude is that »textbooks make money.«[107] The antagonism, however, between the state publishing house and exterior actors, such as private publishing houses or local NGOs, is not limited to the financial issue. The additional educational materials produced by the CDRSEE[108] were confronted with enmity from the very beginning, and there was pressure from the side of the state publishers to drop the project. Their attitude is well known by now: »History is a national discipline.

103 Interview with Natalija Panić, December 18, 2006.
104 Interview with Ana Pešikan, December 14, 2006.
105 Interview with Natalija Panić, December 18, 2006.
106 Interview with Natalija Panić, December 18, 2006.
107 Interview with Natalija Panić, December 18, 2006.
108 See »Slow Burning: History Textbooks in Serbia, 1993–2008,« by D. Stojanović, in this volume.

We need our faith; we cannot have unreliable people meddling with our history. We have to protect the mission.«[109] All this comes as no surprise considering that the director of the state publishing house is himself a prominent historian, defends a very specific view on Serbian history, and has written numerable history textbooks currently used in Serbian schools. Concerning the choice of textbooks for the grades where liberalization has been introduced: »The choice of textbooks lies with the teachers. However, there have been cases in which pressure has been put on schools or favors have been exchanged in order that schools opt for state publishing house.«[110] According to the Umbrella 1 Law, the accreditation of textbooks was to be the responsibility of the Center for Curricula and Textbooks. »Now the ministry has prepared a commission that will give its expertise. But it is ultimately a political decision. The minister signs off on it. Accreditation ultimately proceeds according to a political decision and not an expert one.« The connection, apparently, is even deeper: »The director of the state publishing house and the minister come from the same political party and have an interest in continuing the monopoly.«[111]

For the moment, education in Serbia has been thoroughly sidetracked. Education is understood solely in terms of the expenditure, and not as an investment in the country's future. The funds allocated to education reached a definite low in 2007: under 3 percent of the GNP.[112] Perhaps even more detrimental is the fact that the Ministry of Education is a »bargain« ministry. The ministerial post is customarily allocated as a result of splitting the spoils of political power, rather than by considerations of competence. Most ministers subsequent to the reform government of 2001–2003 have been partisans of one and the same party. Common amongst them is a nationalist orientation and a concomitant conservative stance toward change. Analogous is also the direction in which they have taken the educational system. Slobodan Vuksanović (2005–2007) minimized educational problems in Serbia by arguing that »our educational system is still one of the best in the world,«[113] while his successor, Budimir Lončar, a few months after becoming minister of education, announced his vision as »the necessity of adopting a strategy of education based on ›the national,‹ spiritual roots, and the long educational tradition in Serbia.« Indeed, »there was almost no public appearance where Lončar did not speak about Kosovo.«[114] Apparently, on the occasion of the »Kosovo is Serbia« rally, which took place as a protest

109 Interview with Dubravka Stojanović, December 18, 2006.
110 Interview with Natalija Panić, December 18, 2006.
111 Interview with Vida Grahovac, December 19, 2006.
112 Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, *Self-Isolation: The Reality and the Goal, Annual Report: Serbia 2007* (Belgrade: Zagorac, 2008), 339.
113 Ibid., 340
114 Ibid., 341

action to the self-proclamation of Kosovo's independence, Lončar ordered all schools in Serbia to cancel class and close their doors.[115] The educational system is thus brought to a stalemate by politically induced inertia, while the church is increasingly encouraged to play a more active role in education. Religious education was introduced as an elective subject during the reforms.[116] Its attendance has been growing steadily ever since. An estimated 56 percent of the pupils opt for religious education over civic education, which is the second elective subject but has been programmatically discouraged. Despite the separation of church and state, Minister Lončar, celebrated the fact that »every year we have a growing number of students opting for religious education, which emphasizes the obligation of the state to instigate the religious renewal of our entire state, especially in church life.«[117] From the initial strategic targets of the reform, small enclaves remain. Apparently, the Parliament endorsed the strategy for vocational training development with the goal of upgrading and modernizing the VET programs,[118] while the concept of defining standards of knowledge for certain academic areas is still being considered for primary education.[119] At the same time diachronic problems persist: the educational system is undersourced[120] and most importantly, it does not function as a system guaranteeing success through systematic instruments, but often through a random combination of circumstances. Quite a bit still depends on the will and qualifications of individual teachers, while the social background of children continues to play a significant role in academic performance.[121] Finally, while enrolment for primary and secondary education is at a satisfactory level, enrolment in pre-school institutions is low and serious problems persist when it comes to the completion of primary education. Particularly affected are children with disabilities, children from a socially underprivileged background and rural areas, as well as children of the ethnic minorities.[122]

It is perhaps no coincidence that most of the languages of the region, Serbian included, do not provide for a separate word designating »policy.« Politics and policy are usually expressed through the use of the same noun. Indeed, this could

115 Ibid., 342.
116 On the introduction of religion in Serbian schools see: Milan Vukomanovic, »Religious Education in Serbia,« in *Clio in the Balkans. The Politics of History Education*, ed. Christina Koulouri (Thessalonica: CDRSEE, 2002), 313–319; see also Bojan Aleksov, »Religious Education in Serbia« *Religion, State and Society* 32, no. 4 (2004): 341–363.
117 Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, *Self-Isolation: The Reality and the Goal, Annual Report: Serbia 2007*, 347.
118 Ivan Ivić, *Education Reform in the Republic of Serbia*, 23.
119 Ibid., 21.
120 Ibid., 66.
121 Ibid., 57.
122 Ibid., 46

be cited as a »powerful indicator of the lacking distinction between action aiming at capturing or influencing power and action aiming at changing or influencing the behavior of individuals or institutions.«[123] This is not meant to imply that educational matters are not political matters. On the contrary, whether an educational system is socially sensitive and inclusive, whether it provides for equity and fair chances, whether it makes special provisions for the weaker segments of a society, whether it allows for diverse views and dialogue, etc. – all these are seminal political issues. None of these, however, were not at stake in the Serbian case. The reform represented a modernization attempt, targeting »quality education for all.« Had it been given the chance to develop its potential fully, and had it been granted the time to solidify and improve based on lessons learned in the process, an important step toward the professionalization of the educational sector would have been achieved. The deliberate politicization of education thus is not a discussion on the substance of education. On the contrary, it is the negation of a fully developed professional dialogue on education. More often than not, the politicization of education is a populist ploy meant to extract immediate political capital. Populism, however, is usually no temporary phenomenon and, once unleashed, proves difficult to restrain. In the realm of politics, it means educating the masses in a specific kind of political behavior, while in the realm of education, the price to be paid is the handicapping of schoolchildren for generations. In the prophetic words of G. Knesevic: »We at the ministry needed a long time to win the trust of the system, to animate it, move it, and direct its motion. Today, it is moving. Any sudden halt in this movement, even a sudden change of direction, will provoke the effect of a morose hedgehog. Even if the system listens to the new signal, which is beyond doubt, it will add to its memory another negative experience, and a new start of movement will be even more difficult, slow and painful. So much for the warning.«[124]

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123 Petér Radó, *Transition in Education*, 35.

124 MoES, Introduction to *Quality Education for All* (2004), 8.

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Denisa Kostovicova

The Albanian Parallel Education System and Its Aftermath: Segregation, Identity, and Governance

The United Nations Security Council Resolution adopted on 10 June 1999 ended the Serbian repression in Kosovo and paved the way for an international administration of the territory. Even though the resolution failed to usher in a final settlement for the status of the disputed province, it did create a rationale for the ending of the Albanian parallel system in Kosovo, which was the hallmark of the Albanian resistance to Serb rule in Kosovo in the 1990 s. The so-called Albanian parallel state included »parallel education« at all levels: primary, secondary, and university education. Although the Albanians returned, in 1999, to the offices, classrooms, and workplaces from which they had been expelled nearly a decade before, this was not a straightforward return to the status quo ante. The years of the parallel system created a multifaceted legacy to be reckoned with by all parties concerned: Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs, as well as the international community that began to administer Kosovo after the NATO intervention. This paper examines the aftermath of the Albanian parallel system, specifically as it concerns the legacy that the 1990 s bestowed on efforts in the area of education in the post-1999 period. The examination of key features determining this legacy is divided into three sections: segregation, identity, and governance. The paper first contextualizes the parallel system in general, and then goes on to examine key features of the Albanian-language educational system in 1990 s Kosovo. It concludes by reflecting on the implications that parallel education has had for reformers since 1999.

The Albanian parallel state or society?

Forced suppression of Kosovo's political autonomy by Serbia in 1989 was followed by abolition of Albanian rights in all spheres of life. A tide of dismissals of Albanians from their jobs in Kosovo's economy and public sector, including education, health care, culture, sports, and media – resulted in a jobless, humiliated, and repressed Albanian majority in the province. Albanians did not

accept the Serbian abolition of the political autonomy of Kosovo with resignation. On the contrary, they responded with action. Accordingly, the Serbian exclusion of the Albanians from the hitherto multiethnic educational system prompted Albanians to found the so-called parallel Albanian education system.[1]

In response to the abolition of autonomy, the Kosovo Albanians adopted a declaration of independence, which paved the way for the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo in September 1990 and the subsequent referendum on independence.[2] The overwhelming support for the independence of Kosovo was paralleled by the support for the Albanian national leader, Ibrahim Rugova. He was elected president in clandestine elections, and his Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK hereafter) spearheaded the Albanians' non-violent resistance.[3] Rugova's pacifist strategy was constructed around the building of the parallel Albanian state, in which education played a critical role. In fact, education was the only functioning, albeit imperfect, system of the Albanian parallel state. This bestowed significance on the education system in Kosovo, which exceeded its mission of enlightening the youth. As an embodiment of the Albanian state, it assumed national relevance. At the same time, being the only functioning segment of the state, it raised a question about the accuracy of speaking of a parallel state, when the discussion might more properly be framed as that of a parallel society.

Due to Serb repression, the Kosovars' republic in the 1990 s was an institutionally rump state. The government ministers had to seek refuge abroad, and the Serb police prevented the parliament from convening. Only Rugova's presidential office was working in Kosovo. The system survived thanks to the involvement of the Albanian diaspora. Tapping into the network of LDK charters abroad, the Kosovo Albanians established a centralized tax-collection system. A three percent contribution from the Kosovo Albanian diaspora provided the necessary funds for the rudimentary functioning of the Albanian parallel state at home.[4] It was used to finance a basic social network in Kosovo. It also paid for the

1 Denisa Kostovicova, »Parallel Worlds: Response of Kosovo Albanians to Loss of Autonomy in Serbia, 1989 – 1996,« Keele European Research Centre South East Europe Series, Research Paper 2, 1997.

2 It ought to be noted here that the Albanians initially sought the solution to Kosovo's status within Yugoslavia. Therefore, the »independence« being referred to was the independence from Serbia. Following the breakup of Yugoslavia, the independence declaration referred to the sovereignty of Kosovo. Although the declaration was not recognized, it provided the basis for the legal architecture around which the Albanian parallel state was built.

3 Howard Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo* (London: Pluto Press, 2000).

4 Paul Hockenos, *Homeland Calling: Exile Patriotism and the Balkan Wars* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 177 – 261. Albanians in Kosovo were also expected to pay their taxes. However, the contributions of jobless and impoverished Albanians in Kosovo, who themselves depended on the handouts from their family members abroad, were more a symbolic contribution to state functioning than a significant source of revenue.

Albanian satellite that beamed the news in Albanian, undermining the Serb-imposed information blockade on broadcasting in the Albanian language.[5]

The establishment of the parallel education system was part and parcel of the effort to create the Albanian parallel state in Kosovo. The key feature of the self-declared Albanian state was non-recognition of any jurisdiction of Serbia over it. This legal and symbolic separation from the Serbs was underwritten by a complete physical separation from the Serbs, despite the fact that the latter was also imposed by Serbia through a series of legal measures. The following paragraphs examine the aspects of physical, symbolic, and legal isolation of the Albanian education system, and the consequences it bestowed on the post-1999 system.

Within such an examination, it is critical to consider both the distinction and the ambiguity that arise when treating the parallel education system as either a parallel state or a parallel society. On the one hand, because of Albanians' aspiration to have a state, in which education was to all intents and purposes its only functioning segment, the education system captures potently the flaws that plagued the entire Albanian political system in the 1990 s. On the other hand, if approached in terms of civil society, the parallel Albanian education demonstrates powerfully the capacity of the Albanian society to organize a complex system from the grass roots. Yet, this begs the question how »civil« this society was, if by civil is meant an essentially tolerant and inclusive space. The Albanian parallel education system remained physically exclusive – albeit largely due to Serbian legal measures excluding Albanians from school premises. However, as illustrated by the changes in the teaching content in the Albanian textbooks, described below, it was also an exclusive system at a symbolic level. The changes in the schoolbooks were introduced on the Albanian initiative.

Segregation

Kosovo's tumultuous ethnic history has had a profound impact on the ethnic distribution of, or more specifically, the ethnic mixing and ethnic contact between, the Albanians and the Serbs inhabiting the area. Studies of the available data in the twentieth century point to the process of ethnic segmentation of the two groups. Thus Krstić argued that between 1961 and 1981, out of 1,445 settlements in Kosovo, 1,154 became ethnically homogeneous, with the population of one group often reaching close to 100 percent.[6] Nonetheless, the creeping

5 Denisa Kostovicova, »Parallel Worlds,« 36 – 48.

6 Branislav Krstić, *Kosovo izmedju istorijskog i etničkog prava [Kosovo Between the Historical and Ethnic Right]* (Beograd: Kuća Vid, 1994), 129 – 184.

residential segregation was decidedly offset by the Communist Party's policy of ethnic mixing and proportional representation on the ethnic basis through the application of the so-called ethnic key in all state institutions. The education sector was particularly tasked with forging cross-ethnic bonds, both by creating common spaces and through the educational content. The turnaround in policy occurred after the rise to power of Serbia's national leader Slobodan Milošević in the late 1980 s. In Kosovo, this led to the »nationalization« of the education system, resulting in the physical exclusion of Albanian students and staff from primary and secondary schools as well as from the university.

Serbs denied Albanian students access to schools and the university in response to the Albanians' refusal to give up the right to design the curriculum in Kosovo and the right to education in the Albanian language. By the end of 1991, Kosovo's primary and secondary schools no longer offered education in the Albanian language. The Albanian university students were also segregated in the dormitories, and then barred from faculty buildings.[7]

The process had started ominously, with the creation of »ethnically clean shifts« in mixed schools in the 1990 – 1991 school year. Serbian students had classes in the morning, and Albanian students in the afternoon. In the spring of 1990, following an alleged massive poisoning of Albanian pupils, facilitated by the recently instituted ethnic shifts, the Albanians argued that the Serbs used the incident to try to ethnically cleanse Kosovo. The Serbs denied the charges, describing them as a staged ploy aimed at drawing media attention to Kosovo. Increasingly, students of all ages and their teachers were being drawn into the bitter dispute over the status of the Kosovo province. Consequently, the battle over Kosovo – intimately experienced through the battle over education, whether it be a child's place at school or university or an adult's job as an educator or administrator – grew further entrenched, with positions on the future of Kosovo growing all the more heated and diametrically opposed.

It is through a common effort of the Albanian community and educators that rooms were found in private houses and education was organized in these rooms, as well as in cellars, shops, and the like. Donation of the educational space was considered a matter of patriotic duty. Albanians reinvented the entire education system in private houses, and thus »parallel« Albanian schooling emerged as a major center of Albanian »national« empowerment, but also as a

7 Zeqir Demi, *Roli i Pleqësisë së Arsimit të Republikës së Kosovës në pavarësimin e shkollës shqipe: Kushtet dhe rrethanat e jashtëzakonshme [The role of the education council of the Republic of Kosovo in the independence of the Albanian school: Extraordinary conditions and circumstances]* (Prishtinë: Pleqësia e Arsimit e Republikës së Kosovës, 1995); Krenar Gashi and Zana Limani, »Pristina University Stumbles Deeper into Crisis,« *Balkan Investigative Reporting Network*, June 9, 2006, www.birn.eu.com; Hairullah Koliqi, *The Survival of the University of Prishtina 1991 – 1996* (Prishtinë: University of Prishtina, 1997).

»school of resistance« to the Serbian rule in Kosovo. It involved more than four hundred thousand Albanian pupils, university students, and their teachers.

Segregation took many forms throughout Kosovo. There were all-Albanian schools housed either in proper school buildings or in private houses. In the predominantly or purely Albanian-populated areas, Albanian pupils remained in their original school buildings, without having to dislocate. The main change in these schools was funding. Elsewhere, Albanians continued to attend classes in their school buildings but only as a result of an ethnic exchange of pupils, when two or more mixed schools became unmixed. This often led to the overcrowding of Albanian schools. In other cases, Albanian primary schools opened their doors to Albanian secondary schools, which themselves had been denied access to their own premises. Often as many as three Albanian schools had to share the same premises, as well as organize classes during the weekend. Most secondary schools, however, resumed work in private houses scattered all over Kosovo. It is these home schools that became the symbol of the Albanian parallel education system. In still other schools, the students were segregated within the same school. They used the same building, but pupils of each ethnic group had no contact with the other. Such schools had two entrances, two separate school administrations, and the very building had two names – one used by Serbs, the other by Albanians. This type of segregation was implemented in primary school buildings. In some cases, the mixing of students was prevented by erecting walls in the middle of a school corridor. Or, alternatively, the Serbian and Albanian youngsters were divided by ethnic shifts. Unlike various kinds of segregation at the primary and secondary school level, the university was consigned entirely to private houses. In contrast to the proper university buildings located in easily accessible central areas of the capital Pristina, the parallel home-classrooms were scattered around the outlying areas and remote suburbs of town. The Serb facilities were located in the center of the city. This spatial »discrimination« reinforced the sense of marginalization among the Albanian students.[8]

In sum, despite the many forms it took, the segregation between Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo became absolute, particularly in education. Politically, education was the most important social field in which Serbs and Albanians had mixed. It stimulated cooperation across ethnic lines among the youth: There was, for example, an Albanian rock band called Ramadan Band, which included a Serb member. The Albanians were forced into their entirely separate, alternative school spaces, however, and as a result, the walls of division between the youth were raised. A system in which prejudices flourished had been created, and it was charged with animosity. On their way to schools that were no more

8 Denisa Kostovicova, *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 97 – 115.

than cold cellars, Albanians had to pass by their former schools, which stood either half-empty – for the number of Serb pupils in Kosovo was not enough to fill them up – or were inhabited by Serb refugees, who had been given the schools as housing after the fall of Krajina, in Croatia.[9]

Identity

The physical separation of Serbian and Albanian students at all levels of education in Kosovo was both accompanied and reinforced by the changes in the teaching content, particularly in the subjects considered of national importance, such as literature, history, and geography. These changes, introduced by both the Albanians and the Serbs, completed the process of symbolic nationalization of their respective identities.

On the one hand, the changes were a response to the policy of socialist patriotism, promoted by the Communist Party. That policy, premised on the symbolic engineering of a mixture of exclusive national identities throughout former Yugoslavia into an inclusive and supranational sense of identity, preached the cherishing of »brotherhood and unity.« In other words, any controversial content likely to incite a feeling of animosity had been either completely omitted from the textbooks or drastically marginalized.[10] Nonetheless, »true« national narratives were not buried away. They were kept alive through informal channels in their respective national communities. On the other hand, the changes introduced in the Serbian and Albanian curricula in Kosovo were a reaction to the unfolding dispute over the status of Kosovo. In this sense, the nationalization of social science was also a symbolic weapon in the struggle over the political future of the province. The end of Communism was replaced by the eruption of nationalism, which, in turn, precluded any possibility of achieving either inter-ethnic or intra-ethnic reconciliation between the competing national narratives.[11] Instead, opposing, exclusive versions prevailed among the Albanians and Serbians. How did this vision then translate into the textbooks?

9 Denisa Kostovicova, »Albanian Schooling in Kosovo 1992 – 1998: ›Liberty Imprisoned,‹« in *Kosovo: Myths, Conflict and War*, ed. Kyril Drezov, Bulent Gokay and Denisa Kostovicova (Keele: Keele European Research Centre, 1999), 12 – 20.

10 S. Bezdanov, ed., *Jedinstvo i zajedništvo u vaspitanju i obrazovanju u SFRJ [Unity and Togetherness in Upbringing and Education in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia]* (Beograd: Nova Prosveta, 1986).

11 A discussion of the intra-ethnic contestation of the national narrative is beyond the scope of this paper. Genuine intra-ethnic debate of what a respective national narrative ought to be was entirely marginalized due to each ethnic group's desire to articulate an alternative national narrative that matched and responded to that of their rivals. This, however, should

Both Albanian and Serbian history and geography textbooks had the aim of legitimizing the political vision for Kosovo. This was evident in the maps reproduced in the Albanian textbooks, which were published within the parallel system after the abolition of Kosovo's autonomy, and in the newly nationalized Serbian textbooks. In the Albanian textbooks, the maps presenting Kosovo in the Balkans actually portrayed Kosovo as an independent state. The territory of Kosovo was clearly demarcated from the rest of Serbia, but also from Albania. Such a map of Kosovo was a visual equivalent of the Albanians' 1992 referendum of independence from Serbia (and the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), regardless of the fact that at the time Kosovo was not an internationally recognized state.

Unlike the representation of Kosovo in the Albanian textbooks, that of Kosovo in Serbian textbooks is inconspicuous. Specifically, in the Serbian textbooks used in the 1990 s, Kosovo as a clearly bounded territorial unit is almost absent. Instead, Kosovo is submerged either partially or completely into the visual representations of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.[12] In other words, it is not even delineated by the borders signifying an autonomous province, which, according to the Serbs, is what Kosovo was. By contrast, the textbooks paid much more attention to the representation of the Serbian-inhabited lands outside the borders of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the battle for the national aim of carving out an ethnically compact Serbian state was ongoing. With the abolition of Kosovo's autonomy, the Kosovo project was considered to have been completed. Kosovo had become an integral part of Serbia, which is why there was no need to mark it on the map of Serbia.

As a corollary of the visual representation of Kosovo, the national history of each ethnic group was geared toward providing justification for the group's exclusive claim to the national territory. This was accomplished by following the principle that the territory had belonged to one's nation from time immemorial: It was ever thus, and thus it ought to continue. Hence, the textbooks employed a classic nationalist tool of retrospective reading of territory in national terms, even though this implied the application of the national framework before the age of nations and nationalism. Apart from the national appropriation of territory, the textbooks stressed a conflict-ridden relationship between the two ethnic groups. The periods of coexistence of the ethnicities were airbrushed out of the textbooks. Rather, conflict was portrayed as an inevitable state of affairs,

not imply that there were no contradictory intellectual currents that advocated a different approach within each ethnic community respectively.

12 B. Danilović and D. Danilović, *Poznavanje društva za 4. razred osnovne škole [Social Science for the Fourth Grade of Primary School], Vol. 6* (Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 1998), 9 as quoted in D. Kostovicova, *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 158.

sending the chilling message that peaceful coexistence in the territory was not feasible. This message was further reinforced by portraying the ethnic »other« as blood-thirsty brutes, while one's own nation was portrayed as the perennial martyr and victim – never the aggressor. The following paragraphs will illustrate the construction of the national territorial claims, conflict, and »othering.«

As portrayed in the Albanian textbooks, the Albanian story in the Balkans is essentially the Illyrian story. The Illyrians, the pre-Roman and pre-Greek inhabitants of the Balkans, are treated at length and in great detail – including accounts of their territorial distribution, wars, art, culture, and everyday life – in the Albanian history textbooks.[13] The Albanian textbooks also underplay the scholarly uncertainty in Western literature concerning the Albanians' Illyrian origins.[14] The following passage asserting the link is typical: »Although there are few written documents, links of the Albanians of the early mediaeval period with the Illyrians and the Illyrian-Albanian continuity are now proven by archaeological, linguistic, ethnographic, anthropological, and other sciences.«[15] Such presentation is aimed at asserting the Albanians continued presence in the territory, but also at confirming their »national« claim to the territory on the basis of first occupancy, that is, Albanians were in the present-day Kosovo long before Slavs even arrived on the Balkan Peninsula. The Serbian textbooks, by contrast, do not make this link. They do acknowledge the presence of the Albanians, but not in such overwhelming numbers (numbers being key in the territorial-claims strategy in Kosovo).

Nonetheless, from the very moment the Slavs arrived in the Balkans in the sixth century, according to the Albanian textbooks, the contact between the Serbs and the Albanians entailed conflict: »The Serbian feudal lords settled Serbian colonists on the fertile lands in these Albanian areas. By means of trickery, war, killings, and torture they removed a part of the Albanians from their lands, who were forced to settle in the mountainous regions.«[16] Fast forward, and the representation of the relationship with the Serbs in the twentieth century is the same. Even the former Yugoslav context, where Albanians underwent unprecedented political, social, and economic emancipation, is presented as hostile to Albanians. Thus one textbook cites: »[I]n the communist

13 V. Kuri, et al., *Të njohim historinë e popullit tonë 4 [Knowing the History of Our People for the Fourth Grade]* (Prishtinë: Enti i teksteve dhe i mjeteve mësimore i Kosovës 1994), 10 as quoted in D. Kostovicova, *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space*, 138.

14 Cf. J. Wilkes, *The Illyrians* (Oxford & Cambridge, USA: Blackwell, 1992).

15 H. Myzyri, et al., *Historia për klasën VIII të shkollës fillore [History for the Eighth Grade of Primary School]* (Prishtinë: Enti i teksteve dhe i mjeteve mësimore i Kosovës, 1996), 29 – 30 as quoted in D. Kostovicova, *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space*,138.

16 V. Kuri, *Historia për klasën V të shkollës fillore [History for the Fifth Grade of Primary School]* (Prishtinë: Enti i teksteve dhe i mjeteve mësimore i Kosovës, 1995), 158 as quoted in Denisa Kostovicova, *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space*, 150.

Yugoslav state, the Serbs had a dominant position, while non-Slav populations (especially the Albanians) were discriminated against. During the communist regime, thousands of thousands of Albanians were killed and hundreds of thousands of others emigrated from Yugoslavia, because the living conditions were unbearable.«[17][17]

A mirror image of violence, directed, in this case, against the Serbs by the Albanians, is portrayed in the Serbian textbooks. During the long Ottoman rule, the Albanians are given a free hand against the Serbs, according to one textbook: »For centuries the Turkish authorities had a benevolent attitude towards Albanian banditry, plunder, and terror in the areas inhabited by the Serbian population. That is a method of forcing the Serbs out of Kosovo and Metohija and appropriating their land.«[18] During the Second World War, the situation only gets worse: »…volunteers…managed to expel thousands of Serbs and Montenegrins by terror, intimidation, burning of houses, and other methods, particularly distinguished themselves in these persecutions.«[19] Indeed, the situation is presented as outright unbearable in the 1980 s, shortly before the abolition of Kosovo's autonomy: »The conditions in Kosovo and Metohija were particularly difficult. For the sake of achieving the idea of ›Kosovo Republic‹ and joining with Albania, Albanian separatists put pressure on the Serbian and Montenegrin populace to abandon their property and to emigrate, in order to make Kosovo and Metohija ethnically clean.«[20]

In sum, both the Serbs and the Albanians emerge in their respective geography and history textbooks as the embattled defenders of the territory, always at the mercy of the »other.« For Albanians, the Serbs are exclusively associated with massacres and expulsions; for the Serbs, the Albanians are brutes referred to in derogatory terms as »Shiptars.« Both histories focus on the conflict, and construct a national narrative in such a way as to reinforce their sole national possession of the land. In the process, possible counterarguments based on opposing facts are omitted or sidelined. The emphasis is on a particular and

17 A. Gani, M. Dezhgiu and I. Bicaj, *Historia për klasën VII të shkollës fillore [History for the Seventh Grade of Primary School]* (Prishtinë: Enti i teksteve dhe i mjeteve mësimore i Kosovës, 1996), 130 as in quoted in D. Kostovicova, *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space*, 153.

18 N. Gaćeša et al., *Istorija za 8. razred osnovne škole* [History for the Eighth Grade of Primary School], *Vol 1* (Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 1993), 47 as quoted in D. Kostovicova, *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space*, 162.

19 N. Gaćeša et al., *Istorija za II razred četvorogodišnjih stručnih škola [History for the Second Grade of the Four-Year Long Specialised Schools], Vol. 6.* (Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 1995), 159 as quoted in D. Kostovicova, *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space*, 162.

20 N. Gaćeša, et al., *Istorija za 8. razred osnovne škole [History for the Eighth Grade of Primary School],* 153 as quoted in D. Kostovicova, *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space*, 165.

prescribed interpretation that does not leave room for questioning. The numbers are used arbitrarily, and no effort is made to provide pointers to the original sources.

Ultimately, the nationalization of histories in Kosovo resulted in the symbolic separation that paralleled the spatial segregation between the Serbs and the Albanians in the 1990 s. The pupils were left without an opportunity to question the conflict-ridden history of Kosovo in their textbooks. Nor did they have the opportunity to do so outside the classroom in interaction with fellow pupils from the other ethnic group. The literature on Kosovo is preoccupied with the implications of the Kosovar myth centering on the medieval battle fought by the Ottomans against the Christian army, led by Prince Lazar, in 1389, with a particular emphasis on its impact on shaping the dispute over Kosovo. However, a glimpse into the geography and history textbooks used by Albanians and Serbs in their separate classrooms in Kosovo reveals that new »myth-histories« were under construction throughout the 1990 s. They had one poignant message in common: Inter-ethnic coexistence, let alone, reconciliation, are not for Kosovo.

Governance

The establishment of the Albanian parallel education system in 1992 heralded a total separation of the Albanian-language education from Serbian oversight. Classes were taking place in discrete spaces; the changes introduced in the Albanian-language textbooks were prescribed by the Kosovo Albanian authorities; and the overall system was exclusively governed by the Kosovo Albanian education authorities as a part of a larger governance system of the independently declared state of Kosovo in the 1990 s. In other words, the Serbs had no input in the Albanians' educational matters in the province. This paradoxical educational freedom, achieved by Albanians in the context of harsh repression in Kosovo, did come at a price. The Albanian pupils and university students as well as teachers were often intimidated, harassed, and even imprisoned by Serb security forces. The national importance to the Albanians of keeping the education system going was not lost on the Serbs. Not only did the Albanians manage to keep educating the generations of Albanian youth, but the education also represented the epitome of the Albanian parallel state. The following paragraphs examine the governance mechanisms relevant to the running of the parallel education system, in order to assess their impact on education.

Above all, the political life in Kosovo, including the parallel education system, was organized under the complete political dominance of the LDK, as headed by Ibrahim Rugova. The national project had become of the utmost importance to the Kosovo Albanians ever since Serbia began its administrative assault on

Kosovo's autonomy in the late 1990 s. As the Kosovo Communist Party lost all credibility among the Albanians, a new force emerged. This was the LDK. It was first to articulate the national goal, and thus it established its political supremacy, which was not contested until the mid-1990 s. However, the LDK also played an ambiguous role in Kosovo. At one and the same time, it acted as a party and as a national movement. And because of its lead on the national issue, other rival forces were unable to establish themselves as credible political opposition for much of the period of the parallel state.[21] The supremacy of the LDK in Kosovo was reinforced by its organization. In this respect, it benefited from the infrastructure it inherited, or rather, took over, from the Communist Party. It established more than 1,300 outposts, 360 sub-branches, and thirty branches throughout Kosovo. Its network among the Albanians abroad was equally well developed. According to Fehmi Agani, the LDK vice-president, there were about two hundred thousand members of the LDK in Kosovo. However, since it was not a classical party, but also acted as a national movement, it had thousands more sympathizers. According to some estimates, its unofficial membership in Kosovo amounted to between five and six hundred thousand – exceeding a quarter of the total Albanian population in Kosovo.[22]

Consequently, the LDK had total control over the political affairs in Kosovo, but also over the politics in the diaspora (through its control of the Albanian communities abroad). Likewise, the Albanian-language education was under LDK's control. At the same time, the Albanian-language education became a critical stake in the power game because it commanded most of the funds collected through the Albanian self-tax system in Kosovo. As a result, the education in Kosovo was used for purposes that surpassed the educational sphere and involved power politics. The following paragraphs will illustrate how the education system and its control were used for political rather than educational purposes within the parallel state, which should be distinguished from the education system's political role within the overall struggle against Serbian rule in Kosovo. The description of the use of the educational system to win political compliance and reaffirm the hold on power will be followed by the analysis of the challenge to the political control of the LDK by Kosovo Albanian university students.

From its establishment, the Albanian-language primary and secondary education system was used by the LDK to reinforce the party's hold on power,

21 Shkelzen Maliqi, »Demand For a New Status – The Albanian Movement in Kosovo,« in *Serbia Between the Past and the Future*, ed. Dušan Janjić (Belgrade: Institute of Social Sciences and Forum for Ethnic Relations, 1995), 128.

22 Momčilo Petrović, *Pitao sam Albance šta žele – a oni su rekli: republiku…ako može [I Asked Albanians What They Want – and They Said: A Republic…if possible]* (Beograd: B92, 1996), 178 – 181.

through its control of the educational administrative institutions, including the positions of school principals. The LDK strategy was in place from the very first, regardless that the administration of the Albanian-language education in the early 1990 s was under the auspices of a body that gathered a cross section of political and professional players in Kosovo. In 1994, the policy changed to that of centralization of all educational authorities under the exclusive control of the LDK. The process was carried out in a dubious procedural manner. Rugova's loyalists adopted a series of documents that instated the »new regime.« The legitimacy of these documents was highly contested, but due to the lack of a functioning parliament, they were not put to a public discussion. Rather, they were simply produced by a circle of men close to Rugova, entitling them to dismiss all staff that was deemed disloyal to the LDK. This resulted in a bitterly ironic situation, whereby »noncompliant« Albanian principals were being expelled from their posts in a manner similar to that of their original expulsions, when the Serbs took over Kosovo a few years earlier.[23]

Dubious governance methods employed by the LDK undermined its credibility and prestige in the Albanian community. As Rugova's policy of passive nonviolence, exemplified by the running of the parallel education system, failed to produce any outcomes, the education system, more, specifically, the parallel Albanian university, produced a challenge as regards the means of national struggle in Kosovo. In the autumn of 1997, a series of peaceful demonstrations by Albanian university students was staged in the capital Pristina with the goal, as the students said, to »liberate occupied buildings.« Thousands of Albanian university students took to the streets, protesting both the Serbian policy in Kosovo and the national strategy of passive pacifism championed by Ibrahim Rugova. Importantly, the students did not challenge the ultimate goal of Kosovo independence that was endorsed by the Albanians in Kosovo. However, they did challenge the tactics. The students argued that the resistance ought to be active, and demonstrated it by their own actions. The student demonstrations were of critical importance for the developments that followed. They transformed the Albanian movement from a peaceful, static, and invisible protest to one that was active and visible, though still peaceful. However, patience with Kosovo's nonviolence was wearing thin among other constituencies as well. The peaceful student-led activation of the Albanian national movement coincided with the emergence of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA hereafter), the Albanian guerrilla group that further activated the movement by adopting a strategy of armed struggle.[24] Serb security forces retaliated brutally to the KLA challenge,

23 Denisa Kostovicova, *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space,* 183 – 189.
24 Tim Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), 99 – 134.

with civilian deaths rising; the escalation of conflict eventually led to the eleven-week NATO intervention in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999, ending the Serbian repression in Kosovo.

Conclusion

Albanian educators, assisted by Albanian students of all ages, are to be credited with the survival of the Albanian-language education in Serb-ruled Kosovo in the 1990 s. The parallel education system performed multiple roles in this period. First and foremost, it continued to educate the Albanian youngsters in Kosovo. However, the context of national struggle in which the teaching and learning unfolded also tasked the system with a set of political roles. Parallel education was the embodiment of the Albanian parallel state and, as such, a testament not just to the daily resistance to Serbian rule but also a statement aimed at the international community asserting that the Albanians merited the running of their own state. The Albanian parallel education from the period of Serb rule in Kosovo cast long shadows on the education after the NATO intervention in 1999. This paper has focused on the features that defined Albanian parallel education but that still remain critical in understanding the challenges the education system has faced since 1999. As some of the present challenges illustrate, these features have endured the end of the Serbian rule.

As I argued above, 1999 did not imply a return to the status quo ante. This is poignantly evident in the persistence of ethnic segregation between the Albanians and the Serbs at all levels of education. Although 1999 did herald a change of roles, with Albanians returning to the facilities from which they had been expelled nearly a decade before, and the Serbs now consigned to alternative spaces, whether private buildings or makeshift classrooms, the principle of separation has nonetheless remained the same. Similarly, the post-1999 physical segregation is paralleled by nationally exclusive teaching content used both by Albanians and Serbs. With the memories of the 1998 – 1999 conflict and suffering of both communities still fresh, some educational content has been additionally radicalized. Lastly, education is still used as a potent political tool both in the context of the Serbian–Albanian dispute in Kosovo and within the Albanian community. Consequently, Belgrade has insisted on controlling and funding the education of the Kosovo Serbs, which, in turn, has been used as proof of the presence of the Serbian state in Kosovo and, therefore, as reinforcement of the position that Kosovo is an integral part of Serbia and as denial of the Albanian declaration of independence in February 2008. At the same time, the Albanian education system in Kosovo is mired in the local political struggle. It is best illustrated by the conflict over the control of the university since 1999, between

the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK).[25]

The legacies of the Albanian parallel system of the 1990 s have thus continued to impact on the reform agenda of the local stakeholders for a better and prosperous future in Kosovo as well as that of the international community, which has been deeply involved in the local processes in Kosovo. In particular, these legacies affect efforts to integrate the two ethnic groups in Kosovo, with education playing a long-term role if integration is to be meaningful. Curriculum reform is another significant challenge, one requiring sensitivity to a heightened sense of national identity, yet exclusion of ethnically exclusive and intolerant content. The methodological aspect of the curriculum reform and the presentation of the content is another equally important task. Lastly, content-related reform cannot be isolated from the depoliticization of governance of education. The obstacles and work ahead of educators and administrators are daunting. However, the creation of a good quality, non-discriminatory, and respectable education system in Kosovo can be planned and, hopefully, accomplished – if, and only if, the scope and depth of the legacies shaping it are fully taken into account.

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25 Alma Lama, »Kosovo: Far from Pristina,« *Transitions Online* 28, (April 2005), www.tol.cz; Krenar Gashi and Zana Limani, »Pristina University stumbles deeper into crisis,« 2006.

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Robert Pichler

Historiography and the Politics of Education in the Republic of Macedonia (1991–2008)

Introduction

Ever since 1991, when the Republic of Macedonia became independent, educational policy has been one of the most contested issues in the country. In educational struggles, key elements of the nation's symbolic content are disputed. Claims for educational rights are at the heart of the debates on the political participation and relate directly to ethnically diverging perspectives on the roots and causes of the very conflict. The Albanians' intransigent demand for university level education in their mother tongue mirrored a policy that aimed at neglecting their minority status as defined in the constitution of 1992. Due to their size – according to the census of 2002, Albanians account for 25.2 percent of the total population[1] – Albanians perceive themselves not as a minority but as a co-partner, who deserves equal treatment in the state. The ethnic Macedonians, on the other hand, have interpreted these far-reaching claims for educational emancipation not as a demand for equal status but as efforts toward political autonomy: Not integration, but social disintegration, even territorial secession, would be the consequence if concessions of this sort are granted. Ethnic Macedonian fears are not unrealistic in view of the fact that Albanians, immediately after the declaration of independence, held a referendum on the establishment of autonomy in areas where they formed the majority.[2] The educational conflict

1 Albanians are by far the largest minority. Further minorities are Turks (3.85 %), Roma (2.66 %), Serbs (1.78 %), and Vlachs (0.48 %). The ethnic Macedonians comprise 68.5 percent of the total population. Figures from: Republic of Macedonia, »State Statistical Office: Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of Macedonia, 2002 Final Data,« Skopje, 2003.

2 Around 90 percent of the Albanians participated in this referendum, whereby the vote in favor exceeded 99 percent. Hugh Poulton, *Who are the Macedonians?* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 136. However, in the forthcoming years Albanians refrained from this far-reaching political claim due to an informal political arrangement to include Albanian political parties in the government. Since 1992, Albanian parties have always participated in government coalitions.

thus became intimately linked with the status issue of the newly established Republic and remained so until the outbreak of hostilities in 2001. The so-called Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA hereafter), which was signed in August 2001, ended the short military uprising of Albanian rebels and brought about far-reaching legal and constitutional changes. The compromise, which was brokered with stern international initiative, in many respects met the demands of the Albanian side. By establishing a system of power-sharing, the former model, which favored the ethnic Macedonian majority, was abandoned. In exchange, ethnic Macedonians were guaranteed the territorial integrity of the Macedonian state, a circumstance that excluded any territorial solution to ethnic conflict, something, however, they had regarded as self-evident from the very beginning. As a consequence, the OFA was seen by Albanians as an important step forward, whereby Macedonians regarded it an unjust and forced compromise that rewarded the use of violence against the democratically elected state institutions.[3]

Cornerstones of the OFA are amendments in the preamble of the constitution,[4] the establishment of the Badinter majority for minority issues in Parliament,[5] a stronger representation of the minorities in public institutions as well as far-reaching decentralization, and an administrative reform that reduced the number of municipalities considerably.The agreement further provides for the upgrading of Albanian to the status of an official language. Every language other than Macedonian, spoken by more than 20 percent of the population, became an official language both on the central and communal level. Furthermore, the government had to provide for university education for communities that speak an official language other than Macedonian.[6] This provision brought about some confusion among commentators since the Albanians interpreted it as a green light for the acknowledgement of »their« university in Tetovo. In fact, the amendment foresaw only the use of Albanian as a language of instruction; an Albanian university was not endorsed by the Macedonian government.[7] The newly set-up power-sharing system was supposed to produce ruling coalitions, inclusive of all the larger ethnic groups in the society. By such

3 An important inducement for the settlement of the conflict was the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union at the brink of the conflict.

4 The new preamble avoids terms like »Macedonian people,« »nationalities,« and »minorities,« and instead speaks of »majority population,« »communities,« and »communities not in the majority.«

5 According to the Badinter majority, the parliamentary adoption of all laws relating directly to minorities must follow the principle that requires a majority vote of deputies representing ethnic minorities.

6 Ulf Brunnbauer, »Ein Programm für den Frieden? Eine Analyse des ›Rahmenabkommens‹ vom 13. 8. 2001,« *Ost-West GegenInformationen*, no. 2 (2001): 31-33.

7 Biljana Belamaric, »Attempting to Resolve an Ethnic Conflict: The Language of the 2001 Macedonian Constitution,« *Southeast European Politics* IV, no. 1 (2003): 33.

means, rival principles, such as the right to national self-determination on the one hand and democracy on the other, would be reconciled.[8] In practice, since 1992 on the national level, the ruling coalition comprises parties representing only ethnic Macedonians and Albanians as the two dominating ethnic communities of the country. Other minorities are too small to get an appropriate political representation.

This article deals with developments in the aftermath of the OFA by taking a closer look at the setting up of educational institutions and the teaching of history. The main focus of attention will be Albanians' efforts to enhance their socially and politically marginalized position within the Republic by enforcing initiatives and measures in the field of education. On the basis of interviews with Macedonian and Albanian historians and officials from the Ministry of Education, the process of institutional reform will be evaluated. In a second step, the results of the latest revision of the curricula and textbooks for the subject of history will be analyzed. History education certainly belongs to the most contested issues of the reform process as it touches upon the highly politicized and sensitive symbolic representation of the state. The ongoing production of historical myths is directly related to the aim of legitimizing political claims. Finally, the article intends to explore whether the achieved reforms are in line with the aims formulated by political representatives to create a climate for a better mutual understanding and social integration.

1. Higher education and status politics

In August 1990 the Macedonian government rejected a petition from several Albanian alternative groups and civic leaders calling for the use of the Albanian language in teaching and school administration, the revision of the curriculum, and the reinstatement of Albanian teachers, who had been suspended on political pretexts.[9] In September 1991 thousands of Albanian demonstrators called for the reinstatement of parallel instruction in Albanian in Struga's secondary school, Niko Nestor. The authorities remained unmoved by this campaign; the Macedonian daily *Nova Makedonija* even ignored the events in Struga. If Albanian pupils wanted to attend secondary school in their mother tongue, they had to commute sixty kilometers to the next town with an Albanian-language gymnasium. In view of this unsatisfying situation, Albanian activists decided to set up a gymnasium in the nearby village of Ladorishti. With strong support

8 Mirjana Maleska, »What kind of a political system did Macedonia get after the Ohrid Peace Agreement?« *New Balkan Politics* 9 (2005): 1–2.

9 Hugh Poulton, *Who are the Macedonians?*, 134.

from the local population, the mayor of the village, and jobless teachers, this private school opened its doors soon afterward. An inspection carried out by the Ministry of Education some weeks later made a devastating appraisal. The ministry's report maintained that the teaching staff did not fulfil the needed qualifications, that curricula from Kosovo were applied, and that some of the pupils did not have the required documents for entering a middle school.[10] Albanians, however, were not impressed by these arguments. They claimed the right to education in their mother tongue as fundamental and regarded it a decisive precondition in order »to lead the Albanian nation from darkness into enlightenment.«[11]

The events in Struga and other places at the very beginning of the country's democratic era illuminate some of the most salient aspects of the Albanian-Macedonian conflict over educational issues. Albanians' ardent quest for tuition in their mother tongue was intimately linked to their struggle for greater political emancipation within the country. The way they articulated their claims inevitably bore reminders of the situation in neighboring Kosovo, where Albanians – under quite different political circumstances – established a parallel educational system after the abolition of the province's autonomy.[12] Developments in Kosovo always had direct repercussions on Albanians in Macedonia. This was the case in 1968 when demonstrations in Kosovo had an immediate impact on the then Socialist Republic (SR) of Macedonia and Albanian demonstrators in Tetovo demanded the union of the Albanian-inhabited areas of Macedonia with Kosovo. In 1981, when student demonstrations in Prishtinë were brutally suppressed, similar but smaller-scale nationalist manifestations by Albanians in SR Macedonia took place. Albanian claims for a seventh republic were seen by the officials as possibly fatal to the territorial integrity of the republic and thus to the very existence of the Macedonian nation. Authorities thus observed the growth of Albanian nationalism with particular vigour and reacted even more harshly to nationalist-minded propaganda than in Kosovo by imposing heavy prison sentences and far-reaching administrative measures.[13]

With regard to educational policies, the officials carried out a revision of syllabi and textbooks and thereby increased the number of hours devoted to teaching Macedonian in Albanian-language schools. Syllabi, programs, and textbooks were regarded as penetrated by »Albanian nationalistic, irredentist,

10 »'DIVO' Obrazovanje. Preselba na Gimnazia od Đakovica vo Struškoto selo Radolišta,« *Nova Makedonija*, October 8, 1991.

11 Bexhet Asani, *Gjimnazi »Hajdar Dushi.« Çerdhe e Diturisë 1991 – 1996* (Strugë: Iris, 2005), 35.

12 See the Kostovicova article in this issue.

13 Hugh Poulton, *Who are the Macedonians?*, 126 – 127.

and counterrevolutionary tendencies.«[14] In 1983 teachers in Tetovo were disciplined and some dismissed from the League of Communists for not observing regulations on the use of Macedonian in official matters. In 1985 a law on secondary school education stipulated that classes with Albanian as the language of instruction could only be created if more than thirty Albanian pupils enrolled in a class and provided there were enough qualified teachers.[15] These provisions resulted in the abolition of Albanian-language classes and compelled the Albanians to attend mixed classes with tuition in Macedonian. The Albanians' intransigence resulted in 1998 in the dismissal of at least 150 teachers for allegedly indoctrinating their pupils with Albanian nationalism. As a consequence of these measures, the number of Albanians attending secondary schools in SR Macedonia dropped from 8,200 in 1981 to 4,221 in 1988.[16]

After independence in 1991, the officials pursued an ambivalent approach toward minority education. On the one hand, constitutional provisions guaranteed far-reaching educational rights for minorities[17]; on the other hand, the implementation of these provisions had been far from satisfactory. The abovementioned example of Struga's secondary school Niko Nestor illustrates this dilemma. The government promised the right to instruction in the mother tongue for primary and secondary education, but conditioned this upon the availability of appropriately qualified teachers, sufficient classroom space, and the maintenance of national curricula standards. When Albanians claimed that only 23 percent of their pupils who finished primary school had a chance to continue their studies in their mother tongue, the educational administrators cited the shortage of qualified Albanian-language teachers, the low teaching standards among minority classes, and the economic crisis, which restricted the possibility of opening more schools.[18] Albanians in Struga then turned to ethnic self-organization by opening their privately sponsored high school. Macedonian officials hesitated to use forceful means to encroach upon this illegal initiative. They obviously knew that education was too delicate an issue for forceful in-

14 Ibid., 127.

15 Ibid., 129.

16 Hugh Poulton, *Minorities in the Balkans* (London: Minority Rights Publications, 1989), 27.

17 In formal legal terms, the Republic of Macedonia fulfilled the standards of the international community for the protection of minorities. There was no constitutional or legal provision that could have been understood as discriminatory toward minorities. This was one reason why the international community long regarded Macedonia as a positive example of multiethnic democracy. However, this evaluation also shows the blind eye international observers often turned to the discrepancy between formal legal provisions and the reality on the ground.

18 Robert W. Mickey and Adam Smith Albion, »Success in the Balkans? A Case Study of Ethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia,« in *Minorities. The New Europe's Old Issue,* eds. Ian Cuthbertson and Jane Leibowitz (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 70.

tervention. On the other hand, Albanian initiatives of that kind – Struga was not the only case – opened the door to semi-legal or outright illegal educational activities and gave way to similar developments at the level of university education. This constellation testifies to the fact that the state was too weak to intervene decisively in the affairs of its minority, whereas the Albanian minority, deeply suspicious of state intervention and closely connected to its co-ethnic hinterland, relied on ethnic self-organization based on the model exercised in neighboring Kosovo. Ethnic Macedonians viewed such developments with animosity; they tended to confirm the widespread opinion that Albanians pursued their own agenda, which would inevitably lead to separation.

Restricted access to parallel education in their mother tongue resulted in low university enrollment by Albanians within the Republic of Macedonia. In the 1991 – 1992 school year, only 386 out of 23,000 university students were Albanians.[19] In reaction to this, access for minorities to the universities was eased by means of affirmative action in the academic year 1992/93. A 10-percent quota was introduced, resulting in a rise of the Albanian students' quota to 5.2 percent for the academic year 1994/95.[20]

For Albanians these measures were far from satisfactory. Their efforts were not directed toward institutional integration into a system that they regarded as dominated by Macedonians. They strove, rather, for the far loftier aim of institutional autonomy at the level of higher education. Since political compromise could be achieved in the government, Albanians went ahead and opened their »own« university in Tetovo in December 1994. Here again developments in Kosovo had influenced this decision. The abrogation of Kosovo's provincial autonomy in September 1990 and the subsequent campaign to Serbianize institutions finally led to the establishment of a parallel educational system. For Albanians from Macedonia who studied at Prishtinë University, these developments heavily restricted their opportunity to complete their studies. After 1992 some of them even went to Albania, but conditions there, after fifty years of isolationist policy, were very difficult as well. All these developments spurred the Albanians' determination to get their »own« university in Macedonia. In view of its illegal status, Tetovo University (TU hereafter) had to rely on private funding primarily from members of the Albanian diaspora.[21] However, the material infrastructure remained poor and educational standards were far from satisfactory.

19 Alexander Soljakovski, »An Education in Complexity,« *War Report* (October 1992): 5.

20 OSCE, »High Commissioner on National Minorities (1995): Recommendations to Macedonia,« HC/REF/3/1995.

21 Ibrahim Mehmeti, »The University of Tetovo – A Ticket to Europe,« *AIM Press*, Skopje, November 2, 1995. www.aimpress.ch/dyn/trac/archive/data/199511/51108-005-tracsko.htm.

In contrast to the case of Struga's illegal secondary school, Macedonian officials reacted to the attempted establishment of TU by forcibly closing it down. The fierce intervention caused serious incidents, with one Albanian protester killed and many others wounded. A number of Albanian academics, among them the rector of TU, Fadil Sulejmani, were temporarily arrested. Albanian teachers and students afterward moved into private buildings and continued studies underground. In the following school year the university opened again without serious intervention on the part of the state authorities. The university still operated illegally, but the officials obviously had realized that forceful intervention was futile. Rector Sulejmani regarded the successful reopening of the university as a big step forward. Its illegal status was not deemed a serious problem. According to Sulejmani, influential Albanian businessmen would offer employment to all those who completed their studies, even if their diplomas were not officially recognized.[22]

The ethnic Macedonian public was deeply concerned about this development. The »Albanian university« was regarded as a symbol of the »duplication of the state« and as proof of the Albanians' determination to reach their ultimate political goals, that is, to secede the predominantly Albanian-inhabited areas from the Macedonian state.[23]

In spring 2001 the so-called National Liberation Army (NLA hereafter), inspired by their Albanian counterpart in Kosovo, the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA hereafter), started to attack institutions of the Macedonian state. The reasons for this armed insurrection are still a matter of obscurity. What can be said for sure is that the KLA operated as a »successful« example in the minds of the Albanians in Macedonia and that many fighters of the KLA were prone to continue their business in neighboring Macedonia.[24] Among the officially declared reasons for this attack, the unresolved university issue figured high on the agenda. Rector Sulejmani openly supported the armed insurrection, while the

22 Ibrahim Mehmeti and Saso Ordanovski. »Separate Lives, Divided Media,« *Institute for War & Peace Reporting*, August 27, 1999. http://www.iwpr.net/special/news/mac008_eng.htm.

23 Erik Siesby, »Eine albanische Universität in Makedonien,« in *Die Albaner in der Republik Makedonien. Fakten, Analysen, Meinungen zur interethnischen Koexistenz*, ed. Thede Kahl, et al. (Wien/Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2006), 221.

24 The international community was unclear on how to define or react to these developments. Right at the beginning of the armed insurrection, NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson qualified these attacks as the actions of »a small group of extremists.« The NLA was labeled by Robertson as »murderous thugs and terrorists.« In the course of the conflict, the terminology changed and the former terrorists turned out to be »human rights fighters.« Biljana Vankovska, »State-Building Dilemma in Macedonia. Peace and Democracy for Whom?« in *Dialogues. From International Intervention to National/Local Ownership?* (Sarajevo: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2006), 76.

NLA in their communiqués demanded the official recognition of TU as a political priority.[25]

A sociological survey carried out some months after the signing of the OFA revealed how deeply divided the Macedonian society was over the issue of the Albanian university. Asked what needed to be done to guarantee sustainable peace and stability in the country, Albanians rated the recognition of TU as the first priority, out of twenty-four possibilities. The university issue was ranked even higher than the full implementation of the OFA, which was placed second on the priority list. Macedonians, on the other hand, regarded effective measures against paramilitary groups and organized crime as top priority. The recognition of the Albanian university was less surprisingly ranked last.[26]

For several years already the international community had been trying to find an alternative solution to this deeply polarizing political issue. In 2001, it finally sought to get closer to a compromise with the opening of the Southeast European University (SEEU hereafter) in Tetovo. Until then, the government had maintained its position that all higher education, publicly funded or not, should be conducted in Macedonian and had to be approved by the government and the Parliament. In early 2000 the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Max van der Stuhl, together with experts from the Council of Europe, paved the way for a private higher education institution. Financially supported by the OSCE, USAID, and the Soros Foundation, this private international university was designed to meet in particular the Albanian population's needs for higher education in the area. The university is trilingual; besides Albanian, lessons are conducted in Macedonian and English.[27]

Despite the fact that something of a political compromise had been reached with the opening of SEEU, the problem of the still illegally operating TU remained. It must have been clear that SEEU could not replace TU and diminish the determination of the Albanians to have their own university. The initial idea, that SEEU after some years would take the place of TU as a predominantly Albanian but multiethnic and multilingual institution, did not materialize. This was partly due to the fact that SEEU was too small an institution to provide adequate instruction for the huge number of Albanian students.[28] Additionally,

25 Brian Murphy, »›Das wird jetzt eine Art heiliger Krieg.‹ Die albanische Bevölkerung in Mazedonien stellt sich auf die Seite der Rebellen – auch die Universität Tetovo,« *Der Tagesspiegel Internetedition,* March 18, 2001. http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/archiv/18.03.2001/ak-po-au-2212504.html

26 Colin Irwin, »Forum: Macedonia. Peace, Stability and Elections: An Opinion Poll and its Implications,« *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics* 2, no. 1 (2002): 62-65.

27 For more details on SEEU, see its homepage: http://www.seeu.edu.mak/english/general/history.asp#plan-implement.

28 In the school year 2005/2006, 945 students were enrolled at SEEU (Laura Papraniku, »Gjendja arsimore e shqiptareve të Maqedonisë. Shkollimi si instrument i politikave,« *Al-*

the university fee amounting to 1000 Euro annually was too high for many students. TU, in contrast, provided easier access with student fees amounting to 100 Euro per school year.[29] A politically decisive factor in the failure to replace TU with SEEU was the Albanians' determination to get an Albanian-language state university recognized on par with the two existing Macedonian-language state universities. In the context of the politics of the time, this was an impossible goal. It would be another three years until a compromise could be reached regarding TU. In 2004 the government coalition finally came to a compromise over the legalization of TU. The newly founded State University of Tetovo (SUT hereafter) partially took over the old structures and the cadres of TU.

For the Albanians the recognition of SUT had long been overdue and they regarded it as a first decisive step toward educational equality. Further steps in this direction were already on the way. In 2002 the Forum of the Union of Albanian Intellectuals criticized the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts (MASA hereafter) for its mono-ethnic composition and complained that no Albanian had been admitted as a member of the national elite institution since its formation. The president of the union publicly expressed the need to establish a special department at MASA that would deal with national characteristics of the Albanians in Macedonia. Furthermore, the name of MASA should be changed in order to make the existence of Albanians in Macedonia symbolically visible. MASA reacted to this reproach by stressing the argument that the institution already had a multiethnic makeup; apart from members of Vlach, Serbian, Turkish, Jewish, German, and Polish national communities, a well-known Albanian representative was part of the institution. MASA rejected the demand of the Albanians to introduce an ethnic key for membership and emphasized its basic principle for obtaining membership only and exclusively according to internationally accepted criteria in arts and sciences and upon strict legal procedures. The Academy further pointed to the fact that no suggestion for membership had been submitted by an Albanian when the competition was announced and, in a concluding remark, stressed that not a single Albanian from Macedonia had ever managed to get access to the Albanian Academy of Sciences in Tirana.[30]

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banica (Mujore per dije e kulture) Viti IV, no.64/65 (Janar-Shkurt 2007): 35. TU, in contrast, claimed an enrollment of 13,000 students in 2002. Iso Rusi, »The Two Universities,« *Report of the British Helsinki Human Rights Group.* Macedonia, 2002. http://www.bhhhrg.org.).

29 In the meantime tuition fees have risen to 400 Euro per school year. Students of pharmacology have to pay 1200 Euro. SEEU charges at least 1,210 Euro for one school year (Laura Papraniku, »Gjendja arsimore,« 36).

30 Natasha Gaber-Damjanovska and Aneta Jovevska, »Political Parties Development in the Republic of Macedonia,« *Barometer* (June 2003): 10–11. http://www.fes.org.mk/pdf/barometerNo8.pdf

Although this dispute has been carried out in a polemical way, some aspects of it are noteworthy: While Albanians always complain about their significant underrepresentation at all levels of the state institutions, Macedonians refer to the scarcity of qualified personnel among Albanians. On several occasions, representatives from the Institute of National History in Skopje stressed the argument that they would employ Albanian historians if they could find qualified ones. Of the three Albanian historians who worked there in 2004, one has since moved to SUT, the second shifted from science to politics and became mayor in a nearby village, and the third was being considered for director of the Ohrid Airport. For Albanian historians in Tetovo, such arguments cause only indignation. Referring to the underrepresentation of Albanians in the relevant national institutes, the historian Fejzulla Shabani stressed the argument that Macedonia had not yet found its proper way toward democracy. He further added that, »in Tito's time, Macedonia had no single scientific institute that dealt with the culture of the Albanian people. The institutes established, focused only on the history and culture of the Macedonians. If there was no institute and no university, where should these qualified Albanian scientists come from?!«[31]

Shabani, who works at SEEU as well as at SUT, points to another contributing factor when he complains that he and his colleagues are fully occupied with their teaching obligations. »There is consequently no additional capacity of time for doing serious research.« This is, according to Shabani, particularly deplorable, given the fact that »the history of Albanians in Macedonia is full of important events, because all ethnic communities have played a prominent role at different periods in history.« Shabani, who was Macedonia's representative for science, culture and education at the Council of Europe between 1998 and 2002, refers to the European dimension of the problem when he argues for the necessity to establish an Albanian research institute in Macedonia. »Our future has to be within Europe. But if we want to become part of this European project we have to change our old-fashioned mentality! If we look at the educational situation of Albanians in Macedonia, we have to admit that the preconditions for this new mentality are not given. What is the reason for this? Until 2005, Albanian pupils in primary and secondary schools learned only Macedonian history; the history of Albanians in Macedonia was not even mentioned. Only last year a reform was introduced according to which a few lessons are devoted to Albanian history. But if we want to advance in this direction, we need profound knowledge about the local history and culture of the Albanian people. In order to reach this end, we have to establish an Albanian research institute.«[32]

31 Interview with Fejzulla Shabani, historian at the Tetovo State University as well as at the SEEU in Tetovo, recorded in February 2007.

32 Ibid.

It is obvious that such an approach toward educational reform can lead only to further ethnic segregation. What takes place at the institutional level is mirrored in the field of social relations. Taking a closer look into ethnically mixed areas in Western Macedonia, one can observe sharp social divisions particularly between Albanians and ethnic Macedonians. Apart from the fact that ethnic Macedonians and Albanians do not intermarry, in mixed settlements the two ethnic communities live in segregated social worlds. Particularly striking are the sharp ethnic divisions in the educational system. At all school levels, the two ethnic groups attend separate classes where they are taught solely in their native tongue except for the obligatory Macedonian lessons. In ethnically mixed schools, where all students study under the same roof, education is organized in shifts. There is a clear tendency to further divide these ethnically mixed schools by establishing new school buildings. As a consequence, contacts and communication between teachers of different ethnic groups diminish further. The same holds true for parents' councils and school boards that operate only on an ethnic basis.

Merle Vetterlein, who studied the impact of administrative decentralization on educational affairs in Macedonia, pointed to several problems in the process of the implementation of the OFA. The main idea behind decentralization was to improve the quality of education by reinforcing local responsibility and strengthening local self-government. If local actors were forced into direct negotiations, the thinking went, their participation in decision-making processes should be increased and the involvement of political parties »from above« should be reduced.[33] However, what was regarded as a step forward turned out to be very complicated and not very well prepared. It was a mistake to believe that the political influence and its ethnic implication are less salient on the local level. This became clear after the implementation of the law on decentralization, when twenty-one school directors in seven municipalities were dismissed without any clear grounds.[34] Further on, municipalities were badly prepared for the increase in their competences and obviously didn't have the resources to provide functional basic services. Some small municipalities even wanted to hand back responsibility for the schools to the state.[35] Vetterlein's very critical stance can

33 According to information Vetterlein took from her interviews, there was a serious lack of communication between members of different ethnic communities on the ministerial level.

34 This problem was not restricted to the sphere of education. Large-scale dismissals of officials following the change of government in 2006 illustrate the dimension of politicization at all levels of the public administration. As a consequence, the functioning of the administration was disrupted well into 2007 (Commission of the European Communities, *The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2007 Progress Report*, (Brussels, 6. 11. 2007), 9.

35 Merle Vetterlein, »The Influence of the Ohrid Framework Agreement on the Educational Policy of the Republic of Macedonia,« (paper presented at the 8th Kokkalis Graduate Student Workshop, February 3, 2006): 15 – 16.

certainly be justified in view of the structural problems related to the process of decentralization. However, it must be emphasized that decentralization alone cannot solve all the far-reaching problems of ethnic conflict in educational affairs. As could be observed in the municipality of Struga, there are also some positive aspects to recent developments in decentralization worth mentioning. One main advantage in comparison to the former strongly centralized system is that »ethnic parties« now have to reach some sort of compromise by way of direct negotiation. Though their positions may not alter decisively, this at least brings both sides closer to each other. The fact that teachers, parents, the municipality, and the ministry have to communicate with one another offers some hope of contact remaining upright and possibly improving to some extent in the near future. This was also the opinion of teachers from both the Macedonian and Albanian communities in Struga.

2. Revision of curricula and textbooks in the subject of history

Reforming the curricula and textbooks in the subject of history was increasingly seen as an issue of first priority by Albanian historians and officials in the Ministry of Education. Albanians articulated basically two main points of criticism with regard to the existing curricula. Albanian history was not appropriately represented in the textbooks and the way it was done reflected the Macedonian viewpoint on Albanian history. Albanians claimed that Macedonian historians designed the history of the Albanian people according to their national interests. Important historical events and contexts were either omitted or presented in a way that »did not reflect the historical reality.«[36] Beyond this, »the one-sided representation« of Albanian history was seen as loaded with prejudices and negative stereotypes. For Fejzulla Shabani the reason for this »drastic misrepresentation« is to be found in the methodological shortcomings of Macedonian historiography. »The few Macedonian historians who deal with Albanian history rely only on Slavic documents which exclusively confirm the Slavic historiography.… If one wants to write about the reality of Albanians, about their presence, their autochthony in Macedonia, it is necessary to use other documents. But how can they utilize these sources without knowing our language?«[37] What Shabani points to here is the fact that almost no Macedonian historians are capable of reading sources in the Albanian language. This is one of

36 Interview with Nebi Dervishi, President of the Association of Albanian historians in Macedonia, recorded in October 2003.

37 Interview with Fejzulla Shabani, historian at the Tetovo State University as well as at the SEEU in Tetovo, recorded in February 2007.

the main criticisms of the Albanians against their Macedonian colleagues. Apart from regarding the Macedonian historians' lack of competence in Albanian as a professional shortcoming, Albanians see this deficit as a form of serious disrespect and an expression of the low esteem Macedonians hold for them.[38]

In October 2002 the newly elected government[39] introduced initial measures to revise the history curricula and textbooks. For the first time in postsocialist Macedonia, the Ministry of Education was headed by an Albanian. A first step toward reform was the formation of a special commission endowed with the redrafting of the curricula for the fifth and sixth grades.The commission was multiethnically composed. Among the eleven members there were six Macedonians, four Albanians, and one member of the Turkish community. The other ethnic communities had no voice on this board. The commission agreed upon the revision of the new curricula according to the following principles: The different ethnic communities of the country should be presented in a positive light; the positive values and characteristics of all ethnic communities should be emphasized; and prejudices as well as negative stereotypes should be eliminated.[40] With regard to the presentation of the respective national histories, a flexible solution was found. Macedonian and Albanian pupils would have to learn a defined portion of the history of the respective other, but additional lessons would allow them a more in-depth study of the national history of their own community. In this way Albanian and Macedonian students might get up to an additional three units in national history per semester.[41]

By January 2005 the commission had finished its work. The Ministry of Education approved the results one month later. The ministry then prepared a tender for the publishing houses. One of the preconditions for application was that multi-ethnically composed teams of historians write the textbooks. In this way, the ministry hoped to avoid one-sided representations of historical narratives in the textbooks. At least one author was required to be of Albanian or

38 Turkish and Albanian were both seen as comparably unimportant languages during communism. Macedonian–Albanian and Macedonian–Turkish dictionaries were published in 1968 only, long after the publication of Serbo-Croatian, Russian, English, French, and even Bulgarian dictionaries (Stephen J. Palmer and Robert R. King, *Jugoslav Communism and the Macedonian Question* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1971): 178 – 179).

39 After some months' delay, Macedonia held parliamentary elections on September 15, 2002, as required by the OFA. The Together for Macedonia coalition, led by the Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia (SDAM), was the clear winner, taking 59 of the 120 assembly seats. Among the ethnic Albanian parties, the recently formed Democratic Union for Integration (DUI), the political wing of the NLA, was the winner with16 seats. In October 2002 SDAM and DUI managed to form a government together with the small Liberal Democratic Party.

40 Interview with Agim Rushiti, former Adviser of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia, recorded in July 2005.

41 Interview with Qamil Xheladini, director of the Bureau for Educational Development in Skopje, recorded in July 2005.

Turkish origin. Textbook authors who applied for this tender had to remain anonymous. From the six to eight textbooks that were prepared for each grade, a maximum of three were approved. In order to select the best textbooks, another commission was established, which consisted of historians and educational experts from the ministry. Decisions taken by this commission were based on the standards formulated by the curricula commission. In order to open the door to publication, the minister of education had to approve the textbooks chosen by the special commission.[42]

The reform in textbook development as described above certainly allows for a broader and more balanced representation of the different ethnic communities in history textbooks. However, what was intended to bring about an all-inclusive integration of the country's ethnic mosaic turned out to be a strong boost for the representation of the country's largest minority only. Thus Albanians feel quite confident with the new textbooks, while the other minorities have been marginalized and widely ignored. This is particularly true for the Turkish minority of the country. It was primarily on the Macedonian side, however, that the issue of minority representation raised strong skepticism. Todor Čepreganov, director of the Institute of National History and himself a member of the curricula commission, points to the fact that it is extremely difficult to respect the demands of the various minorities to be appropriately represented in the textbooks. Čepreganov stresses the argument that, in view of the limited number of hours reserved for history, it is almost impossible to appropriately instruct pupils in European and world history, in Balkan and national history, as well as in the history of the country's minorities. Moreover, according to Čepreganov, the demand of the European community, to reserve more space for international history, can never be materialized under the current conditions. »In former textbooks we had 45 percent for our national history and 35 percent for European and world history. Now, according to the new law, European and world history has to be reduced to 19 percent. This is exactly the opposite of what Europe wants us to do!« Thus, instead of European and world history, Macedonians have to learn a lot about minorities. Čepreganov ironically counted the percentage share prescribed for minority education in the new curricula: »For Macedonian national history we have 35 percent, for Albanian history 25 percent, for Turkish and Bulgarian history 3 percent, for Serbian and Greek history 1.5 percent, and for the history of the Vlach people 0.7 percent. Ten percent is reserved for the history of the neighboring countries. For Bosnians and Roma people there is no more space in the curricula.«[43] With the history of the mi-

42 Interview with Agim Rushiti, July 2005.

43 Interview with Todor Čepreganov, director of the Institute for National History in Skopje, recorded in July 2005.

norities now at the center of the curriculum, pupils are consequently getting far less informed about the history of the Balkans, Europe, and the world . »Imagine [if] we would also have to prepare texts about the history of the Bosnians and the Roma people in our textbooks! What knowledge would our pupils then get about Europe!?«[44] Asked for an alternative solution to this problem, Čepreganov admitted that he himself has no answer. »We go round in circles. The Albanians say, their pupils want to learn about their national heroes. I was against it. We discussed this a lot in the last one and a half years and we had to find a compromise. This, in fact, is the compromise.«[45]

Apart from complaints about a stronger minority representation in the new textbooks, Čepreganov mentioned other areas of conflict with regard to the authority of historical self-representation. Of the two issues raised by Čepreganov concerning the presentation of Albanian history, his main concern relates to the Albanian pretension to teach the history of their people in as wide a geographic scope as possible (i. e. including Albania and Kosovo), instead of focusing on the Albanians within the borders of Macedonia. »The main issue was if the Albanians should teach the history of their people in Macedonia, or the history of the Albanians in general. We had a long dispute about this. The Albanians insisted that they could not teach Albanian history by ignoring their mother country. Okay, we conceded to this. It is their right. We can not force them to teach what they don't want!« Čepreganov and other Macedonian historians regard it as a risk to the integrity of the common state to have Albanians learning more about the history of their people than about the history of the country they live in. But this problem is not easy to solve, as Irena Stefoska, a young Macedonian historian, explains. »The main problem is that we don't have a single common historical myth. What we have are completely divided historical narratives based on ethnic adherence. How can we create an identity of a civic state on the basis of ethnically divided histories?«[46] This comment leads us to the core of the Macedonian-Albanian conflict, which is often carried out with the »weapons of history.«

Among the most contested historical issues for both ethnic communities are their respective ethnic origins. The Albanians' claim that they are descendants of the ancient Illyrians is contested by the majority of the Macedonian historians. On the other hand, Albanian historians question Macedonian versions of history, which present Macedonians as being ethnically linked to the Macedonians of Phillip's and Alexander's time. Čepreganov explains this conflict by referring

44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
46 Interview with Irena Stefoska, historian at the Institute for National History in Skopje, recorded in July 2005.

to the disputes carried out within the curricula commission. »From history textbooks in Albania and Kosovo, pupils learn that Albanians are of Illyrian origin. Our historians are convinced that they are not [Illyrians].« The way the two sides settled these disputes provides insights into their mutual relationship: Though the curricula are characterized by incongruities, these very incongruities serve reciprocal interests. Čepreganov, looking at the results of this process, finally concedes: »If Albanians hold the opinion that they are of Illyrian origin, it is there business. They should be what they want to be.«[47]

According to Čepreganov, Macedonians refrained from any further opposition due to Albanian determination to ignore legal provisions and to revert to former methods of resistance if they didn't get what they wanted. »They [the Albanians] said they would use their own teaching materials from Albania if their versions are not accepted. Then I said, okay, you can write your version. It is your history, not mine.« But Čepreganov added an interesting comment that gives insight into his epistemological thinking and the way he wants his (Macedonian) community to be respected with regard to its interpretations of its own national history. »I'm not able to write the history of Germany or Austria either. I could take some books and write a summary. But this is not my history. We owe them [the Albanians] a collective memory, and this collective memory tells them that they are Illyrians.«[48] Just as Macedonian historians tolerate the Albanian version of history, so they expect tolerance for their own version of history based on »collective memory.« It is obvious that this sort of scholarly approach makes room for every sort of historical manipulation and adaptation according to the »needs of the nation.« The fact that history is strongly politicized in Macedonia and serves the legitimization of political aims makes the problem even worse.

In the main, Čepreganov is rather satisfied with the results of the textbook revision. »At least we managed to design a common concept. It could have been worse. Albanians could have used textbooks from Kosovo or from Albania. This we could avoid. Now we can start with the implementation. This [project] is a first step that opens the door to further discussions.«[49]

Albanians also welcome the achieved results of the curricula revision. Confronted with Macedonian criticism concerning the procedures of the process, Albanians disagree sharply. The issue of ethnic origin also raises strong emotional reactions on the part of Albanian historians. With regard to the allegedly questionable theories about the Illyrian descent of the Albanians, they like to refer to international scholars who back their version of history. At the same time, Albanians cast an ironic eye on the Macedonians' own claims of ethnic ties

47 Interview with Todor Čepreganov, July 2005.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.

to ancient history. »Macedonian historians, until recently, convincingly argued that they were of Slavic origin. Now that Greece questions their [i.e. the Macedonians'] very identity, they suddenly link their national history with Alexander the Great. This is not very convincing and produces a lot of confusion,« an Albanian historian told me off the record.

The demand advanced by Macedonian members of the curricula commission to treat Albanian history as the history of a local minority is rejected by the Albanians. »We would teach our local history, but there is not enough thorough research done on this. However, this is not our fault!« complains Nebi Dervish, president of the Association of Albanian Historians in Macedonia and a member of the curricula commission. Apart from this, Albanian historians unanimously emphasize that their local history cannot be divided from that of other Albanians. Fejzulla Shabani, a historian with an ethnic Albanian background at the SEEU, explains this stance in the following way: »Until the creation of Yugoslavia there was a common Albanian history. After that, there was a history of the Albanians in Albania and a hidden history of the Albanians in Yugoslavia. This hidden history didn't come to the fore for a long time. The suppression of the Albanian people went hand in hand with the suppression of their history. In Macedonia this suppression lasted until 2001. Nowadays, the history of the Albanians in Macedonia is slowly coming to the surface. Slowly our historians are bringing the hidden history to light.«[50]

For this reason, Albanian historians and members of the ministry have no objections to the ethnic key that defines the percentage of the ethnic community's representation in textbooks. In accordance with this argument Fejzulla Shabani stressed that »We always had to learn the history of the others. Why should we now complain that they have to learn our history too?!«[51]

It is obvious that the main focus of Albanian historians and officials involved in this reform process was the enforcing of their own interests. Although Albanians challenge differing historical views held by their Macedonian colleagues, they do not intend to intervene in the Macedonians' historical narratives. In this respect they share the opinion of their Macedonian colleagues: Each side should have the right to design its own national narrative as long as it does not question the version of the respective »other.« Among Albanians too, there exists a strong notion that serious scientific research about a national community can best be done by its members. Historians who live in the respective country, who are part of the particular ethnic group, and who are familiar with the mentality of their people, are best suited »to understand« their own history. Such theoretical approaches create authoritative positions that are immune to

50 Interview with Fejzulla Shabani, February 2007.
51 Interview with Isamedin Azizi, July 2005.

criticism and to self-reflective engagement with history. They show how deeply the production of historical narratives is still linked to ongoing processes of nation-building. However, the preeminence of such theoretical suppositions must also to be analyzed against an additional background, that is, the extensive experience of dominant external identity ascription, which often had a clear political agenda. Is goes without saying that the political impact of such ascription on national self-definition is still a prominent factor. The seemingly naïve recourse to the primary validity of one's own ethnic perspective on history has to be seen within the context of belated nation-building processes in a politically fragile postcommunist environment. Macedonians and Albanians are both involved in an ongoing dispute about their respective positions within the country as well as within the region. These hermetically organized ethnic discourses on history thus also have to be understood as efforts toward (political) recognition, cultural visibility, and ethnic dignity.

Due to the fact that both ethnic communities are deeply engaged in the (re)definition of their respective national narratives, there is no space to overcome the ethnocentric views on history. Since the majority is no longer in the position to dominate the minority, the common ground for a »shared history« is reached whereby one side concedes to the other the opportunity to design its own version of history. Historical approaches that would go beyond the ethnocentric view – pointing to the fact that Macedonians and Albanians did not always live separated from each other in seemingly hermetically isolated social environments – are rejected, and these periods of shared community regarded as mere episodes of history undeserving of further acknowledgment. The historian Čepreganov, confronted with the argument that Macedonians and Albanians developed similar modes of social adaptation during the Ottoman period and thereafter, responded in a most telling way: »We are dealing here with something [i.e. national history] very strong, and this is the fact that we are different and not the same!« In our conversation, Čepreganov conceded that there are features of a common history on the local level, but this local history does not correspond with the collective memory of the people, which is based on difference. »What you were pointing at was earlier the case. After 2001 the situation has changed fundamentally… We have a new constellation and under this constellation we are always under pressure.«[52]

On the side of the Albanians there is also little sympathy for the development of a common historical narrative. Confronted with a similar argument, that Macedonian and Albanian social and cultural history at the village level shows a number of similarities, the historian Shabani gave a rather confused response. »Yes, that might be the case. But what more of a common ground can be found

52 Interview with Todor Čepreganov, July 2005.

than that which we have already defined in the curricula? We have reached the ultimate compromise.« Stimulated by this idea, Shabani added that, as a next step, one could write a new common Balkan history to which all nations could contribute equally. But in doing so, »one has to ensure that history is based on facts, on true facts! In order to achieve this, one has to interpret the right documents.«[53]

3. The new generation of history textbooks

The new generation of history textbooks shall be analyzed in view of the national self-representation of the two dominant ethnic communities in Macedonia. The analysis that follows is based on two textbooks for grades five and six of primary school. The two books cover historical developments from prehistory to the Middle Ages. The choice of materials in these textbooks can be considered representative of the way new textbooks are designed. The analytical focus centers on textbooks dealing with the history of antiquity and the Middle Ages because both Macedonians and Albanians trace their roots to these periods and therein compose their respective myths of origin and find the main building blocks of their unique identities. Moreover, the ways myths of descent are designed offer insight into basic elements of ethnic and ideological continuity. All-important features of national self-representation are to be found here. The analysis is confined to the level of content and provides some general reflections as well as critical remarks about the way the two versions of national history are presented.

Textbook 1, which covers the period from prehistory until the end of the Roman Empire, is written by a team of Macedonian historians.[54] Interestingly, the second history textbook available for the fifth grade was also written by Macedonian authors only. The implementation of the principle formulated by the curricula commission that textbooks be written by ethnically mixed teams was thus disregarded.

The authors of the textbook make excessive use of the opportunity to prominently position the history of the antique Macedonians. Fifteen pages are devoted to the roots of Macedonian ethnohistory; the Hellenes and the Romans, in comparison, are each given only twelve pages. This strong emphasis on a Macedonian antiquity serves several purposes, among them the incorporation of the history of ancient Macedonians into the modern Macedonian national

53 Interview with Fejzulla Shabani, February 2007.

54 Kosta Adžievski, et al., *Istoria za V oddelenie / Historia për klasën e pestë* (Skopje/Shkup: Prosvetno Delo SHA, 2005).

master-narrative. By means of this incorporation, both the continuity of the name »Macedonia« from ancient times until the present, as well as the existence of a distinctive ethnic Macedonian culture, are attested. Continuity with present-day Macedonia is further accomplished through a strong emphasis on the formation of the antique Macedonian state. The state of Phillip and Alexander is depicted as an ideal model of statehood. The state is strong – the reform of the military system under Phillip is given particular attention – and it is big – it comprises Macedonia from the shores of the Aegean Sea in the south to the present-day borders with Serbia in the north – and its leadership is cultivated.[55] The personality and deeds of Alexander the Great are described in detail. He is depicted as a statesman and military leader of high esteem: well educated, physically strong and determined, but tolerant and full of respect toward culturally divergent people.[56]

In this way, the theory of ethnic continuity is extended backward from the Middle Ages to antiquity. The Macedonians of old are depicted as the true forefathers of their present-day descendants. Particularly conspicuous in this representation is the intention of Macedonian historians to emphasize the ethnic distinction of the Macedonians from the Hellenes. The textbook creates the impression that the ancient Macedonians successfully managed to avoid Hellenization and to preserve their ethnic individuality. Apart from the ethnic pedigree, the state-building capacity is emphasized as a particular virtue. The seemingly everlasting ability of the Macedonian people to manage their own political affairs is thereby confirmed.

The scholarly approach chosen in the textbook is in line with recent historical research by local historians on the roots of the Macedonian ethno-nation. The strong emphasis on the history of antiquity has to be seen within the context of changing political circumstances after the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the independence of the Macedonian state. Although Macedonia experienced a peaceful and benign transition from authoritarian rule to democracy, the new state had to face numerous serious problems, among which the struggle for its international recognition ranged foremost. In neighboring Greece, the symbolic repertoire of the new state – basically its name, its flag,[57] and its constitution –

55 Ibid., 60-63.

56 Ibid., 64-66.

57 From 1991 until 1995, the flag depicted the Vergina Sun, which led to protests from neighboring Greece. Excavated in 1977 during archaeological digs in Vergina (in the northern Greek province of Macedonia), the symbol of the Vergina Sun—a stylized star with sixteen rays—is the intellectual property of Greece. The dispute was partially resolved in October 1995 under a compromise brokered by the United Nations. The symbol was removed from the flag of the Republic of Macedonia as part of an agreement to establish diplomatic and economic relations between the two countries. It was replaced by an eight-pointed sun, which has been displayed on the flag ever since. (For further reading on this

were considered elements of an irredentist policy that threatened the very integrity of the Greek nation-state. As a consequence, Greece reinforced its diplomatic and economic pressure and tried to prevent international recognition of the Macedonian state's name. The official UN designation for the new state thus remained »the former Yugoslav Republic of Yugoslavia« (FYROM).[58] The name issue remains unsettled to this day, as the latest conflict over Macedonia's attempted accession to NATO in April 2008 testifies.[59] The reframing of Macedonia's national history is intimately linked to this ongoing political dispute. Both Greek and Macedonian nationalists insist on the exclusive right of their respective communities to call themselves Macedonians. They both lay claim to the same name, the same symbols, the same ancient heroes, even the same cities and towns. This hauntingly shows the degree to which historiography is related to actual political developments.[60]

The chapter on the Illyrians is also very detailed and gives insight into the geographical extension of the Illyrian tribes on the eastern shore of the Adriatic and in the Dinaric Alps stretching from present-day Slovenia to northern Greece. The Illyrians are depicted as a tribal people primarily engaged in pastoralism and agriculture. Before the formation of the Illyrian kingdoms, the tribes are said to be prone to rivalry and strife. A subchapter deals with the Illyrian culture, religious cults and beliefs, as well as with archeological findings in the area of present-day Albania. The language of the Illyrians is described as distinct but

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issue see: Keith Brown, »In the realm of the Double-Headed Eagle: Parapolitics in Macedonia 1994-9,« in *Macedonia. The Politics of Identity and Difference*, ed. Jane K. Cowan (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 122-139.

58 After Macedonia's acceptance into the UN under its provisional name, Greece imposed an embargo on its northern neighbor in 1994. The strained bilateral relations lasted until September 1995, when under U.S. mediation, the two countries managed to negotiate a deal, the Interim Accord, according to which Greece lifted the embargo and recognized Skopje under its provisional name. In exchange, Skopje agreed to change its flag and reaffirmed that nothing in its constitution could be construed as an irredentist claim against Greek territory (International Crisis Group, »Macedonia's Name: Breaking the Deadlock,« *Europe Briefing* 52, 12 January 2009, 3-4 [http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5862&l=1]).

59 On the Greek-»Macedonian« dispute in the diaspora see: Loring M. Danforth, *The Macedonian Conflict. Ethnic Nationalism in a Transnational World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 11 – 55.

60 On the interrelation between politics and historiography among ethnic Macedonians see: Ulf Brunnbauer »Nationalgeschichte als Auftrag. Die makedonische Geschichtswissenschaft nach 1991,« *Jahrbücher für Geschichte und Kultur Südosteuropas* 4 (2002): 165-203; Ulf Brunnbauer, »Illyrer, Veneter, Iraner, Urserben, Makedonen, Altbulgaren… Autochthonistische und nichtslawische Herkunftsmythen unter den Südslawen,« *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie* 42, no. 1+2 (2006): 37-62; Stefan Troebst, »Makedonische Antworten auf die »Makedonische Frage« 1944-1992: Nationalismus, Republiksgründung, Nation-Building,« *Südosteuropa* 41, no. 7 – 8 (1992): 423-442; Christian Voss, »Irredentismus als historischer Selbstentwurf. Wissenschaftsdiskurs und Staatssymbolik in der Republik Makedonien,« *Osteuropa* 7 (2003): 949-962.

similar to that of their immediate neighbors, the Hellenes, the Macedonians, and the Thracians. The chapter avoids mentioning any theories linking the Illyrians of the antique age with the modern Albanians. Indirectly, however, this link is obvious, given that the main emphasis of the chapter is on historical events and archeological excavations in present-day Albania.[61]

The second history textbook under scrutiny deals with the Middle Ages and is written by three authors, two Macedonians and one Albanian.[62] The chapter on Macedonia in the early Middle Ages treats the Slavic invasion, the relationship between the Slavic invaders and the autochthonous Macedonians, and the process of Christianization. Pupils learn that the autochthonous Macedonian population was forced to retreat to fortified cities after the invasion of the Slavic tribes. In a short paragraph the cultural assimilation of the local Macedonians with the Slavs is explained. According to the theory propounded, the culturally advanced Macedonians passed on their name and the name of their region to the Slavic people. The Slavs, on the other hand, gradually imposed their language on the local Macedonians. In this way, the specific ethno-cultural traits of the autochthonous Macedonians were incorporated into the now demographically dominating Slavic element.[63]

Concerning the process of evangelization, the codification of Slav dialects, and the development of a distinctive Slavic culture, particular attention is given to the works of two brothers, Saints Cyril and Methodius, and their pupils, Saints Clement and Naum. It is emphasized that the two brothers were of Slavic origin and that the language they used for the translation of the holy books from Greek into the liturgical Church Slavonic was a Slavic Macedonian dialect spoken in the area around Thessalonica.[64] The city of Ohrid is portrayed as a center of Orthodoxy and Slavic literary culture and explicitly regarded as part of the national Macedonian heritage.[65]

The same is true for the »Macedonian Empire,« founded by Samuil in the late tenth century. The formation of an »independent Macedonian state«[66] in the second half of the tenth century is explained as an insurrection of the sons of Prince Nikola against Bulgarian domination. A second uprising of the Macedonians against Byzantine pretensions to dominate Macedonia took place some years later. Despite this external pressure, Macedonians »managed to liberate all

61 Ibid., 48-53.
62 Boškoski et al., *Istoria za VI oddelenie/ Historia për klasën VI* (Skopje/Shkup: Prosvetno Delo SHA, 2005).
63 Ibid., 32.
64 Ibid., 35.
65 Ibid., 38-39.
66 Ibid., 42.

of Macedonia apart from Saloniki [Thessaloniki].«[67] Under Samuil the state was extended into an empire that stretched from the Sava River and the Danube in the north to Mount Olympus in the south, and from the Black Sea in the east to the Adriatic Sea in the west.[68]

This chapter focuses extensively on the spatial dimension of nationhood, which is particularly relevant with regard to the imagination of a common homeland. The borders of Macedonia, already delineated in early times, remain unaltered as a unified geographical entity during the medieval period. This territory is imbued with the meaning of homeland, the country of the forefathers, who settled there and fought continually for the sake of their people. At the same time, the territory is endowed with the virtue of culture: Cultural developments that took place there are ascribed to the Macedonian people, who are regarded as the dominant ethnic element in the area. Since the relationship between space and ethnicity is static, a coherent notion of a people's unity, their (ethnic) identity, and their territory becomes evident. In this way, the cultural and political developments that took place in the area of Ohrid and Prespa are »naturally« seen as a part of the »Macedonian« national heritage.

The same priorities have been brought to bear on the presentation of Albanian medieval history. In the textbook chapter »Albania in early medieval times,« the notion of »Illyrian territories« is applied on several occasions.[69] Although the borders of this medieval Albania remain undefined, the textbook's authors obviously want to suggest that Albania already existed as a territorial entity at that time. The linkage of Albania with the Illyrian territories creates the impression that Albania comprised a much larger territory in the past than it does today. However, what this chapter really wants to stress is the Illyrian continuity on the territory named Albania: With the invasion of the Slavs, the Illyrians were forced to retreat to the mountains but managed to remain a dominant element in the area of present-day northern Albania and Epirus. The so-called Macedonian Empire of Samuil, which stretched across »Albanian territories,« is presented as a temporary phenomenon that did not leave important traits in the area.[70]

Another chapter on Albanian medieval history treats the feudal principalities and the Despotate of Arta founded in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. These short-lived principalities are presented in detail. The same applies to the presentation of the »Albanian principalities« in the fourteenth century. Pupils have to learn many names and toponyms but are never given broader explanatory

67 Ibid., 43.
68 Ibid., 44.
69 Ibid., 28–9.
70 Ibid., 29.

context.[71] The »Macedonian feudal principalities« of the thirteenth century are presented in a similar fashion.[72]

With regard to the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans, the two national narratives again follow similar patterns of explanation. The Ottoman Empire is depicted as a mighty, well-organized state with its own cultural features based on Islam. In the Albanian narrative, inner strife and rivalry among Albanian feudal lords are offered as explanations for the quick Ottoman advance on »Albanian territory.« Also mentioned is the Albanian landlords' early conversion to Islam, a fact that helped them preserve their position and property for a certain period of time.[73]

The Macedonian narrative differs in this respect: It emphasizes the notion of resistance by introducing King Marko – naturally a Macedonian by origin, rather than a Serbian or Bulgarian – as a ferocious fighter for the preservation of independence and Christianity. But in 1385, Marko was forced to accept the status of a vassal. It was his sense of responsibility to his »Macedonian people« that supposedly led him to submit to Ottoman suzerainty. Thus, due to his wise leadership and his bravery, he managed to shelter his people from Ottoman violence. »Since he was the last Macedonian king, the people know a lot of songs about him.«[74]

At this point Gjergj Kastriota Skanderbeg, the most important figure of the Albanian history, appears in the textbook. His life and deeds are presented in great detail. The plot of his life is indeed interesting: He was taken captive by the Ottomans and educated in the Sultan's court; there he changed both his name and religion, to be known from then on as Iskander Beg (alb. Skënderbeg). On a military campaign with the Ottoman army in 1443, he deserted with a number of Albanian soldiers and returned to Kruja. There he managed to establish an alliance of Albanian nobles at the so-called League of Lezhë in 1444. In the textbook, the Albanian nobles are depicted as loyal and closely related to each other; their widespread rivalries, which seriously impeded a strong union, are glossed over.[75] Skanderbeg became famous for his successful twenty-five-year struggle against the Ottomans. The textbook authors point to the fact that two important battles against the Ottomans took place in present-day Western Macedonia. Paragraphs dealing with this event are emphasized in bold letters in

71 Ibid., 73-74.
72 Ibid., 85-87.
73 Ibid., 78.
74 Ibid., 92.
75 For a critical account of historical narratives on Skanderbeg see: Oliver Jens Schmidt, »Skënderbeu – elemente për reinterpretim,« in *Gjergj Kastrioti Skëndergeu 1405 – 1468*, (Shkup: Instituti për Histori Nationale, 2006), 25 – 40.

the textbook.[76] Today this area is predominately inhabited by Albanians. The insertion of Skanderbeg into the Albanian historiography in Macedonia is a recent phenomenon, and both Albanian historians and officials pay particular tribute to it. Skanderbeg is a symbol of a lifelong resistance against »foreign occupation«; his determination and warrior abilities are highly esteemed among Albanians. Since the Albanian military insurrection in 2001, Skanderbeg's portrait can be found almost everywhere in Albanian-inhabited areas of Macedonia. There is hardly an office, restaurant, or cafe, an Internet bar or bathroom where a picture of Skanderbeg is not on display.

The approach to ancient and medieval history is to a large extent influenced by actual political conflicts and ethnohistorical disputes. The mode of representation and the way topics are treated are dominated by actual political concepts of the nation that are retrospectively projected into the past. Both national narratives are guided by a concept of ethno-space suggesting that »Macedonia« and »Albania« are ethnically compact units consisting of historical territories that remained virtually unaltered from antiquity up to contemporary times. Pupils are thereby given the impression that the current political entities do not correspond to the natural ethnographic borders of the nation. The idea is thus conveyed that both nations, Macedonian and Albanian, are victims of a process of forced and unjust dismemberment and territorial contraction. The presentation of an unbroken and unaltered continuity of a people within a properly defined territory implicitly contains the danger of irredentism. In emphasizing a static relationship between territory and people, such a presentation for the most part neglects the dynamics of historical processes and of migration movements, the molding and shifting of identities, as well as changing political, social, and cultural developments. History thus used – to define allegedly distinct ethnic features that have diachronically determined the self-perception of a particular people – becomes a vehicle for essentializing ethnicity. The ethnocentric approach to history is particularly problematic with respect to the treatment of multiethnicity and multiculturalism. The ethnic territories are treated as though composed of only one common ethnic culture; social and cultural distinctions between towns and the countryside, between mountains and plains, between border areas and the center are mostly ignored. The isolated presentation of ethno-narratives singles out the individual historical developments from the broader Balkan context. In this way, the confrontational relationship with »the other« is emphasized, and alternative, peaceful forms of relationship are widely neglected. Moreover, by emphasizing the notion of »resistance« as a continuous moment in ethnic history, textbook narratives underscore the values of heroism and martyrdom. National history thus might be seen as a perennial fight for

76 Ibid., 107-108.

freedom and independence within a milieu of rivalry and conflict. There is hardly any notion of peaceful ethnic coexistence in the textbooks under analysis. By projecting the modern concepts of ethno-nation and ethno-space back into the past, the textbooks create a distorted and anachronistic image of early and medieval history that runs counter to the findings of contemporary historical research on these topics by international scholars.

4. Alternative Approaches

It is difficult to find alternative historical approaches that question the pre-eminent paradigm of ethnocentricity in the Republic of Macedonia. In what follows, two projects that can be regarded as exceptional due to their innovative approach will be presented. The two leading figures in civil society engaged in history teaching projects are Violeta Petroska-Beška and Mirjana Najčevska. Together they direct the Center for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution, a research and training center within the SS. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje.[77] The explicit aim of the Center for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution is to design curricula and teaching material for history teachers in order to improve inter-ethnic relations and support education for human rights, communication, and conflict resolution.

»Historians basically like to glorify their own nation.… What we are interested in and what we intend to do is to make historians aware of the fact that there always exists a second legitimate opinion formulated by the respective ›other‹.«[78] This was, according to Petroska-Beška, one of the guiding principles of a project carried out with Macedonian and Albanian high school history teachers and students in the teacher-training departments of the SS. Cyril and Methodius University in the aftermath of the military confrontation of spring 2001.[79] The majority of participants in the workshops were ethnic Macedonians and Albanians. The methods applied in these workshops were based on the idea that each side should, as a first step, formulate the most extreme partisan perspectives held by its respective ethnic community. Between the first and second phases of each workshop, teachers and students worked on topics such as the nature of conflicts; perceptions and misperceptions in conflict situations; ethnic

77 Violeta Petroska-Beška is a professor of psychology at the Faculty of Philosophy; Mirjana Najčevska is a senior researcher and legal expert at the Institute of Sociological, Political, and Juridical Research.

78 Interview with Violeta Petroska-Beška, Co-director of the Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution in Skopje, recorded 2005.

79 The project »Understanding History, Preventing Future Conflict« was financed by the United States Institute of Peace. See: www.usip.org.

stereotypes and prejudices; majority-minority relations and discrimination; and human rights and freedom. Explored through ethnically neutral exercises involving simulations and discussions based on individual attitudes and everyday experiences, each topic yielded insights that helped lead the teachers and students toward the desired goal, namely, legitimizing the other side's perspective. The two initiators conceded that, as a result of this pilot project, »the participants had learned to listen to the opinion of the other ethnic community,« but »they were still a very long way from sympathizing with, or even perhaps understanding, the other side.« But to overcome the different perceptions and to transform the participants' attitudes considerably would certainly have been unrealistic. Nevertheless, a certain progress was achieved through the program. »After the workshop, participants knew much more about the other side's outlook, were much more conscious of the shortcomings of ethnic stereotypes, were more prepared to argue rationally about the causes and consequences of the recent armed conflict, and appreciated that their own opinions of the conflict did not necessary encompass the full historical truth.«[80]

A second more recent project initiated by Petroska-Beška and Najčevska was carried out in collaboration with Irena Stefoska and Isamedin Azizi, two young historians at the Institute of National History in Skopje. »Narratives in Our Histories« was initiated with the aim to »offer students historical narratives about events that are important for the ethnic identity of both Macedonians and Albanians.«[81] As with the earlier project, the aim was not to negate or contest either of the two narratives, »but to enable the representatives of one ethnicity to become familiar with the narrative of ›the other.‹« This project was guided by the idea that what was required for the ethnicities to get to know each other was the recognition of differences in the historical developments of the respective communities. However, the prepared narratives should also highlight common elements in the histories of the two communities. The textbook material prepared by the Stefoska and Azizi contains three important topics that have had a substantial influence on the development of Macedonian and Albanian ethnic identity: religions in the Ottoman Empire, division of the ethnic territory, and the Second World War. In addition, accompanying teachers manuals were published, offering guidelines on how to approach the textbook material. Teachers are directed to follow precisely formulated stages in studying the narratives. First the teacher presents a topic, after which the students study and then discuss the material. Next, the teacher presents the content of the narrative of »the other« ethnic group regarding the same topic. Students have to famil-

80 Violeta Petroska-Beška and Mirjana Najčevska, *Macedonia. Understanding History, Preventing Future Conflict*, United States Institute of Peace, Special Report 115 (2004): 9–10.

81 Violeta Petroska-Beška et al., eds., *Narratives in Our History* (Skopje, 2006).

iarize themselves with this narrative and then discuss it as well. Finally, the two narratives are compared. The comparison consists of looking for similarities and differences between the two narratives. The results of this discussion, held in smaller groups, should be presented in front of the entire class. In a final step, the comparisons of the narratives of one's own ethnic group and that of »the other« should be discussed. The teacher, in this final process, should refrain from giving his or her own comments, thereby avoiding the risk of being deemed biased. The teacher's obligation is to take due care that students refrain from exhibiting any bias that might favor one narrative at the expense of the other.[82]

Compared to the presentation of the respective historical narratives in the obligatory textbooks, this topic-oriented approach is innovative in several respects. First, the presentation of the narratives is based more strongly on explanations of historical processes than on the enumeration of facts and data. In this way the narratives become more analytical than descriptive. A second important step forward is the intention of the authors to put the respective ethnic narratives into a broader historical context, something often lacking in the ordinary history textbooks. By employing a more competent contextualization of historical phenomena, the two pedagogues wish to provide for a better understanding of the differences between various state formations, such as empires on the one hand and nation-states on the other. In this way, the ethnic nation's position as primary actor in history is weakened, at least to some extent. Finally, the narratives are written in a lively, stimulating, and highly readable manner, which is not often the case with ordinary history textbooks. However, there are also some critical shortcomings with regard to this presentation of national history that bear mentioning. The narratives remain strongly based on the prerequisite of isolated ethnic histories. Macedonians and Albanians are depicted as compact ethnic communities whose identities were ethnically defined und thus remained for the most part unchanged during history. This aspect of the presentation is particularly questionable as it ignores the results of contemporary scholarship about the formation of national identities. On the other hand, one has to concede that the didactical method applied in this project opens the space for dispute on delicate historical topics between the students of each ethnic group, who usually do not communicate with each other. However, it remains questionable how well the teachers will be able to handle their role as unbiased mediators. Given the fact that history teachers are often deeply involved in the production of their respective ethnic narratives, this task can hardly be fulfilled.

82 Petroska-Beška et al., *Narratives in Our History.*

Conclusion

The period from Macedonia's independence in 1991 until the outbreak of armed conflict in spring 2001 was marked by the aim of the titular nation to claim legal sovereignty in educational affairs in order to defend its predominance in the production of the symbolic coordinates of the state. With the signing of the OFA, a system of power-sharing was introduced that shifted the balance of power in the country toward greater equality in favor of the Albanians. The more pronounced participation of the Albanians in the administration certainly contributed to improvements in the security and stability of the country. However, it must be questioned whether the Albanians' stronger institutional incorporation also increased the level of social integration. As the examples presented in this paper illustrate, the ethnic majority group had to concede to a number of »compromises« that were essentially imposed by the international community. The Albanians' strategy to escalate the conflict and thus to involve the international community as an interventionist power proved a successful move. The uneven relationship among the constituent nation, its largest minority, and the international community is to a large degree maintained through the expectation of European and transatlantic integration. The (temporary) failure of NATO accession due to the unresolved name issue puts enormous pressure on the stability of the country.[83] However, the ongoing debates on history education and ethnohistorical representation show also the dimension of the ethnic conflict, which certainly cannot be solved solely through the signing of agreements between political parties and former rebel groups that have lost a good part of their credibility and are only loosely related to their constituencies. International politics continues to focuses primarily on issues of »hard security,« like reforms of the army, the police, and the judiciary. »Softer« issues, like education, media, and human rights, are still underestimated and given only peripheral attention. The OFA, for instance, contains only a few provisions that touch upon educational issues. This oversight testifies to the fact that international policy makers are still not sufficiently aware of the difficulties when it comes to bridging the social cleavages between ethnic Macedonians and Albanians. Political cooperation on the governmental level is an important precondition for sustainable

83 For ethnic Albanians, accession to NATO is a top-priority issue that should not be prevented by the name conflict with Greece. In a survey carried out in July 2008, 95 percent of the Albanians voted in favor of a change of the state name in order to settle the conflict with Greece and to achieve NATO membership. The majority of ethnic Macedonians, on the other hand, would reject NATO membership if the name of their state had to be changed (Anila Limani, »Shqiptarët duan NATO-n, s'kanë gajle për emrin,« *Lajm Maqedoni* Shkup, 19.–20. korrik 2008: 5). The clear distinction in the stances of the two ethnic groups illustrates the degree to which identification with the symbol of the state differs between them.

stability, but this alone cannot provide for a policy that is able to respond to the deep-rooted problems of discrimination, reciprocal distrust, and mismanagement. The postconflict environment in Macedonia, which looks promising from the outside, is nothing more than a short-lived compromise based on a huge amount of wishful thinking that does not correspond to the social realities on the ground. Both ethnic communities are deeply involved in processes of nation-building due to ongoing challenges of the very principles of the nation. In such an emotionally charged environment, historical thinking and history teaching become delicate issues. The fact that historical narratives of the very ethno-nation are decisive elements in the production of »stateness« contributes to the ongoing invention of history with the sole purpose of defending oneself against »the other.« Here, ethnic Macedonians are in the difficult position of designing a national history out of a material that was already »possessed« by others. As a latecomer in the process of nation-building, Macedonians have to appropriate elements of the historical claims of their neighbors. What looks from the outside like a process of artificial appropriation of national identity is in fact a desperate attempt to keep a country together that is torn apart by the forces of inter-ethnic strife and severe economic crisis. Albanians, on the other hand, are in a much more favorable position since they make use of an already well-defined arsenal of historical narratives. Macedonian Albanians have their motherland in their »backyard« and Kosovo in their immediate vicinity, and they can count on both these states as well as on the support from the international community. The latter is also a guarantee of the integrity of the Macedonian state. The compromise between Macedonians and Albanians to refrain from intervening in the affairs of the respective other with regard to the production of historical myths is certainly a pragmatic decision to avoid ongoing disputes. It seems as if ethnic Macedonian historians have stepped down from their dominant position due to the numerous »struggles« they already have to fight with neighboring Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia. Appeasement within the country is obviously a reasonable strategy. However, it became clear from the disputes within the curricula commission that there was hardly any other way for ethnic Macedonians to go. Albanians, if they weren't given what they wanted, threatened to revert to well-tested methods of resistance and ethnic self-organization. The compromise thus was not a result of negotiations on equal footing but a forced one—at least for the ethnic Macedonians. This constellation is no basis for a fruitful cooperation; it can only be a temporary settlement of a deep-rooted conflict. Strategies that might be able to overcome this conflict and create conditions for a demilitarized and peaceful coexistence are scarce in the field of history education. The best compromise that can be reached at the moment is what Petroska-Beška and Najčevska practice in projects methodologically guided by social-psychological approaches. Figuratively speaking, one might think that both ethnic commun-

ities are so deeply involved in the exploration of their own historical identity that there is neither space nor time left for the perception of the respective »other.« The obsessive search for the consolidation of the national self will continue as long as the basic principles of the nation-state are not commonly recognized. However, it remains an open question how ethnic Macedonians and Albanians can come closer on the basis of the preeminent historical narratives of their history textbooks, which portray their respective nations as natural, homogeneous, and bounded entities that possess mutually exclusive identities, cultures, histories, and territories. The social-psychological approach of strengthening one's own position by providing it with a coherent historical identity might, in the best scenario, engender a sense of reciprocal respect; in a lasting politically strained environment, however, it might sow the seeds for mutually exclusive positions that favor difference and segregation over common ground and integrity.

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Falk Pingel

From Ownership to Intervention – or Vice Versa? Textbook Revision in Bosnia and Herzegovina[1]

Of all the countries which emerged from the former Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BaH hereafter) was affected most directly by violent conflict. It is here that the war lasted longest, and claimed the highest number of victims, both in absolute terms and in proportion to the local population. The heritage of this war has left an indelible mark on the reconstruction process in general and in the education sector in particular, such that this country and its education system are still, about fifteen years after the end of war, in the middle of a process of rebuilding and renovation. It is for this reason that international organisations play a far more important and more enduring role here than in most other countries which emerged from the former Yugoslavia, a situation which is comparable only with Kosovo, yet whose social structure is characterised by more distinct majority and minority groups and therefore, since attaining independence, is likely to achieve stable, though not necessarily fair, structures more quickly than in BaH. The Dayton Peace Agreement has certainly given BaH a degree of political structure, but it is not yet possible to predict whether it will prove to be economically and politically stable enough to survive over time without the intervention of the international community (IC hereafter).[2] Peace

1 This article is based on my work for the project »Textbook Research and Textbook Revision in South East Europe« at the Georg Eckert Institute (GEI) from 1999 to 2008, and as chair of the Education Department of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2003; my function in these organisations was not as an expert on South East Europe, but on questions concerning international education and textbook research. For this reason, I am deeply indebted to my colleagues, who worked with me on the project about Bosnia and Herzegovina at the GEI, for their advice and support: Augusta Dimou, Heike Karge and Katarina Batarilo.

2 The International Community comprises the representatives of member states of the *Peace Implementation Council* (PIC hereafter) and international organisations actively rebuilding BaH. Organisations helping to reconstruct the education system include the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the World Bank, OSCE, UNICEF, UNDP, and UNESCO. The High Representative (HR hereafter) is the highest authority in the country whose task is to oversee the implementation of the civil stipulations of the Dayton Agreement (Annex 10); he has the power to scrap laws and dismiss politicians who infringe the regulations or, by substitution, pass laws which are indispensable to the implementation of Dayton (the so-

has brought about a society characterised neither by common bonds nor by awareness of shared responsibilities, but a system in which people adhere to notions of distinct ethnic national interests. There is no notion of a common history, and even less a recognised way of remembering, describing and interpreting the recent war.

The following study addresses the material destruction of the educational infrastructure, the breakdown of the federally organised educational institutions of the former Yugoslavia (then bound together by a single state ideology) into ethnically defined segments, which became the main pillars of the postwar system and shaped the ethnically defined education policy as well as the politics of memory.

1. The war has given rise to new curricula and textbooks, and sparked off the division of the education system into institutions which are marked by ethnic interests, a situation which has been entrenched and prolonged by the Dayton Peace Agreement. The first part of this essay will therefore address the relationship between war and the peace treaty, as well as its consequences for the education system in time of peace.

2. The peace treaty and following agreements give the IC the task of supervising the implementation process. The need to demilitarise society and integrate the military into the emerging democratic society, the safeguarding of peace, the stabilisation of democratic political procedures, and the promotion of the private economic sector, meant that the international community soon had to play a central role – not only by providing advice, but also by taking initiatives and making vital decisions. However, by extending this role of the IC to the education system, it effectively exposed the contradiction between the need to promote, on the one hand, local initiative and democratic forms of participation in civil society and, on the other hand, the need to provide guidance from above as well as direct intervention.

3. Since this interaction, alternating between initiative, the recognition of needs, and obligation, has not yet led to a degree of stability which is acceptable to national and international agents, the third part of this essay will address the limits of intercultural communication and discrepancies between memorial

called Bonn powers, stipulated by the PIC in December 1997 in order to speed up the implementation of conditions for peace. See http://www.ceis-eu.org/publications/policy_briefs/2006/doc/02_2006_ceis_policy_brief.pdf). In practical terms, the HR is responsible solely to the PIC. In order to fulfil his tasks, a special Office of the High Representative (OHR hereafter) has been set up.

policies, which appear to be major obstacles impeding mutually compatible and mutually informed kinds of historical, political and geographical education.

The three dominant national groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina –Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats – are distinguished by their religion, language and national identification patterns: whereas, in this regard, Croats and Serbs in BaH feel attached to the neighbouring countries Croatia and Serbia, Bosniaks adhere more to the all-embracing nationality, be it Yugoslavian (in the past) or Bosnian (in the present day). Nevertheless, they do have much in common: the languages they use are not dissimilar, the Orthodox and Catholic churches are both Christian denominations and share a long history which is related to Islam. Moreover, the society in Bosnia and Herzegovina had been strongly influenced by the fact that the members of each national group regarded themselves as part of a wider South Slavic population. The war, however, has highlighted differences rather than similarities.

The process of national dissociation in BaH saw the introduction of an ethnic dimension that affected four areas crucial to the field of education: history (the history of the Serbs, the Croats, the Bosniaks and the history of Bosnia itself), language (Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian), religion (Serbian Orthodox Christianity, Croatian Catholicism and Bosniak Islam) as well as the large political organisations, which are not based on any fundamental, ideological principles but rely on support within the various regions, primarily from an electorate that defines itself in ethnic terms.

I. Ownership: What was once one's own becomes »foreign«

Separate education as a result of the war

The need for a revision of schoolbooks resulted from the war of 1992 – 1995 and the subsequent peace agreements. The Dayton Peace Agreement, as well as the negotiations and accords which preceded and followed it, reflect the ambivalence of the war, both as a war against a foreign enemy and as a civil war, insofar as it

- brought about peace between the military opponents,
- secured the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina and thereby turned the state of rump Yugoslavia into an official foreign partner,
- sealed peace with the Bosnian-Serbian military and politicians, thus turning these self-appointed opponents of the state of BaH into partners as well,
- contains in germ the future state constitution (Annex 4),
- guarantees fundamental rights by including references to the European

Convention on Human Rights and other international human rights conventions (Annex 6).

The imbalance between the negotiating partners was reflected in the complex political structure of the conflict and peace process:

- The Dayton Peace Agreement was signed by Izetbegović for Bosnia and Herzegovina, by Milošević for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and by Tudjman for Croatia
- These representatives of sovereign states had to rely on the votes of representatives of the three ethnic groups in BaH during the negotiations which led to the Peace Agreement
- Although Izetbegović signed the agreement on behalf of BaH, he was in fact (until the end of the war) merely in charge of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which had been formed during the war with a loose political structure serving to protect the military alliance, which international pressure (in particular from the USA) had forced Bosnian Croats and Bosniaks to join in 1994 in order to guarantee military superiority over Serbian troops. Following the peace agreement, this loose federation, brought about by foreign powers as an emergency solution, became a political unity and key component of the newly defined state of BaH
- The representative of the government of the United States of America, Richard Holbrooke, was a key mediator in the peace process.

The peace agreement established a new, apparent, state of peace between BaH, Serbia and Croatia, and at the same time brought about domestic peace. This was achieved largely by external intervention; while Milošević was hailed for a while, both nationally and internationally, as a »peace mediator,« political representatives of the Bosnian Serbs and Croats remained more sceptical.[3]

The war and peace treaty shed light on one of the »new wars« which have provoked a large number of academic debates since the 1990 s, albeit not because these wars are novel, but because the collapse of the bipolar world has drawn attention to regional centres of conflict which are no longer related to the former global polarisation – centres of conflict which are often characterised by unusual degrees of cruelty and enduring patterns of violence and tension, and

3 For an evaluation of the peace agreement, see Thorsten Gromes, *Demokratisierung nach Bürgerkriegen. Das Beispiel Bosnien und Herzegowina* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2007); *Dayton and Beyond: Perspectives on the Future of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, ed. Christophe Solioz, Tobias Vogel (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2004).

which can only be partially contained, and not brought to a definitive end.[4] These wars were sparked less by the conflicting interests of sovereign states, as were the major wars during the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, than by tensions between groups within states or societies which are defined in ethnic, religious or cultural terms, or with reference to specific political ideologies. These wars, which frequently resemble civil wars or wars of secession, come to an end only as a result of the mediation of third parties or military intervention. The three-year-long conflict over the independence of BaH, which took place very close to the border with the established states of the European Union, threatened to escalate into a long and uncontrollable war. The armed conflict which accompanied the dissolution of Yugoslavia had proved to be consistently more violent over time: leading from a war lasting only a few weeks, which led to a clear victory of the »secessionists« in Slovenia, to a war between Serbs and Croats with almost unprecedented severity and enmity, and finally to the war over BaH, the final phase of which degenerated into acts of mass extermination carried out in the face of foreign troops, embroiled Croatia and Serbia in renewed military confrontation, and thus made the need for a swift end to conflict more urgent than it had ever been.

In such conditions, the peace treaty had become a very complicated task, particularly because all of the Bosnian parties had laid claim to the right to make their own demands or else to leave the negotiation table and run the risk of resuming military conflict. In such a situation, it is understandable that education was not a priority in the negotiations. However, this is not the whole picture. Of course, questions regarding domestic security, territorial divisions, guarantees for basic human rights and political *rapprochement* were among the top priorities and demanded solutions. A solution was found essentially because the education system, as it emerged from the war, was not fundamentally altered by the Peace Agreement; this means that the reasons for the outbreak of the war had been at least partially acknowledged, such that the three constituent peoples each received extensive cultural autonomy and a strong political foundation in those areas which were home to a clear ethnic majority. Thus the Croats in Herzegovina and the Serbs in the Republic of Srpska had achieved one of their war aims, whereas the Bosniaks could not put into practice their idea of ethnic cohabitation. The national structure of BaH therefore cannot be understood in terms of minorities and majorities, for it is made up of three nations or »con-

4 Herfried Münkler, Patrick Camiller, *The New Wars* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005); Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

stituent peoples« each with (in principle) equal rights, even though these groups are represented in varying proportions.[5]

Jurisdiction over education was carried out by the entities which had formed during the war, and which had each defended a specific educational policy: the Serb Republic, and the Federation, consisting of »cantons« with either a Croatian or Moslem majority. After the peace agreement, the ministry which had previously been responsible for education throughout BaH had to be disbanded and in part integrated into the largely powerless and far smaller education ministry of the Federation.[6] As long as questions regarding education throughout the Federation had to be addressed, as was the case for higher education in the first years after the war, these questions were dealt with by the state interior ministry, for there is no central state education ministry. The »Republika Srpska« (RS hereafter),[7] which now constituted one of the two »entities« of the state of BaH, retained the central administrative structure of its education system in the process. Only in the district of Brčko, with its highly mixed population, did this solution seem to be unacceptable, such that Brčko was removed from the sphere of Bosnian self-administration and placed directly under the authority of the OHR. The second »entity,« the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is divided into ten cantons, with borders designed to account for the relations between ethnic and cultural majorities and minorities in each case, although they cannot in reality do justice to the complicated mathematics of ethnicity in the Federation. The cantons have either a majority of Bosniaks (including the econom-

5 According to the latest census of 1991, the proportion of Serbs (mostly Orthodox) stood at 31.2 percent, Croats (mostly Catholic) at 17.4 percent, and Bosnians (mostly classified in the census as ›Moslems‹) 43.5 percent. These proportions do not appear to have changed very much since then; a new census has not yet been carried out. See Katarina Batarilo, Volker Lenhart, »Das Bildungssystem in Bosnien-Herzegowina,« in *Bildungssysteme Europas*, ed. Hans Döbert, et. al., 3 vols. (Baldmannsweiler: Schneider Verlag Hohengehren, 3rd ed., forthcoming 2009).

6 Until 2006 the ministry was located in Sarajevo, and then moved (as originally planned) to Mostar; it is the only ministry of the Federation which is not located in Sarajevo.

7 Bosnian Serbs had declared the *Srpska Republika Bosna i Hercegovina* as early as 9 January 1992; it was renamed »Republika Srpska« in the early days of the war on 12 August 1992, following various measures taken by the Bosnian-Serb governmental organs to organise the administration according to people's proof of affiliation to the Serbian ethnicity; see: Armina Galijaš, »Identitätswandel der bosnischen Serben in den 1990er Jahren. Vom räumlich-staatlichen Jugoslawentum zum ethno-nationalen Serbentum,« in *Südosteuropa als Macht*, ed. Emil Brix, et al. (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 2007): 151–164. This new organisation along the lines of affiliation to »Serbianness« was immediately apparent to and experienced by school pupils: Serbian flags were raised and list of pupils' names registered according to their nationality. See quotations of interviews by Adila Pašalić Kreso, »The War and Post-war Impact on the Educational System of Bosnia and Herzegovina,« *International Review of Education* 54 (2008): 353–74.

ically more important cantons of Sarajevo, Zenica and Tuzla)[8] or Croats (mostly located in Herzegovina, with the exception of the Posavina canton close to the border with Serbia) and therefore maintained the systems inherited from the war period. Cantons containing highly mixed populations resisted the logic of a culturally defined territorial power, and were therefore a source of friction.[9]

Historical education as a strategy of nation-building

When peace was reached, it was not clear who had won or who had lost; all parties involved in the war had been recognised as negotiation partners, even if their leaders, such as Milošević and Karadžić, had previously been publicly accused by representatives of the IC for having committed war crimes. The peace effectively entrenched the power relations in place at the end of the war, yet corroborated the sovereignty and unity of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The following structure in the education sector emerged as a result:

- The RS has a central organ for education, curricula and textbook development.
- The cantons of the Federation each have their own education minister. The education ministers of the five cantons with a Croatian majority work in collaboration and generally agree to use the same curricula and textbooks.
- The main task of the education ministry of the Federal Government is to coordinate the work of the cantonal ministries. However, the education ministers of the Croatian cantons permit the Federal Ministry to carry out little more than an advisory role; the influence of the Federal Education Ministry is essentially confined to the cantons with a Bosniak majority.
- In cantons or municipalities which contain a large minority of one of the three main ethnic populations, parallel curricula and school systems coexist, each with an emphasis on Serbian, Croatian or Bosniak respectively. The education ministers essentially feel responsible only for those schools which represent »their« ethnic minority.
- The director of the education department of the municipality of Brčko works

8 The cantonal structure had been introduced as early as March and May 1994 when treaties were signed in Washington and Vienna, which had again brought the Croats into a coalition with the Bosniaks who claimed to representing the all-Bosnian interests. This structure had to be respected after the war in order to sustain the coalition with the Croats. Thus, the Croats failed to establish an undivided territory similar to the RS created by the Serbs; the Herceg Bosna Republic, declared on 3 July 1992, had to be abandoned in favour of the cantonal structure.

9 Since the name of the cantons had been subject to debate, the OHR decided that the cantons should be given numbers. In order to ease identification, we refer here to the main towns in each of the cantons by their names.

independently from this structure and is effectively an equal partner to the other ministers

The constitution grants the governments of the RS and the cantons with Croatian majorities the right to maintain special relations with their respective sister nations, that is, the neighbours Serbia and Croatia. The close relations with Serbia and Croatia influence the nature of the education systems. The education ministers make sure that it is easy for Serbian students to study in Belgrade, and for Croatian students to study in Zagreb. They insist that schools and universities ought to provide education in the appropriate disciplines and languages, which itself warrants a degree of »nationalisation« of education.

One could say that these policies have turned the education system into a victim of the peace process, and that many of the continuing shortcomings are rooted in policies which formed the basis for the Dayton Peace Agreement. It is not unusual that education systems play a secondary role in peace treaties. Nevertheless, historical and political education is of major importance when »peace-building« follows the initial phase of »peace-making« – a factor which some peace treaties take into account, especially with reference to civil wars or domestic political conflicts.[10] In BaH the emphasis is exactly the opposite: Although the recognition of the separate education systems was one of the fundamental conditions for the peace treaty, the treaty itself was void of any kind of explanation of what the education policy should consist of. Therefore, in the immediate aftermath of the war, the forms and contents of educational reform had a very low priority for the IC.

Even before the war ended, new independent curricula and also some new textbooks were developed in the RS, in Herceg-Bosnia and in the area controlled by the Bosnian government. The difference between these curricula and textbooks and those produced in Yugoslavia lay less in their content than in their interpretations and evaluations of events. In the RS and in Herceg-Bosnia, textbooks dating from the socialist period which were still in use (as far as education continued under a state of war) were initially replaced by textbooks

10 For example, the Taif Agreement, which marked the (provisional) end of the civil war in Lebanon in 1989, planned to develop common textbooks for national, civic and history education; joint historical and political education was considered to be a crucial factor in the domestic peace process. See: Nemer Frayha, »Developing Curriculum as a Means to Bridging National Divisions in Lebanon,« in *Education, Conflict and Social Cohesion,* ed. Sobhi Tawil, Alexandra Harley (Geneva: UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2004), 159 – 205. For a general examination of the role of historical and political education in peace building, see: Falk Pingel, »Can Truth Be Negotiated? History Textbook Revision as a Means to Reconciliation,« *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 617 (2008): 181 – 98.

from neighbouring countries with a corresponding ethnic majority.[11] In so doing, the Serbian and Croatian governments clearly bade farewell to the ethnically mixed society and culture inherited from Yugoslavia well before either a military or lasting political decision had been made – at a time when all three areas were home to considerable minorities from each of the other two ethnic communities, and when all groups continued to be educated together. However, the number of pupils who did not belong to the respective ethnic majority rapidly dwindled in the course of the war as a result of emigration, flight or expulsion. Some teachers who belonged to a minority in their municipalities lost or left their jobs only after the war had ended, because the structural changes undertaken during the war could then no longer be considered as a temporary measure.[12]

Since it was out of the question that the Bosniaks import Serbian or Croatian textbooks, and since they did not share a bond with a nation outside BaH which had a corresponding ethnic majority, the government of BaH was obliged to develop its own textbooks, which were introduced into classrooms from 1994/1995.[13] After regaining political and military unity with the Croats, the government in Sarajevo strove to introduce the new textbooks in the Croatian-speaking cantons, and even offered to modify the textbooks in line with the requirements of the Croatian governmental institutions. This proposal was rejected by the Croats.[14] These new curricula were the first to refer to BaH as the central point of reference for cultivating political and cultural identity in education – albeit at a moment when doubt had been cast over this identity and its foundations severely shaken.

Initial studies have praised these textbooks, because they take into consideration the state as a whole and its multicultural society.[15] Although this com-

11 On the production of stereotypes and national and ethnic prejudices in these textbooks, see Wolfgang Höpken, ed., *Öl ins Feuer. Schulbücher, ethnische Stereotypen und Gewalt in Südosteuropa/Oil on Fire? Textbooks, Ethnic Stereotypes and Violence in South-Eastern Europe* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1996).

12 Interviews carried out by Katarina Batarilo prove this point; several teachers report that they were unable to leave during the war and carried on teaching.

13 The books were funded by the World Bank and printed in Slovenia; see Srebren Dizdar, *Development and Perspectives of Teacher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Sarajevo: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1998), quotations 85 and 199.

14 Pilvi Torsti, *Divergent Stories, Convergent Attitudes. A Study on the Presence of History, History textbooks and the Thinking of Youth in Post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Helsinki: Taifuuni, 2003).

15 Heike Karge, »Geschichtsbilder im postjugoslawischen Raum: Konzeptionen in Geschichtslehrbüchern am Beispiel von Selbst- und Nachbarschaftswahrnehmung,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung/International Textbook Research* 21 (1999): 315–337; Bra-

mentary is certainly justified (in contrast to the textbooks from Croatia and Serbia), it must be added that BaH is essentially approached from a Bosniak and Moslem perspective, which pays insufficient attention to the Bosnian Croats and Serbs and their historical interpretations. In her textbook analysis, Kolouh-Westin comes to the conclusion that positive values are ascribed to tolerance and peace, though only in relation to the experience of war; these textbooks, she claims, indulge in a »commemoration of cruelties« rather than »peace education« and the treatment of peaceful conflict resolution.[16] The textbooks and subject matter dealt with in schools had been marked by the war; the conflict influenced the interpretation of past violent conflicts with Serbia and Croatia and fostered images of the enemy, which thereafter were hard to shake off.[17] In light of the massacre in Srebrenica, the concept of »genocide« was applied to other violent acts committed by the Serbs in the past.[18] At the same time, Bosniak textbooks also had recourse to martial language[19] and equated the current Serbian aggression with the battles of the Četniks in the Second World War. Yet even at this time, Bosniak textbooks presented (in part) a more open narrative than those which adhered to the Serb or Croat curricula, and were therefore more open towards the history of the »other.« The less restrictive atmosphere in

nislava Baranović et al., *Education for Peace – A Conflict Resolution Intitiative for Post-war Bosnia (final report)* (Zagreb, 1999).

16 Lidija Kolouh-Westin, »Students and Teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina,« in *Democracy in Education in Bosnia-Herzegovina and FR Yugoslavia,* ed. Lidija Kolouh-Westin (Stockholm: Institute of International Education, Stockholm University, 2002), 169 – 253; the same conclusion was reached by Torsti's study of textbooks published during the war, *Divergent Stories, Convergent Attitudes.*

17 »There is a constant emphasis on »Bosnian uniqueness« and »Bosnian patriotism« referring to Bosnian Muslims and excluding the Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs« Lidija Kolouh-Westin, »Curriculum and Textbook Analysis,« in *Democracy in Education in Bosnia-Herzegovina and FR Yugoslavia*, 149.

18 Aida Čavdar, *Textbook Review in Bosnian and Croatian Language Education Unit, Human Rights and Rule of Law Department* (Sarajewo: OHR 2002), unpublished paper; Falk Pingel, »»Sicher ist, dass…der Völkermord nicht mit Hitler begann und leider auch nicht mit ihm endet.« Das Thema »Völkermord« als Gegenstand von Unterricht und Schulbuch,« in *Genozide und Staatliche Gewaltverbrechen im 20. Jahrhundert,* ed. Verena Radkau, Eduard Fuchs, Thomas Lutz (Wien: Studienverlag, 2004), 98 – 112; in the years preceding the war, academic publications and the media used the notion of »genocide« to describe massacres of Bosnian Moslems committed by Čentniks during the Second World War; see Ger Duijzings, »Commemorating Srebrenica: Histories of Violence and the Politics of Memory in Eastern Bosnia,« in *The New Bosnian Mosaic. Identities, Memories and Moral Claims in a Post War Society,* ed. Xavier Bougarel, Elissa Helms, Ger Duijzings (Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2007), 141 – 166.

19 Heike Karge, »Bestimme Genetiv und Akkusativ: Seid ihr euch eures Verbrechens bewußt? Die Drina flußabwärts trieben ermordete unschuldige Menschen. Eine Studie zu post-jugoslawischen Schulbüchern,« in *Südosteuropa von der Krise zur Transformation*, ed. Cvetana Todorova, Edgar Hösch (Munich: 2000), 73 – 78.

Sarajevo is shown by the fact, for example, that there is a private Catholic school with a largely Croat intake, to which Bosniaks are happy to send their children and where there are teachers who are committed to developing innovative learning methods and contents.

As the siege around Sarajevo intensified, and as homes, factories and schools were destroyed, leaving communication routes within the Bosnian territory broken, teaching in some areas was at least temporarily interrupted, while teaching hours were reduced and adequate teaching materials and equipped classrooms became increasingly difficult to find.[20] Many teachers were left to their own devices, putting together their own presentations or producing their own teaching materials. The reality and proximity of war prevented them from carrying out teaching in accordance with prescribed curricula. The threat to life posed by the Serbian and Croatian troops meant that teachers could no longer fall back on the ideological framework of the principles of a balance of power which had prevailed during the socialist era.

Textbooks in the RS and in the Croat cantons continued after the war to be geared towards, if not identical with, the textbooks used in the respective neighbouring country; by doing so, however, in particular the Croat ministries and textbook authors drew on the more conservative or even nationalistic mainstream textbooks in Croatia and failed to recognise the growing number of alternatives on offer in the neighbouring country.[21] These textbooks, which had hardly been adapted to the Bosnian context or else reflected solely the Serbian or Croatian context from which they had been taken, often denied the fact that BaH was an independent political unit. They contained, for example, maps in which the state borders had been incorrectly drawn; or the history and geography of the other respective part of the country were treated as if they were not really part of Bosnia as such, and relevant only in terms of the history of relations between neighbouring peoples. The authors essentially wrote about this country not in terms of a closely knit unit of people working together, but in terms of a mutual relationship between two separate ethnic groups.

Over time, the majority language was increasingly used as the sole language for teaching purposes, and instruction in pupils' native language, as well as religious education and subjects which lent themselves to a national context, caused the education systems to drift apart. However, the content and meth-

20 A scientific analysis of teaching conditions during the war still has to be done. This summary, which tries to give an impression of the atmosphere at the time, is based on interviews conducted by Katarina Batarilo during teacher training courses in BaH and at the Georg Eckert Institute.

21 For a survey of textbooks in the second half of the 1990 s, see Christina Koulouri, ed., *Clio in the Balkans: The Politics of History Education* (Thessaloniki: CDRSSE, 2002).

odology of scientific and technical subjects retained a surprisingly high degree of uniformity, a phenomenon which will be treated in more depth below.

Divergent interpretations of the »self« and the »other«

The war played an important role in bringing about changes to images of the self and of the other in BaH. From a Serbian perspective, it involved the secession of a republic from the Yugoslavian federation of states. In principle, the constitution of 1974 allowed secession, but in the eyes of the Serbs this law could not be enforced without the approval of the Bosnian Serb population. Since the Bosnian Serb population in areas with a majority of Serbs had voted to stay in Yugoslavia and had boycotted the all-Bosnian election of 1992, in which the vote favoured an independent state of BaH, Serb politicians and historians interpreted the war as a civil war between different domestic groups which could not come to an agreement about the future of the state. They claimed that the Bosniaks, like the Slovenians and Croats before them, had engaged in an unjustifiable conflict to »destroy« Yugoslavia. This had led, in their eyes, to an internal state of war which made it impossible to identify either the aggressor or the defender. From a Bosniak perspective, the war was said to have been triggered by a Serbian attack from outside, intended to put an end to the independence of BaH. The position of the Bosnian Croats was similar to that of the Bosniaks, but more difficult to defend, because the Croats of Herzegovina had first joined the Bosniaks in their attempt to preserve the unity of BaH by fighting the Serbs, but later preferred to opt for independence or to join Croatia, and therefore laid the ground for conflict between all sides. From the point of view of the Bosniaks and Croats, the conflict constituted the dissociation and disintegration of Yugoslavia, which ensued from the demise of socialism and the introduction of democratic constitutions.

A further asymmetry between different types of self perception and perception of the other was brought about by definitions of ethnicity and nationality. Croats and Serbs were defined by their respective nationality, which has linguistic and religious connotations and builds on references to peoples which are named in the first Yugoslavian state (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), whereas the Moslem population received official recognition as an independent national group as late as 1974, in the new Yugoslavian constitution, where it is referred to in exclusively religious terms as »Moslem.« Prior to 1974, they had to identify themselves in the census as »Yugoslavs.« The Moslem Bosnians were not granted the status of nationhood when the Yugoslavian state was founded. Under the Ottoman Empire, they had converted to Islam and were therefore defined ethnically as former Croats or Serbs who had deserted their

religion and therefore their nation. The highly religiously connoted Serbian and Croatian nationalism of the nineteenth century hardly offered Moslems a chance to identify with these movements. While laying claim to the territory of Bosnia (or part of Bosnia), it considered the Moslem population as an annex, not as an integral part of the emerging Serbian or Croatian nation.

The majority of Moslem Bosnians were therefore consistently committed to maintaining the unity of Bosnia, for fragmentation would invariably weaken their position, and they recognised that their chances of survival were higher in a mixed population, since Bosnia was no longer part of the Ottoman Empire. Moslem Bosnians had defended a similar attitude under the Habsburg Empire, which was both a form of foreign rule and a defender of the unity of the country. The Austrians supported Moslem self-awareness by promoting education and culture with a »Moorish element,« because this was geared towards unity and could serve as a counterbalance to separatist Croatian and Serbian nationalism. The Bosnian Moslems developed a political consciousness very early on which expressed itself in civic rather than national categories, and which strove less to represent its own group in politics than to establish a political order which aimed to secure the coexistence of different peoples in Bosnia.

In similar fashion, during the recent conflict over the maintenance and democratisation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Moslem population acted as the agent of unity.[22] Although parts of the Serb and Croat minorities in and around Sarajevo supported the Moslem population's position, the latter had to bear the brunt of military conflict and responsibility for representing political interests of the united state. By taking on this representative function for the whole state, and striving to preserve the state as such, there emerged a new claim to Islamic nationhood, which arose during the war and began to compete with the Serbian and Croatian national movements by laying claim to its own tradition, one with the deepest possible historical roots, and which subsequently found its way into textbooks.[23] The Moslem population therefore identifies itself readily as Bosnian, while the majority of Bosnian Croats and Serbs prefer to be defined in relation not primarily to Bosnia, but to one of the neighbouring nations with a similar ethnic majority. In order to be defined linguistically as one of the three constituent peoples, but without having to refer to religion, the term »Bosniak« has become established as a term referring to the Moslem population.

22 It defended unity even to the point of promoting war. During the international negotiations early in 1992, Serbian and Croatian representatives accepted a cantonal solution similar to the political structure in place today, while Izetbegović rejected it, because he was afraid this would lead to the fragmentation of the country and the isolation of the Moslem population.

23 Wolfgang Höpken has identified a similar trend in historiography; see Wolfgang Höpken, »Post-sozialistische Erinnerungskulturen im ehemaligen Jugoslawien,« in *Südosteuropa. Traditionen als Macht*, 13 – 50.

These fundamental discrepancies between the emergence of the concept of nation and the history of the foundation of the independent state of BaH present obstacles not only to a common teaching programme, but also to attempts to treat the war in detail in teaching, as we will see later in this article. One should point out in this context that the neighbouring countries Serbia and Croatia (and Slovenia of course) have integrated the war into their national narratives as either a history of loss or success, and thereby construe their histories in terms of national continuity which reaches into the present, as the respective contributions to this volume amply demonstrate. By contrast, the history of the modern independent state of BaH in schoolbooks begins, as it were, with a blank page.

The main bone of contention is the terminology in the context of the debate over language. Following the war, the Serb and Croat politicians who defend language policy succeeded in convincing people all over the world that Croatian and Serbian are distinct languages, while the variant language spoken by Bosniaks – which had never been given recognition within the official name of »Serbo-Croat« – thereby automatically, whether deliberately or not, acquired its own status as »Bosniak.« However, the Bosniak politicians who are no less trained in language policy do not recognise this definition, for they insist that the language definition should have a more general appeal, while at the same time accusing the Croats and Serbs of being linguistic secessionists and claiming that the language should be referred to as »Bosnian.«[24] Serbs and Croats naturally refused to accept a term which made no reference to one of the respective constituent peoples, but to Bosnia as a whole (in terms of »Bosnian« rather than »Bosniak«).

This dispute over the definition of the language was coupled with a discussion over the degree to which the three variants should be differentiated, recognised, reinforced and expanded. It had an immediate effect on the language textbooks which were and are produced in each part of the country. Linguistic »purity« is considered absolute, though it presupposes that languages are codified and autonomous, which is clearly not the case. Agreements to reform language teaching without regard to ethnic divisions have therefore come to a standstill, for Serbs and Croats cannot acknowledge even the titles of »Bosnian« textbooks dealing with language and literature. The Bosniaks likewise refused to compromise on this matter. Although ethnic belonging was officially of no significance for the production of new textbooks in the Federation during and after

24 Ian Innerhofer, »Nationale Selbstbilder und die Diskussion um die Sprachbezeichnung in Bosnien-Herzegowina nach dem Zerfall Jugoslawiens,« in *Nationen und ihre Selbstbilder. Postdiktatorische Gesellschaften in Europa,* ed. Regina Fritz, Carola Sachse, Edgar Wolfrum (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2008), 306 – 327.

the war, only Bosniaks were allowed to write language books.[25] Ethnic definitions also found their way into universities. In 1993, the RS passed a new law about university education, which resulted in many non-Serbian employees being removed from their posts at the universities. Institutions on Serbian territory which belonged to the University of Sarajevo were fused under the umbrella of a new Serbian university, which resulted in a more provincial and less professional delivery of teaching, as well as the almost complete collapse of research. Textbooks were imported from Serbia and Serbian promoted as the single valid language to be used for teaching. The process of separation followed a similar path in the Croatian part of BaH. As early as 1992, following the new law about universities in Herceg-Bosna, institutions in the east belonging to the University of Mostar were incorporated into a new Croatian university (»Sveučilište Mostar«). This spurred the Federation to found a new Bosniak university in the eastern part of the city in 1994.[26] Although all universities formally accept students from all ethnic backgrounds (ethnic discrimination is forbidden by the constitution), in reality the curricula and linguistically and culturally one-sided entrance examinations lead to the creation of ethnic distinctions, especially in humanities and social science departments. Professors in humanities departments therefore became influential agents in the development of either ethnic or all-Bosnian orientation of educational strategy, for they are responsible for training secondary school teachers and their textbooks are often the most important, if not the only source of examinations, which determine what the students have to learn. Following the war, the partially destroyed or decimated libraries contained almost no international books, or else the materials they contained were so ill-suited to the new educational context that they were of no use to teachers. The situation which came about as a result of the war became the norm in the postwar years. The principle of non-intervention in matters of education and culture, as implied in the Dayton Agreement, effectively reinforced ethnic separatism and even paved the way for its long-term institutionalisation after the war.

In their respective spheres of influence, politicians immediately organised educational institutions along lines which emphasised these differences as

25 Srebren Dizdar, *Development and Perspectives of Teacher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

26 Bodo Weber, *Kriza univerziteta i perspektive mladih naučnika u Bosni i Hercegovini/Die Krise der bosnisch-herzegowinischen Universitäten und die Perspektiven junger Nachwuchswissenschaftler/The Crisis of the Universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Prospects of Junior Scholars* (Fondacija Friedrich Ebert Bosna i Hercegovina, 2007). Articles concerning language in the laws of the RS and the Croatian cantons which contravened the Dayton Agreements had to be revoked following the judgement of the constitutional court, and then adapted in line with the Bosnian constitution. However, this altered little in the actual language usage.

boundary markers for the concept of nationhood. Brčko proved to be the only exception to this rule. Here, with the help of the IC, a comparative and basically multicultural approach to textbooks in disciplines which were relevant to national identities was adopted, insofar as teachers either developed their own teaching materials or used the textbooks of all three curricula side by side. Although the IC tried to implement this technique, very few teachers have adopted it as a result.

The BaH constitution supports efforts to consolidate cultural and ethnic separation via education to such an extent that municipalities with a majority that differed from the majority registered in the local canton were allowed to enforce curricula which differed from those used at the cantonal level. This ruling could have offered an opportunity to (as in Brčko) to develop a curriculum tailored to the needs of the municipality and to the mixed population rather than to one of the majority or minority groups. In reality, however, none of the municipalities have attempted to do this. Instead, municipalities with large ethnic minorities have been granted the right to deviate from the curricula stipulated for the canton, and to adopt curricula and textbooks from another canton in which there are similarly structured majorities and minorities. The education ministers in each canton effectively exclude these minority schools from their sphere of responsibility and transfer responsibility for curricula planning and teacher training to a pedagogical institute over which they have no control. This ruling means that politicians responsible for education policy deny themselves the possibility of putting into practice their multicultural mandate, which was effectively not wanted. Municipal authority, which could have been used productively, was subordinated to a tripartite, ethnically defined social system, which henceforth determined the structure and social function of the education system.

Although the war had led to a clearer divide between ethnic majorities and minorities, most parts of BaH retained an ethnic mix. From the beginning, therefore, the policy of cultural separation was founded on an illusory idea which had little to do with the complex social reality, and therefore gave rise to a number of self-made problems which, during the subsequent phase of reconstruction, made the intervention of the IC increasingly inevitable.

Internal separation, induced by the quest for cultural autonomy, persisted not only on the level of municipalities but also in schools. Since centralisation in the RS, cooperation between Croat cantons, and the Federal ministry's coordination of the Bosniak cantons[27] had given rise to three different national curricula,

27 Attempts by the ministry to take initiative are resented and sometimes rejected by even the Bosniak cantons. When the Federal education minister Dubravko Lovrenović presented a new history curriculum that was intended for the entire Federation, he failed to win the

tensions dwindled in some schools in which minority groups had been taught with the »wrong« curriculum. Ministers in the Federation agreed that any school with at least twenty pupils from a minority could set up minority classes in which the appropriate curriculum could be applied. This ruling, passed in 1997, became valid for the whole country, including the RS. Some parents protested, since not all of them wanted to remove their children from the tradition classes. However, these decisions were mostly respected by school committees and parent representatives.[28]

In the years following the war, the IC focused primarily on the internal security of the country, the rebuilding of infrastructure, and control over newly created political organs, in particular in order to ensure democratic elections. This list of priorities was understandable in light of the severity of the war and the complex political structure of the country. Borders between the entities and between the Croat and Bosniak cantons still resembled external borders, and whenever a member of one of the minority nations had to cross these borders, discrimination and reprisals often ensued. The canton and town of Mostar effectively remained a divided city with two administrative centres, because the front had run roughly along the course of the river Neretva; only with good reason would anyone move from one sector of the town to the other. Even the education ministry was divided into two sectors, in which the minister was responsible for the Croat sector and the deputy minister for the Bosniak sector, until the OHR dismantled the dual administration in 2002. Probably the greatest achievement of the IC, and in particular of the HR, is to have made it possible to move freely around the town and to have made such a town relatively safe to live in once again.[29]

The IC confined its efforts in the field of education almost entirely to material aid by supporting (with financial aid, materials and manpower) the reconstruction of the large number of schools destroyed in the war. UNICEF joined in with material reconstruction aid by offering to print new textbooks, though it became apparent that this issue was too controversial, because there were fears that some contents of the textbooks would be offensive to one of the three constituent peoples; at that time, the IC had not planned to intervene in the

support of the Bosniak cantons. The economically relatively sound cantons of Sarajevo, Tuzla and Zenica have their own curricula and textbooks, the contents of which are very similar.

28 Srebren Dizdar, *Development and Perspectives of Teacher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 38.

29 The report by Hans Koschnik about his experiences as EU administrator in Mostar from July 1994 to April 1996 shows that freedom to move and security were particularly fragile in places where different groups of people converge in close quarters; Hans Koschnick, *Praktische Friedensstiftung durch die Vereinten Nationen am Beispiel Mostar: Erfolge und Mißerfolge?* (Bonn: Europa-Union-Verlag, 1997).

content of curricula or textbooks.[30] Whereas the IC's commitment to domestic politics was by no means confined to material reconstruction, but included the reconstruction of viable democratic institutions, the material aid to the education sector contributed exclusively towards the stabilisation of institutions, and did not give these institutions new aims such as implementing democratic, non-discriminatory forms and contents of teaching. One report, solicited jointly by the EU and the World Bank, stated self-critically that, »Rapid reconstruction has medium-term costs in terms of delayed policy and institutional reform.«[31] With reference to the peace treaty the IC had given free rein to national powers when addressing questions regarding education in the postwar years. This phase can thus doubtlessly be characterised as one of non-intervention and national ownership.

The ethnicisation of the education system, which in local terms is defined rather as a form of nationalisation, is considered by those concerned to have been a primarily political rather than pedagogical measure. In Kolouh-Westin's questionnaire, almost a third of all teachers did not even answer the question concerning reform, while 11 percent answered, »There are no reforms.« By contrast, material reconstruction was acknowledged; the most commonly mentioned changes in education were the restructuring of curricula in line with the language and history of one's own national community, though these measures were generally not classified as reforms.[32]

30 According to Dizdar, these fears led UNICEF to confine its aid to the printing of mathematics textbooks: Srebren Dizdar, *Development and Perspectives of Teacher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina,* 77.

31 *Bosnia and Herzegovina. 1996 – 1998 Lessons and Accomplishments: Review of the Priority Reconstruction and Recovery Program and Looking ahead towards Sustainable Development.* A Report for the May 1999 Donors Conference Co-hosted by the European Commission and the World Bank, Annex 9, 5. Referring to the period before 1998, the report states that, in light of the considerable damage done to school infrastructure, »…political and educational leaders and the donor community have focused … on physical reconstruction…, postponing necessary educational reforms … The chaotic post-conflict environment also contributed to the reinforcing of old structures and attitudes …, and the fragmented higher education system …«, 1. The task still to be accomplished in the future was defined as follows: »Donors should give priority … to curricular material and textbooks that are acceptable to all groups in the two Entities,« 3.

32 Lidija Kolouh-Westin, »Students and Teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina,« in *Democracy in Education in Bosnia-Herzegovina and FR Yugoslavia*, 153 – 169.

II. Making foreignness familiar

The International Community's agenda for intervention

The intervention of the IC was sparked by an inherent contradiction within the peace accords which led to a lasting dispute not only between the IC on the one hand and the national and local authorities and agents (including civil society) on the other hand, but also between the national and local authorities and agents themselves. One of the priorities of the IC is the return of refugees and exiles, insofar as the right to the freedom of movement and protection against exile and expulsion is guaranteed by international conventions, and insofar as the right to return is explicitly stipulated in Annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement. The IC was therefore obliged to take steps which would guarantee the return of war refugees and their reintegration in their ancestral home, as requested by the host countries. The first phase of the reconstruction programme was designed to provide the material basis for this measure. However, politicians at the cantonal level were among those who most frequently lacked any interest in providing adequate conditions for refugees and exiles, because a large wave of returnees belonging to minority groups could have created an imbalance in the population and in the power structure in each of the regions.[33]

It soon became clear that refugees and exiles could only be encouraged to return if there existed the readiness and an acceptable cultural atmosphere which would convince them that returning would bring them more advantages than if they stayed in their host countries. However, this generally applied only in cases where they returned to a municipality which contained a majority whose ethnicity corresponded to their own ethnicity; yet many people had been forced to leave precisely because they had belonged to the minority, which is why they now demanded guarantees that they would be safe if they were to return. Security was also demanded of behalf of their children who would have to go to local schools. If pupils were expected to be taught with a curriculum tuned to an ethnic majority to which they did not belong, parents were less likely to want to return. Hence the OHR took on the task of setting up so-called »two schools under one roof,« in order to facilitate return in areas in which there were still tensions between different groups, or in which these groups lived side by side and tolerated each other only because their daily and professional lives were largely segregated. In these circumstances, pupils from different groups attended lessons organised according to different curricula and timetables (which

33 This is why no agreement has been reached over a new census, because this could also lead to a shift in the balance of power. This is the reason why the authorities consistently adhere to the status quo in place at the end of the war.

prevented encounters between them during the breaks, for example), and were taught by teachers from their »own« group. Moreover, teaching took place in places which were physically separate, such that pupils entered school via separate entrances, even when the teaching took place in the same building. Such schools are most commonly (but not exclusively) found in cantons six (Central Bosnia/Travnik) and seven (Herzegovina-Neretva/Mostar), where the majority populations are Croat, and in canton four (Zenica-Doboj), where the majority is Bosniak.

The IC became increasingly aware that it was no longer feasible to give national institutions the responsibility to prescribe the contents of education. Dissatisfaction with the previous management of education and the relatively modest results of demands for the return of refugees and exiles motivated the IC to make a special effort to bring about a fundamental change in educational policy, which should focus on changing not the institutional structure of the education system but rather the very contents of the curricula. The first would not have been a realistic option since, according to the Dayton Agreement, the institutional structure could be changed only by making changes to the constitution, and there was too little support in parliament at the time to achieve this. The particularisation of educational content, which the governments of the RS and the cantons supported, nonetheless opposed the spirit of Dayton, for it made cohabitation for people in BaH impracticable.

However, there were also overriding political reasons why the IC was under pressure to take action. Since the war in Kosovo, priority had to be given to finding a political solution that would bring about peace in this centre of conflict. Moreover, the new »war against terrorism« meant that Iraq and Afghanistan had become new places where intervention was needed, which effectively diverted attention away from South East Europe and spurred people to call for a rapid solution to tensions there, so that more resources would be made available in other parts of the world. Since 1998, the IC has therefore striven to coordinate the varying topics and interpretations dealt with in education, and to »cleanse« teaching materials of passages which might appear to discriminate against one of the three constituent peoples or one of the minorities (e. g. the Sinti and Roma) and thereby infringe against the principles of cohabitation with equal rights. In so doing, the IC paved the way for and even encouraged activities among the Bosnians, which turned out to be rather poorly organised and therefore intensified rather than resolved contradictions.

Somewhat under the influence of nostalgia for the relatively harmonious, multicultural and multireligious cohabitation in Sarajevo, the IC proposed the introduction of a »Sarajevo Declaration« in February 1998, which was to develop

the capital city of BaH into »a model of coexistence and tolerance for the rest of the country.«[34] A »task force,« composed of representatives of the IC, the education ministry and the body of teachers from the canton, adopted a set of recommendations designed to correct the textbooks currently in use, with the explicit aim of encouraging measures enabling people to return. The grassroots of this initiative were too weak, however; the responsible minister finally rejected the recommendations, and textbook authors refused to modify their textbooks as requested. This applied above all to literary and historical texts which contained references to the recent war. Press reports suggested that the IC played down the suffering of those Bosniaks who had fought for the unity of the country and had born the brunt of the acts of terrorism committed by the Serbian occupants, in order to make it easier to act as a mediator with the other two constituent peoples. Some articles refer to textbooks from Serbia and Croatia used in BaH which reported the war atrocities (that is, those committed by the other side, of course). They accused the IC, and above all UNESCO, since it possessed more expertise in the field of textbook revision than other large international organisations, of wanting to suppress the truth and cause the victims, which the population had been forced to sacrifice, to sink into oblivion. However, oblivion would inevitably provoke new crimes. The headlines of the newspaper *Vecernje Novine* on 31 October 1998 read »Do we want to teach our children how to lie? Textbooks for a new genocide.«[35]

The campaign against textbook revision in Sarajevo, which was supposed to serve as a model for the entire country, hindered reform steps which the IC had initiated at the ministerial level. On 18 May 1998, the education ministers of the RS and the Federation, along with the deputy education minister of the Federation (for the Croat cantons), had signed an agreement on textbook revision which included all disciplines except mathematics and the natural sciences.[36] In fact, the state-controlled revision of textbooks in Bosnia had been concerned with subjects which deal with the concept of »nation« or »nationhood,« namely language and literature, history, geography, the environment and society as well as religion, and to some extent music. These »national subjects« have a special status since, in contrast to other disciplines, they concentrate more specifically on the traditions and specific cultural features of each of the three constituent peoples. Each minister agreed to appoint an expert committee which was to recommend which »objectionable passages« should be eliminated, and suggest changes to be made to longer passages. However, the ministers did not succeed

34 »The Sarajevo Declaration, 3rd February,« *Bosnia Report, New Series* no. 2, January-February 1998.

35 »Hoćemo li svolju djecu učiti lažima. Udžbenici za novi genocid.«

36 Technical and vocational schools were not included in the textbook revision.

in presenting their recommendations by the beginning of the new school year. Time in short supply, and differences in opinion about how the revision process was to unfold slowed the process down. Although these initial controversial steps towards textbook revision were of little effect, a few basic principles were nevertheless formulated which found their way into all of the subsequent recommendations, such as the fact that the war which was waged from 1992 to 1995 was not to be called the »civil war,« but the »past« or »last« war, and that none of the parties may be accused of being solely responsible for »aggression.« The trend was to neutralise terminology and thereby reduce references to conflict so that controversial interpretations could be avoided.

Since the Council of Europe stipulated that potentially offensive material from textbooks should be withdrawn before the start of the school year of 1999/2000 (one of the pre-conditions for BaH's accession to the Council), the ministers reintroduced the same review process before the beginning of the same school year. Regular but sporadic conference meetings of all the education ministers were initiated in order to guarantee the continuity of the revision process. An additional paragraph was included in the agreement which stipulated that, in the long term, textbooks from other countries may no longer be used; in cases where these books were still in use, they should be equipped with an appendix explaining the special conditions prevailing in BaH.[37] As in the previous year, the whole process got off to such a late start that complaints predictably could not be considered in time before the books went to print. However, the demands of the Council of Europe could not simply be denied. This is why the ministers compiled an additional agreement in which they reached the onerous decision to cross out those passages which it was too late to remove by blotting them out with black ink, and to mark controversial formulations with a stamp, which bore the inscription, »The following passage contains material of which the truth has not been established, or that may be offensive or misleading; the material is currently under review.« Representatives of the OHR had permission to go into schools and check whether the recommended sections had been blacked out or stamped.[38] This visible intervention in textbooks which were already in use made teachers, pupils and parents alike particularly curious to know what these sections had to say. The incriminated formulations, marked with the stamps, were often the object of discussions between pupils and teachers. In spite of the

37 *The Agreement on Removal of Objectionable Material from Textbooks to be Used in Bosnia and Hercegovina in the 1999–2000 School Year*, July 19, 1999. See Ann Low Beer, »Politics, School Textbooks and Cultural Identity: The Struggle in Bosnia and Hercegovina,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung/International Textbook Research* 23 (2001): 215–223.

38 *Progress in Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Information note prepared by the Directorate of Education, Culture and Sports* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, September 1, 1999) [GR-EDS (99)46].

stipulations, these control measures were not consistently implemented, and the controls carried out by representatives of the OHR made people think that the textbook revision had been primarily introduced by the IC, which had turned against textbook authors' freedom of expression.

Intervention and interplay

Following this difficult, controversial and essentially failed process, the education ministers of the RS and Federation (including the deputy minister) made a statement at the conference of education ministers on 10 May 2000 in Sarajevo, in which they defined a broader basis with which to proceed with the process of textbook revision. The statement defines principles which imply an extensive reform of the education system. This should include, for example, the end of ethnic segregation. Teaching should promote intercultural understanding, convey a common literary and cultural heritage, and teach pupils about the major religions of the country. Bosnia and Herzegovina was pinpointed as the country to which curricula and textbooks concerned with »national disciplines« should refer. In a more detailed additional agreement, the ministers decided to remove undesirable material from textbooks by the beginning of the following school year and, thereafter, to improve the quality of the textbooks in general. However, they did not indicate precisely how this could be done. A further task was to render the various textbooks more compatible or »harmonious,« and to introduce basic common elements which would strengthen a sense of common identity and citizenship. The subject »civil defence/social studies« was to be replaced by a new course about human rights and citizenship, and developed with the support of the Council of Europe, UNESCO and Civitas.[39]

These agreements were the first to sketch the aims of a fundamental reform of textbooks and curricula, and to incorporate textbook revision into an integrative educational policy. To start with, however, no fundamental changes were made to the revision process, so the evaluators continued to confine their complaints to single passages or concepts, without making suggestions for fundamentally new contents and methods. From one year to the next, textbook revision had to be put into practice anew, for disparaging, offensive and »anti-Dayton« formulations were still to be found.

The entity commissions set up to revise the textbooks designed to be used for

39 Civitas had piloted a course on »Democracy and Human Rights« since 1996/1997. On 10 May 2000, all the ministers of education signed a »Memorandum of Understanding« stipulating the integration of course material on »Democracy and Human Rights« (»Demokracija i ljudska prava«) into the official curricula starting from the school year 2000/2001.

the school year 2002/2003 met in Neum 10–12 July 2002, where they recommended that, in future, assessments would not only be made of textbooks already in print, but should also cover all manuscripts submitted to the ministries.[40] For in the past, they had succeeded in neither assessing all the textbooks to be used, nor presenting the recommendations in time for textbooks to be revised and reprinted by the start of the new school year.

The work of the revision commission initially aimed only to correct or cross out single words or passages; it dealt selectively with texts without taking issue with their structure and the general thrust of the interpretations. It thus did not achieve an overall revision of texts, but rather neutralised linguistic expression in some of the topics which referred to the mutual relationship between the constituent peoples. Its didactic value was therefore very limited, and left teachers in disagreement because the changes made to the textbooks often affected central aspects of their teaching, which now had to be stripped of their standard interpretations and emotional connotations without there being new evaluations available to take their place. Moreover, a number of questions had to be left unanswered because the commissions were unable to agree on »neutral« concepts to express fundamental historical processes. This applied not only to the ways in which the end of Yugoslavia and the emergence of the new states should be conceptualised, but also the representation of the conversion of Bosnian populations to Islam during the Ottoman Empire. The Croat and Serb reviewers insisted on using the concept of »Islamicisation,« whereas the Bosniaks refused to adopt this concept since it implied that the process unfolded under duress. Yet the Serb and Croat position wanted precisely to emphasise the aspect of force, and to demonstrate the cruel and violent oppression of the culture and religion of Christian Slavs under the Ottoman Empire. This is why Serb and Croat history textbooks never fail to give (often with the help of pictures) a thorough representation of the so-called »boy harvest,« the recruitment of Christian boys for the Sultan's Janissarian army. By contrast, the Bosniaks interpret the transition to Islam as a long and slow process of acculturation leading to its successful acceptance, albeit without describing in detail the socio-political ramifications of this process. The introduction of Islam led to a more positive attitude towards Ottoman rule, such that the Bosniak textbooks do not refer to it as either occupation or subjugation.[41] However, this does not

40 *Minutes from the Commission Meeting in Neum*, July 16, 2002, Ref. No. 614.2.166; author is in possession of the document.

41 The same type of argument occurs in many of the textbooks used in Arabic-speaking countries. Ottoman rule, unlike »western« colonial rule, is not characterised as an occupation of their country; see Eleanor Abdella Doumato, Gregory Starett, eds., *Teaching Islam. Textbooks and Religion in the Middle East* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007). For a detailed textbook analysis of the issue see Ahmet Alibašić, *Images of the Otto-*

mean that violent conflicts between local Bosnian rulers of the Moslem faith and the Sultan are denied. The dimensions of religion and culture are implicitly detached from those of political and economic interests, while no attempt is made to explicitly devise a model representing the complex interaction between the native population and an overarching central rule. By contrast, the Croat and Serb commission members construct an argument in which religious, cultural, economic and political repression are lumped together into a single force, which the »subjugated« native population more or less heroically strives to withdraw from or resist. This implies an overly dichotomous way of understanding the terms »occupying power« or »conquest regime,« which is repeated in the assessment of Habsburg rule. No mention is made of the different social classes, domestic social differences and political territories, nor of political participation and the common ground shared by different religions in the everyday lives of people in premodern societies.[42] As a result, the concept of tolerance is applied and assessed in different ways. Whereas Bosniak history books place emphasis on the fact that people of the Christian faith were tolerated under the Ottoman Empire, and describe this as tolerance, the Serb and Croat textbooks emphasise restrictive measures akin to persecution, such as the closure and destruction of Christian churches or the restriction of services, and therefore refuse to employ the concept of tolerance. Although some members of the commissions pointed out that Christian states in the early modern period were less tolerant towards other religions or even towards Christian faiths other than their own, this did not spur the commissions to take account of the varying historical meanings of this concept; rather, they began to talk of tolerance in such absolute terms that it could not adequately apply to the various levels of legal and social relations found in early modern, feudal and largely agrarian societies. However, the real historiographical challenge was how to account for the ethnic and cultural factor (which today plays such a central role) in a way that is commensurable to premodern societies. Since concepts such as tolerance or occupation are central to our understanding of the modern history of the Yugoslavian peoples, it is hardly possible to represent premodern history in school teaching without re-

mans in History Textbooks in Bosnia and Herzegovina, paper delivered at the International Conference on »East-West Relations: Past, Present, Future,« Sarajevo, February 14 – 15, 2008; http://www.bosanskialim.com/rubrike/tekstovi/00432R008.pdf

42 A similar simplified picture of repression and resistance, which almost stifles social analysis, can also be found in Greek history textbooks; see Augusta Dimou, »Regional History in Greek History Textbooks,« in *In Search of a Common Regional History: the Balkans and the East Asia in History Textbooks. Reports from the International Symposium held at Komaba Campus* (November 12, 2005) (Tokyo: The University of Tokyo, 2006), 83 – 106; Loris Koullapis, »The Presentation of the Period 1071 – 1923 in Greek and Turkish Textbooks between 1950 – 2000,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung/International Textbook Research* 24 (2002): 279 – 304.

ferring to present-day conflicts. This problem could be rectified, however, once the recent conflict and its consequences have been properly treated in schools and interpreted independently of the interpretations of other epochs.

Parallel to the textbook commissions which were set up by state authorities and coordinated by the OHR and the OSCE, various international organisations carried out a number of projects designed to develop innovative teaching materials. They focused mainly on the needs of secondary education, that is, vocational education, general peace education, citizenship, and the promotion of democratic and civil society participation via education.[43] One of the most ambitious projects was the attempt to introduce a programme of general, comparative education about religion entitled »Culture of Religions« in order to overcome the tendency to associate religious difference with division and tension. As early as 1999, the education ministers had agreed to implement such a project with the support of the German *Goethe Institute*, but in the end all efforts undertaken to introduce such materials met with indifference or even direct resistance, and were not given the necessary support of the Christian churches. Contrary to its aim, critics of this project suggested that it was intended to replace faith-based religious education and that it pursued a fundamentally anti-church and anti-Christian policy. It was clearly difficult to set up such a project at a time when the country was embarking upon a new national and religious direction, especially since key suggestions about how to teach the children of

43 UNESCO and the Council of Europe focus mainly on questions related to curricula, while the Council of Europe concentrates on history teaching; Jean-Michel Leclercq, *Post-accession Programme of Co-operation with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Seminar on »History Curriculum Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina,«* Sarajevo December, 10 – 11 (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002) [DGIV/EDU/Hist 2002 – 06]; *History Teaching in Schools: the work of the Council of Europe and UNESCO in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2003).
The organisation »Pupils Help Life« (*Schüler Helfen Leben*) uses funds raised by pupils working during their free time in Germany to create and strengthen pupil representatives; see Steffen Emrich, Christian Rickerts, »Peer-Support: Peace work Experiences of ›Schüler Helfen Leben,‹« in *Peacebuilding and Civil Society in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ten Years after Dayton,* ed. Martina Fischer (Münster: Lit-Verlag, 2006), 279 – 295. The World Bank also devotes part of its poverty reduction programme to the education sector by striving to comprehensively modernise secondary and higher education, and thereby adheres to so-called outcome-oriented curricula, which are designed to enable vocational schools to provide qualifications for modern professional activities which also cover a broad educational horizon and, therefore, differ from traditional programmes geared to a very specialised profession and to specific activities in BaH. However, the promotion of information technology and clusters of skills does not correspond to the current structure of technical professions in BaH. In order to avoid this approach, in which curricula were planned either »from above« or »from outside,« the EU-TAER project attempted to devise new forms of education by working in small groups with local experts with experience of existing vocation education in the area; these projects operated side by side and gave rise to potential conflict which made it more difficult to pass a general law which addressed vocational education.

migrants came from Germany which, in the eyes of some Bosnian education experts, originated in a context which was ill suited to the situation in BaH.[44] However useful these projects were, they were hardly given due consideration or compared on an equal footing. As a result, it remained impossible to develop new projects which built upon the results of previous projects.

In order to assure that projects are more carefully coordinated and represented coherently in the national institutions in future, the OHR gave the OSCE the task of coordinating education policy in 2002.[45] This policy of reform was founded on a document whose key points had been devised by the IC, and which all education ministers in BaH had agreed to at the Peace Implementation Council at its meeting in Brussels in November 2002. This document called for educational reform in the form of integrated schools and the end of ethnic segregation.[46]

The most urgent and comprehensive aspect of the reform measures was a law outlining guidelines for primary and secondary education, which was designed to prevent further growth of the rift between educational institutions and provide a foundation for non-discriminatory education enabling effective cohabitation of the three constituent peoples. A work group set up by the Council of Europe outlined such a law, which was discussed in depth and repeatedly modified in the committees of the IC, in national institutions, and by the parties of BaH. Both the lower and upper houses of parliament finally voted in favour of the law with a large majority, and thereby supported efforts to gear education

44 See the reports: *›Kultur der Religionen‹ in den Schulen in Bosnien und Herzegowina. Dokumentation,* ed. ABRAHAM – Vereinigung für Interreligiöse Friedensarbeit / Goethe-Institut, Gründungsbüro Sarajewo, 2 vols., (Sarajevo, 2001); *Towards InterReligious Understanding in Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Status Report on the Pilot Course ›Culture of Religions‹* (Sarajevo: OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Education Department, September 2007).

45 In order to increase awareness of this task, the OSCE set up a new education department. The OSCE mission in Sarajevo was the only example of such a department, for people dealing with education generally worked in the democracy department, whose main task was to monitor free elections. However, since this task had been delegated to BaH institutions for the elections of 2002, employees of the democracy department could be transferred to the new education department. In addition to the head office in Sarajevo, the OSCE also has regional offices in Mostar, Sarajevo and Banja Luka in which there are regional education advisors, who cooperate with the ministries, and education field officers in each of the larger municipalities, who are in direct contact with the schools.

46 *A Message to the People of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Education Reform/Poruka građanima Bosne i Hercegovine. Reforma obrazovanja/Poruka građanima Bosne i Hercegovine. Obrazovna reforma/Порука грађанима Босне и Херцеговине. Реформа образовања.* 21.11. 2002. In future, this document will be referred to as the »reform message.«The printed document, which has widely been circulated by the IC and local authorities, characteristically lacks any information about the authors or editors, such that it is not clear who actually sends out the »message.«

policy in the entities and cantons towards the interests of Bosnian society as a whole. This was the first time after Dayton that a law was passed concerning education which was valid for the whole country. Of course, this law only provided guidelines for further laws which were to be ratified by the parliaments of the RS and the cantons. In practical terms, the law was to remain under fire for many years to come. During preliminary discussions, members of parliament had rejected the paragraph which would have given the interior ministry powers to execute laws by substitution in case the federal representatives did not wish to comply with the legal guidelines. As a result, the HR was obliged to force three cantons to adopt laws, such that parliamentary ownership had to be upheld with international intervention in order to guarantee nationwide regulations.[47]

The national framework law for primary and secondary education aims to ensure that:

- teaching helps pupils to develop a positive relation and civic commitment to BaH as a whole;
- consistent high quality education is made available to all pupils in schools in all areas of BaH;
- conditions likely to bring about changes in schools are being improved.

In order to guarantee that curricula are founded on coherent principles, the law stipulates a »Common Core Curriculum« (CCC hereafter). Working in parallel with the parliamentary consultation process designed to ratify the law, the ministers and the IC together implemented an inter-ministerial committee in order to set up a basic curriculum. Although the idea for this is contained in the reform message, it was not clearly explained neither there nor in successive negotiations. Moreover, the committee members were not given appropriate instructions by their ministers. Political approaches to this issue prior to its implementation were radically different: most Serb and Croat representatives assumed that only issues common to the existing curricula should be maintained in the CCC, whereas Bosniak representatives expected to have the opportunity to develop a new and comprehensive basic curriculum which could subsequently be modified and completed according to the needs of the entities and cantons. In order not to put at risk the overall project, the commission focused on the smallest common denominator, compared all the existing syllabuses and filtered out what they had in common. In mathematics and the sciences, surprisingly, this amounted to between 70 and 90 percent of the teaching content. In the »national subjects« the percentage was much lower, standing around 50 percent

47 *Education Reform Agenda: An Update* (Sarajevo: EISSG – Education Issue Set Steering Group, February 2005).

or less. The common core curriculum for history is almost exclusively limited to international developments and delegates the history of the different ethnic groups completely to the syllabuses of the cantons and the entities. In its present form it still fails to meet the objectives of the framework law as outlined above.

The ratification of the CCC is interpreted in a number of different ways. It did not give rise to anything new, but made people aware that the different curricula had far more in common than the debate about educational policy had led them to believe. However, the overlaps between curricula were essentially rooted in the common Yugoslavian tradition. The CCC is therefore generally conservative, since it does not represent a new start as far as didactics are concerned. The political inconsistencies about the conception of the CCC may be ascribed in part to the IC. The English word »curriculum« is ambiguous. It can refer to a concrete teaching unit, a specific curriculum and even an educational plan covering all available subjects. When translated into the three national languages, an expression was chosen which corresponds more closely to the English word «syllabus.«[48] This is consistent with Yugoslavian educational tradition, in which curricula are essentially teaching plans which contain very few methodological explanations. This is why the basic understanding that common teaching plans should be drawn up was expressed implicitly in the language used, although the IC had initially intended to go beyond this. Discussions in which educational plans, the subject matter, methods and educational goals were given equal consideration arose only in the mixed working groups between the IC and national or local representatives, but the results of these discussions could not be incorporated into the CCC itself.[49]

In order to assess the changes brought about by the reform since 2002, as well as the inertia and resistance which prevented their comprehensive and swift realisation, it is worth taking a glance at the origins of the problem, which lie in the education system which was already in place in Yugoslavia. For whether explicit or implicit, the Yugoslavian experience forms the negative or positive

48 »Nastavni plan i program« ~ »list of subjects and lessons by grade.« The Common Core Curriculum is defined as »zajedničke jezgre nastavnog plana i programa« ~ »the common heart of the syllabi.«

49 During a six-month long UNESCO project about curriculum reform, the education specialist Phil Stabback carried out a survey among teachers in which they were asked what their understanding of the concept »curriculum« was; their answers confirmed that no common understanding of the term exists; Phil Stabback, »Curriculum Development, Diversity and Division in Bosnia and Herzegovina,« in *Education, Conflict and Social Cohesion,* ed. Sobhi Tawil, Alexander Harley (Paris: UNESCO International Bureau of Education, Geneva, 2004), 37 – 83.
Whereas the curricula of the RS had already been modified in accordance with teaching goals, those of the cantons had not yet been modified, which meant that this aspect of the reform could not be adopted in the CCC.

context in which most active politicians or members of expert commissions share common experiences.

The fact that the commission members largely accepted the idea of a CCC was partially due to the Yugoslavian experience, and partially founded on nostalgia for Yugoslavia. Older teachers are especially likely to object to references to linguistic and cultural differences between ethnic groups in the classroom; they prefer to pay tribute to their own language and culture without referring to separatist tendencies. The federal structure of the education system was a familiar inheritance from Yugoslavia, whereas the separation and cantonisation was not.[50] The IC went to great lengths to avoid pointing out that there was a forerunner of the CCC in the final years of the former Yugoslavia, for it wanted to encourage neither nostalgia for Yugoslavia nor defiance of Yugoslavian traditions. Yet the reasons given in the 1980 s justifying a common curriculum for history were rather similar to those given in 2002. The greater influence lent to the republics by the constitution of 1974 was clearly so effective that each group's own traditions were given more weight in history and literature teaching, albeit not to the extent that they could be identified as independent »national« movements. Ethnocentricity had rather come about implicitly as a result of focus being placed on specific content, events and people, rather than as a result of explicit interpretations. Yet the battle for ethnic domination was, after Tito's death, fought more openly than before, and even gave rise to a reactionary movement in the education sector which led then to the formulation of a common core curriculum for history and literature, which nonetheless was not put into practice.[51] For this reason, today's interpretations of the room for manoeuvre offered to the republics vary widely according to the angle of approach.

50 According to Dizdar, *Development and Perspectives of Teacher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 196–97, a survey conducted in spring 1997, teachers considered that teacher training programmes in BaH should urgently be coordinated, that is, made harmonious. This means alignment, not centralisation or uniformisation. According to Katarina Batarilo, Volker Lenhart, »Das Bildungssystem in Bosnien-Herzegowina,« a poll carried out by OSCE in 2006 claimed that two thirds of the respondents were in favour of a single comprehensive school curriculum.

51 »In textbooks of Serbia, the dominant discourse is an ethnocentric one. Oddly enough, such a situation is not a consequence of the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1990 s. In desperate last attempts to achieve a kind of integration of the of history and literature curriculum in early 1980 s, it was agreed among all representatives of republican scholars and educational authorities that some 60 percent or more of the history curriculum should be common in all Yugoslavia.« Predrag Marković, »Regional History in Serbian Textbooks: Silence of the Neighbors,« in *In Search of a Common Regional History: the Balkans and the East Asia in History Textbooks. Reports from the International Symposium Held at Komaba Campus* (November 12, 2005), 52. See also Andrew Wachtel, *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation: Literature and Cultural Politics in Yugoslavia* (Paolo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

Centralist dirigism, which left little room for manoeuvre, was inherent to the project of building an all-Yugoslavian socialist state which could not be questioned; it nevertheless fostered a system in which regional differences flourished, which some critics identify as the roots of ethnic separation in place today.[52]

A shortcoming of the whole curriculum development process consists in the fact that the planned curriculum agency has not been set up, and that the originally planned gradual expansion and modernisation of the CCC has failed to materialise, both with respect to its methodology and quality control.[53] In the meantime, not even the IC appears to want to modernise the CCC. Instead, it is working on a basic curricula reform which is largely influenced by the World Bank's conception and therefore disregards the specific requirements of the regions. Following this line of thought, a politically representative working group with the supervision of the EC-TAER programme presented a *White Paper* in October 2003 outlining the general goals of a comprehensive reform of curricula.[54] The concrete contents of teaching are here marginalised, while learning goals in terms of skills are brought into the foreground. This makes it possible to avoid conflict over contents, but it probably also detracts from the everyday reality of teaching, in which knowledge of content still plays a decisive role when the achievements of learners have to be evaluated. New methods whose contents are not put to the test have almost no chance of being accepted. This is why teacher training should be an obligatory part of curricula reform. The Council of

52 Weber even associates the ethnicisation of the Bosnian universities during the 1992 – 1995 war with the constitutional reform of 1974: »The adaptation of curricula to »national disciplines« (historiography, literary studies and linguistics) and the equal rights accorded to Moslem academic specialists led to specific battles over the allocation of rights in which academic elites felt obliged to articulate their interests in ethnic terms.« Bodo Weber, *Kriza univerziteta i perspektive mladih naučnika u Bosni i Hercegovini/Die Krise der bosnisch-herzegowinischen Universitäten und die Perspektiven junger Nachwuchswissenschaftler/The Crisis of the Universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Prospects of Junior Scholars*, 52.

53 The World Bank also finances the »Standards and Assessment Agency,« which remains incomplete because the Bosnian authorities can neither agree on a viable financial scheme and inter-entity working structure for a sustainable future of this institution, nor do they seem to be deeply interested in using the results of such an agency for raising the quality of teaching.

54 *White Paper. Shared Modernisation Strategy for Primary and General Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina,* produced by the BiH Educational Authorities, assisted by the EC-TAER Programme, funded by the European Union (Sarajevo, October 2003); a previously published analytical statement, produced by the same institutions, is the *Green Paper. Reform of Primary and General Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Sarajevo, Spring 2003). The same line is taken by the *Model Framework Curriculum,* developed by the project »Reform of General Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina,« which was also financed by the EU; *Model Framework Curriculum,* realised by ibf International Consulting in association with the British Council, November 2005.

Europe, OSCE and NGOs work towards this goal by organising appropriate seminars, which nevertheless take place almost exclusively in the field of social studies.

Following the »Memorandum of Understanding« of May 2000, Civitas developed materials and teaching plans for civic courses;[55] in addition, Civitas, in cooperation with the Council of Europe, devised an extensive teacher training programme and set up project coordinators throughout the country. The »Project Citizen,« which had been prepared for the secondary school level, included guidelines for concrete group work on projects designed to encourage teachers to take on social and political responsibility. According to evaluation criteria developed by Civitas together with Bosnian teachers and scholars, teachers who attended the training courses successfully passed the course and acquired certificates. Only certified teachers should teach the course, but this provision has not yet been fully implemented. Although it was possible to close down the old disciplines of »civil defense« (for primary schools) and »military training« (for secondary schools), both the RS and the cantons developed their own curricula guidelines into which the Civitas materials had to be integrated. Success was limited at first, which contributed to the fact that »civics« was mainly taught across all disciplines, such that the Civitas curriculum lost some of its consistency. The Common Core Curriculum nevertheless made way for a corresponding separate course in grade VIII (or IX) for primary schools, and in grade III (or IV) for secondary schools. The most persistent resistance to the introduction of the Civitas materials came from the cantons with Croatian majorities, although parts of these materials were adopted in the subjects »politics and economy« (for primary schools, grade IV) and »politics, economy, democracy and human rights« (for secondary schools).[56]

According Civitas's own inquiries, the courses lead to measurable changes in attitude; yet the latest questionnaire of 2007 confirms that the context in which political education in BaH operates is still challenging. Trust in the political institutions of the country (including the IC) is extremely limited; whereas

55 To this end, the materials (which had in fact been prepared for the US market) »Foundations of Democracy: Authority, Privacy, Responsibility, and Justice« and »Project Citizen« were modified and translated into the three national languages, and donated to schools: *Demokracija i ljudska prava. Udžbenik za učenike srednje škole* (Sarajevo: Civitas, 2007); *Projekt građanin* – vol 1: *priručnik za učenike*; vol. 2: *priručnik za nastavnike* (Sarajevo: Civitas, 2007).

56 The Council of Europe has criticised the Civitas materials because they do not refer to Europe, that is, to European organisations and corresponding conventions on human and civil rights. The Council has now developed its own teacher training courses and materials: Rolf Gollob, Peter Krapf, eds., *Education for Democracy and Human Rights* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002); ibid, *Exploring Children's Rights. Lesson Sequences for Primary Schools in Bosnia and Hercegovina* (Strasbourg/Sarajevo: Council of Europe, 2004).

parents, teachers and religious institutions are held in relatively high esteem; young people show little willingness to become politically active.[57]

On the institutional level, OSCE failed in its attempt to reverse the »two schools under one roof« model in 2003, which was the most visible sign of a segregated education system.[58] At considerable financial cost and with the support of an elaborate media campaign, the reputed grammar school (*gimnazia*) in Mostar was to be developed into a model project that would set standards for other schools. But even the reconstruction of the partly destroyed building did not achieve the desired effect of establishing a common teaching programme for Bosniak and Croatian pupils in the renovated classrooms. Although Bosniak classes, which had been displaced to the other side of the river as a result of the war, returned to the grammar school, neither teachers nor parents and the school council were prepared for teaching and learning together. Political actions involving schools, which are staged by the IC in an attempt to establish the most coherent teaching conditions possible for all, continue to provoke strong resistance.[59] Talk about the »depoliticisation« of schools, as conveyed by the IC, has backfired insofar as parents define the closure or reduction of ethnically segregated schools as a policy which contradicts the idea of what education is meant to achieve. Thus when conflicts arise, the status quo is preserved on the basis of the lowest common denominator, such that the institutional structure remains largely unchanged in spite of the shift in the legal framework. The same situation arose with respect to the catchment areas out-

57 Suzanne Soule, *Beyond Communism and War. The Effect of Civic Education on the Democratic Attitudes and Behavior of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Youth* (Centre for Civic Education, 2000); Vedrana Spajic-Vrkas, *Civitas B&H Istraživački Projekt 2006–2007. Stanje obrazovanja za demokraciju i ljudska prava u srednjim školama Bosne i Hercegovine. Upitnik o znanjima i stavovima učenika srednjih škola BiH o demokraciji* [*Civitas BaH 2006–2007 Research Project. Attitudes and Knowledge of Secondary Civic Education Students in BaH*], unpublished report; Antun Batarilo, *Civic Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Inclusion of Civic Education into Official Curricula* (Sarajevo, February/March 2008), unpublished report.

58 In 2005, there were still 54 schools in 26 buildings, which constitutes less than 5 percent of all schools in BaH; *Education Reform Agenda: An Update* (Sarajevo: EISSG Education Issue Set Steering Group, February 2005).

59 In the survey of pupils in Mostar, carried out by Warshauer and her team, only Bosniak pupils expressed a wish for integrative teaching, whereas »Croat youth…respond neutrally, like their parents«; Sarah Warshauer Freedman et.al., »Public Education and Social Reconstruction in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia,« in *My Neighbor, My Enemy. Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity,* ed. Eric Stover, Harvey M.Weinstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 231. Insofar it is misleading when Astrid Fischer speaks of a »bureaucratic centralism…on a more local level« that does not include school personnel, parents and students; Astrid Fischer, »Integration or Segregation? Reforming the Education Sector,« in *Peacebuilding and Civil Society in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, 301.

lined in the law, which were designed to assure that children go to the school which is closest to their home. In reality, however, parents got their own way and children continue to face time-consuming and often cumbersome trips by bus and on foot in order to reach a school which offers the curriculum corresponding to their particular ethnicity.

The IC's proposed nationwide law concerning universities proved to be far more difficult to implement than the law concerning schools even though the law concerning universities was a necessary condition for BaH to fulfil the requirements of the Bologna process, which the country had adopted in 2003. A coherent higher education system which is capable of fulfilling the quality requirements laid down by the Bologna process could not be achieved without making prior changes to the constitution, for the universities (with the exception of Tuzla) were effectively made up of loosely collaborating faculties and institutions which were not prepared to renounce their privileges, which were often attached to financial rewards, to the benefit of central organs. The controversies that were triggered by questions concerning the competencies and financing of the higher education quality and assessment agency lasted for years. The process required to validate diplomas, especially those acquired abroad, has been notoriously slow, complex and expensive and, in the eyes of students, arbitrary. They were hardly suited to establishing a coherent area of higher education on BaH, let alone in Europe. The higher education law was ratified as late as August 2007. The delay to the ratification of this act proved also to be an obstacle to pursuing reform at the school level, because both levels are interconnected. A tightening, amounting to a modernisation, of methods and contents of teachings largely inherited from Yugoslavian universities failed to materialise, with the result that newly trained teachers knew very little about modern curricula theories and forms of teaching and learning.[60]

60 The lack of progress with the development of the higher education law and with bringing to a close the »Two-Schools-under-one Roof« programme caused the IC to reach a sceptical judgement of the educational reform in general: »Ownership of the education reform process by local authorities continues to be a problem. Information on reform efforts is rarely forthcoming from local authorities to school directors, teachers unions, students and the general public, and a large bulk of the work is done by the International Community or its projects. At present, there is a possibility that the education reform will be put on hold if the International Community stops pressing and providing significant financing for the reform process.« *Education Reform Agenda: An Update* (Sarajevo: EISSG – Education Issue Set Steering Group, February 2005), 3.

III. The obstacle course: from principles to practice

Multiperspectivity as a challenge

The OSCE report about the textbook revision process for the school year of 2003/2004 addressed the shortcomings of the process and made a recommendation, which proposed not to make modifications to existing texts, but rather to suggest constructive principles for texts to be developed. For example, they proposed ways of exposing contested interpretations within textbooks and treating them in a rational manner. They proposed guidelines for textbook authors showing how they should use appropriate terminology and represent all constituent peoples in a non-biased way.[61] This recommendation effectively led to the foundation of a further commission, which began by testing authors' manuscripts not with the criteria of ethnic and political »purity,« but by aiming to develop principles with which history and geography are represented in textbooks such that BaH is considered in its entirety.

Having been accepted in 2007 in all parts of the country, these guidelines provide a missing link between the overarching principles of reform, as presented in the reform message, and their implementation in textbooks and teaching practice. They stipulate that tolerance and multiperspectivity should be prevalent in those parts of textbooks which deal with mutual relations among peoples in BaH, as well as their relation to neighbouring countries.[62]

There are several different ways in which multiperspectivity is understood. It is not, for example, recognised as a fundamental didactic concept, but rather as a substitute procedure which is applied when the »final truth« cannot be firmly established. However, comparisons based on the idea that different interpretations are legitimate and therefore should be explained without one necessarily agreeing with them are, in light of the very fragile basis for common agreement in BaH, likely to cause insecurity and are therefore often rejected. Even members of the IC, who referred to the continuing debates about cultural domination and independence, argued that BaH is »not ripe for multiperspectivity.« The idea of a gradual notion of truth, which should be applied differently in relation to the level of development of each country, even found its way into the draft of a resolution in the European parliament, in which members

61 *OSCE Report on the Work of the Inter-Entity Textbook Review Commission*, July 2003; author is in possession of the document.

62 *Guidelines for Writing and Evaluation of History Textbooks for Primary and Secondary Schools in BaH*, BaH Official Gazette 05/07, January 2007, referred to throughout the article as »Guidelines.« The following essay by Katarina Batarilo and Heike Karge will treat the guidelines and their effect on a new generation of textbooks in more detail. I am referring here in particular to points 1.2; 2.3; and 2.3 – 2.5.

of parliament rejected the idea that a multiperspectival approach should be used in history teaching, for they were afraid of launching a debate which would cause more strife than unity in BaH.[63]

Although we know that multiperspectivity as a form of comparative judgement, especially moral judgement, develops in tandem with a child's intelligence, it is not possible to apply this finding of developmental psychology to entire populations or their pupils, in the sense of a historically grounded mass psychology. Even though the resolution did not get past the stage of a preliminary draft, these debates show that situations characterised by crisis and conflict give rise to serious doubts about the validity of the concept of multiperspectivity. These doubts are shared by professional experts in BaH as well as by representatives of the IC. It is as if multiperspectivity can only be effective if there already exists common ground on the basis of which different judgements can be compared; quite the reverse is true, since multiperspectivity refers to a method to find out to what extent starting points are shared and to what extent criteria of judgement differ. Multiperspectivity is not a form of truth, but a method designed to provide insight into processes by which judgements are reached. Students and teachers have to find common ground by agreeing on the conditions in which communication should take place: the degree of respect shown when listening to the »other«; the attempt to understand the argument; and the willingness to subject one's own interpretation to the judgement of the respective other. Criticism of the use of multiperspectivity in BaH therefore appears to be rooted in the fear that the basic social conditions necessary for it are missing, both in Bosnian politics and in the classroom. This is true insofar as training is certainly necessary in the classroom, and the teacher must be aware of its principles. Prior to the reform, teaching consisted in frontal teaching, based on factual learning techniques, which dates from the Yugoslavian period. Pupils generally appear to adhere to the notion of a single truth, ›their‹ truth, and are therefore not open to integrative teaching because they are afraid that this creates the risk that only the other side's truth will be taught; they have no spontaneous notion of comparison.[64]

It is clear that a multiperspectival approach to the textbook can be successfully put to use in the classroom only if suitable didactic conditions have been fulfilled.[65] Doubts that this is not the case are frequently justified. Therefore,

63 Even the head of the OSCE mission to BaH expressed similar doubts in an interview in the daily newspaper.

64 Sarah Warshauer Freedman et.al., »Public Education and Social Reconstruction in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia,« in *My Neighbor, My Enemy. Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity,* 237.

65 Robert Stradling, *Multiperspectivity in History Teaching: A Guide for Teachers* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2003).

criticism should not be aimed at the method of multiperspectivity, but at inappropriate teacher training and current teaching methods which make it difficult to rationally participate in controversies. Rational controversial discussion in classroom does not mean that emotions associated with collective identities and individual experience should be avoided. Attempts to apply multiperspectivity is therefore not without risk. And it does not suffice to simply write this word in documents in order to assure that multiperspectivity is implemented sympathetically. In short, the main problem lies in the fact that, in the national languages of BaH, there is no equivalent of the concepts of reform such as curriculum, multiperspectivity and multiculturalism, which were imported as foreign words by the IC into the professional, and sometimes also political, debate, such that they are seen as words which are controlled from afar, or at least which require some explanation. The international agenda for reform originated in political documents which introduced concepts whose local meaning and local applications still need to be explored or developed.

The political goal of multiculturalism as expressed in the reform message arose from the threat that the reintegration of returnees would fail. The contradiction between cultural separatism and practical »living together,« which the Dayton Agreement provoked, underscored the need for a decision regarding education which, on the one hand, should turn multiculturalism into a guiding principle for teaching but, on the other hand, could not alter the segregated institutional structure of the education system. The framework law ensured that this contradiction became less acute, though the complex process by which the law was to be implemented also ensured that the contradiction could not be eliminated. National politicians responsible for education made use of notions and examples of multiculturalism which were clearly not contained in the reform message, but which they nevertheless wanted to uphold and defended by referring to the »European standards« so often quoted by the IC. These included, for example, ethnically and/or linguistically separate education systems in established member states of the European Union and Council of Europe such as Belgium or Switzerland, or schools for national minorities in the Baltic states. They were more than willing to adopt this kind of multiculturalism. Hence members of the OSCE were forced to begin to query which system and which conditions should be defined as »standard.«

Consocialism, separation or cooperation?

Is it conceivable that the IC might have taken the wind out of the sails of the politicians' and school councils' opposition to the reform agenda on the local level if only it had openly recognised the separate structure of the education

system and tried to reform it from within rather than constantly holding it responsible for shortcomings in the development of education and thereby encouraging people to suspect that the reform plans ultimately aimed to undermine and even put an end to this structure? More generally, is it conceivable that multiculturalism might have a neutralising effect on a conflictive relationship, while an enforced integrative approach may sustain conflict?

Sumantra Bose has explored this question in a wide-ranging study in which he compares experiences of different people from India. His analyses of the situation in BaH in the postwar years led him to the conclusion that the model of »group-based power sharing« (consociationalism), which is contained in germ in the Dayton Agreement, could be used to construct a sustainable state, and is therefore preferable to complete separation between political entities.[66] Other studies show that, although separate education can provide shelter for minorities and disadvantaged groups as well as opportunities for untrammelled self-development, it does not remove the barriers between segregated areas of life and therefore, in the long run, contributes to new conflicts. Separate education is at most a preparatory measure designed to pave the way for future integration or cohabitation with equal rights. However, it is not to be recommended as a permanent solution (as the case of Belgium clearly shows). This argument applies not only to the political, but also to the social dimension of teaching. Teaching about the »other,«even when done in a fair, balanced and multiperspectival way, is little more than an academic exercise which has little influence on pupils' behaviour if other social groups in which pupils are involved, or politics and the media, propagate contrary opinions. According to contact theory, it is not enough for pupils to be together, for only when they experience the ways in which they are dependent on each other do effective changes in behaviour occur.[67]

Past results of the reform process, which have been limited but generally inadequate, can be explained on the basis of this theoretical model. Success has primarily been achieved in cases where experts have worked in close cooperation and been obliged to develop common results as, for example, in the numerous commissions and work groups with mixed membership. The focus on results has given rise to new experiences, social contacts and changes in attitude such that the whole is more effective than the sum of its parts. The same goes for the tendency to avoid political statements in favour of confirmed expert statements as the commissions progressed with their work.[68] To a lesser degree, this

66 Sumantra Bose, *Bosnia after Dayton. Nationalist Partition and International Intervention* (London: Hurst & Company, 2002).

67 Thomas F. Pettigrew, »The Contact Hypothesis Revisited,« in *Contact and Conflict in Intergroup Encounters*, ed. Miles Hewstone, Rupert Brow (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), 169–195.

68 This is corroborated by the interviews conducted by Katarina Batarilo.

possibly also applies to cooperation in the field of educational policy, though here there is less positive continuity and agreement is achieved only occasionally, which has almost no long-lasting influence on other areas. Groups of people who were less closely integrated in reform commissions, such as the many local politicians and »civil stakeholders« (mainly parents and pupils and their associations and representative committees on the local level) frequently defied agreements which had been reached at the higher level of political and professional committees; among those who were persuaded to join in their protest were politicians who were prepared to slow down or even prevent measures from being implemented, even if they had agreed to these measures on another level. In cases where the IC had attempted to follow a programme which had not been underpinned with adequate cooperation, as in the case of the attempted sabotage of the »two schools under one roof« project, the IC effectively increased the chances of conflict and had to backtrack. School councils, in which parents, pupils and sponsors were represented, were a remnant of Tito's Yugoslavia; their members were largely excluded from the mixed work committees of the IC and entities or cantonal governments, such that, in the initial phase during which they were still striving to make their mark, they often constituted a grassroots democratic element which placed obstacles in the way of reform.[69]

Since the framework law and the CCC were ratified, the reform of primary and secondary education appears to be focusing less on the general institutional level than on the implementation of new approaches to teaching and new kinds of teaching materials. Seen in negative terms, this reflects the IC's frustration about the fact that the original approaches (in what is largely a reconciliatory legal process) have been watered down, and about the fact that centrally ratified laws are very slow to be introduced into regional policy. Seen in positive terms, feedback to this development shows that there is growing approval on the part of professional participants in the commissions and teacher training seminars, and that people are keen to develop new teaching materials and get involved in open discussions. Those taking part in seminars have become advocates of reform, make the reform understandable to a wider public, and continue to work as textbook authors and in ministerial training without having been prompted to do so by the IC. In spite of the federalisation process, the small size of the country ensures that intermediary institutions remain manageable; common training programmes run by the ministries, OSCE, the Council of Europe, the Georg Eckert Institute, EUROCLIO and others have ensured that there is a large pool of

69 The experiences of Sarah Warshauer Freedman and her team confirm this. Sarah Warshauer Freedman et al., »Public Education and Social Reconstruction in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia,« in *My Neighbor, My Enemy. Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity.*

textbook authors, evaluators and inspectors who are able to implement reform issues on the ground. There is therefore a broad and concrete willingness to foster reform and critical consciousness in professional circles, even though there have not been any sweeping successes on the political level. A major change in the relations between Bosnian experts came about during the course of work done by the commissions for textbook revision in the year 2003/2004, the CCC Commission and the commission responsible for guidelines. Members of the first textbook commissions generally behaved as if they were representatives of their ethnic group and they stressed their responsibilities towards or even dependency on the ministries, such that the ensuing debate was almost always divided along the lines of ethnicity, and the representatives of the IC or international experts had the task of seeking ways of achieving a compromise or getting the opposed parties to begin negotiations.

Although the revision commissions worked on an infrastate level, their working methods resembled those of interstate commissions. Textbooks produced by each of the three participating peoples were exchanged and evaluated by each of the other partners, upon which the results were discussed together and lists of complaints compiled on the basis of which agreement was sought or else disagreement continued. Members of the commission represented their populations and governments, not the society as a whole. Only during the second phase after around 2003 was there sufficient awareness and readiness to begin to push through compromises in society.

As time went on, the commissions increasingly began to resemble expert discussions, with the effect that competing arguments lost their specifically ethnic character, and participants felt free to criticise the restrictions which each of their ministers had placed on them. The most significant effect was perhaps that the members were themselves surprised to find out to what extent they shared the same opinion and that they saw the ratification of the CCC and the guidelines as a success, even though the main achievement of the CCC was simply to reinforce awareness that members shared an equal footing.

During the first phase of the commission's work, the agreement was implemented largely according to an arrangement, run by elites, between separate ethnic groups which then each had to ensure that the compromise was actually respected in their group. Only in the second phase did commission members increasingly adhere to a model for cooperation beyond ethnic lines, which nonetheless was restricted to elites as in the first phase, although it became easier to involve professional elites alongside political elites; the longer this process lasted, the more independent became the professional experts from narrow political guidance. Further intermediary measures between politics and teaching practice are lacking, however, because teacher training has not yet taken place on a broad basis; furthermore, the IC is only partially in a position to

provide for the inclusion of civil society, because few agents of civil movements are active in BaH. This is why politicians frequently succeed in sabotaging rules (which have been well thought through by experts) by arguing that these rules would throw doubt on the cultural specificity of the constituent peoples and thereby reverse the outcome of the war.

On a political level, these methods of action can be incorporated into the consociational model mentioned above, as demonstrated by Bose in his study of Bosnia. According to this model, the elites of a segregated society come to agreements which guarantee a minimum number of overarching social functions. By extending this approach, it can be said that the IC organises the form in which this takes place and generally also suggests the contents which then have to be agreed on by the national representatives. This means that the elites have less influence on implementing the agreement; local politicians have considerable scope with which to water down the agreed compromises or to delay their implementation; in so doing, they act in a tacit or arranged agreement with politicians, who have shown themselves to be responsible for the compromise on a higher level.

Until now, the OHR has intervened on all levels of the decision-making process. Without the direct intervention of the HR with the help of the »Bonn powers,« the legal requirements for the educational reform on a local level could not have been achieved everywhere. Even those in the OHR are aware that this substitute undertaking effectively suspends the Bosnian decision-making process and enables Bosnian politicians to get the OHR to make decisions about existential questions.

This lack of democracy and readiness to take on responsibility could be confronted only if the OHR agreed not to make use of the Bonn powers, which is precisely what HR Schwarz-Schilling aimed but failed to do in relation to memory politics. The mandate of the HR and of the Bonn powers has repeatedly been extended because the relief concept, that is, the transfer of control from Dayton to the EU representation in BaH does not appear to be feasible for the IC. Almost fifteen years after the end of the war, all those involved would find it easier if the indecisive handling of the present provisions were abandoned; instead there could be a statute which ascribes control functions to the IC in similar fashion to the Allied sovereign jurisdiction in the postwar Federal Republic of Germany, without interfering in everyday politics. The IC's task would then primarily be to provide advice, to encourage international exchange on the professional level and in civil society, and to include the country as far as possible in processes of European integration; the latter would be the most effective way of combating domestic resistance, since BaH would be further cut off from its neighbours if it were excluded from these processes; there is considerable incentive to keep pace with these countries, not least because there are existing

close connections to the ethnically related sister countries. However, adhering to the long-term political goal of transforming the constitution of the country into a majority or representative democracy and giving up the Dayton model of a democratically ruled representation of the constituent peoples, means in practice a prolongation of the mandate of the HR as a majority in the parliament for such constitutional changes is difficult to achieve. This would also protract the fear of Bosnian politicians to take over responsibility for Bosnia as a whole, particularly in the education sector.

The close relation that traditionally exists in Bosnia between the curriculum, textbooks, main teaching contents and examinations tends to thwart initiatives which people try to take from below. Although foundations and NGOs have helped to develop alternative teaching materials, only very few nationwide projects in the field of history and social sciences have materialised. The Stability Pact has not been able to improve this situation, for its projects have been generally developed and sponsored by west European donor countries, because for years the receiving countries did not possess sufficient resources in the area of didactics to plan their own projects. Bosnia is a prime case of this. There was and still is no professional representative organisation for history teachers which can represent their interests before the ministries. This said, a group of history teachers joined the European Association of History Teachers, EUROCLIO, in 2003 and presented a sourcebook together with colleagues from neighbouring countries which draws on the history of everyday life in several countries.[70] Since this work consists in supplementary materials, its influence

70 *Ordinary People in an Extraordinary Country. Every Day Life in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia between East and West 1945 – 1990* (EUROCLIO, 2008, available also in Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian). A first source book of this kind appeared as early as 2000; Milan Ristović, Dubravka Stojanović, *Childhood in the Past. 19th and 20th Century* (Belgrade: UDI, 2000), a work which has been translated into all the local languages. The history of everyday life was given priority because this tends to pinpoint historical themes which ethnic groups have in common. Darko Gavrilovic, for example, chose an approach from cultural history in order to avoid political controversies; Darko Gavrilović, Zoran Đerić, Zoran Josić, *Stvaranje modernog svijeta (1450 – 1878)* (Banja Luka: Besjeda, 2005). The broad-based »Joint History Project« at the Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeastern Europe (CDRSEE) does not seem to have met with approval in BaH, since the international team of authors deal with materials referring to controversial aspects of history. By starting with textbook analysis, workshops were devoted to developing teaching materials which were then presented to teachers in further seminars. In order to raise the likelihood that the materials will be approved, the teachers frequently insist that the seminars are organised in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. Nationalist forces in Serbia responded by organising a campaign in which they claimed that the teaching units strove to establish a uniform textbook for all countries in former Yugoslavia. However absurd this claim is, it nevertheless spurred resistance against the influence of international organisations or foundations, which are accused of trying to substitute faceless international mul-

will be limited as long as officially approved books covering the curricula continue to serve as the main reference and authority for teaching contents and methods. In Southeast Europe, curricula and textbook revision must go hand in hand, for teachers can only gradually acquire and make use of room for manoeuvre. According to most educationalists and authorities, new approaches for textbooks must be based on corresponding changes to curricula. Likewise, new curricula need to be coupled with new textbooks. This mechanistic understanding of reform makes it difficult for a lot of teachers to take on an active role in the development of innovative contents and methods. Since pedagogical institutions have few resources to develop teacher training systematically for specific disciplines, the onus still lies on international organisations to do this. Moreover, teachers feel as though they are excluded from the state-run reform of textbooks and curricula. Teachers today have a lower social status, which contributes to their often low level of commitment beyond the school gates. The dissolution of the socialist system saw a sharp decline in the respect that teachers had traditionally enjoyed. Teachers have benefited much less than other social groups from the economic changes that have taken place. And the lack of jobs for school leavers with a secondary level diploma has further dented the reputation of the school institution.

Textbook revision usually develops from within a given society, unless it is under occupation as Germany and Japan were after the Second World War. The textbook discussions which took place between previously belligerent countries in the wake of occupation, such as the Franco-German textbook conferences and the ongoing German-Polish textbook commission today, developed from within the respective national societies and were then subsequently supported by governments. Textbook revision in BaH was initiated – by the IC – from outside, and was initially insufficiently supported within the country itself. Since 2002 the initiatives of national institutions, local associations and the international community have been interconnected in many different ways. Work in the education sector has been carried out by the IC, represented by OSCE (which acts as coordinator), alongside the education ministers of the entities and the cantons. They work together within the scope of a steering committee and the conference of all education ministers; to these leading committees have been added planning and advisory committees with disciplinary foci, and which have contributed significantly to the reform process. Representatives of the IC have only an advisory role in this process, though they are in a position to put political and financial pressure on the parliamentarians and ministries. Thus a new framework for laws and regulations concerning school education as well as

ticulturalism for the independence and values of local cultures; www.cdsee.org/jhp/index.html.

curricula and textbooks for history and geography has been set up. However, tangible changes in practice have been achieved rather on the basis of consistent work within training seminars, run by the regular organisations of the IC in collaboration with groups representing civil society.[71]

III Textbook revision and memory politics

As a legacy of the last war, Bosnian history textbooks have conveyed a clear perpetrator-victim dichotomy. Memory of violence suffered divides people and prevents them from acknowledging that violence was part of their own (re)-actions.[72] The term »victimisation« refers not only to the depth of suffering, however, but gives a people a sense of purpose in the name of which political sovereignty and cultural autonomy have to be defended. This purpose has a historical dimension which goes back in the Bosniak case at least to the beginnings of a »Bosniak national history« in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and, in the case of Serbia, to the Middle Ages.[73] Suffering in history is also being translated into numbers. The number of victims is proof of the cruelty of the »other« and of one's own capacity to suffer. According to the official political discourse referring to memory in the RS, a total of 700,000 people fell victim to the Ustasha regime in the Jasenovac concentration camp; the exhibition in the section of the Jasenovac memorial which belongs to the RS continues to state that 500,000 of those victims were Serbs, although there is no longer any doubt that these statistics are unproven and that they date from the immediate postwar years when the Yugoslavian state gave priority to the history of Yugoslavian resistance and victimhood.[74] Strangely, the rectification of these statistics would

71 However, these reform initiatives are also fragmented, for the activities of the participating international organisations generally cannot be effectively coordinated; see the sceptical review of the IC by the former HR: Paddy Ashdown, *Swords and Ploughshares. Bringing Peace to the 21st Century* (London: Orion, 2007).

72 Whenever the Bosnian-Serb side officially admits that massacres have taken place which are not in line with the recognised rules of warfare, they immediately offset these acts with similar acts that have been committed by the Bosniak army. Not even these calculations have found their way into textbooks, not to speak of open acknowledgment of one's own crimes.

73 These historical visions of conflict are highly controversial; see Wolfgang Höpken, »Post-sozialistische Erinnerungskulturen im ehemaligen Jugoslawien,« and Dževad Juzbašić, »Die Geschichtsschreibung in Bosnien-Herzegovina im letzten Jahrzehnt des 20. Jahrhunderts,« in *Klio ohne Fesseln? Historiographie im östlichen Europa nach dem Zusammenbruch des Kommunismus,* ed. Alojz Ivanišević, et al. (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002), 421 – 433.

74 The history of these statistics and their utility for Yugoslavian memory politics is dealt with in depth by Heike Karge, *Steinerne Erinnerung – versteinerte Erinnerung? Kriegsgedenken in Jugoslawien* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, forthcoming 2009). According to recent documentation, there is proof of approximately 70,000 dead, including 45,000 Serbs, 12,000

not bring about relief, but rather throw doubt upon the dual self-image as both fighters and innocent victims, and lead to a reevaluation of power relations among populations in the former Yugoslavia and of the relation between collaboration and resistance during the Second World War. Since the factions in the wars of the 1990 s were still interpreted against the background of the inner animosity between groups during the Second World War, a revision of the numbers of victims who died during the occupation of the territory by the National Socialist or Italian fascist regimes would effectively throw doubt on present-day myths.

To this day, there are still no accurate documents, or at least none recognised by the state, which give us a credible story about the victims of the war of 1992 – 1995. The prevailing estimates of 250,000 dead are clearly exaggerated. This figure is, like the figures concerning the number of dead during the Second World War, based on a rough estimate calculated in relation to population counts, which naturally only account for the fate of groups. These numbers therefore lend themselves especially well to memory politics. By contrast, some civil society organisations devote time to documenting the fate of individuals. These organisations have to work without state sponsoring even though their work is clearly relevant to society as a whole.[75] The broad response to the aims of the Sarajevo Documentation Centre – to collect evidence about victims and create opportunities and places for mourning – has been muted. Since there is no doubt that the majority of victims of the war of 1992 – 1995 are Bosniaks, the possible reduction of the numbers affects the myth of suffering upheld by this group, although existing documentation tends to confirm rather than contradict our knowledge of the crimes committed in Srebrenica. Competition over the numbers of victims is part of today's competition between groups. And the fact that the soldiers and citizens of BaH waged, or were at least involved in, a war of defence makes it easier to subsume all of the casualties under the notion of »victims« and integrate people by giving them a sense of shared victimhood, which defies and hinders any rational explanation of the war. The dead victims of Srebrenica are those with whom the image of the victim is associated and generalised; they likewise thwart people's capacity to consider this event com-

Croatians and Moslems, 17,000 Jews and 10,000 Gypsies; Ivo Goldstein, »Jasenovac. Myth and Reality,» in *Südosteuropa. Traditionen als Macht*, 97 – 111.

75 The Research and Documentation Centre in Sarajevo has, until now, found proof of approx. 100,000 dead and missing people (www.idc.org.ba). See Mirsad Tonaca, »L'importanza di ogni vittima,« in *Diario europeo* IV/1 (2008): 56 – 59; see also Marie-Janine Calic, »Ethnic Cleansing and War Crimes, 1991 – 1995,« in *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies. A Scholars' Initiative*, ed. Charles Ingrao, Thomas Emmert (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2009),115 – 151, particularly 138.

paratively, and exclude the idea that war crimes were also committed on the Bosniak side.

Replacing these national histories in the context of Europe does not help to reduce this gulf between self-perception and perception of the »other« which results from the sense of victimisation. Serbian and Croatian national histories compete against each other in their claims to uphold and defend European tradition and to have suffered and made sacrifices for Europe. The Croatian national historical narrative represented in textbooks tends nevertheless to see the European and national roots of their historical identities in a positive way, as the country strives to bring together European destiny and national independence successfully with the expected access to EU membership; this even allows it now to interpret the history of the Ustasha state as if it were a historical aberration on the way to sovereignty. By contrast, the Serbian narrative has, until now, been one of loss, in which »Europe« has not only not recognised but even fought to stop the Serbian mission. At present, it is difficult to conceive of the future as open and bright here, because hitherto narrow interpretations of the past have overshadowed positive views of the future. The Bosniak-Bosnian narrative has only one possible future in a tolerant multicultural Europe as the Bosniaks suffered –according to their self-image – most from the national or nationalistic aspirations of their two neighbours. However, this ideal is far removed from present-day realities. Nowhere is the gulf between reality and words greater than between the expectations raised in relation to Europe and real conditions required to join Europe. In sum, potential common ground regarding Europe is outweighed by the discrepancies between images of Europe rooted in the past and between the different hopes places in it.

Victimhood is significant not only for relatives of those who were killed in the war, including family and friends, for the war dead have also acquired meaning as a collective victim for the newly founded state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Victims are, to a large extent, a political issue. Since the interpretation of the war in school education in BaH is currently an object of dispute, history teaching cannot simply fall back on official memory politics. Moreover, teachers are very vulnerable to the criticism expressed by politicians and social pressure groups – regardless of the solution they propose, whether this is to omit the subject from their courses, to briefly mention the bare facts, or to give a thorough and emotional account of what happened.

Textbooks which address the suffering of »others« or attempt to do away with the canonisation of one's own suffering and the history of foreign aggression, risk being banned by the authorities. In Tuzla, the organisation representing veterans of the recent war characteristically succeeded in having official approval withdrawn from a history textbook because, among other things, it had given insufficient space to the canon of the so-called Serbian genocide com-

mitted against the Bosnian Moslems in the early modern period.[76] Veteran associations assume entire historical responsibility, as it were, for the suffering of their group beyond the fate of individuals. This »sym-pathy« (in accordance with the original meaning of this word) with one's own people which is rooted in the past clearly also affects the historical consciousness of young people. The interviews carried out by Freedman and his team in Mostar demonstrate how young people, faced with the prospect that their history lessons were to include the stories of the »others,« were afraid of losing their own history. In their opinion, only one version of the story could become established, and they were acutely aware that other versions than their »own« may gain the upper hand; no space was available for a comparative approach which would facilitate discussion about different perceptions and values attached to what happened.[77]

Each side assumes that the historical understanding of the respective »other« has a claim to exclusivity akin to one's own exclusivity, which leaves no room for accounting for the suffering of the »other.« This is why there are no common memorial ceremonies; the presence of a representative of the government of the RS at the mourning ceremony in Srebrenica is considered to be a formality as long as the government continues to refuse to recognise the crimes in such a way that the question of responsibility and punishment of the perpetrators is not ignored. The motto, »Don't forget Srebrenica!« which serves as a motto for official ceremonies and features in a giant graffiti on a wall in Sarajevo, cannot provide a basis for mediation between the populations; rather, it evokes a competing »geography of victims,« which again goes back to the Second World War to the time when the area around Srebrenica was also under siege, and where the Bosnian Serbs now erect »their« memorial sites in local villages after attempts to disturb (in some cases with violence) Bosniak commemoration ceremonies proved to be ineffective.[78] In June 2007, HR Schwarz-Schilling, though unwittingly, supported further territorialisation of commemorations in an attempt to protect the commemorative ceremonies by placing, with the help of the

76 See the essay by Batarilo and Karge in this volume. Koren and Baranovic's essay deals with a similar case.

77 Sarah Warshauer Freedman et.al., »Public Education and Social Reconstruction in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia,« in *My Neighbor, My Enemy. Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity*, 240. See also Pilvi Torsti, *Divergent Stories, Convergent Attitudes,* 323. On the place of the wars in people's memory, see Wolfgang Höpken, »War, Memory, and Education in a Fragmented Society: The Case of Yugoslavia,« *East European Politics and Societies* 13 (1999): 190 – 227. In a remarkable essay, Svjetlana Nedimovic concludes that »Up to now, the perception of the self as victim and of one's own suffering as a key element of identity has served only to preclude all dialogues in society.« She seeks opportunities »to change this dynamic and take the traumatic experience as a starting point for mutual listening … and to accept the memories of others …«; Svjetlana Nedomovic, »Personal Experience as Solitary Confinement,« *Bosnia Daily* no. 1537, June 29, 2007.

78 Ger Duijzings, »Commemorare Srebrenica,« *Diario europeo* IV/1 (2008): 34 – 41.

so-called Bonn powers, the Srebrenica memorial site which was on the territory of the RS under the supervision of the central state. The anticipated protest by the Serbian government caused the commemorative events to become more politicised than ever before.[79]

Schools were also part of the war zones and therefore now become sites of memory, or rather sites marking the inability to talk about what happened during the war in the schools. The primary school »Vuk Karadžić« in Bratunac near Srebrenica was used as a war prison,[80] and children whose parents were imprisoned and suffered there, or else meted out suffering, now attend this school. It took forty years, for example, before schools in Germany began to commemorate the fact that they had been used by the National Socialist regime as places where members of the Jewish community had been assembled before deportation.[81] Would BaH be well advised to apply similar pedagogical reserve, and would such an option be feasible in the light of ongoing trials, national and international media reports and the stories which continue to be told in families? At the key negotiation session of the »Guidelines« held with ministers at the Georg Eckert Institute in spring 2005, it was suggested that the period after 1992 should be treated in more detail than with just a few facts. Although those present decided to cover the period up until the end of the twentieth century in history lessons, no mutual agreement was reached stipulating how this should be done, such that only a general statement could be made, »to teach these processes in accordance with these Guidelines.«[82]

Although it is understandable that teachers are afraid of the emotional debate that would ensue if pupils are confronted with the period after the dissolution of Yugoslavia, it is also wishful thinking to imagine that earlier periods such as the history of the Second World War can be taught without the very same emotions being aroused. For this reason we should not simply ask whether schools are in a position to teach recent history but rather how they can break down the stereotypical evaluations involved. Under the prevailing circumstances this can hardly be achieved by subjecting pupils to a lecture, for example, on the siege of Sarajevo. Teachers must adopt a different approach to the topic involving extra-

79 Thorsten Gromes, *Demokratisierung nach Bürgerkriegen*, 319. The OHR imposed the law because Serbian members of parliament had boycotted the vote and thereby successfully sabotaged the law. The OHR had played an important role since 2000, when the memorial area was built. See Ger Duijzings, »Commemorating Srebrenica: Histories of Violence and the Politics of Memory in Eastern Bosnia.«

80 See: the report »The Women of Podrinje« http://www.cranepsych.com/travel/Bosnia/Sarajewo3.html

81 Examples of teaching projects dealing with this topic can be found on the website www.lernen-aus-der-geschichte.de.

82 *Guidelines for Writing and Evaluation of History Textbooks*, point 4.16.

curricular and out-of-school activities.[83] Some of the few projects working in this field draw first on personal life stories before they introduce documents and reports from external sources, with the result that a new narrative is constructed by combining »subjective« experience with »objective« information. The aim of such a project is to enable the pupils to communicate about the war and not to teach an »authorised and exclusively valid« version.

Of course, such approaches are rarely to be found and teachers are wary of implementing them unless encouraged to do so by pedagogical institutions, ministries or international organisations. The lack of support for this approach illustrates the wider political and social context surrounding the question of how to relate to the recent past within the field of education. Families perceive the war as a period of loss and violence, during which they fought to survive and establish an identity for themselves; they also see it more negatively, namely as a catalyst that helps to perpetuate mistrust and thoughts of revenge. The media tend to concentrate on the guilt and involvement of politicians and military personnel, while theatre productions and films deal with the extreme situations in which people found themselves during the war. In the field of education, however, these topics are either taboo or reduced to a stereotypical friend-foe format.

This is where international intervention reaches its limits, particularly since the IC was itself directly involved in the war and should therefore not be seen as a neutral mediator, whether in terms of methodology or content. For the IC, the task of creating a formal, that is, legal or institutional framework, with which to treat the topic of the war is either impossible or requires strong supporting measures taken on the concrete pedagogical level, and the understanding of almost all actors, including pupils, parents and teachers.

Countries which have to deal with post-conflict education are often (not only in BaH) not prepared to perceive the role of schools being public institutions which pursue pedagogical aims in the name of the government, as places where young people should be confronted with issues that are both highly controversial and emotionally charged. Unlike Bosnia, however, the dissemination of knowledge, discussions about guilt and compensation, and the expression and acceptance of perpetrators' and victims' personal feelings take place on a number of state levels and institutions other than schools. Truth commissions (with very varied functions ranging from collecting documentation, jurisdiction, and reconciliation measures for perpetrators and victims), trials, ma-

83 One such approach is proposed by Larisa Kasumagic, »Engaging Youth in Community Development: Post-war Healing and Recovery in Bosnia and Herzegovina,« *International Review of Education* 54 (2008): 375–392. See also the Bosnia Project on the website www.childrensmovement.org.

terial reparation, and joint commemorative ceremonies rooted in local, traditional ways of establishing consensus are among some of the approaches taken beyond standard school teaching.[84] Such approaches are not openly practised in BaH. Almost every side in BaH considers the international tribunal in The Hague to be biased, precisely because it tries to be unbiased towards all sides and, for example, even convicted the Bosniak commanding officer who had been in charge of the troops in Srebrenica until shortly before the mass murder. Since the IC has consistently played a central role in negotiating and then implementing peace, the international tribunal appears to function more as a continuation of than as an alternative to intervention. The attempts of Jacob Finchi as the head of the Jewish community, to set up a truth commission which would be devoted to enquiring into what really happened by collecting objective documentary material and carrying out interviews in order to produce independent research and statements serving as reliable data independently of international authorities, were repeatedly rejected in parliament.[85] Since cultural life and the media largely appeal to an ethnically defined public, few social groups have emerged independently of mediation by the IC which work on what may be described as an inter-ethnic scale. Textbook revision therefore takes on an almost unique task which it is incapable of fulfilling in light of the lack of social consensus and intermediary organs which could normally deal with dissent outside of schools.

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Heike Karge and Katarina Batarilo

Guidelines guiding history textbook production? Norms and practices of history textbook policy in Bosnia and Hercegovina

Introduction

The more than one and a half decades since Bosnia and Herzegovina (BaH hereafter) became an independent, internationally recognized state, and since war broke out in the country, have been characterized by manifold dynamics within the sphere of history textbook production in the country. The article at hand presents an overview of related key developments, with an emphasis on roughly the past decade. The reform process of history education and how international as well as national actors have shaped it takes center stage. However, as the general characteristics of history teaching reform in BaH are dealt with elsewhere in this volume, this contribution will focus on the question of how this process was and is reflected in the rather concrete spheres of history textbook approval, production, and quality, and, most importantly, the reflections of teachers, pupils, and textbook authors in BaH upon the newly produced history textbooks and textbook policy in the country in general. Our article is based on empirical data collected from history teachers, educationalists and students in 2007 and 2008, and accompanied by a qualitative textbook analysis, thus presenting a multilayered, critical study of history education and history instruction in present-day BaH.[1]

To a certain extent, the year 2006 marks a milestone in the reform process of history instruction in BaH, as since this time all of the Ministers of Education in BaH – of which there are 14 – have adopted the »Guidelines for the Writing and Evaluation of History Textbooks for Primary and Secondary Schools in BaH.«[2] The Guidelines, developed from a two-year common endeavor by international and national actors, serve as the focus lens of our investigation. More precisely,

1 We thank the Educational Office of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo for its technical and financial support of our research in 2008.

2 *Guidelines for Writing and Evaluation of History Textbooks for Primary and Secondary Schools in BaH*, BaH Official Gazette 05/07 (January 2007). Referred to throughout the article as »Guidelines.«

compliance with these Guidelines and their stipulated norms and regulations for history textbook writing will be closely examined, namely in terms of the empirical data survey as well as the textbook analysis. In this vein, and in contrast to many of the numerous analyses and reports that have been authored so far on problems regarding history instruction in BaH,[3] our study provides comprehensive insight into both the norms and practices of the ongoing reform process. It elucidates what is regulated by law and what is regulated in normative terms, and, on the other hand, how different actors »in the field,« such as textbook authors, educational policy makers, teachers, and, last but not least, pupils, handle these norms and rules and how they adapt to them. Ultimately, it seeks to clarify how these norms and rules are transformed into practices. Empirical surveys of teacher and pupil opinions about history textbook quality before and after the Guidelines, selected expert interviews with current textbook authors, and the parallel evaluation of selected history textbooks written both before and after the adoption of the Guidelines thus allow for a unique insight into the multilayered, and multifarious processes that characterize the ongoing reform of history education in BaH.

The empirical survey among history teachers in BaH was conducted in the spring of 2008.[4] The main aim of the pilot survey among history teachers was to

3 For general assessments of educational reform in BaH see: Seth Spaulding, »An Assessment of Educational Renewal and Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina,« Pittsburgh University, http://www.pitt.edu/~ginie/bosnia/pdf/AsseBaH98.pdf; Lidija Kolouh-Westin, »Curriculum and Textbook Analysis: Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina,« in *Democracy in Education in Bosnia-Herzegovina and FR Yugoslavia*, Stockholm, http://www.interped.su.se/publications/115%20Yellow%20Report.pdf. See the following reports also: Ann Low-Beer, »History Tea ching in Schools: The Work of the Council of Europe and UNESCO in Bosnia and Herz egovina. Report,« http://www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-operation/education/history_teaching/reform_of_history_teaching/south_east_europe/o.%20Low-Beer%20Booklet.asp#To pOfPage; Heike Karge, »History Curricula and Textbooks in Bosnia and Hercegovina: A Report of the Seminar of the Georg Eckert Institut in Cooperation with UNESCO, Sarajevo, April 5–8, 2001,« http://www.ffzg.hr/seetn/states/BaH/history_curricula.htm. See also the analyses of history textbooks used in BaH during the war and until the beginning of the second millennium: Pilvi Torsti, *Divergent Stories, Convergent Attitudes: A Study on the Presence of History, History Textbooks and the Thinking of Youth in Post-War Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Helsinki: Taifuuni, 2003); Heike Karge, »History after the War: Examples of how Controversial Issues are Dealt with in History Textbooks in Bosnia-Herzegovina,« *International Textbook Research Network-Newsletter* 9 (2000): 36–41; Branislava Baranović, »History Textbooks in Post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina,« *Intercultural Education* 12, no. 1 (2001): 13–26. As for more recent developments see Andreas Helmedach, "Recommendations for the Writing of History and Geography Textbooks in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Expe riences in Neighbouring Countries," *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 27 (2005): 121–125; and Pilvi Torsti, »How to deal with a difficult past? History textbooks supporting enemy images in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina,« *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 39, no. 1 (2007): 77–96.

4 The survey was conducted after a period of about 6 months of use of the new textbooks.

gather more detailed information about the concrete use of history textbooks in classrooms throughout BaH, especially after the implementation of a new generation of textbooks in the school year 2007/2008. In cooperation with the Educational Office of the OSCE Mission to BaH and its Educational Field Officers, a quantitative survey compiled by the authors of this article was distributed to primary and secondary schools throughout BaH. As teachers had to fill in the questionnaire independently, OSCE field officers, who distributed the questionnaire to the schools, were briefed by the authors on the purpose of the survey before distribution in February 2008. The questionnaire had a rather high response rate of 184 teachers.[5] The surveyed teachers teach in primary as well as in secondary schools and come from different types of schools such as grammar or vocational schools. The group of teachers interviewed includes both new teachers as well as teachers who have been teaching history for more than 15 years. Furthermore, the teachers surveyed came from all regions of BaH, from the two entities (Federation and Republic of Srpska) as well as from the Brčko District. The ethnic make-up of surveyed teachers also approximately represents the ethnic distribution of the BaH population (approximately 46 percent Bosniac teachers, 38 percent Serbian teachers and 15.6 percent Croatian teachers). It must be stressed that the survey was designed to be explorative. The results thus show primary tendencies with regards to teacher's opinions on history textbooks.

Parallel to the teacher survey, a pilot study was conducted among secondary-school pupils in Sarajevo in early autumn 2008. The pilot student survey aimed at gaining initial insight into what school pupils think about the new generation of history textbooks published after the Guidelines. To this end, 55 pupils from three grades (10 – 12) in a multi-ethnic high school in the city district of Dobrinja in Sarajevo were asked about their opinions on various aspects of history textbooks. A history teacher colleague from Sarajevo carried out the survey, which in terms of content and design was compiled in close cooperation with the authors of this article.

About ten expert interviews among history textbook authors, participants from BaH history teaching training seminars and educational authorities were also conducted by Katarina Batarilo, one of the authors, in 2007 and 2008. These interviews were conducted with the main aim of obtaining more detailed information about and insight into the processes of textbook revision, production and use, as there has been no literature on these topics to this point. Insofar as the

5 About 220 questionnaires were distributed among history teachers in BaH. The results of the survey and textbook analysis will be published in: Heike Karge and Katarina Batarilo, »The Reform of History Teaching in BaH. Past, Present and Future.« OSCE unpublished paper. September 2008.

topic of our present contribution is concerned, qualitative analyses of selected interviews form part of the study at hand.

Finally, a qualitative textbook analysis, compiled by Heike Karge, helped to form a picture of history textbook writing in BaH today. Forty-eight history textbooks in use in BaH primary schools within the period from autumn 2000 to summer 2008 were selected for investigation and analysis. With the Guidelines again as the central focus, the major objective of the textbook analysis was to investigate whether history textbooks approved for the 2007/8 school year in BaH fundamentally differ from their predecessors published before the adoption of the Guidelines. The inclusion of selected history textbooks published between 2000 and 2007/8 allows, thus, for a comparative perspective, through which changes and continuities that have shaped the history textbook landscape of the last decade in BaH can be highlighted. Quite clearly, this textbook analysis will not be absolutely comprehensive. Rather, it centers on one of the main and most »attacked« problems of BaH history textbooks, which could be referred to as a problem of identity or as the different »senses of belonging« to which the different ethnic communities in BaH are still attached today. To quote from the Guidelines, the usage of »BaH as the main reference point«[6] in the textbooks is at stake here, which was identified as a problem by educational authorities before the adoption of the Guidelines and has been tackled in numerous seminar papers, NGO and IGO educational reports, and elsewhere.[7] It has been identified as the main and major obstacle in the harmonization of the three sharply separate educational systems. No adjustment of the contradicting historical narratives in the sphere of national history can be realistically expected at present, given that many Croats in BaH regard the term »national history« as the history of Croatia, many Serbs respectively as the history of Serbia, and parts of the Bosniac population in BaH eliminate non-Muslim parts of BaH history from mainstream historical narratives.

Revised understandings of what constitutes »national history« cannot simply be obtained by re-education through the law or by the Guidelines, however. A certain level of political will has been expressed by educational authorities of all three sides – at least in a modest form – via the adoption of the Guidelines. How

6 Guidelines, paragraph 1.2.

7 For an early BaH curriculum analysis to UNESCO see: Volker Lenhart, Anastasia Kesidou and Stephan Stockmann, *The Curricula of the ›National Subjects' in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A Report to UNESCO*, (Heidelberg/Sarajevo, 1999). For a more recent critical evaluation of segregated teaching in BaH see: Gordana Bozic, »Reeducating the Hearts of Bosnian Students: An Essay on Some Aspects of Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina,« *East European Politics and Societies* 20, no. 2 (2006): 319 – 342; Compare also: Ann Low-Beer, »Politics, School Textbooks and Cultural Identity. The Struggle in Bosnia and Herzegovina,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 23 (2001): 215 – 223.

are textbook authors responding to the respective regulations in the Guidelines? How do teachers and pupils reflect upon and react to the BaH history in the textbooks? And finally, what are their opinions about the inclusion of one of the major aspects of the many controversies governing textbook policy in BaH: the most recent war(s) on the territory of former Yugoslavia in history textbooks?[8] In the light of latest developments in the sphere of educational policy – the joint adoption of the Guidelines – is BaH society now disposed to tackle its uncomfortable and painful recent past in the textbooks? Or would it be better for BaH society to embark upon an epoch of silence until new generations with no direct experience with the horrors of civil war have grown into adulthood?

There are no easy answers to these questions. Remarkably, the opinions of teachers and students on these questions are often much more critical and open to controversy than the textbooks that they use. This, at least, should provide a reason to entrust BaH society with a certain level of »dealing with a painful past« even in the light of a fragile state constitution, the fundamentals of which were created under pressure and with the support of the international community through the Dayton Agreement. Before we approach these questions, a short overview about history textbook production »before the Guidelines«, that is until the year 2006, will be given, to be enlarged upon later by a comprehensive discussion of the different legislative norms and actors' practices regulating history textbook assessment and approval after the adoption of the Guidelines (from 2007).

The Main Characteristics of Textbook Production until 2006

Not surprisingly, the war in BaH had strong implications on history education in BaH. First of all, the formerly unified educational system broke down and was replaced by three parallel educational systems, which followed strictly ethnonational lines. In terms of the approval and production of history textbooks during the war, this period was marked by history textbooks being imported from Yugoslavia/Serbia and Croatia and the development of new history text-

8 As only recently demonstrated by the history textbook episode in the Tuzla Canton in September 2007. Following public protests by war veteran unions against part of the content of two newly written and approved history textbooks, the two textbooks were withdrawn from use in schools during the school year 2007/08. Remarkably, neither textbook dealt with the war explicitly; rather the war veterans articulated that the major shortcoming of the books was the non-presentation of the suffering of the Bosniac people in the war (inter alia). See also: Georg Eckert Institut, »Press Release: Comment on Recent Public Discussion with Regard to History Textbooks in Tuzla Canton, BaH,« http://www.gei.de/index.php?id=598#c1960.

books for the Bosniac community within BaH itself.[9] During this time, there were no revisions of the textbooks imported from foreign countries for both Croat- and Serb-dominated parts of BaH, as the Croatian and Serbian educational authorities in BaH simply took on the education plans and programs from their respective »kin states.« Therefore, quite naturally, textbook authors from all three of the constitutive nations, who had already published textbooks in the 1980 s in the former Yugoslavia, were still engaged in textbook writing in BaH up until the early 2000 s. They have, however, been accompanied by authors who only began textbook writing after the war in the mid-1990 s.

The first revised versions of imported textbooks appeared in 1997, in the Republic of Srpska (RS hereafter). Here, for the subject of history, a »Dodatak« (»Supplement«) for the 8th grade history textbook dealing with the 20th century was added to the imported textbook from Belgrade. This supplement was used in schools throughout the RS for the next two school years, including the year 1999/2000. Its aim, as well as those of supplements developed for other subjects (Serbian language, literature, nature and society, and geography) was to expand the existing teaching program by a certain local component.[10] Regarding the 8th grade book, this first integration into the BaH environment implied bringing the war of 1992 – 1995 on BaH territory into the textbook and focusing on the »injustice« that it brought to the Serbian people in BaH and abroad.[11] The first

9 Note that in reality, teachers, especially during the war, also used other – and, in this case, older – history textbooks than those approved by »their« Ministries of Education (MoE), quite often for reasons of limited access. For comparative analyses of history textbooks from Croatia, Yugoslavia and BaH in the 1990 s see: Wolfgang Höpken, »War, Memory, and Edu cation in a Fragmented Society: The Case of Yugoslavia,« *East European Politics and Societies* 13, no.1 (1999/2000): 190 – 227; Wolfgang Höpken, ed., *Öl ins Feuer? Schulbücher, ethnische Stereotypen und Gewalt in Südosteuropa* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1996); Heike Karge, »Geschichtsbilder im postjugoslawischen Raum: Konzeptionen in Geschichtslehrbüchern am Beispiel von Selbst- and Nachbarschaftswahrnehmung,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 21, no. 4 (1999): 315 – 37; Heike Karge, »Tra euforia, moderazione e isolamento: l' Europa nei testi scolastici di storia delle repubbliche della ex Jugoslavia,« in *Insegnare l'Europa*, ed. Falk Pingel (Torino: Fondazione Agnelli, 2003), 479 – 525.

10 As a critical comment to these supplements see Mirko Mirčetić, »Politika u udžbenicima. Dodatak po glavi učenika.« *Banjaluka*, October 9, 1997, http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/pubs/archive/data/199710/71009-009-pubs-sar.htm.

11 The following passage is taken from Mirčetić, op. cit., who quotes from the mentioned supplement for the 8th grade book: »The Serbian people, threatened by the frequent attacks of Muslim Fundamentalists and Croatian Klero-Nationalists, had to organize and defend their lives, their national identity, their honor and their human worth with weapons … An unbelievably anti-Serbian media campaign was carried out worldwide, supported by certain political circles, to which Serbian behavior was not considered suited to the so-called »new world order.« After all of this, the international community declared the Serbian people as the aggressors and attacked them militarily. Muslim and Croatian politicians, as well as all media, propagated lies of such a kind, that the victims for whom they themselves were

history textbooks for the Serbian community were published in BaH beginning in 2000,[12] although they did not automatically imply the adoption of content reflecting BaH history. Overwhelmingly, the very same textbooks, which had formerly been imported from Belgrade, were then re-published by the publishing house in Eastern (at the time known as »Srpsko«) Sarajevo. As a parallel process, history textbooks were also written and published in the RS itself, although, as a rule, the content did not differ very much from their Belgrade counterparts.

Almost simultaneously, the Croats in BaH also started adapting their history textbooks, albeit in a slightly different manner. Thus, similar to their Serbian colleagues, Croatian authorities in Mostar approved textbooks that had been published in Zagreb without adapting them in any way to the BaH environment until 2000.[13] From 2001 onwards, a superficial adaptation to the BaH environment took place within textbooks, in the form of adding a Herzegovinian co-author to the original author from Zagreb, and by publishing the books in Mostar. The addition of content related to BaH history, however, constituted only a small fraction. The last history textbook that experienced this kind of (minor) BaH-oriented revision was that for 8th grade primary school, in 2003. In 2006, the very first history textbooks written solely by a Croatian author (from Herzegovina) appeared in the textbook market in BaH. As a parallel process, adopted versions of Zagreb textbooks now published in Mostar were also in use.[14]

As mentioned above, the Bosniac community in BaH began to produce new history textbooks during the war. In terms of content, quality and authorship, these books (as well as their Croatian and Serbian counterparts), bore the legacy of both the 1992 – 1995 war and remnants of former educational standards up until 2002. In 2003, however, with the emergence of a new publishing house, the first steps away from this path were taken. The new publisher, *Sarajevo Publishing*, began to replace the Bosniac textbook format, which up until then had been rather old-fashioned, with new, visually attractive designs. In addition, new

responsible were attributed to the Serbian army. They tried by all means possible to vilify/demonize the Serbian people and accused them of being the culprits of this war.«

12 The mentioned »Dodatak« found its way into the new RS history textbook, Ranko Pejic, *Istorija. Za osmi razred osnovne skole* (1st edition) (Srpsko Sarajevo: Zavod za Udzbenike i Nastavna sredstva, 2000).

13 For analyses of these early Croatian history textbooks see: Damir Agičič, »The Image of the Peoples of South-Eastern Europe in the Croatian History Textbooks for the Primary School,« in *The Image of the "Other", Neighbour in the School Textbooks of the Balkan Countries*, ed. Panos D. Xochellis, et al. (Athens: 2001), 147 – 62; Snježana Koren, »Minorities in Croatian History and Geography Textbooks,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 23 (2001): 183 – 199; Magdalena Najbar-Agičić, »The Yugoslav History in Croatian Textbooks,« in *Clio in the Balkans* (Thessaloniki: CDRSEE, 2002), 232 – 48.

14 For a textbook analysis of more recent Croatian history textbooks compare: Snježana Koren, »Regional History in Textbooks: The Croatian Case,« *European Studies* 5 (2006): 29 – 42.

author teams appeared, who at least partly tried to integrate multiple perspectives into the textbooks. This development, which appeared quite early in comparison to the Serbian and Croatian textbook market in BaH, was to no small part caused by the ongoing textbook reform process in the country. Since that time, Bosniacs have consistently constituted the largest textbook writer community. This may partly result from the fact that educational law in the Federation allows for a plural textbook market (approval of three textbooks for each grade). However, with the Croats in the Federation, who technically enjoy the same right, this regulation has not had such »multiple« implications. It seems that the Croats in BaH lack the textbook expert resources required to make use of the plural textbook market. Yet, while in Croatia itself the existing plural textbook market results in great diversity with regard to history textbook quality, the lack of such diversity and quality in the Croatian BaH textbook market may also reflect a lack of political will to improve textbooks for this community.

Writing, Assessment and Approval of Textbooks in 2007

As mentioned above the highlight of textbook production alignment for the subject of history has been the Guidelines that were signed by all ministries of education and repeatedly deemed as a significant basis for the redevelopment of textbooks from 2007 onwards by representatives of textbook issues from all three sides. In addition to the elements of the *Common Core Curricula*[15] (CCC hereafter) and the Guidelines, which apply for the entire territory of BaH, it is regulated through the State Agreement that all compulsory textbooks used in BaH can be used state-wide.[16]

This is reinforced by the publication of the »Catalogue of Approved Textbooks and Teaching Means in BaH« by the Ministry of Civil Affairs, presented to the public for the first time in 2006. This Catalogue[17] lists all textbooks that were approved for the 2006/2007 school year on the entire BaH territory. Ministers from both entities encouraged their educationalists to select a textbook of their

15 The CCC are a mandatory framework for teaching plans in the entities, Cantons and in the Brcko district that were approved in 2003 by the Conference of all Education Ministers. The CCC should ensure that students in the entire BaH have as much content in common as possible in order to make mobility for them in the country easier, or respectively, possible.

16 Stability Pact for South East Europe, »The state of history teaching in South East Europe,« http://www.stabilitypact.org/education/MATRIXHistory%20TeachinginSEE.pdf, 2007.

17 Federal Ministry of Education, Council for Textbook Harmonization Policy, »Liste der zugelassenen Schulbücher, Handbücher, Arbeitsblätter und Aufgabensammlungen für Grundschulen, Gymnasien und technische Sekundarschulen sowie Berufsschulen für das Schuljahr 2006/2007,« 2006.

choice from the list; in other words, a teacher from the Federation could select a textbook by an author from the RS and vice-versa.[18]

In reality, however, the situation is completely different. In BaH, different textbooks are used in both entities and in all cantons and according to our pilot study,[19] many older textbooks are still in use, particularly in cantons that follow the Croatian curriculum and in the district of Brčko. The great variety of textbooks and the obvious lack of exchange of these books is a result of the situation of education policy as comprising three de facto parallel education systems, each with its own curriculum. The fact that the textbooks are primarily based on the curricula, which do not only differ from entity to entity, but also – to a certain extent – between the individual cantons, gives rise to problems for the authors in textbook production as well as for teachers in textbook selection. It also causes difficulties for pupils, such as those changing schools between and even within the entities, as will be explained in more detail below.

The Production of Textbooks in the Federation

The Council for Textbook Harmonization Policy (CTHP hereafter)[20] annually announces a tender for textbooks. The announcement[21] of the competition for new textbooks, handouts and worksheets for history and geography for primary and secondary schools in 2006[22] stipulated that manuscripts must be written in compliance with the curriculum, common core curriculum, and Guidelines. The authors had ten months in which to write the manuscripts, an extremely short

18 OSCE,»Press Releases. The Path to Unified Textbook in BiH« http://www.oscebih.org/public/default.asp?article=show&d=6&id=1857.

19 The data of the study shows that during the 2007/2008 school year there were still old textbooks in use, with a higher percentage of Croatian respondents using older textbooks when compared to Serbs and Bosniacs. Serbs and Bosniacs mostly indicated using new textbooks (published in 2007), whereas Croats named textbooks from 2003, 2005 and 2006. Teachers from Brcko also used older versions of textbooks. See Karge and Batarilo, The Reform of History Teaching, 2008.

20 The CTHP was established after the adoption of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Schools (2003). It should be noted that the Ministries of Education generally don't participate, but rather delegate an advisor from the MoE to attend on their behalf (see OSCE, *Textbooks and Their Publishers in BiH. A research study prepared by the OSCE Mission to BiH Education Department.* Unpublished paper, 2008.)

21 The call for textbook proposals was based on the decision at the conference of the Coordination Board for the Implementation and Evaluation of the Federation Education Reform on March 10, 2006 in Mostar. The publication of this call for bids took place from the 17 – 19 of April in the Daily Paper.

22 Bosnien-Herzegovina, Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Federal Ministry for Education and Science, Work Report for the Year 2006 (Mostar: 2006).

period of time considering that the principles recommended in the Guidelines were new to the majority of the textbook authors.

The publishing houses that hire authors to write textbooks according to the Croatian curriculum have not followed the tender of the federal Ministry of Education (MoE hereafter). In this case, the publishers, and not the above-mentioned Council, are responsible for the entire process, from selecting authors to distributing and selling the textbooks.

The difficulties with the two different processes of textbook production in the Federation arise – amongst other factors – due to the lack of a relevant law. In the Federation, an old law is still in force on the publication of teaching materials from the Yugoslavian era.[23] A commission was appointed in the Federation of BaH in the autumn of 2007 to make recommendations for the skeleton law surrounding the textbook, with the aim of regulating the complex textbook market in BaH. The attempt to pass the skeleton law failed, however (in the spring of 2008) due to the objections raised by the ministers of Education of the Croat majority cantons. The coordinating board of the education ministers from cantons in which lessons are taught in accordance with the Croatian curriculum[24] considered its rights endangered and claimed that the Federal Ministry of Education is attempting to pass over – or to take over – the authorities granted to the cantonal ministers by the fundaments of the Dayton Treaty.[25]

In the light of these events, the call for proposals can be considered the only public and legalized framework for textbook production at the federal level. It comprises fundamental reference documents for textbooks such as the curricula, the CCC and the Guidelines, as well as regulations pertaining to script types. It is, however, not legally binding and thus constitutes a grey area that in fact circumvents certain legalities.

The coexistence of different curricula as a result of the decentralized education system in the Federation could be a further cause of the problem. The call for proposals does not clearly specify on which documents – such as curricula – the manuscripts should be based for use within the Federation. It therefore remains unclear as to whether the cantonal or federal curricula should be referred to. In practice, during the writing phase, the authors found themselves confronting the problem of which curriculum they should use for orientation. From the statements of the questioned/interviewed authors it would not be in their best in-

23 Zakon o izdavačkoj djelatnosti [Law over Publication Practices], *Službeni list SR BiH*, no. 35, 1990, and *Službeni list RBiH*, no.3, 1993 and no. 23, 1993.

24 West Herzegovina Canton, Central Bosnia Canton, Canton 10, Posavina Canton.

25 The constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, formulated in Annex 4 of the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), transfers educational issues to the entities (see Annex 4: »The responsibility for all governmental functions not explicitly mentioned in the constitution are transferred to the entities.«).

terests to use the cantonal curriculum, as it would be restricted to that immediate area; more profit would be made from using the federal curriculum, in which case, however, teachers and pupils alike would be subjected to greater burdens and difficulties due to discrepancies with the cantonal curriculums.

As a result, the manuscript based on the federal curriculum can only be used as a textbook in a few cantons within the federation. The problem can be illustrated using the example of the canton of Sarajevo. Here, as in other large cantons, lessons are taught using the canton's own curriculum, which deviates from its federal counterpart. Authors writing their manuscripts in accordance with the federal curriculum thus have no chance of selling their textbook on the Sarajevo market. In secondary schools, where large parts of the curricula have not been reformed and thus remain extremely varied, this can result in up to three different textbooks being used in parallel for one class year. A similar situation is to be found in vocational schools.

The canton education ministers need not adhere to the regulations laid down by the federal ministry, neither in terms of curricula, nor in calls for manuscripts, nor for textbook approval procedures, as such regulations at federal level are in fact merely recommendations, and are not compulsory.

The consequences of differences from one curriculum to another – and thus from one textbook to another – become particularly problematic when pupils change schools. According to a teacher's statement, such difficulties are most dramatic when pupils cross entity borders. A further problem when students switch schools is the use of different scripts. Whereas textbooks published in the RS exclusively use Cyrillic script, textbooks published in Mostar (and in Zagreb, of course) are published solely in Latin script. All Bosniac textbooks published in 2007 use both the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets. This is a result of the directions in the call for manuscripts, which stipulated that thirty percent of each textbook in the Federation should be written in Cyrillic script. In preceding years, some of the Bosniac books were published in both alphabets, but it seems that the use of both was not adopted as a general rule until 2007.

Despite their positive statements regarding the textbooks, many of the history teachers interviewed pointed out a lack of compliance with the curricula alongside the problematic or incorrect portrayals of national history.[26] As the textbook continues to be used as the main teaching medium in class by many teachers, this problem must be taken extremely seriously and the necessity to find a solution in the way of curricular reform becomes more urgent.

26 A RS teacher commented in our survey: »I actually don't have any important remarks on the textbooks that we use in history instruction, except that in some cases the textbook content doesn't follow the curriculum as well as the fact that some of the lessons aren't handled well.«

Textbook Production in the Republic of Srpska

»Textbook publishing in the RS is thoroughly centralized. The…Institute for Textbooks and Teaching Aids, East Sarajevo is the sole publisher as well as the main distributor and seller of textbooks and other teaching aids in the RS. The issuance of books is under tight government control, with only one textbook issued per subject per grade, following government approval.«[27]

Unlike for the Federation, there is a law regarding publisher practices for the RS that legally specifies how a textbook is written, who it is written by and the manuscript procedure from this point on.[28]

»The process described by the RS Law on publishing is the following:[29]
1) Issuance of the plan[30] for the textbook
2) Establishing the textbook concept[31]
3) Provision and drafting of the text
4) Manuscript submission for expert review[32]
5) Manuscript submission for approval
6) Issuance of approval by the RS Ministry of Education
7) Printing the textbook«.

The authors are also given the Guidelines and CCC and instructed to write their

27 OSCE, *Textbooks and Their Publishers in BiH*, 4.

28 Republika Srpska Law on publishing, Official Gazette of BaH, no. 18/03. Section VI, Articles 30 to 44 from RS Law on publishing covers the legal framework of textbook publishing in RS.

29 The following quotation taken from: OSCE, *Textbooks and Their Publishers,* 5.

30 Article 32 of RS Law on publishing: (sic) »The plan of the textbook shall contain the needs for new, i. e. adaptation of the existing textbooks and it shall be issued together with new of changes and amendments of the existing curricula for primary and secondary schools. The plan of the textbook shall contain the deadline for the submission of the manuscript for approval and deadlines for the beginning of use of the textbook in classes in primary and secondary schools. The plan of the textbook shall be issued by the minister upon proposal of the Republic Pedagogical Institute.«

31 Article 33 of RS Law on publishing: »The concept of the textbook shall determine the scientific-expert, pedagogical, didactic-methodology, language and art-graphic requests (sic)/requirements? of the textbook. The concept of the textbook shall be determined for particular teaching subject as a whole, i. e. for common contents of one or more subjects within one or more teaching subjects for primary or secondary schools. The concept of textbook shall be determined by the Institute upon proposal by Republic Pedagogical Institute.«

32 Article 36 of RS Law on publishing: »For each manuscript of the textbook, the institute shall be obliged to ensure at least two expert reviewers, and one of them shall be an appropriate teacher of the higher education institution and the other one shall be a teacher of the respective subject of primary, i. e. secondary school. The author of the manuscript can not be the expert reviewer of that manuscript.«

textbooks in accordance with these two documents. Potential authors submit written material to the Institute for Textbooks and Teaching Aids, and it is then forwarded to expert reviewers.

In practice, the Minister of Education, Antun Kasipovic, the Director of the Pedagogical Institute, the Director of the Textbook Institute, and experts in the field decided that due to limited time, it would be better to form author teams rather than to organize a competition for the best manuscript as carried out in the Federation. The author teams were first formed in 2007; they mostly consisted of teachers as well as an advisor from the Pedagogical Institute and a university professor. Particularly noteworthy here is the fact that the members of the author team for the history textbook for vocational schools came from different ethnic backgrounds.[33]

Textbook Assessment

As with the case of textbook production, there are extreme discrepancies at various levels of the process of assessing and approving textbooks. The assessment procedure is similar in both entities. As a result, problems appear in parallel, and the Republic of Srpska can be subject to peculiarities as a result of its centralized education system.

In the Federation, the Ministries of Education for each canton signed an agreement on textbook approval procedures with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Federation of BaH in 2007. »According to this agreement, all Cantonal Ministers should be represented in the Council for Textbook Harmonization Policy (CTHP) which reports to the Coordination Body of all Cantonal Ministers of Education.«[34] However, the Croatian Ministries of Education have an independent approval system, which will be described later, and which is based upon the joint Education Institute in Mostar.

The authors send their manuscripts to the Ministry for the assessment process; the Ministry invites expert evaluators to join its special commission. To this end, the manuscripts are allocated code numbers and passed on to the evaluators, who are teachers or academic experts, together with relevant catalogues of criteria and forms. The same process is followed in the Republic of Srpska. For the assessment of textbooks written in accordance with the Croatian curriculum, the Central Pedagogical Institute in Mostar creates expert commissions for the various subjects to analyze and evaluate the texts.

In the Federation, within the »Bosniac« system, as well as in the Republic of

33 In this case the author team included two Serbian authors and a Bosniac author.
34 OSCE, *Textbooks and Their Publishers*, 2008, 7.

Srpska, the evaluation reports consist of three parts; no detailed information is available about the Croatian system. The first part of the report requires general information from the evaluator, such as the type of school for which the textbook is intended, year and number of pages as well as the names of the authors. The second part entails an analysis of the manuscript in accordance with prescribed categories in six sections. The evaluator is asked about the conformity with the curriculum, the accuracy of the content matter, the normative aims, and the educational value of the manuscript, and required to analyze psychological aspects,[35] didactical and methodological matters,[36] and questions of language and style.[37] In the Federation, each block of exercises is given a mark,[38] and ultimately added to form a final grade. In the Republic of Srpska, on the other hand, commentaries are written for each criterion. Alongside the analysis, the evaluator is also required in a third section to write a concluding text giving a final assessment. In the Federation, the third part repeatedly questions the conformity of the manuscript with the CCC,[39] which is not the case in the Republic of Srpska. It is equally problematic that the forms fail to refer to the Guidelines. Nevertheless, authors from the Federation and from the Republic of Srpska mention that they were provided with the curricula, CCC and the Guidelines at the beginning of their work on the manuscripts. Croatian education representatives also emphasize that no positive evaluation may be attained via the Commission without adherence to the CCC and Guidelines.[40]

Ultimately, the manuscript can be assessed by the evaluator in terms of four prescribed categories. The manuscript may be assessed positively,[41] it may be assessed negatively, in which case errors detected are to be rectified; the manuscript need not, however, then repeat the assessment procedure, but may be printed without further action. Sometimes the recommendations for improvement are not, however, sent to the author for rectification, but rather the texts are sent to print immediately. Should – in a third possibility – the assessment reach a negative verdict, the author is given the opportunity to correct the

35 Such criteria include, for instance, the suitability of new terminology or sentence length.
36 One aspect is the selection and structuring of the material in terms of didactic principles.
37 Questions address typing errors or the suitability of the style for the age of the children.
38 The marks given range from 1 (fail) to 5 (excellent).
39 A manuscript cannot be assessed positively if it does not fully comply with the CCC as published in the Official Gazette of BaH, No. 24/03 on 15th August, 2003. (Cf. Evaluators' Worksheet of the Federation, 2007).
40 This statement was made in an interview with one of the authors and a representative of the Pedagogical Institute in Mostar in June 2007.
41 A manuscript requires two positive assessments in order to be accepted. In the case of differing assessments, the evaluators are invited to a conference and talks during which an agreement is reached. (Cf. Instructions for the Review of Federal Educational Ministry Textbooks, 2006).

mistakes and re-submit the manuscript for a further review. Some authors affected have reported that, here too, great difficulties arise due to the fact that – in many cases – the reviewers' comments fail to be passed on to the authors: There was theoretically no chance for the authors to correct their work and they therefore merely received a final rejection of their manuscripts. This corresponds, in fact, to the fourth possibility, which is that the manuscript is given a negative verdict and it »disappears.«

The problems are not limited, however, to the final verdict for the manuscript; as a whole, the assessment and approval process lacks sufficient objectivity and transparence. Firstly, the training and role of the evaluators is very unclear. In the Republic of Srpska, the evaluators often act in a dual function: sometimes they are simultaneously an author, an evaluator and also an employee of the ministry, which can be seen as extremely problematic. This may be due to the fact that only qualified experts trained by the international community are placed on the list of evaluators comprised by the Institute for Textbooks, many of whom even – sometimes for the first time – became authors as a result of this training. A ministerial employee in such a dual function argued in an interview: »You can't become an evaluator if you haven't encountered the word ›multiperspectivity‹.«[42] Criticism has also claimed that the evaluation and assessment process is tainted by lobbyist politics and attempts to bribe the evaluators.

A second problem is the catalogues of criteria. The criteria and their individual items are too general and do not specifically address history textbooks. They are also out-of-date[43] and easily misunderstood, as one criterion can demand several items, i. e. a sub-question covers several different aspects.[44] Thirdly, the compliance with the Guidelines can be regarded as problematic. In both entities, the Guidelines are not specified as the document upon which the assessor forms should be based. Even if the evaluator and authors have received the Guidelines, there is no guarantee that they refer to them in their assessment.

And finally, it can be generally said of both entities that the number of textbooks to be assessed by each evaluator is extremely high, and that too little time

42 It is particularly interesting that a kind of adaptation of the language spoken by the international community is taking place here, and that this language is being employed for argumentative purposes. So the above mentioned ministerial employee stated that evaluators who have not participated in such trainings offered by the international community are only rudimentarily equipped for this important task.

43 According to information obtained from the Director of the Institute for Textbooks and Other School Materials, Republic of Srpska, in the RS, the criteria for evaluators was revised in 1998 and then not again until 2006.

44 An example of pedagogical-psychological criteria (Instructions for the Review of Federal Educational Ministry Textbooks, 2) follows: »Is the instructional material aligned with the mental development and experience of the students in its content, sentence length and age range?«

is allowed for the assessment process.[45] The time chosen for the procedure – the end of the school year – is also unfortunate, as the majority of evaluators are teachers.

Textbook Approval

In the RS, only one new textbook is approved per subject and class level, whereas in the Federation on the Croatian and Bosniac sides, three textbooks are approved for a period of three years.[46] This restriction to three books is relatively new, since 2006, at least for authors of textbooks written in accordance with the Bosniac curriculum. Approval is given to the first three textbooks with the highest number of points following the expert evaluation.

The first problems appear early in the approval process via the ranking of points. An evaluator from the Federation reports that, for a particular class, three of five manuscripts were in fact very poor in quality, thus deserving a negative verdict; nevertheless, three textbooks were admitted. In practice, therefore even textbooks that ought to have failed the assessment are approved. We also know from the situation described above that in some cases where manuscripts are to be revised by the authors, there is in fact no opportunity for the latter to carry out the revisions. As a result, manuscripts which may well have been of good quality are rejected. One can only speculate that envy and nepotism could be behind such events. As the Federation does not have a law regarding textbooks, there are no known preventive measures for this problem. One area that is legally regulated is the use of non-approved textbooks. As a whole in BaH, and according to the state agreement, all compulsory textbooks used from the Catalogue are admitted in the entire state. In the Federation there are no modalities of sanctions specifically described for the use of non-approved textbooks. However, the current legislation[47] specifies that the respective Ministry of Education

45 One evaluator in Sarajevo, for instance, was given only 25 days in which to assess five textbooks, two exercise books, and a handbook.

46 The period of three years is only named in the text of the call for manuscripts, and even here it is merely a recommendation.

47 Federation: In Cantons K1, K3, K4, K5 and K9, textbooks for primary and secondary schools are approved on the basis of the Article 3 of the Law on Publishing Activities (Official Journal of the Socialist Republic of BaH, Number 35/90, and the Official Journal of the Republic of BaH, numbers 3/93 and 23/93), on the basis of the Articles 1 and 9 of the Regulation on the procedure of preparing and publishing of textbooks and other teaching material for primary and secondary schools (Official Journal of the Socialist Republic of BaH, Number 4/91), and accordingly to Article IX.5(1) of the Federal Constitution. In Cantons K2, K8 and K10, the Institute for Education Mostar approves textbooks for primary and secondary schools. Both of these legal frameworks are used in Cantons K6 and K7; See: Stability Pact for South East

approve all textbooks for primary and secondary schools. If any school, school director or publisher uses non-approved textbooks, it can be seen as a breach of the aforementioned legislation. In the RS, Title VIII of the law on publishing activities (articles 47 to 51) specifies that in the case of violation of the law fines can be imposed on the responsible institution.[48] The Brčko District's agreement states that all compulsory textbooks from the Catalogue are approved for use in the District's primary and secondary schools. All other textbooks are prohibited.[49]

The process of approval of Croatian textbooks is quite different. The various ministries of education of the Croatian cantons can alter the list of approved books; in other words, the latter decide on the ultimate approval or rejection of the textbooks. The list of (Croatian) textbooks must therefore pass through the expert commission of the Pedagogical Institute as well as through the commission of the cantonal ministry of education. According to the Director of the Pedagogical Institute in Mostar, the textbooks remain in use for a very long time, which is also confirmed by the data from our comprehensive teacher study. The reasons for this, such as reduced financial strain on the parents, are of an economic nature; the market for Croatian textbooks, particularly at the secondary level, is simply too small, and turnover too low. According to the Pedagogical Institute in Mostar, new calls for manuscripts do not appear every year; textbooks were not newly developed until 2006, when the CCC required a new tender for textbooks. Sections of textbooks, especially for vocational schools, are written by authors from Croatia in a team with authors from BaH; Criticism here also claims a lack of humane capacity to cater to this.

After approval the manuscripts are sent for publishing; in all three cases, the selection process differs dramatically. Teachers in the RS do not have a choice of textbooks. Here, the ministry of education also selects the books.[50] But in the Federation, who decides which textbook the school will use once three have been approved? In theory – and according to the »Regulations for the Procedure of Preparing and Editing Textbooks and Other Teaching Materials«[51] – the teachers within a subject area convene (at a so-called »stručni aktiv«), yet in reality it is rather different. The publishing houses begin promoting the books, evidently at

Europe, »The state of history teaching in South East Europe,« 2007, http://www.stabilitypact.org/education/MATRIXHistory%20TeachinginSEE.pdf.

48 Ibid. Fines range from KM 3,000 to 20,000. The responsible person is also fined from KM 300 to 1,500.

49 Ibid.

50 According to the regulations of the RS Ministry for Education and Culture, no. 07.2 – 5619/07 of 24.08.2007 and no. 07.2-4817-2/07 of 23.07.2007 as well as no. 07.2 – 5990/07 of 03.09.2007.

51 Official Gazette of the Socialistic Republic of BaH, No. 4/91, according to Article IX. 5(1) of the Constitution of the Federation of BaH.

times involving a certain amount of bribery and manipulative tendencies. The role of the teacher advisor, for instance, might be questioned; reports suggest that teachers are called upon at the relevant meetings to vote for a particular book; or indeed only one book is put forward rather than three. The interviews conducted with teachers confirm these reproaches; ultimately, textbook selection takes place on three levels: at the Pedagogical Institutes and the teacher advisors themselves, at the teacher conferences, in some cases, the headmaster or a teacher, either in consultation with his colleagues or alone. Many teachers in the Federation also stated, however, that they had no possibility to influence selection at all, reporting that they had not even been informed about a particular textbook, to say nothing of the fact that their opinion was not requested. Only a small number of teachers had even seen the textbook before being ordered to use it.

The inadequately transparent practices in the selection of textbooks are only a continuation of the numerous unclear rules and practices in the areas of textbook production, textbook review and the approval of textbooks. New standards, rules and laws for textbook production are therefore urgently needed. In doing so the role of not only the teacher, but also the parents could be strengthened, as they would most profit from a transparent textbook policy.

Before and After the Guidelines: History Textbooks in BaH

The Guidelines resulted in the development of 29 new history textbooks as well as training for over 200 history teachers in implementing these new resources during the year 2007.[52] This is a quite impressive number of newly written textbooks for a country as small as BaH. What, then, were the distinguishing features of the Guidelines that made the publication of so many new history textbooks and the parallel training of history teachers necessary?

In the most general terms, the Guidelines require the implementation of European standards in history textbook writing in BaH.[53] Substantiation of these »European standards« was done in the *General, Specific and Individual*

52 **OSCE press article »Promoting a Culture of Tolerance,« http://www.osceBaH.org/education/tolerance.asp.**

53 For a more detailed discussion of the development of the Guidelines see the chapter by Falk Pingel in this volume. For European standards see: »Recommendation 1283 (1996) on History and the Learning of History in Europe,« Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/AdoptedText/TA96/EREC1283.HTM. The development of the critical skills of investigation for students and teachers alike are at center stage here, in order to »enable students to better understand the links between past and present and the nature of the conflicts facing Europe today.«

Guidelines for History Textbook Writing in BaH, which form part of the Guidelines. They provide four analytical categories, namely the usage of appropriate language, qualitative aspects in terms of content as well as methodological and quantitative aspects. With regard to »language« the *General Guidelines* ask for age-appropriate texts and the removal of hate speech.[54] Additionally, the *Specific Guidelines* emphasize the adequate use of historical terminology. In terms of more specific qualitative aspects, the Guidelines require above all the accentuation of BaH as the main reference point. This requirement constitutes one of the major aims of the *Guidelines* and the *Memorandum of Understanding*.[55] Additionally, adequate presentations of women, national minorities, and the history of daily life are included as Guidelines requirements as well.[56] Closely related to these criteria are methodological aspects, which accentuate the use of certain methodological tools, such as comparative, interactive, multiperspectival, and critical thinking methods.[57] Finally, the *General Guidelines* ask for a quantitatively balanced presentation of political, cultural and economic history, as well as of texts, illustrations, tasks, and sources, and for a balanced coverage of national and World/European history.[58]

Of the criteria mentioned above, there are at least two aspects which require a more detailed investigation: the requirement to use BaH as the main reference point in textbooks, and, secondly, the mode of (non-)presentation of the last war (1992 – 1995) in BaH. Regarding the former criteria, one could state that it actually ranks as a »primus inter pares« among all the other criteria mentioned. For, as a document at the OSCE official website states, the accentuation of BaH as a main reference point in daily school instruction – much more than history textbooks – has been the major driving force for the working groups that have been elaborating the Guidelines, and whose mandate was »to ensure that students have a basic understanding of the history and geography of all three constituent people, and of national minorities, that BaH is used as the main reference point, [and] that neighboring countries are presented in a balanced manner…«[59]

54 Paragraphs 2.10 and 2.11 of the General Guidelines: »Hate speech is, thereby, a term for speech intended to degrade, intimidate, or incite violence or prejudicial action against a person or group of people based on certain criteria, such as their ethnicity, religion, gender identity, age, nationality, or moral or political views.«

55 Paragraph 1.2 and 2.4 of the General Guidelines.

56 Paragraphs 2.16 and 2.17 of the General Guidelines and paragraph 3.4 of the Specific Guidelines.

57 Paragraphs 2.6, 2.9, and 2.12 of the General Guidelines, as well as paragraphs 3.1 and 3.9 of the Specific Guidelines and paragraph 4.11 of the Individual Guidelines.

58 Paragraphs 2.1, 2.8 and 2.15 of the General Guidelines.

59 Adin Sadic, »Education in BaH: Towards a Multi-Perspective Approach,« OSCE BaH, http://www.osceBaH.org/public/default.asp?d=6&article=show&id=1955.

However, at the very end of the Guidelines, where three final conclusions are formulated, the very first of these in the end actually overthrows this central criterion, when stating:

»The Commission has concluded that different points of view exist relating to certain historical contents in the curriculum and point 1.2. of the Moratorium of Understanding which stipulates that Bosnia and Herzegovina is the reference point and recommends further work on harmonization of the curriculum, through development of standards in education.«[60]

Here, the enacting of Guidelines unveils its limited power, particularly if we bear in mind that it was the Dayton Agreements itself that vested the majority of powers, including educational powers, to the two entities and the cantons in the Federation. In view of the year-long engagement of the OSCE Education Mission to BaH, a recent OSCE background report states quite pessimistically that »The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina may have ended the war but it did not end ethnic divisions or nationalist ideologies.«[61]

Ethnic division in BaH is, and not only in the case of textbooks, mainly grounded in the insistence of dominant parts of all three constituent nations upon the preponderance of ethnic affiliations, and the parallel disregard of a civic affiliation to the state BaH among the Serbian and Croatian communities in BaH. The textbook analysis documents the very different ways of how textbook authors and textbook admission committees have been dealing with this contested criterion. Additionally, the teachers' survey sheds light on what teachers themselves think about the contested character of the »national history of BaH,« and how they deal with the problems evolving out of the different concepts of national and state identity as offered in the textbooks in their daily work as teachers.

Another striking feature of the Guidelines, which will be discussed below, is the silencing of the period from 1992 – 1995, one of the most sensitive and controversial periods in BaH history today. Apart from the more general issues mentioned above, the *Individual Guidelines* deal in more detail with almost every historical epoch, including the ancient times, the middle ages, or the period from 1945 – 1992. Special requirements regarding each of these periods are emphasized.[62] The framing of the period 1945 – 1992 is indicative as it marks,

60 Guidelines Conclusions. The two other conclusions relate to the »harmonization of the concept of historical content from national history,« and to the applicability of the guidelines for the subject Nature and Society.

61 OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, »Background Report: Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A Neglected Security Issue,« June 26, 2007.

62 For example, in paragraph 4.3 in the Guidelines: »When teaching about world religions from

in terms of national history, many different things: the definite end of the former common state Yugoslavia, the referendum in BaH in early 1992, EU recognition of BaH as a sovereign state in April 1992 and the instantaneous outbreak of war on BaH territory. Yet the war, lasting from 1992 to 1995 is, as of yet, excluded. Possible reasons behind this cannot be found in the advocating of a moratorium on teaching recent history supported by various players both within and outside of BaH.[63] These appeals never went beyond being recommendations, unlike, for instance, in Eastern Slovenia, where the UN enacted a moratorium on teaching recent history that expired only recently in 2003. In BaH, similar recommendations have had no impact, except for on Bosniac history textbooks published since 2003, which have since this time refrained from dealing with the war in school textbooks.[64] In contrast, Serbian and Croatian textbooks in BaH continue to constantly deal with the wars following the breakup of Yugoslavia in an imbalanced way until today. Finally, as our teacher survey and expert interviews reveal, the history of the civil war in BaH is a topic dealt with at school, even when it does not form part of the textbooks – as is the case with teachers teaching according to the Bosniac curriculum and with the help of Bosniac textbooks. Thus, the results of our empirical surveys do not confirm the as-

ancient history, their common features and specificities at the time of their development should be underscored« or, paragraph 4.14: »When covering the period 1945 – 1992, the content should be presented in three levels: history of the world, Europe, neighbouring countries, i. e. the former SFRY [Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia] and BaH. This theme should be covered conceptually, through integration processes in the World and Europe.«

63 For example »Recommendation 1454 (2000) Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina,« Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta00/EREC1454.htm. Edith Marko-Stöckl, referring to Robert J. Donia, mentions in her analysis another initiative, namely one in 1997 that BaH intellectuals directed as well at a moratorium on teaching recent history in schools. See Edith Marko-Stöckl, »Specific Report on the Role of History for Reconciliation. My Truth, Your Truth – Our Truth? The Role of Truth Commissions and History Teaching for Reconciliation,« MIRICO: Human and Minority Rights in the Life Cycle of Ethnic Conflicts, January 2008, http://www.eurac.edu/NR/rdonlyres/0DFF7A44 – 9AA7 – 471A-8DD4-F7F6D011F63E/0/25_historyreconciliation.pdf.

64 For reasons of efficiency the authors differentiate between the following three major textbook groups in BaH. The group used for the curriculum in the Bosnian language, and published in Sarajevo and Tuzla, is defined as Bosniac; the group in Serbian language, produced within the »Zavod za Udžbenike« in Eastern (formerly »Srpsko«) Sarajevo, as Serbian, and the group used for the Croatian language curriculum, and published in Mostar (and/or in Zagreb) as Croatian. This, as the authors explicitly wish to state, does not imply that all Serbs, Croats and Bosniacs in BaH use the specified textbooks, or that the respective authors necessarily (though in practice they mostly do) belong to the specified ethnic group. However, these demarcations do reflect the ethnic majority of the canton/entity of BaH in which the specific textbook has been approved and of the predominant ethnic group in the schools where these textbooks are used (with the major exception of the Brčko District, where textbooks of all three groups are used by students and teachers in the classroom).

sumption made elsewhere that there is »in reality, an unofficial moratorium [executed by the teachers] on teaching the history of 1992 – 1995.«[65] The reality that teachers have been portraying seems more to be one of teaching the war, though with great difficulties, since they receive only poor (respectively one-sided) support from textbooks and teacher trainings. The Guidelines, finally, seem to confirm the status of uncertainty in (not) dealing with the war on BaH territory. There is, actually, one paragraph of the *Individual Guidelines* which at least implicitly refers to this period, when stating:

»The Ministers of Education acknowledge the necessity for teaching historical processes concluding with the end of the 20th century, and to teach these processes in accordance with these Guidelines.«[66]

The period of the war is, somehow, implicitly included here. Therefore, the different modes of textbook authors, teachers and pupils engaging and avoiding mention of this period, or to reflect about the contested character of the war and its implication on daily life in BaH beg the question of a more comprehensive investigation.

BaH as a Principal Point of Reference?

What does national history mean in the textbooks? This question relates to one of the most important landmarks from the *Guidelines* and from the *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU hereafter). As mentioned earlier, paragraph 1.2 of the MoU states that the region and the country of BaH must be presented in the textbooks as the main reference point. Accordingly, the Guidelines, referring to the MoU, point out in paragraph 2.4 that national history must be presented in the regional context of BaH. Interestingly, all analyzed history textbooks express clear, but different understandings of »national history.« There is, (if possible or necessary at all) a long way to go to reach a »shared history of BaH.«

Croatian books in BaH provide clear evidence that »national history« is not equated with the history of BaH, but with the history of Croatia and Croats. This applies to all the textbooks analyzed, including those published in 2007 after the adoption of the Guidelines. Remarkably, the Croats have not even tried to be suggestive of adapting history textbooks to the Guidelines. In contrast to textbooks written for the Bosniac and the Serbian community in BaH, Croatian authorities have approved textbooks for the school year 2007/08 – that is to say,

65 Marko-Stöckl, »Specific Report on the Role of History for Reconciliation,« 17.
66 Paragraph 4.16 of the Guidelines.

after the implementation of the Guidelines – that were published in 2006 and even before. Thus, all the analyzed Croatian books express a kind of »possessive behavior« towards BaH's past and present. Not only do sub-chapters on BaH history mostly deal with Croatian history on BaH territory: the history of Croatia is constantly incorporated even here. Additionally, certain terms including possessive pronouns such as »our homeland« or, »our soil,« which are consistently incorporated into the author's text, always relate to Croatia – something not at all surprising given the fact that most of these books were originally written and published in Zagreb.

The textbook commission suggestions addressing this problem from 2001 onward have been ignored by the authors (and textbook approval committees), or ostensibly only accepted at a surface-level.[67] One extreme but telling example is a textbook published in 2001, 2003 and 2006 by Makek and Nikić.[68] All three books are identical, except for the heading of the last main chapter in the books, where in the publications from 2003 and 2006 the former (2001) heading »Hrvatska od 14 do kraja 18 stoljeća« (»Croatia from the 14th until the End of the 18th Century») was replaced by »Bosna i Herzegovina i Hrvatska od 14 do kraja 18 stoljeća«(»BaH and Croatia from the 14th until the End of the 18th Century«) and with no content changes in the chapter text. Another example can be found in the 8th grade history textbook written by Matković et al., which represents an adopted version of the same textbook originally written and published for use in primary schools in Croatia. It was approved by authorities in Mostar in its third, and clearly unrevised, edition for the 2007/08 school year. It is not a hidden message or underlying assumption of the book that it was written from a purely

67 Extract from the reviewer comment for the textbook Ivka Pavičić, Franko Mirošević, Tihomir Zovko, *Povijest 5* (Mostar: Školska naklada, 2001): »The textbook needs to be revised as the focus is on Croatia not on Bosnia and Herzegovina. If Croatia and BaH territories are mentioned in the context of archaeological findings, then the other Balkan states should be presented as well or Croatia and BaH should be separated … on page 24, 25, 50, 51 – revise references to Croatia, such as »our soil« (possessive pronouns).« Neither of the suggestions has been followed in the second edition of the book (Ivka Pavičić, Franko Mirošević, Tihomir Zovko, *Povijest 5* (Mostar: Školska naklada, 2003). The same applies to the textbook Ivan Dukić, Krešimir Erdelja, Andrija Nikić, Igor Stojaković, *Povijest 7* (Mostar: Školska naklada, 2001). Extract from the reviewer comment: »The textbook is about Croatia in the period(s) from the mid-18th to the mid-19th century, while BaH is included into the sections on the Balkan area. Arguably, the textbook is designed for Croatia's school system, which is not acceptable in BaH considering the fact that the students should learn about the history of their country and then neighboring states. A suggestion is to re-print the textbook and to adjust it to the BaH school system.« The second edition of the textbook (2003) has been republished without accepting any of the reviewer comments.

68 Ivo Makek, Andrija Nikić, *Povijest 6 – Udžbenik za VI. razred osnovne škole* (Mostar: Školska naklada, 2006); Ivo Makek, Andrija Nikić, *Povijest 6 – Udžbenik za VI. razred osnovne škole* (Mostar: Školska naklada, 2003); Ivo Makek, Andrija Nikić, *Povijest 6 – Udžbenik za VI. razred osnovne škole* (Mostar: Školska naklada, 2001).

Croatian perspective, aimed at Croatian pupils only. Instead, it is explicitly stated in the introduction:

»In each unit the focus is on better understanding of the Croatian people in the certain historical circumstances and struggle for the preservation of its identity and specific features. A separate unit deals with events that marked the new era of the history of the Croatian people when Croatia and BaH finally broke all links with other Yugoslav republics and became independent states. Each unit has separate topics on developments in Europe and worldwide which had an impact on the history of the Croatian people. These are short reviews needed for better understanding of the events that marked the past of the Croatian people.«[69]

But even history textbooks written by a local BaH author, which contain a slightly higher amount of BaH history than others, follows the dominant line of Croatian history, added, foremost in the 8th grade, with an aggressive anti-Serbian undertone, which – by the way – has been disappearing from several high-quality history textbooks published in Zagreb.[70]

History textbooks approved for the 2007/08 school year in the RS are, compared to previously used textbooks, characterized by considerably more references towards local and BaH history within the context of South Slavic and national history. Nevertheless, one needs to stress that the main focus of all textbooks is, in terms of national history, clearly directed at Serbian national history. Skimming over the books one almost forgets that they are meant for students in BaH. Quite often, headings which formerly read »Serbian« or »Yugoslav« history, have now been changed to »South Slavic« or »›Balkan‹ history,«[71] which may, in positive terms, attest to an attempt to uncouple older, Yugoslav-Serbian perspectives and regional and BaH perspectives on national history.

Textbook authors from Banja Luka have also demonstrated a beginning change in perspective, however. Thus, the new 8th grade history textbook offers quite impressively balanced and in-depth presentations of modern BaH history up to the end of the 19th century. A single, yet important, example from the book

69 Hrvoje Matkovic, Bozo Goluza, and Ivica Sarac, *Povijest 8. Udzbenik za VIII. razred osnovne skole (trece izdanje)* (Mostar: Skolska naklada, 2006), 7.

70 Miljenko Miloš, *Povijest Staroga Vijeka: Udžbenik povijesti za 5. razred osnovne škole* (Mostar: Znanje, 2006). For contemporary history textbook quality in Croatia compare the contribution by Koren and Baranović in this volume.

71 Quite clearly exhibited, for instance, in the textbook by Rade Mihaljčić, *Istorija 7 za VII. razred osnovne škole* (Istočno Sarajevo: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2007), compared to its predecessor Rade Mihaljčić, *Istorija za VI. razred osnovne škole* (Srpsko Sarajevo: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2001). Headings for the 2001 edition read »Serbian lands,« »Serbian people,« »Serbian territories,« etc. Headings in the 2007 edition have now been replaced, at least partly, with »South Slavic and Serbian history/lands/territories,« though the sub-chapter's emphasis is, as before, on Serbian national history.

is the units dealing with the reform period of the late Ottoman Empire and its consequences in Bosnia.[72] Unlike formerly used books in the RS – and current books in the Croatian community – this textbook not only mentions the autonomy movement of Husein-kapetan Gradaščević in the early 1830 s, but also delivers a balanced and thoughtful discussion of its motifs, and its opponents.[73] In doing so, the authors do not play the »Muslim-Christian confrontation» card, but rather highlight that conflicts at that time were mainly due to the unsolved question of land reform.[74] This example is important as the autonomy movement of the early 1830 s, while of minor importance in historiography and school instruction in socialist Yugoslavia, was developed into a major Bosniac *lieu de mémoire*, a historical topic of high importance for the Bosniac community in BaH after independence.[75] Not mentioning this topic in Serbian and Croatian community generated history textbooks in BaH was, therefore, obviously a *must* until very recently in Serbian textbooks, and still is in Croatian textbooks today.

All of this has constraints, however. Textbook authors in Banja Luka obviously feel more comfortable adapting to Guidelines principles when dealing with pre-WWII history. This is most evident in the new 9th grade book published in 2007, which exhibits a remarkable rupture in quality when pre- and post-WWII history representations are compared.[76] The authors, who promise a textbook different from previous ones in the introduction,[77] do keep their word in the subsequent chapters, though not entirely. In the first parts of the book,

72 Željko Vujadinović, Slavica Kuprešanin and Gordana Nagradić, *Istorija za 8 razred osnovne škole* (Istočno Sarajevo: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2007), 164 – 67 and 105 – 08.

73 The authors, after discussing the autonomy movement, also highlight elements of tolerance and economic progress within this period. With regard to Ali-paša Rizvanbegović from Stolac, an opponent of the autonomy movement, the authors state: »He was tolerant with the Orthodox and Catholic population.« (Ibid., 165), and also mention that he introduced, for example, irrigation systems to Herzegovina (Ibid., 166). At the end of the chapter, the authors list source material, including, inter alia, statements from Ivan Mažuranić, a Croatian poet who travelled through Bosnia at the middle of the 19th century.

74 With regard to the peasant uprisings in Bosnia during the first Serbian uprising, see statements such as: »The basis of all unrest during this and later times generated unresolved agricultural questions.« (Ibid., 165) which, in former books was constantly connected with the »national awakening« of Serbian peasants in Bosnia.

75 Thus, the main streets in Gradačac and Sarajevo were renamed in the 1990 s after Gradaščević. See also the historiographical works Mustafa Imamović, *Historija Bošnjaka. Borba za autonomiju Bosne – Husein-kapetan Gradaščević* (Sarajevo: BZK Preporod, 1997) and Husnija Kamberović, *Husein-kapetan Gradaščević (1802 – 1834): Biografija: uz dvjestu godišnjicu rođenja* (Gradačac: BZK Preporod, 2002).

76 Ranko Pejić, Simo Tešić and Stevo Gavrić, *Istorija za 9 razred osnovne škole* (Istočno Sarajevo: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2007).

77 See Pejić et al., *Istorija za 9 razred*, 5. The introduction reads: »[…] *the authors tried, in accordance with the Guidelines for the writing of the new textbooks and Curriculum in force, to write a textbook that will be different from the previous ones. You will also find that it contains less political and more cultural and economic history.*«

which deal with the end of the 19th century, the authors introduce more balanced information about the »triple history of BaH,« quite often using a structure of three consecutive sentences that stated: »The Serbs did…«, »The Croats did…» and »The Muslims did…« A slight increase in BaH history reference can be observed here.[78] Chapters dealing with post-1918 history, however, show much greater preponderance of Serbian perspective on history culminating in the chapters on World War Two and post-1945 history, where a purely Serbian perspective governs the texts. Information about historical developments other than of political and military character appears here not only as marginal, but in order to uphold one-sided, and self-justifying messages.[79] With regard to World War Two, Serbian victimhood is the leitmotif.[80] Thus, concerning the most controversial periods of 20th century history, World War Two or the disintegration of Yugoslavia at the beginning of the 1990 s, the Guidelines obviously have had no impact on textbook writing in the RS.

Bosniac textbooks exhibit, almost as a matter of course, a clear focus on BaH history as they cannot refer to a »national fatherland« abroad. But do the presentations of BaH history cover the histories of all the constitutive peoples (and minorities) or do they focus predominantly on just one aspect of the history of the country, namely on the history of the Bosniac community within BaH? It appears that the textbooks within the Bosniac community have not undergone a one-way development. At the moment, textbooks oscillate heavily between the different and contested concepts of what constitutes »the« Bosniac identity within BaH. While some books seem to engage in the »invention of tradition,« others try to reflect upon the contested character of the country's history.[81] This,

78 An increase compared, in quantitative terms, to the preceding book Ranko Pejić, *Istorija za 9 razred osnovne škole* (Istočno Sarajevo: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2006). In the chapter dealing with Balkan countries at the end of the 19th century, the Pejić 2006 book contains less information about BaH history than the Pejić et al. 2007 book. Also, the Balkan wars at the beginning of the 20th century are dealt with in Pejić 2006 without ever mentioning BaH, whereby Pejić et al. 2007 deals with BaH in this subchapter (p. 46).

79 This can particularly be found in the parts of the book dealing with the breakup of Yugoslavia and the following wars. Images of burning Serbian houses, of refugees fleeing the Republika Srpska Krajina (Pejić et al., *Istorija za 9 razred*, 194), of destroyed bridges, bombed busses and industrial complexes in Serbia (Ibid., 198) inform the reader about the price of war for Serbs and Serbia and only for them.

80 For example Ibid., 135: »Horrible crimes against Serbian civilians were perpetrated in Kosmet by the Siptar unit ›Skenderbeg.‹ The infamous ›Handzar-Division‹, which was trained by fascist-minded Muslims from Raška und Bosnien-Herzegovina, did this as well.«

81 As a vivid example see the contradicting presentations of »Crkva Bosanska« in two 7th grade Bosniac textbooks published in 2007. Thus, in Hadžija Hadžiabidić and Edis Dervišagić, Historija. *Udžbenik za sedmi razred osnovne skole* (Tuzla: Bosanska Knjiga, 2007), 103 it states: »The Bosnian Church emerged under the influence of Bogomil teaching. […] The followers of the Bosnian Church called themselves Christians. They were also called Patarens and Bogumils.« Compare with Arifa Isakovic, *Historija-Povijest za 7. razred osnovne skole*

in and of itself, is a distinguishing and remarkable feature compared to the textbooks published during the war and up until 2000/2001. By narrowing down the focus towards Bosniac instead of BaH history those early books were written with an implicit and sometimes explicit anti-Serb tone, through which one could easily sense the impact of recent conflicts (foremost the war from 1992 – 1995).[82]

Starting in 2003, however, a shift towards an attempt at a »harmonization« of BaH history took place. »Harmonization« here means that, from 2003 onwards, the dominant tone of many textbooks was much more oriented towards underlining the historical experience of peaceful co-existence and of good neighborhood relations (»komšiluk«) in BaH. This is especially evident in 6th and 7th grade books, which deal with the period from the Middle Ages up to the beginning of the 20th century.[83] However positive as the intention may be, it often alludes more to a »surface-Bosnianization« of the concept of national history, especially in light of the fact that these textbooks continue to put emphasis on a Muslim-Bosniac perspective, both quantitatively and in interpreting certain events. Another crucial development came about in 2003: the appearance of a new publishing company, Sarajevo Publishing, and the parallel emergence of a number of young textbook authors.[84] They began to produce critical discussions

(Sarajevo: Bosanska Riječ, 2007), 134, which points to the contested character of the whole phenomenon: »Academia has two opposing views of the character of the Bosnian Church: firstly, that it belonged to a dualistic movement that spread across a large area of Asia Minor, across the Balkans and Italy up to the south of France and central Europe; secondly, that is was not a dualist sect, but rather a Christian institution that had split from Rome and maintained traditional customs and ways of life.«

82 In this, one of the textbook authors belonging to the older generation, Ganibegović, persistently continues the narrative of »Bosniac victimhood« throughout its history and until very recently. See the following examples in Muhamed Ganibegović, *Historija – Povijest za VIII razred osnovne škole (treće izdanje)* (Sarajevo: IP Svijetlost, 2006), 18, in the subchapter dealing with BaH at the end of the 19th century: »New cultural forms affected all people in BaH, but it should be emphasized that Bosnian Muslims had the most difficulties in finding their way in the new circumstances.« See also in the subchapter dealing with BaH during the Interwar period and the founding of Banovina Hrvatska, (Ibid., 78): »Agreement and solving of the »Croatian issue« was carried out at the expense of BaH and especially at the expense of the Bosnian Muslims [...] The boundary determination of Banovina Hrvatska with the rest of Banovina Drinska, Vrbaska and Zetska was done on the assumption that Bosnian Muslims do not reside in these territories at all.«

83 Compare for example Fahrudin Isaković and Enes Pelidija, *Historija za 7 razred osnovne skole* (Sarajevo: IP Svijetlost, Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2003) with the preceding book Ibrahim Tepić and Fahrudin Isaković, *Historija za VII razred osnovne škole* (Sarajevo: IP Svijetlost, Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2000). In contrast to the book published in 2000, the 2003 edition of the book refrains from pinpointing the evaluation of certain events as being mainly stacked against the Bosniac population. The chapter about »national movements« in the 19th century (p. 132) in the 2003 edition is even introduced by the phenomenon of »komsiluk,« presented as a basic property of living together in Bosnia.

84 See Zijad Šehić and Zvjezdana Marčić-Matošović, *Historija. Istorija. Povijest. Udžbenik za*

of BaH history while adopting modern historiographical research results for textbook writing. The Bosniac textbook market thus experienced its most powerful surge forward long before the official adoption of the Guidelines.

There is a paragraph in two of the analyzed textbooks that unveils with remarkable clarity the current state of »peaceful coexistence« between totally different understandings of very similar concepts of historical reasoning within the contemporary Bosniac textbook author community (and most likely beyond). The example relates to the mode of historical interpretation as introduced to 5th grade students when they begin being educated in the school subject of history. Under the same heading »Kako se vidi neki dogadjaj? Razlicite interpretacije« (»How is an event is looked at? Different interpretations«) the two textbooks, which were both published in 2003, exhibit two parallel yet absolutely contrary understandings of historical interpretation, the role of the historian, and, eventually, the idea of »historical truth.« Thus, Imamović, a textbook author of the older generation, uses the paragraph to defend the very idea of historical truth, in the sense of Ranke with »wie es wirklich gewesen war.« Though the heading reads »different interpretations,« the authors' text actually makes clear, that thorough and careful historical research does leave room for one final explanation only:

»If we study and work on an event from the past in a detailed, scholarly and conscientious fashion, there will be no comments from either side. If, however, one does not proceed thus, the written word will be of no value; indeed, it could even be destructive. In some cases, historians write incorrectly – as a result of insufficient knowledge of the subject matter, or a lack of willingness. There are also cases in which an event is purposely falsified, whether out of political, religious or nationalistic motives. It is the business of the historian to correctly describe and deal with historical events, regardless of their character. If one does otherwise, it can only result in dilemmas and mistakes amongst the people, who will wonder what is correct and what is not.«[85]

Whereby Imamovic binds the possible existence of different interpretations for

osmi razred osnovne škole (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Publishing, 2003); Esad Kurtović, Salmedin Mesihović and Samir Hajrulahović, *Historija 6, Udžbenik za VI razred osnovne škole* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Publishing, 2003); Seka Brkljača, Vahida Bašalić and Salmedin Mesihović, *Historija 5, Udzbenik za V razred osnovne škole* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Publishing, 2003). Later, another new publishing house, Bosanska Riječ, appeared on the market, also producing high quality textbooks including: Leonard Valenta, *Historija – Povijest za VIII razred osnovne škole* (Sarajevo: Bosanska Riječ. 2007); Arifa Isaković, *Historija – Povijest za VI razred osnovne škole sa radnim listovima* (Sarajevo: Bosanska Riječ, 2007); Melisa Forić, *Historija – Povijest za V razred osnovne skole sa radnim listovima* (Sarajevo: Bosanska Riječ, 2007).

85 Enver Imamović, *Historija za 5 razred osnovne skole* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2003), 4 – 5.

the same event to the very idea of historical-political manipulation and historian non-reliability, the other textbook, written by a team of younger authors, approaches the concept of different views in a totally different manner. Put again under the mentioned heading »How is an event is looked at? Different interpretations,« the authors state:

»There are different views as to what happened and why it happened, just as there are regarding the actual meaning of an event. Two historians may also treat the same material in different ways. The same facts can often give rise to differing interpretations. The information and documents that are available to the historian are often far from being complete, which in turn can open up further opportunities for different interpretations. If different portrayals of one and the same event contain different perspectives of individual people or historians, this does not always mean that one of these versions must necessarily be the true version. Some – perhaps even all – may be correct by recounting different personal experiences. In some cases, we would receive a clearer and more complete picture of what happened by considering various points of view.«[86]

What is at stake here, ultimately, is the concept of »multiperspectivity,« a didactical concept that has been in development since the 1970 s.[87] Does the existence of these two different interpretations prove the assumption made by various international policy makers that, in a sense, BaH society is not »ripe« for the idea of multiperspectivity in history teaching?[88] We would suggest that it is to the contrary. Up until now, Bosniac textbook writers have been the only ones in BaH who have at least begun to develop an approach to »tripled«-truth history in BaH (though, in terms of the very idea of multiperspectivity, not entirely »successfully«). Yet the very »parallel existence« of these two different approaches towards historical truth and interpretation stand for the now more and more contested, and in this sense more open, terrain that has, at least partly, begun to mark textbook writing and academic historical discourse in BaH.

86 Seka Brkljača, Vahida Bašalic and Salmedin Mesihović, *Historija 5. Udžbenik za peti razred osnovne škole* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Publishing, 2003), 28.

87 For an overview of the term »multi-perspectivity« and the development of this approach since the 1970 s see: Robert Stradling, »Multiperspectivity in History Teaching: A Guide for Teachers,« http://www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co%2Doperation/education/historyteaching/european_dimension/Multiperspectivity-E.pdf.

88 This assumption was formulated in a motion for a recommendation signed by 17 deputies of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe: Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr. Platvoet and others, »A study of history teaching in Bosnia and Herzegovina,« Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe, Doc. 11338, 28 June 2007, http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc07/EDOC11338.htm.The motion has not been discussed in the Assembly.

The Break-Up of Yugoslavia and the Wars in the Textbooks

As mentioned before, paragraph 4.16 of the Individual Guidelines for Writing History Textbooks states a clear requirement that historical processes concluding with the end of 20th century must be taught »in accordance with the Guidelines.« The proper meaning of the term »the end of 20th century« becomes apparent when comparing the last chapters of the reviewed textbooks, namely those dealing with the break-up of Yugoslavia. »Break-up of Yugoslavia« is, thereby, a term which here includes all those textbook chapters dealing with post-1980 (the death of Tito) developments on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Whereas some of the reviewed books also include historical accounts on the war in BaH (and in other parts of former Yugoslavia), others conclude with the year 1992, without explicitly mentioning the war on BaH territory. This is due to the fact that the recent war is not part of the curriculum in the Bosniac majority Cantons of the Federation of BaH, whereas it is part of the curriculum in the Republika Srpska, as well as in the Croat majority Cantons in the Federation. When comparing the books used in the 2007/2008 school year to formerly used history textbooks, it becomes obvious that there is virtually no development at all with regard to coming to terms in the classroom with this sensitive period. Serbian and Croatian textbooks, which have constantly dealt with the wars following the break-up of Yugoslavia, continue to do so in an imbalanced way. Bosniac textbooks published before 2003 did so as well. Since 2003, only one Bosniac textbook still deals with the war in BaH, and does so in an unchanged and imbalanced manner.[89] All other Bosniac books since 2003 have stopped dealing with the events following 1992 – in what might be called a step forward, in a certain sense. The different modes of (non-)dealing with the war period in today's BaH classrooms poses one of the major challenges for the present and the future in BaH education. As even if teachers or the curriculum decide to not deal with the war, the course of the crisis events of the early 1990 s constantly appears before the BaH public; in commentaries, films, and the news from the ICTY as well as in family narratives. The question is therefore crucial of whether, and probably more importantly, how these wars are dealt with in the textbooks at the

89 Ganibegović, *Historija-Povijest za osmi razred*, 2006. The entire narrative of the last chapter »BaH as an Independent and Sovereign State« is developed as a mono-perspective account, with a clear contrast drawn between victims (civilians, Bosniacs) and perpetrators (primarily Serbs), between »good« (Patriotska liga) and »bad« (again, mainly the Serbs). Extract from Ibid., 126: »Everything which was not seen as belonging to the Serbs was destroyed for the realization of the plan of »Greater Serbia.« The cultural heritage of the Bosniacs was destroyed and the people from the ethnically cleansed territories spilled across the world as refugees. Prior to the open military aggression against BaH, the Patriotic league (PL) was formed in Sarajevo on 31st March 1991 and composed of proven patriots who deliberately joined the fighting units to defend the sovereignty of their homeland.«

moment. In addition, most teachers today are already faced with the presence of students of different ethnicities in their classrooms. Many teachers have found their own solution to this threatening situation and report using more than one textbook in their daily teaching.[90] So, before we approach the question of how teachers and pupils relate to these presentations or to silence in the textbooks, we will take a closer look at the respective parts of the books.

When do the textbooks identify the beginning or the outbreak of war in BaH? Apart from the books that do not cover the war, four (sic!) different answers are delivered. These differences partly seem to be the result of factual errors, and partly the result of differing historical interpretations. The dates delivered are April 6th 1992, April 12th 1992, September 5th 1991 and October 5th 1991. The textbook by Ganibegović, a Bosniac author, identifies the beginning of war on BaH territory as April 6, 1992, stating that an »open aggression« was started by Serbian and Montenegrin forces supported by the former Yugoslav army and terrorist formations of the SDS of BaH and paid soldiers from Serbia, Montenegro, Romania, Russia and other parts of the world. A »silent occupation« of BaH started earlier, however, beginning with the violent clashes in Slovenia and Croatia, through moving armed forces onto BaH territory.[91] The new BaH Serbian textbook written by Pejić et al. identifies the beginning of war in BaH on April 12, 1992, stating: »To the surprise of the Serbian people, BaH was recognized on April 12th and war started.«[92]

Clearly, the authors are referring to the same event as Ganibegović – the day of EU recognition of the state BaH – but an incorrect date is cited. Quite in contrast to this, two BaH Croatian textbooks written by Matković and Milos develop a very different narrative with a different message. They emphasize that the war actually started with the Serbian attack against the village of Ravno in Eastern Herzegovina, inhabited by Herzegovina Croats. »Sarajevo,« they write further, reacted with the message that »That is not our war« leaving Croats to defend themselves in isolation against these first attacks. However, whereas Matković states that October 5, 1991 is the date for these attacks, Milos, referring to the same event, identifies the day as September 5, 1991.[93]

Apart from these different interpretative patterns corresponding to different »world views,« a further problem lies without doubt in the fact that the war in BaH is implicitly present in the narrative of certain books which ostensibly do not cover the topic. This problem is evident in some of the Bosniac textbooks, which stop dealing with history at the point of early 1992, thus pretending not to

90 As it is done today mostly, but not solely in the Brcko District.
91 Ganibegović, *Historija-Povijest za osmi razred*, 2006, 125.
92 See Pejić et al., *Istorija za 9 razred osnovne škole,* 195.
93 Matković et al, *Povijest 8*, 2006, 124, and Miloš, *Povijest Staroga Vijeka*, 2006, 206.

deal with the war. Yet the war enters through the back door, as for example in the textbook written by Hadžiabdić et al., which formally concludes its last chapter with the international recognition of BaH. However, the war is present first in the introduction to the book, and, second, with a subordinate clause in the last chapter. In the introduction, the authors state:

»It is of particular importance to mention that the independent state of BaH was formed in this period after the hard and terrible war waged against BaH...«[94]

At the end of the book, in the chapter »BaH as an independent and sovereign state,« a sequence which appears to be taken totally out of context – since the war is not dealt with – states further on:

»The former president of the SDS Radovan Karadžić, presently indicted for war crimes by the Hague Tribunal, openly threatened the Muslim political leaders and people: if BaH becomes an independent state war will break out and the Muslim people will disappear from this region.«[95]

As the war is not dealt with in the book, how can pupils and teachers discuss these brief statements? Obviously, textbook authors (rightly) presume that both pupils and teachers know about the war. But how can pupils, then, answer the question at the end of the book »When and how BaH was formed as an independent state?«[96] Either they enter into a discussion of the war without any support from the textbook, or they merely repeat the text, which must be a rather disappointing endeavor for both students and teachers.

Unlike Bosniac books, Croatian textbooks in BaH deal openly and in length with the war in BaH as well as with the »war against Croatia.«[97] The history of the war against Croatia is developed as a narrative of a Serbian (using also the alienating title »Četnik«)[98] aggression, launched against Croatia, Croats and other non-Serbs. The suffering of the civilian Serbian population of Croatia is not even mentioned, and a critical evaluation of the military operations of the Croatian army (for instance »Oluja« and »Bljesak«) is completely out of the question.[99] Severe criticism is, instead, directed towards international engage-

94 Hadžija Hadžiabdić, Edis Dervišagić, Alen Mulić and Vahidin Mehić, *Historija. Istorija. Povijest 8, Udžbenik za VIII razred osnovne škole* (Tuzla: Bosanska Knjiga, 2007), 7.

95 Ibid., 140.

96 Ibid., 141.

97 »Rat protiv Hrvatske,« subchapter title, in Matković et al, *Povijest 8*, 2006, 125.

98 Ibid.: »Armed Cetnik groups put logs on the roads and railway towards Knin (log-revolution), blocked traffic and terrorized the travelers. Imbued by emotions for Greater Serbia, the Cetnik leaders encouraged an insurgent gathering in Knin and proclaimed a state of war.«

99 Ibid., 128: »At the beginning of May 1995, the occupied parts of West Slavonia (in the area of

ment, namely towards UNPROFOR, which, according to the book, failed to carry out its duties in Croatia on the territories occupied by Serbs.[100] With regard to the war in BaH, the textbook develops a narrative where two phases of the war are distinguished. Thereby, the first phase was characterized by »homogenizing effects« after the immediate aggression against BaH, during which »Croats and Muslims and many Serbs strove jointly against the aggressor in urban areas.«[101] Though the text explicitly identifies Serbia as the main aggressor and perpetrator during the war in BaH, it also mentions that, in the second phase of the war, initiated by the Croatian-Bosniac military split, all three sides participated in ethnic cleansing and brutal warfare against each other:

»Each of the warring sides wanted to conquer as much territory as possible and then to cleanse it ethnically from the members of the second (and third) people (which is one of the especially brutal characteristics of this war). Again the civilians suffered the most.«[102]

However, this does not result in a critical discussion of the fighting parties in BaH. Rather, the book's narrative implies that the Croatian-Bosniac split and the brutality of the war in BaH was solely the result of international (mis)engagement and map exercises of the Serbian political elite:

»Then the whole situation became more complicated and the so-called »war within war« occurred – this was armed conflict between Croats and Muslims that culminated in 1993. Now we have three warring sides. Of course, the Serbian politicians and military leadership benefited the most from this conflict since they wanted right from the beginning to conquer as much territory as possible. This imperialist logic was indirectly encouraged by the confusing position of the International Community towards the situation in BaH. Some political moves by the current international »experts for the Balkans« left an impression that the complicated ethno-religious Rubik's Cube of BaH might be

Okucani) were liberated by the action called »Bljesak« (Lightning), and then, from the 4th to 5th of August the same year, the areas in north Dalmatia (Knin was liberated on August 5th), Lika, Kordun and Banovina were liberated by the action called » Oluja« (Storm). The defeated units left Croatian state territory on the run.«

100 Ibid., 127: »The International Peace Forces were deployed on the territory of the Republic of Croatia as well, especially on the territories occupied by Serbs. Their task was to disarm Serbs who controlled those territories with support of the JNA (Yugoslav National Army) forces, to return those areas to the control of the Republic of Croatia and to enable the return of displaced persons. However, UNPROFOR did not fulfill its task and Croatian authorities had to do it by themselves. Croatia strengthened its armed forces and when they were ready, quick and successful military-police actions were taken in mid-1995 aiming to liberate its areas.«

101 Ibid., 124.

102 Ibid., 125.

solved by enabling inter-ethnic conflicts, the conquering, partition and division of territory. That was (including many other reasons as well) the basis for the blazing-up of the war between Muslims and Croats...«[103]

Whereas Croatian educational authorities approved the same book that had been used before the *Guidelines* after the coming into force of the latter, authorities in the RS had been tendering new history textbooks for all grades. The new 9th grade textbook, dealing with the respective period of the 1990 s, has been written by Pejic, et al. As mentioned before, Pejic had previously outlined his view on the course of events in the »Dodatak« published in 1997. Seemingly, though writing as a team member in the year 2007, Pejić now nearly identically reproduced these earlier arguments, with the exception that the units about »NATO-aggression against Yugoslavia« have been, for obvious reasons, included in the later books only. Directly with regard to war in BaH, the Pejic, et al 2007 book briefly states:

»Three national armies: Muslim, Serbian and Croatian were in conflict in BaH over a period of four years. The United Nations made efforts to stop the war. That's why peace forces were deployed at the boundary lines between the sides in conflict.«[104]

Unlike this rather brief and ostensibly neutral account, the preceding chapter »Forced Secession and Dissolution of the Socialist Yugoslavia« and the following chapter »The Formation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia« are more openly one-sided. They accentuate the fate of the Serbian people as having fallen victim to political and military developments caused by Croats and Croatia,[105] by Albanians,[106] and, finally, by the international community.[107]

103 Ibid., 124.

104 Pejić et al., *Istorija za 9 razred,* 195, with a brief account of the Dayton Agreement in the margins.

105 Ibid., 193. Subchapter »Secession and War in Croatia«: »The HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union) was formed in Croatia, which had the features of a nationalistic party… The HDZ, after the victory gained at the elections and assumption of power, started to create paramilitary formations. The Croatian Assembly adopted the Constitution in 1991 which abolished Serbs as a constituent people. The Serbs were transformed into a national minority and immediately dismissed from all public and state services … The new Croatian authorities jeopardized the existence and identity of the Serbian people in Croatia. Therefore the Serbs had to organize themselves politically and protect their national and human rights. The SDS (Serbian Democratic Party) was formed and led by Dr. Jovan Rašković. On August 15, 1990 the Parliament (Sabor) of Serbs was held at which the autonomy of Serbs in Croatia was proclaimed. Also, a decision to conduct a plebiscite of all the Serbian population within the borders of AVNOJ's Croatia was adopted. On August 17th the Croatian police tried to prevent the plebiscite, which caused the conflict. This conflict marked the beginning of the armed conflict in Croatia.«

Thus, the Guidelines, asking for a presentation of late 20th century history »in accordance with the Guidelines« have had no effect at all for the respective textbook chapters, neither for the Serbian nor for the Croatian ones, and the same must be said, actually, for some Bosniac textbooks in which the war, quite deliberately, slips through a loophole.

Major Shortcomings in Textbook Writing. Opinions of Teachers, Pupils and Authors

Textbook intervention procedures in BaH, especially earlier measures from the 1990 s, are currently highly controversial issues, and not only within the country itself.[108] After more than ten years of educational intervention procedures in BaH, (the interviewed) history teachers and authors express a positive attitude towards the revision processes of the international community in the field of

106 Ibid., 192: »Serbian people in Kosovo were in a very difficult situation. Siptar separatists publicly claimed the establishment of a Kosovo-Republic and joining it to Albania. Permanent pressure was made on Serbs and Montenegrins to leave their homes or to sell their property for a bagatelle. Emigrants from Albania settled on Serbian land but they never applied for Yugoslav citizenship.« See also page 196: »Separatism in Kosovo. Siptar separatists, by support of some Western states, especially the USA, intensified terrorist activities in Kosovo and Metohija after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was ready to give Albanians the wide-ranging autonomy in order to prevent further activities by the separatists. Albanians, however, refused the offered autonomy and publicly demanded separation from Serbia and the joining of Kosovo and Metohija to the Republic of Albania. The so-called Kosovo Liberation Army (OVK) was formed which attacked the Yugoslav military and police forces, took control over cities and established Albanian power.«

107 There is much slander with regards to the role of the international community in the process of the break-up of Yugoslavia. They all point to the behavior of international actors as being characterized by bias and partisanship against Serbia and the common Yugoslav state, also by imperialist ambitions towards the Balkan region. See for example Ibid., 192: »Subsequently, Croatia, BaH and Macedonia separated from Yugoslavia and immediately afterwards they were internationally recognized. The rapid recognition of the separated republics by Western states clearly shows that Western states planned and supported the break up of Yugoslavia.« Also Ibid., 196: »Yugoslav military and police forces successfully fought against Albanian separatists and paramilitary forces from 1996 to 1999 and finally defeated them. The defeat of the Albanian terrorists enabled the strengthening of the sovereignty on its entire territory. But this was not in the interest of the NATO member states. NATO member states, especially the USA, planned to politically and militarily conquer the Balkan countries in order to pass freely to the East and establish control over huge resources of oil, gas, coal and other raw materials.«

108 H.M. Weinstein, S.W. Freedman and H. Hughson, »School voices. Challenges facing education systems after identity-based conflicts«. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice* 2 (2007): 48 and 51.

history textbooks.[109] This also affects the textbook landscape in the subject of history following the installment of the *Guidelines*. Although we hardly know the opinions of teachers and authors regarding the *Guidelines*, we do know how teachers, pupils (and authors) assess the books that have been produced in accordance with them. Data is thus available from the quantitative analysis of the factor of »satisfaction with the new textbooks,« which will be discussed in the following.

History teachers were asked to share their opinion on the new generation of textbooks in comparison to textbooks they used before. In general, about half of the teachers (45 percent) stated that the new textbooks are better than older textbooks. However, this group is curtly followed by a group of the teachers (about 41 percent) expressing that the textbooks are almost the same and that they didn't see any improvement. Only a small group of about 3 percent of teachers stated that the textbooks are worse and about 4 percent were uncertain in their rating. The positive assessments refer primarily to individual methodological revisions, such as a more intensive use of image sources in the new books, which have brought about an improvement in illustration for teachers and pupils.[110] The majority of teachers who generally reacted positively to the new books nevertheless complained of a lack of conformity between the textbooks and the curricula, which led to significant difficulties in the classroom.[111] This, along with individual critical voices on the portrayals of national history and the alleged lack of depictions of shared historical experience of the Bosnian people, is probably the most dramatic criticism from teachers of textbook development since the *Guidelines*; a critique that is also shared by all three sides. For anywhere where the curricula have not been subjected to a similar process of fundamental reform at the same time as the textbooks – as is the case in BaH – the odd visual improvement or even the occasional excellent textbook will not solve the teachers' dilemma. The teachers, should they even have the chance to select a textbook themselves, would in most cases chose one that followed the

109 There are naturally also critical voices that currently refer more to structural changes in the area of education, some of which have occured within the framework of international intervention. The reduction of the number of hours of history instruction in vocational schools is particularly criticized at present. The vocational schools were reformed by the EU-VET-Program, in the third model phase that is currently being heralded in, history instruction could even be entirely cut out.

110 Students have similar attitudes about the new textbooks. Nearly all of the students questioned in the pilot study, 94 percent, agreed that more images and maps contribute to better understanding.

111 In secondary school in particular up to three different textbooks must be used in order to be able to follow the curriculum. This doesn't only carry consequences for instructional organization but also presents a financial burden for the student's families.

curricula, whether or not it necessarily adhered to the »new European standards.«

As textbook development has not followed a uniform pattern for the three ethnic groups of BaH in the last few years, we decided to analyze the responses with regard to satisfaction with the new textbooks separately for the three groups. Not surprisingly, huge differences come to light here. The level of satisfaction with the new textbooks expressed by history teachers in BaH is the highest among teachers using Serbian textbooks. The high level of satisfaction among Serbian teachers is probably first of all the result of the didactically modernized and visually attractive textbook format, in which all the new textbooks in the RS have been published this school year. Even though, quite often, the content and message of the textbooks are the very same as of those published in last year's books, the new books now come with briefer texts, more images and historical maps, being altogether more easily manageable both for teachers and for students.

Many of the history teachers who use Croatian textbooks know that the quality of textbook writing in Croatia proper is much higher than that of history textbooks published in Mostar. Therefore, probably, they are much less satisfied with their history textbooks than their colleagues in the Republic of Srpska, as the answers to the questionnaire reveal. A large group of teachers using Croatian textbooks explained their satisfaction with the books. Yet some teachers in this group some teachers expressed a distanced, disappointed stance towards the books they use, mostly because of the fact that the books they are using this year are the very same that they were already using. Another group has severe reservations, expressing foremost a conditional stance towards the books, which they evaluated as »positive under current circumstances.« The conclusion must therefore be drawn that history teachers using Croatian textbooks are highly divided with regard to their opinion about the quality of the history textbooks they are currently using. This conclusion and message from the teachers, as well as the textbook analysis, should be reason enough for educational authorities in Mostar and other Cantons responsible for education in the Croatian language to accept and adopt the new methods of textbook writing, which have long been adopted by many of their colleagues in Sarajevo and Banja Luka. Surprisingly, at least at first glance, the level of satisfaction with the new textbooks is lowest among the teachers using Bosniac books. The Bosniac textbook market began a much higher level of textbook quality in 2003 than the markets in Mostar and Banja Luka, and teachers, though they appreciate these books, are now looking forward to further and deeper improvements. The level of dissatisfaction expressed among teachers using Bosniac history textbooks is high,[112] but not

112 Out of 79 teachers, 35 express their dissatisfaction (44 percent).

because the textbooks are worse than their Serbian and Croatian counterparts. The strongest reason for dissatisfaction mentioned by teachers using Bosniac books is disappointment about the fact that the Guidelines have had no major impact on further improving textbooks that were already, at least partly, of high quality in 2003. Their expectations were therefore higher, but because the curriculum did not change along with the Guidelines, they could not be met.

Teachers' assessments of the new history textbooks thus vary, since they reflect the different developments and levels of progress undergone in history textbook writing for each community. However, a more concrete inspection of which historical topics teachers dislike to teach with the new textbooks, reveals remarkable agreement among all the surveyed teachers. Actually, the teacher's answers tie in with the findings of the above discussed textbook analysis, as dealing with the recent past, dealing with wars in general, and dealing with the many elements of shared historical experience seems to be quite difficult for teachers in all of BaH today.

To elucidate upon this aspect, teachers have been asked to identify those teaching units from the area of national history in the textbooks that are difficult for them to teach.[113] According to teachers, teaching the recent war is one of the most problematic teaching units in the textbooks (17.5 percent). It is important to take into account, that, an additional 13.5 percent of the teachers have identified the period of the break-up of Yugoslavia, which is both in time and narration closely related to the following war(s), as most problematic to teach with the help of current textbooks. This means that 31 percent of all the teachers identify difficulties and problems stemming from insufficiencies of the textbooks they use when dealing with the end of Yugoslavia and the following war(s), that is, the period from 1980 – 1995 and until present day. As mentioned earlier, this finding is striking with regard to teachers working with Bosniac textbooks and according to Bosniac oriented history curricula. As the answers to the questionnaire reveal, more than half of the responding teachers work in ethnically mixed classes. This might imply situations, for instance, where pupils before moving to a certain area have probably already received school education before, very likely according to a different history curriculum. Thus, teachers working according to the Bosniac history curriculum both directly and indirectly hint at the question of teaching the period of the recent war.[114] The

113 Teachers were asked to identify two teaching units of their choice. Out of 184 teachers, 125 responded to this question, though they sometimes identified only one instead of two teaching units.

114 In their answers to the question about »difficult teaching units« one often finds phrases such as »raspad Jugoslavije« (break-up of Yugoslavia), or »Bosna i Hercegovina (BiH) kao samostalna i suverena drzava 1992 god.« (BaH as an independent and sovereign state 1992), but also answers related directly to the war such as: »BiH u posljednjem desetljecu 20

challenge of dealing with the war in the classroom, without any adequate support from the textbook, appears to be a quite frustrating experience for teachers, and, most likely, for pupils as well.[115]

Aside from the recent past, teachers also identified a number of other problematic teaching units in their daily work when dealing with the new textbooks. These include the Early Middle Ages – before the arrival of the Ottomans – (17 percent), the Ottoman period and the period of the first Yugoslavia in the Interwar period (each 16 percent), and the periods of the Habsburg Empire, and socialist Yugoslavia until 1980 (each 13 percent). However, of all the responses to this question, a clear majority, 59.5 percent (74 teachers) referenced the teaching of wars in the 20th century in general (that is, World War I, World War II and the war 1992 – 1995) as difficult.[116] Since we know that teachers in primary schools in BaH usually teach all the historical periods from pre-history up to recent times, we can understand this extremely high percentage as an important signifier.

To sum up all the answers given to the question about difficult teaching units, of all the topics mentioned the absolute majority relates to World War II (37 percent), followed by the war 1992 – 1995 (17.5 percent), and then all other mentioned subject areas:

Teachers' opinions about difficult teaching units – in descending sequence

Difficult teaching units	Number of teachers	In % (rounded off to the nearest value)
World War Two	46	37
The war 1992 – 1995	22	17.5
The Early Middle Ages	21	17
The Ottoman Period	20	16
First Yugoslavia (Interwar period)	20	16
The Breakup of Yugoslavia	17	13.5
The Habsburg Empire Period	16	13
The socialist Yugoslavia (until 1980)	16	13
World War One	6	5
Sum of related responses	184[117]	

vijeka« (BaH in the last decade of the 20th century), or simply »1992 – 1995,« or »nastavne jedinice vezane za period od 1992« (teaching units dealing with the period from 1992).

115 Quite telling, one teacher using Bosniac textbooks stated when being asked to identify difficult teaching units in the textbook he/she uses: »one nastavne jedinice koje ni autor udžbenika nije jasno objasnio nego prepisao obične fraze« (»the teaching units that the textbook author did not clearly explain, but copied general phrases«).

116 Thereby, the absolute majority of answers relates to World War II (37 percent), directly followed by the mentioned period 1992 – 1995 (17.5 percent). 5 percent of the teachers additionally identify World War I on BaH territory as a problematic teaching unit.

117 The number of 184 responses does not correspond to the number of teachers answering this

There is almost no period in the area of national history (except for the period of the arrival of the Slavic tribes in the Balkans, probably) that does not seem to be difficult to teach with the help of current BaH history textbooks. This certainly does not imply that today's history textbooks in BaH in general fail to come to terms with all of these mentioned historical periods. Teachers always have, for personal reasons, preferences and distastes for teaching certain periods. But, it is exactly the periods of conflict and war as well as the very many periods of *shared history*, be it under Ottoman, Habsburg or Yugoslav rule, which are quite difficult to teach throughout BaH. In view of the textbook analysis, where the different meanings of national history have been elaborated, this does not come as a surprise. As long as national history is understood in the Croatian history textbooks as Croatian history, in Serbian textbooks predominantly as Serbian history, and in some (but not all) Bosniac textbooks as predominantly Bosniac history, any classroom dealing with periods of shared history will continue to be difficult for both teachers and students.

Nevertheless, qualifying certain teaching units as problematic or difficult does not prevent teachers from taking a very clear stand towards the general necessity of teaching these historical periods. Thus, one question of the teachers' survey dealt with teachers' opinions regarding whether or not to teach the period of the last war. The survey brought to light that teachers in BaH are not just divided about their opinion of whether the 1992 – 1995 war should be dealt with in the textbooks – instead, a majority of 52.5 percent expressed that the war *should* be dealt with in the textbooks.

Inclusion of the period 1992 – 1995 into BaH history textbooks – Teachers opinions

Teachers opinions	Number of teachers	In % (rounded off to the nearest value)
Should be dealt with in history textbooks in BaH	97	52.5
Should not be dealt with in history textbooks in BaH	54	29.5
Uncertain	32	17.5
No opinion	1	0.5
Overall number of teachers answering this question	184	100

Simply taking problematic teaching units out of the textbooks, out of the classroom, or administering a moratorium on teaching a controversial event

question (125), because, as mentioned, some of the answering teachers identified just one instead of two difficult teaching units.

may not be a solution, at least not after a decade or so has passed since the end of the war.

Historians in BaH, however, have not yet begun to tackle the controversial period of the recent war(s), and this is probably one of the major reasons that nearly 30 percent of teachers stated that the recent period should not be dealt with in the textbooks. The very last item in the survey indicates this assumption. The survey gave the opportunity to add more personal comments on the new history textbooks, which encouraged many teachers to reflect once more upon the phenomena of »historical distance,« and the ongoing manipulation of history by political means.[118] Thereby, the argument of insufficient historical distance with regard to the war period may reflect not only an actual perceived level of uncertainty when dealing with the war under current circumstances or the ongoing presence of the war in the public. Rather, it may also reflect a certain historiographical tradition, which has shaped academic historiography in the former Yugoslavia at least since the end of the Second World War.

But how much historical distance is, then, necessary? There are, again, no easy answers to this question. The examples of Germany, Austria, or Italy, avoiding teaching the period of the Second World War for a period of more than a decade or so after the end of the war may corroborate with the idea of keeping a certain distance before tackling these issues. But the world has changed profoundly since the 1950 s and 1960 s – with a much higher level of Western NGO and IGO third party intervention in educational and other areas of post-war countries and countries in transition, attempts made by various actors on a European level at Europeanizing standards in history education, an internationalization of crime law – ICTY – and, last but not least, a mass media explosion, where information about almost everything, including the war on BaH territory, can be easily obtained via the internet, etc. If information, of any quality whatsoever, is easily available it becomes quite difficult not to tackle the issue at hand in today's classrooms. What is at stake instead here and now is the urgent need to develop teaching tools that support teachers and students in dealing with controversial periods. Teachers have already indicated their preferred topics – to deal with the recent war differently in future textbooks. Interestingly, teachers opted mostly for the inclusion of topics such as »Consequences of the war« and »Destruction of cultural and historical monuments.« The topics of »the military situation« and »media« are less desired by the

118 In this last open-ended question, 8 teachers referred to the latest period of war in the textbooks and mostly accounted for this with the necessity of a historical distance. They were of the opinion that the sources of all three parties still currently need to be analyzed and examined and due to this one must wait until the respective archives are open. It was also mentioned that it is not the right time as policy would have too great an influence on the historians/scholars.

teachers:[119] just 33 percent and 46 percent respectively consider these topics as important – reflecting, perhaps a surfeit of media manipulation and (mis)-information to which people in BaH have been overexposed in the last decade.

Finally, one last observation will be discussed, relating to the highly controversial issue of an (as yet non-existent) common history textbook in BaH. For a long time, there was the fear in Bosnian public life that the international community was aiming towards a uniform and common history textbook that would simply »smooth over« opposing perspectives with its textbook revision efforts. The option of a shared history textbook for the whole country is a highly controversial discussion that continues today. In order to eliminate the possibility of any suspicion on the part of the teachers regarding hidden motives behind our survey, we did not mention this topic in the survey at all. It is, therefore, all the more astonishing that some of the teachers raised the subject themselves, and not in a dismissive manner.[120] Opinions vary now as ever: while the »opponents« of the idea claim that a standardized and common (national) portrayal of BaH's history is simply not possible, the »advocates« speak in favor – explicitly as well as implicitly – of a shared textbook. In the first case, the teachers consider a shared textbook as the »motor« and support for reconciliation between the BaH peoples. Teachers formulate a rather more implicit demand for a shared textbook via various arguments: Firstly, they would like to see the content matter and topics harmonized in the books; on the other hand, they demand a uniformity of national history, to be presented in all BaH textbooks. Furthermore, there are even demands for (ethnically) mixed author teams and textbook commissions.

Indeed, first steps towards such proposals have already been taken. In the RS, a history textbook for vocational colleges that was written by an ethnically mixed team has been in use since 2007, and in the Federation there is now an (excellent) Croatian author who writes textbooks in accordance with the Bosniac curriculum. Both of these examples would have been unthinkable only a few

119 The teachers could chose from 9 presorted topics, whereby some could be chosen more than once. The rating of all issues among teachers was as follows: Consequences of the war: 83.1 percent; Destruction of cultural and historical monuments: 82.1 percent; Refugees: 67.3 percent; The World about us: 62.5 percent; Education and school during wartime: 57.1 percent; Political history: 52 percent; Daily life in war: 51 percent; Media: 46 percent; Military situation: 33 percent. The student survey exhibits some differences with regard to this question. Interestingly, teaching about the military situation in the war takes a much more important place here. The rating of all issues among pupils was as follows: Consequences of the war: 92.5 percent; Destruction of cultural and historical monuments: 88.7 percent; The World about us: 84.9 percent; Military Situation: 83.1 percent; Education and school during war time: 83 percent; Daily life in war: 73.6 percent; Refugees: 73.6 percent; Political history: 56 percent; Media: 51 percent.

120 Twenty-eight teachers from a total of 184 independently brought up the subject of a common textbook in response to an open, non-specific question following a last comment.

years ago in the fragile state of BaH. In the Federation, there is a lively – if only informal – exchange between textbook authors writing in accordance with different curricula. The federal ministry of education in Sarajevo has finally begun employing evaluators of all ethnicities to assess the manuscripts. The case of Brčko should also be mentioned here: as it represents an exceptional case for the state as a whole. Studies at integrated schools of the Brčko district revealed that here, pupils are allowed to select their textbooks from the variety of books published in BaH.[121] Indeed, the OSCE estimates the following regarding Brčko specifically:

[F]or many, the next step would be to introduce a single textbook for each subject, which would be translated into all three languages. In fact, most primary schools are already using a selection of nine core texts for six subjects edited for[122] Bosnian and Serbian. The texts have been selected on the basis of their quality; the Brčko District Education Department has paid for their translation and re-issuance.[123]

But even beyond the individual initiatives mentioned above and the special »Case of Brčko,« a general trend towards a possible denouement can be identified; an end to the strict segregation of the three education systems. According to the results of a public opinion poll carried out on behalf of the OSCE in 2006 amongst the population of BaH on the subject of education in BaH, three quarters of those interviewed would welcome a homogenous curriculum across the entire country.[124] In view of the role of the state as a whole in the education sector, 72 percent of all respondents would welcome the introduction of a state ministry of education.[125] Not only the teachers, but also the population as a whole, now seems to represent a clearly more affirmative position and to concede that education cannot be built only around national needs.

Ultimately, we conclude that the initiatives named here do indeed point towards success – a positive change compared to the beginnings of textbook revision at the end of the 1990 s. It becomes clear from the teachers' statements, which now assume a clear position and call for solid improvements, that the time for structural change is now ripe. Another sign that the right moment has come for further reforms is the fact that history teachers today are presenting them-

121 OSCE, *Textbooks and Their Publishers,* 2008, 11.

122 »lectored.«

123 OSCE, *Textbooks and Their Publisher*s, 2008, 12.

124 OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (press statement): Highlights of Public Opinion Survey on Education in BiH: Citizen Opinion in December 2006, http://www.oscebih.org/documents/8751-eng.pdf, 2007.

125 Sixty-five percent of all respondents agreed with the statement »the biggest problem of education reform is the fact that there is no MoE [Ministry of Education] at the State level« (78 percent of Bosniacs, 69 percent of the Croats, 44 percent of Serbs and 82 percent of other groups).

selves as professionals rather than as representatives of an ethnicity; they also primarily consider themselves teachers and they cooperate with their colleagues across the whole of BaH, taking on initiatives themselves, and organizing further training seminars together across the whole of Europe.

Nevertheless, impending structural and organizational changes, such as curricular reform, training and further education for teachers and evaluators, and improvements in the quality of education will be necessary for success in the long term. Weinstein, et al. did correctly note that »the education systems [in BaH] are constrained by the legacy of past political influences as well as traditional pedagogical practices.«[126] Of course the Guidelines, which have been our focus here, have been a clear attempt made by educational policy makers to overcome these constraints. Yet the Guidelines have their own limits, at least as long as adherence to the Guidelines instructions does not seem to be mandatory. It is exactly here that the gap between the good-will of educational policy authorities, professionalism of textbook authors, teachers and others on the one hand, and the continuous insistence of educational policy makers on the priority of ethnic criteria over pedagogical needs meet. Thus, although the *Guidelines* have not had a resounding effect on textbook quality, they have definitely uncovered that various actors in the field of education in BaH have begun to set out for quality education, and thereby subordinated ethnically colored power interests. Without relevant curricular and educational reforms within the Bosnian governmental authorities on the part of the long-awaited »Agency for Education,« however, the initiatives that have been begun cannot be supported or extended in the long term.

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Stefan Ihrig

Moldovan Nightmares, or: »Historiographic Deadlock at Birth« History, identity, and history teaching in the Republic of Moldova, 1991 – 2008

Introduction: Standing in the rain in Braunschweig

Internal legend at the Georg Eckert Institute has it that some time in 2002 – it was night and was raining – a senior minister of the Republic of Moldova was standing in front of the institute's building in Braunschweig, Germany. It was said that he was either the minister of foreign affairs or the minister of education, but such details do not matter here. What does indeed matter is what he was doing there: He had come, without prior arrangements, to ask for help. That he should be standing there in the middle of the night and in the rain certainly underscored the point he wanted to make: The Republic desperately needed the Georg Eckert Institute's help. The government did not know where else to turn. But how could it have come to this? A situation so dire that a government was forced to ask a research institution for help,

Earlier that year, in February 2002, the Moldovan government had decided that history teaching in schools needed to be changed. In 2001, following the electoral victory of the Moldovan Communist Party, a new government had been formed. Now, it wanted to tackle a problem its predecessors had been unable to resolve: history teaching. A resolution was adopted that was to be implemented by a subcommittee headed by the vice premier minister himself. But it was not just another matter of government business. When the resolution in question was adopted, a couple of days after the initial decision to change something, a massive crowd of protesters was already camped outside Parliament – it had been gathering there for a whole month by then. The crowd was to become bigger and the protest was to last three months altogether. It is no wonder that, seeing the protesters' many tents and hearing their slogans daily, the government officials and parliamentarians felt themselves under siege – and feared for the future of the government itself.

As if the threat of insurrection or revolution over history teaching were not drama enough, the Moldovan case has it all, and a bit more: the public burning of history textbooks, the comparison of textbook authors with Goebbels, the ac-

cusations of Holocaust denial and of treason – and the publication of official history textbooks which call for the abolition of the Moldovan state itself. Moldova is arguably more than just another typical example of textbook controversy in a country in the process of transition; Moldova is an exceptional case in which history teaching and textbooks have become the prime arena of an identity conflict with immediate repercussions for the very existence of the Moldovan state. Indeed, the roots of all this lie deep in the nature of the conflict and its own history.

In the beginning there was the history textbook: Historical background of the Moldovan identity conundrum

What is today the Republic of Moldova was until the early nineteenth century an integral part of the Moldovan principality. In 1812 the eastern part of this principality, from then on known by the name »Bessarabia,« was incorporated into the Russian Empire. The treaty that formalized the separation of the eastern part of the principality also stipulated that the Nogay Tatars who had settled in southern Bessarabia, an area also known as the Budjak, had to emigrate to the Ottoman Empire, of which the principality was an autonomous part.[1] This effectively meant that a large area of the newly acquired territory was almost uninhabited. The Tsarist administration invited settlers from the Balkans (Bulgarians, Gagauz, and Greeks); later Germans were to follow as well.[2] With the immigration of these groups as well as others the nature of the region invariably changed.

When in 1861/1862 the two Romanian principalities of Moldova and Walachia united to form the Kingdom of Romania and when in other regions inhabited by Romanian-speakers[3] nationalist movements grew in strength, all was quiet in

1 Kemal Karpat claims this, with the migration of Christians to southern Bessarabia, was the first population exchange. In Kemal Karpat, »The role of Turkey and Iran in Incorporating the Former Soviet Republics into the World System,« in *Studies on Turkish Politics and Society – Selected Articles and Essays*, ed. Kemal Karpat (Leiden: Brill Academic, 2004), 543 – 579.

2 Cf. Detlef Brandes, *Von den Zaren adoptiert – Die deutschen Kolonisten und die Balkansiedler in Neurußland und Bessarabien 1751 – 1914* (München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 1993).

3 What to call the people who form the majority population in the Republic of Moldova already poses a problem, because, as Wim van Meurs has observed, »anyone who voices an opinion on the historical, linguistic, demographic, or cultural developments inevitably becomes a party in the conflict.« Here, the majority population will be called ethnic Romanians or Romanian-speakers. This is meant merely as an analytical category and is not intended to pre-categorize this population and thereby either include it in the Romanian nation or preclude it from forming a separate Moldovan nation. Cf. the discussion in Stefan Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier? Rumänismus versus Moldowanismus in Historiographie und Geschichtsschulbüchern*

Bessarabia. Until the First World War there was only a marginal group of people advocating nationalist ideals in this region.[4] The Great War was to change everything. In the wake of the Russian Revolution and of Brest-Litovsk, a »country council« (*Sfatul Ţării*) was formed in the capital of the region, Chişinău. At first this body declared autonomy, later full independence, thereby creating the short-lived »Moldovan Republic« (*Republică Moldovenească*).[5] After Romanian troops were called in to keep order, the *Sfatul Ţării* proclaimed union with Romania, making Bessarabia part of the so-called Great Unification of 1918 (*Unirea Mare*), which created Greater Romania (*Romania Mare*). But the newly founded Soviet Union was not to let Romania keep this province unchallenged, and Bessarabia became the apple of discord between the two countries in the interwar period. In order to solidify its claim over Bessarabia, the Soviet Union set up a shadow republic east of the river Dniester, which had become the new border. This autonomous republic, the Autonomous Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic (*Republica Autonomă Sovietică Socialistă Moldovenească, RASSM*), was supposed to show the world that the Moldovans not only wished to live together as Moldovans but also longed to live together inside the Soviet Union.

Thus Moldovanism was born. At first its rhetoric was that of class and anti-imperialism, but as the overall political situation changed, so did Moldovanism's rhetoric. During the Second World War, Bessarabia changed hands again: At first it was awarded to the Soviet Union as agreed between Hitler and Stalin in 1940, then it was re-conquered by Romanian and German forces in 1941, and finally in 1944 it was again occupied by the Red Army. In Bessarabia a new Soviet republic, the Socialist Soviet Republic of Moldova (*Republica Sovietică Socialistă Moldovenească*), was established incorporating much, but not all, of the territory of the RASSM east of the Dniester River.

Moscow's claim over Bessarabia had been built on rather weak ideological foundations. A fully fledged historical justification for its existence inside the Soviet Union was needed, a fully fledged Moldovanist concept. And in the beginning there was a textbook. The first Stalinist synthesis of Moldovanist history writing was published in 1949 with the experimental »model« history textbook

der Republik Moldova, 1991–2006 (Stuttgart: ibidem, 2008), 24–28; Wim van Meurs, *The Bessarabian Question in Communist Historiography – Nationalist and Communist Politics and History Writing* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 3.

4 For overview of Bessarabian/Moldovan history cf. Charles King, *The Moldovans – Romania, Russia and the Politics of Culture* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1999); Iulian Fruntaşu, *O istorie etnopolitică a Basarabiei 1812–2002* (Chişinău: Cartier, 2002); Keith Hitchins, *Rumania, 1866–1947* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

5 Cf. Izeaslav Levit, *An de răspînti. De la proclamarea republicii moldoveneşti pîna la desfiinţarea autonomiei Basarabiei (Noiembrie 1917-Noiembrie 1918)* (Chişinău: Universul, 2003).

on Moldovan history.[6] This textbook was supposed to demonstrate that the Moldovans were a separate nation from the Romanians and illustrate how the paths of the two nations had diverged in the past, most notably in the time before that of the »bourgeois nations.« Historiographic Moldovanism was to undergo at least one major change in its discourse, but it essentially remained the guiding interpretation of history and of the nation, shaping history teaching and historical academic activities in the Republic until the 1990 s.[7]

The nation that woke up, but never got out of bed: The 1990 s in Moldova

When Perestroika and Glasnost were restructuring the nature of politics and power all over the Soviet Union, the Republic of Moldova was not standing idly by. The many grievances of diverse segments of the population found their expression in a political movement known as the Popular Front (*Frontul Popular Moldovenesc*). The Front and other political players called for reform and advanced a series of concrete reform proposals – for example, »the letter of the 66,« calling for the recognition of the identity of the Romanian and the Moldovan language, the adoption of a Latin-based alphabet, and the institution of this language as official language of the state.[8] In August 1989 a huge demonstration, allegedly with some six hundred thousand Moldovan citizens (out of an entire population of 4.3 million) participating, took place in Chişinău.[9] It entered the annals of Moldovan history as the Great National Assembly (*Adunare Mare Naţională*). In 1991, first autonomy and then independence from Moscow were proclaimed. Moldova proceeded along »expected« lines of post-Soviet transition, or at least so it appeared. What happened in Moldova from the late eighties until the end of the millennium turned out to be paradoxical, to say the least. It has been captured in a saying by the Moldovan author Ion Druţa, who

6 A.D. Udalćov and L.V. Čerepnin, *Kurs istorii Moldavii* (Chişinău, 1949) as cited in van Meurs, *The Bessarabian Question*, 181.

7 On the history of Soviet Moldovanism cf. van Meurs, *The Bessarabian Question.*

8 Alla Skvortsova, »The Cultural and Social Makeup of Moldova – A Bipolar or Dispersed Society?« in *National Integration and Violent Conflict in Post-Soviet Societies – The Cases of Estonia and Moldova*, ed. Pål Kolstø (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield 2002), 178; Charles King, »Politique panroumaine et identité moldove.« *Balkanologie* 1 (1997): 16 – 17.

9 Some claim that the numbers are exaggerated. Flavius Solomon, »De la RSSM la Republica Moldova – Identitate etnică şi politică,« in *Basarabia – Dilemele Identităţii*, ed. Flavius Solomon and Alexandru Zub (Iaşi: Fundaţia Academică A.D. Xenopol, 2001), 76; Victor Stepaniuc, *Statalitatea poporului moldovenesc. Aspecte istorice, polito-juridice* (Chişinău: Tipografia Centrală, 2005), 346.

claimed that nationalism in Moldova is a strange beast, because »it woke up, but never got out of bed.«[10]

What was so strange about it? At first everything seemed to progress on a »normal« path. National sentiment awoke and led to independence. New laws were introduced to regulate the many things that needed to be dealt with in a post-Soviet situation. Moldova achieved international fame by passing the most inclusive, and thus the most civic, citizenship laws of all the post-Soviet states, making every inhabitant a citizen of the new republic regardless of his or her ethnicity.[11] This in itself was more than remarkable given that according to the 1989 census only 64.5 percent of the population were ethnic Romanians. The remaining population was composed of approximately 13.8 percent Ukrainians, 13 percent Russians, 3.5 percent Gagauz, 2 percent Bulgarians, and 3.1 percent other groups.[12] But this was only one direction towards which the new state was pulling. At the same time, the symbolism of the state pointed clearly toward Romanian nationalism and indeed toward unification with Romania. The newly adopted national flag and national anthem were identical to their Romanian counterparts – with the minor difference being that the Moldovan flag bore the coat of arms of the Moldovan principality. If the citizenship laws assuaged the fears of the minorities, other aspects of the national awakening in Moldova certainly did not. It appeared as if the Moldovan Republic had transformed itself into a Romanian twin; unification seemed only a short and natural step away.

During the Great National Assembly slogans like »Russians go home« could already be heard.[13] And as nationalist tempers grew hotter, hostile feelings were no longer aimed just at representatives of »Russian chauvinism« but at any minorities who were seen as Russian instruments of control and as stifling the Romanian nation in Moldova. On of the most poignant slogans of the time was »suitcase, train station, Russia« (*Чемодан – Вокзал – Россия*).[14] And when mi-

10 Charles King, *The Moldovans*, 224.

11 Alla Skvortsova, »The Cultural and Social Makeup of Moldova,« 188; Charles King, »Politique panroumaine,« 27. However, the citizenship laws were changed in 2000 and it is now stipulated among other things that »sufficient« knowledge of the state language (Moldovan) is necessary for successful applications. Tatjana Mletschko. »Die Sprachgesetzgebung im Zeitraum, 1989–2005 – Ein Überblick,« in *Sprachliche Individuation in mehrsprachigen Regionen Osteuropas. Vol. 1: Republik Moldova*, ed. Klaus Bochmann and Vasile Dumbrava (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2007), 52.

12 There was another census in 2005, but it did not include the Transnistrian territory, which for all intents and purposes is still part of Moldova. Cf. the discussion in: Florentina Harbo, »Can Federalism cope with the challenges of the Transnistrian conflict?« in *Weak State, Uncertain Citizenship – Moldova*, ed. Monica Heintz (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Pub., 2008), 180.

13 Edward Ozhiganov, »The Republic of Moldova – Transdnjestr and the 14th Army,« in *Managing Conflict in the Former Soviet Union: Russian and American Perspectives*, ed. Alexei Arbatov, et al. (Cambridge (MA): The MIT Press, 1997), 157.

14 Stefan Troebst, »Separatistischer Regionalismus (post-)sowjetischer Eliten – Transnistrien

nority parliamentarians were beaten up in 1990, it was clear that this was not just a mood that was going to stop at inflammatory words.[15] Memories of the time when Bessarabia was part of Greater Romania and when the minority populations were subject to harsh Romanianization measures grew vivid once again. The language laws that were passed in 1989 did not help to cool ethnic tensions. These laws stipulated that all state employees be fluent in Romanian, which most of the minority population was not.[16] The whole phase from the late 1980 s well into 1992, if not 1994, was characterized by waves of Romanianization. For example, in the sphere of academia, the spirit of the language laws was preempted by having all employees fired and only those fluent in Romanian reemployed.

The language laws are often seen as the trigger for the two territorial ethnic conflicts in Moldova.[17] Shortly after these laws were passed, both in Transnistria, i. e. the territories across the river Dniester, and in Gagauzia, i. e. in the south of Moldova (in the Budjak region), the Transnistrian and the Gagauz autonomous republics were proclaimed. The conflict between the Moldovan central state and Gagauzia was resolved remarkably quickly. Yet it had required the deployment of Soviet special forces to keep the Moldovan nationalist volunteers – many thousands according to some accounts, armed with knives and clubs, whom Prime Minister Druc had called on a »march on the Gagauz« (*Nachod na Gagauzov*) – from entering Gagauz territory.[18] With the lobbying and arbitration of the Republic of Turkey, a very generous and unique autonomy agreement was negotiated for the Gagauz.[19] The conflict with Transnistria took a different turn.

1989 – 2002,« in *Kulturstudien Ostmitteleuropas. Aufsätze und Essays*, ed. Stefan Troebst (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006), 181.

15 Alla Skvortsova, »The Cultural and Social Makeup of Moldova,« 184 – 188.

16 Ibid., 178 – 9; King, »Politique panroumaine,« 23.

17 Cf. Stefan Troebst, »Von »Gagauz Halkı» zu »Gagauz Yeri» – Die Autonomiebewegung der Gagausen in Moldova von 1988 bis 1998,« *Ethnos-Nation* 7 (1999): 41 – 54; Jeff Chinn and Steven D. Roper, »Territorial Autonomy in Gagauzia,« *Nationalities Papers* 1 (1998): 87 – 101; Claus Neukirch, »Autonomy and conflict transformation – The case of the Gagauz territorial autonomy in the Republic of Moldova,« in *Minority Governance in Europe*, ed. Kinga Gal (Budapest: LGI Books, 2002), 105 – 123; Nicu Popescu, »Supravieţuirea Transnistriei,« in *Republica Moldova: Stat slab – cetăţenie incertă. Studii despre Republica Moldova*, ed. Monica Heintz, 77 – 102 (Bucureşti: Curtea Veche, 2007); Harbo, »Can Federalism«; Gottfried Hanne, »Der Transnistrien-Konflikt – Ursachen, Entwicklungsbedingungen und Perspektiven einer Regulierung,« *Berichte des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche Studien* 42 (1998); Edward Ozhiganov, »The Republic of Moldova«; Anneli Ute Gabanyi, *Die Republik Moldau im Kontext der Neuen EU-Nachbarschaftspolitik* (Berlin: SWP, 2004).

18 Chinn and Roper, »Territorial Autonomy,« 95.

19 Cf. John Webster, »Using Power for Peace: Turkey, Moldova and the Gagauz (1989 – 1995),« Unpublished report, University of Oxford, October 2005; see also Troebst, »Von »Gagauz Halkı»«; Charles King, »Gagauz Yeri and the Dilemmas of Self-Determination,« *Transition* 1

It came to actual fighting. Of the approximately one thousand casualties of the conflict, eight hundred alone died in the fighting around the city of Bender in the middle of 1992.[20] While it quickly turned into a »cold conflict,« the issue remains unresolved (as of 2008). Moscow's backing of Tiraspol on the one hand, and the industrial character of the region on the other – in sharp contrast to the predominantly agrarian rest of Moldova – and thus its economic importance for Moldova, helped to aggravate this conflict.

But why was nationalism in Moldova a strange beast? Did it really not get out of bed? After all, the initial momentum of protest and the common will to reform led to the establishment of the independent Republic of Moldova. However, in the period after 1992, the Republic displayed a surprising degree of indecision in regards to its identity. If there was enough popular feeling for independence from Moscow, there was not enough for either a union with Romania or a separate Moldovan nation. The cross-ethnic, and in general cross-societal, consensus that had carried the Popular Front in the beginning disintegrated quickly after it became clear that a large number of Front leaders wanted union with Romania. The Front-backed candidate, Mircea Snegur, was able to become head of state in 1990, but afterward the Front, now a political party, was unable to gain ground in any of the elections that followed. From 1994 until today, only parties that have a clear Moldovanist agenda, i. e. the will to retain the state and the belief that there is a Moldovan nation, have been elected. At least in the time since 1993, we can say with certainty that only a minority still wanted to unite with Romania. In an opinion poll in 1993 only 10 percent favored such a union.[21] In 1994, after the election victory of the Moldovanists, President Snegur initiated a nationwide referendum, the so-called *sfat-la-poporul* referendum, which literally means »going to the population for council.« The population was asked if it wanted to keep Moldova as an independent state; 96 percent answered yes.[22] But the monumental failure of unionist politics is perhaps most symbolically captured by Mircea Druc's adventures in Romania. The former Moldovan prime minister wanted to achieve unification through the Romanian »back door« and

(1995): 21 – 25; Charles King, »Minorities Policy in the Post-Soviet Republics – The Case of the Gagauzi,« *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 20 (1997): 738 – 756.

20 Stephen Iwan Griffiths, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict – Threats to European Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 84; Anika Zeller, *Konstruktion im Wandel: Nationale Identität in der Republik Moldau. Eine Analyse der staatlichen Zeitung Nezavisimaja Moldova (1991 – 1994). Hamburger Beiträge zur Geschichte des östlichen Europa, Vol. 12* (Hamburg: Dr. Kovač, 2005), 62.

21 Mariana Hausleitner, Die Moldaurepublik – Ein Staat mit umstrittenen Grenzen,« in *Herausforderung Osteuropa – Die Offenlegung stereotyper Bilder*, ed. Thede Kahl, Elisabeth Vyslonzil and Alois Woldan (Wien: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 2004), 28.

22 Ines Hartwig, »Die Beziehungen zwischen Rumänien und Moldova seit 1992,« *Osteuropa* 11 (1994): 1075 – 1076.

ran for president in the 1992 Romanian presidential elections. With Druc coming in last in this election, it became clear that the momentum for unification had passed.[23] Long gone were the days of euphoria when the bridge over the river Dnieper, connecting Romania and Moldova, was opened. The event, which became known as the Flower Bridge (*podul florilor*), had captured the imagination of nationalists on both sides: people cheering, Romanian flags, flowers floating in the river Pruth, and the obligatory Orthodox clergy.

Even if euphoria had already been superseded by sobriety after 1992, the year 1994 marked the final turning point in this ambiguous post-Soviet time. In fact, with 1994 the first period of post-Soviet transition found its end. During the 1994 election campaign, the Agrarian Party organized a congress with the auspicious name Our House Moldova (February 1994). Presidential candidate Snegur delivered the keynote address, which is also known today as the Our House Moldova speech.«[24] And it was more than just another election speech. Snegur set his vision for and of the Republic of Moldova, or more precisely, for the Moldovan nation. His speech was a historiographic discourse re-framing the history of the Moldovans. The speech received much applause, especially from the minority representatives. Not surprisingly, it was criticized harshly by the opposition as well as by the Romanianist-oriented Moldovan academia.[25] And there was another symbolic event at the same congress: a book presentation. The book in question, Vasile Stati's *Istoria Moldovei,* told the history of the Moldovans in a fashion very similar to that of Snegur's speech.[26] Taken together, these two events signaled the advent of post-Soviet Moldovanism on the political, societal, and historiographic stage. Until then, Moldovanism had been part and parcel of Soviet rule in Moldova; now, it seemed, it was a movement in its own right.[27] With a (relatively) clear historiographic and political outlook in place, Romanianism, i. e. the movement for union with Romania, which postulated that the Romanian-speakers of Moldova were in fact Romanians, had found its post-Soviet counterpart: Moldovanism.

The Moldovanist Agrarians won the 1994 elections, and indeed, political Moldovanism – later in the form of the Communist Party (*Partidul Comuniștilor din Republica Moldova, PCRM*) – won the day in every election after 1994. And taking into account the aforementioned opinion polls against unification with Romania, it would seem that the identity question in Moldova was an open and

23 Charles King, *The Moldovans*, 167; Anneli Ute Gabanyi, »Die Moldaurepublik zwischen Russland, Rumänien und der Ukraine,« *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen* 1 (1995): 49.
24 Cf. appendix V in Stefan Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier?*, 291 – 7.
25 Cf. discussion in ibid., 49 – 53.
26 Vasile Stati, *Istoria Moldovei.* Chișinău: Vivar Editor, 2002.
27 Cf. discussion in Charles King *The Moldovans*, 155 – 160; Charles King, »Politique panroumaine,« 19.

shut case. An analysis of early post-Soviet newspapers in Moldova on the identity question also seems to confer this impression. As Anika Zell found for the time up to 1994: »After the question ›who are we: Moldovans or Romanians?‹ was posed on 26 October 1993, on 24 November 1993 the answer was: ›We are Romanians.‹ Yet already on 21 December 1993 an article heading featured the opposite answer: ›We are Moldovans.‹«[28]

The country without history

Nothing was resolved and nothing was clear. When later in 1994, the new government set out to »implement the constitution,« the Moldovan identity conundrum resurfaced with a vengeance. Article 13 of the Moldovan constitution speaks of the »Moldovan language« and, in other parts, of the »Moldovan people« and of »Moldovan history.«[29] In schools and at universities at the time, however, the Romanian language and the history of the Romanians (*Istoria Românilor*) were taught. The new government now wanted to bring the curricula in line with the constitution, creating Moldovan language and Moldovan history courses. But never mind the constitution – it was impossible to do so. When an ordinance regarding the replacement of Romanian school and university subjects became public knowledge, protest quickly followed. A handful of university students, who were promptly joined by their teachers and by schoolchildren, organized a demonstration just across from Parliament and in sight of other government buildings in the central square of Chişinău, the square that bore the name of, and had been the site of, the Great National Assembly. The demonstration turned into a permanent strike, as its leaders proclaimed, and continued to grow in size. After a couple of days of »business as usual« regarding the demonstration, something extraordinary happened: the public burning of history textbooks. These were Soviet history textbooks, and the protesters chanted, »Read them yourselves,« alluding to the perceived reintroduction of Soviet-style Moldovanism into the school curricula. As the demonstrations grew in size and intensity, so did the consternation and confusion of the government officials. How could the same people who had voted for them be so radically opposed to the concept of a common Moldovan nation?

There was, it seemed, no way out of the problem for the government short of abandoning the whole project altogether. And so it did. The government ended the demonstrations with a moratorium on all questions of language and history

28 Anika Zeller, *Konstruktion im Wandel*, 147.

29 Article 13 as well the preamble: »Constituţia Republicii Moldova – Adoptată la 29 iulie 1994,« in *Вехи Молдавской государственности*, ed. В.И. Царанов (Кишинев 2000), 139 – 142.

teaching. The first attempt to teach the history of the Moldovan nation had failed, but history still needed to be taught – only how? During the demonstrations one female protester shouted into a microphone that Moldova had no history. Many years later, in 2002, an unlikely ally, President Vasile Tarlev, repeated her words.[30] He lamented that all nations had their history, only Moldova had none. Moldova certainly does have a history; indeed, one has to agree with Wim van Meurs that Moldova's problem is rather the abundance of »histories« – »too much past and too little future.«[31] What the protester meant was that Moldova, as an entity (or a construct), had no history other than within the context of Romanian national history. And what President Tarlev alluded to was that, while other nations taught their own national history, in Moldova not only was its own history not taught, but what was in fact taught was the history of another nation, that of the Romanians. Both Tarlev and the protester were right in so far as that, already in 1991, the course »history of the Romanians« had been introduced in Moldovan schools and, in 1994, the very year of the demonstrations, the production of history textbooks for this course began. The conflict between Romanianism and Moldovanism was to take the strangest possible course from the mid-1990 s onward. While political Moldovanism ruled the country, Romanianism was taught in the schools.

Romanianism and Moldovanism in textbooks and historiography

But the absurdity of conflicting influences and of conflicting arenas of the two isms is not confined to a mere displacement or a standoff between different societal spheres. The content of both historiographic movements in combination with their roles in society paint a picture of complete dissonance. It is at this point that we need to venture into the intricate content of the discourses in question.[32] Post-Soviet Moldovanism was the first of the two movements to produce new national grand narratives. While for the Romanianists, it appears to have been sufficient to republish older, mostly interwar, historiographic works on Bessarabia, for the Moldovanists, republishing Soviet Moldovanist literature was apparently out of the question.[33] And Moldovanism, at least its

30 Cf. discussion in Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier?*, 15 – 23; See also: Sergiu Musteaţa, »Predarea istoriei în Republica Moldova între reformă şi antireforma,« in *Ethnic Minorities in History Textbooks*, ed. idem (Chişinău: Typescript, Forthcoming).

31 Wim van Meurs, »Moldova – zwischen National-, Staats- und Regionalgeschichte,« *Österreichische Osthefte* 1 – 2 (2002): 245.

32 For detailed citations on the textbooks cf. Stefan Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier?*, 89 – 151; 183 – 240.

33 See also for a list of the re-published texts: Stefan Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier?*, 305 – 6.

political expression, seems to have been something new anyway. It appealed to the minority populations as well, which the old Moldovanism did not necessarily do – and did not have to do.

There were three expositions of Moldovanist grand narratives in the 1990 s. Two were written by Vasile Stati (albeit one using the pseudonym Petre Moldovan)[34] and another one was written by a team of authors composed of many historians of the old order. Stati's two monographs as well as the book by Vladimir Ţaranov's team narrate the biography of the Moldovan nation from antiquity to the present.[35] Important to both Moldovanist accounts is the tracing of the genesis of their nation to the fusion of Dacian, Roman, and Slavic elements. Central to their pre-modern narratives is the figure of Ştefan cel Mare (Stephen the Great), whose sole aim and motivation was, in the Moldovanists' view, to protect the independence of the Moldovan nation. When their narratives arrive at the modern era, it becomes clear that Russia is the only friend the Moldovans have. The image is that of a nation surrounded by hostile states with all but one friend and protector. Accordingly, the time under Tsarist rule is a good one for the Moldovans, but it is especially the Soviet period that is glorified as a golden era in which the nation flourished and prospered.

Clearly the Moldovanists could not go unchallenged in Moldova regarding their views on the nation. As early as the late eighties onward, Romanianist historians and publicists had set forth their views on the nation, its history, and its relation with the Soviet Union and Russia in various articles, speeches, and books.[36] What was lacking, however, was a new Romanianist grand narrative. Given the dominance of Moldovanism in the spheres of politics and government, the place in which the new Romanianist narrative was set forth was the most unlikely of all: the official Moldovan history textbooks. While there are sig-

34 Vasile Stati, *Istoria*; Petre P. Moldovan (=Vasile Stati), *Moldovenii în istorie* (Chişinău: Poligraf-Service, 1993).

35 Vladimir I. Ţaranov, et al., *Istoria Republicii Moldova din cele mai vechi timpuri pînă în zilele noastre. Editia a doua* (Chişinău: Elan Poligraf, 2003 [1998]).

36 See, for example, the debate on the state flag and its history: Pavel Parasca, »Despre drapel, istorie şi bunavoinţa,« *Moldova socialista*, 16 April 1989; Vladimir Mischevca, »Culorile istoriei sau despre steagurile Moldovei,« *Învăţământul public*, 11 October 1989; Ion Ţurcanu, »Tricolorul în lumina datelor istorice,« *Literatura şi Arta*, 15 June 1989; Ion Ţurcanu, »Întoarcerea privirii spre steag,« *Moldova* 7 (1989); Mihai Audage and Ion Negrei, »Dreptul la tricolor,« *Tinerimea Moldovei*, 15 December 1989; Anton Moraru and Ion Şişcanu, »Tricolorul – Contribuţii la istoria drapelul naţional,« [article series] *Moldova Socialistă*, 27, 28 and 30 January 1990. Also first debates on history textbooks began during the late Soviet period: Ion Stafii, »Manualul de istorie,« *Literatura şi Arta*, 6 October 1988; Boris Vieru, »Vom avea în sfăşit un manual de istorie a Moldovei?« *Literatura şi Arta* 18 (1989); »Avem istorici, dar nu şi cărţi de istorie,« *Literatură şi Arta*, 26 Januar 1989. All cited according to Maria Neagu, »Istorie, memorie, identitate în Moldoa postsovietică – Consideraţii asupra evoluţiei istoriografiei şcolare din Republica Moldova, 1991 – 2005,« *Cugetul* 1 (2006): 13 – 14 and 23.

nificant variations within Moldovanist historical writing,[37] the textbooks for the history of the Romanians read like the work of a single author (although they are definitely not); they are coherent in their views, interpretations, and focal points to an astonishing extent. Accordingly, it makes perfect sense to read them as one grand narrative.

Very much like their counterparts, the Romanianists tell the story of their nation beginning with time it emerged from an early ethno-genesis, although this one comprises Roman and Dacian elements with only minor Slavic contributions. Ethno- and natio-genesis, just as in the Moldovanist narrative, are very much the same thing for the authors. And once there are »Romanians,« the Romanian nation marches down the path of history. Before the narrative enters modern times, the pivotal importance of Mihai Viteazu (Michael the Brave) is highlighted, because it was he who first, so the authors claim, united all the Romanian lands into one Romanian nation. As in the Moldovanist case, the nation is besieged by hostile powers and the only friend the Romanians of Bessarabia have is Romania itself. Their greatest foe is Russia or, in different guises, the Soviet Union or the Russian proxy, the Moldovanists. The Moldovanist narrative stipulated that the most important characteristic of the Moldovan nation was its will to live independently. Conversely, the Romanianist discourse defines the will to live together in a unified national state encompassing all Romanians as the Romanians' prime national characteristic. For the Romanianists then, expectedly, the time under Tsarist administration from 1812 until 1918 is a dark period of foreign occupation, while the Great Unification of 1918 is the high point of national evolution. The time of Greater Romania is the golden era of the Romanianist narrative. Here the nation rises to its full potential in all spheres of society—the sole reason for this being its national fulfillment. Both narratives, Romanianist and Moldovanist, exhibit a marked ethnocentric tendency, not only in their exclusion of minorities from the projected »self,« but also in the way they explain progress and how they evaluate different periods of history and their different political regimes. Whether the nation lived under democracy or dictatorship seems to matter little, if at all; what matters exclusively, and for all periods, is the national aspect. Democracy, capitalism, market economy, communism, etc., carry little weight here.[38]

37 Stati derives his national project very much from the historical principality of Moldova. The authors around Țaranov, on the other hand, found their national project more on the Bessarabian territory. Cf. discussion in Stefan Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier?*, 167 – 174.

38 Cf. Stefan Ihrig, »Democracy (dis)connected – Discourses of democracy and of the inter-war period as (mis)guiding lights in the history textbooks of the Republic of Moldova and Romania,« *CEU Political Science Journal* 2/1 (2007): 27 – 43.

Discrepancies of discourse

The fact that both narratives were undemocratic to the bone did not stir sentiments in the Republic. What did, however, cause violent criticism was the treatment of minority issues. An open letter signed in the name of the minorities of the Republic, but probably written by Sergiu Nazaria, an outspoken champion of the Moldovanist cause, drew parallels between the narratives of the textbooks and the language of the Third Reich. This letter, which was distributed to many foreign embassies in Moldova, the Council of Europe, and the Georg Eckert Institute, claimed that the way minorities were described and their history narrated was nothing short of xenophobic propaganda on a par with that which Goebbels had famously produced.[39] In addition, the letter points out that the mass murder of Bessarabian and Romanian Jews during the Second World War in what is today Transnistria and parts of the Ukraine was minimalized, if not negated, in the »history of the Romanians.«[40] While this letter displayed a questionable strategy and utterly undiplomatic language, it struck a major cord in the discussion about history textbooks in the second half of the nineties and the early years of the new millennium.

What is most striking about historiographic developments in the 1990 s and the early years of the new millennium is that they conflict with societal realities in the strongest way possible: While most of the population voted for Moldovanists, and Moldovanist parties in fact ruled the country, history textbooks of an adverse ideology were published and used in state schools. While Moldovan society is markedly polyethnic and many minority voters sustain political Moldovanism, only ethnocentric narratives of the »Self« were produced. And lastly, while history textbooks usually serve to imbue the younger generations with a sense of allegiance to their own state, the Romanianist textbooks called for an outright abolition of the Moldovan state.

39 The open letter is explicitly addressed, in addition to the presidents of some East and Southeast European states, to the Council of Europe and the director of the Georg Eckert Institute: Societăţile etno-culturale din Republica Moldova: Scrisoare deschisă către Consiliul Europei, către Preşedinţii Albaniei, Armeniei, Bulgariei, Germaniei, Greciei, Poloniei, Republicii Moldova, României, Rusiei, Ucrainei, Ungariei, Serbiei, Turciei, către directorul Institutului Georg Eckert de la societăţile etno-culturale din Republica Moldova despre starea educaţiei din Republica Moldova, exprimată prin prisma manualelor de Istorie a românilor. Typoscript (2002/2003).

40 If the author of the letter is indeed Nazaria, the focus on the denial of the Holocaust would make sense as he authored the first post-Soviet Moldovan monograph on the Holocaust in Transnistria: Sergiu Nazaria, *Holocaust pe teritoriul Moldovei şi în regiunile limitrofe ale Ucrainei, 1941 – 1944 – file din istorie*, (Chişinău: Tipografia Centrală, 2005); cf. also: Stefan Ihrig, »Der transnistrische Holocaust in moldawischen Geschichtsschulbüchern,« in *Völkermord in Transnistrien, 1941 – 1944 – Deportation, Rettung und Erinnerung*, ed. Wolfgang Benz and Brigitte Mihok (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, forthcoming 2009).

It is perhaps not surprising that Romanianism – as a nationalism that sets out to achieve unity with Romania and feels it has to speak for a nation subdued by Russia's proxies – focuses singularly on its own nation. It is remarkable, however, that such an ideology is disseminated as the official history of a polyethnic state. Moreover, that Moldovanism – which, after all, is to a large extent politically dependent upon the non-Romanian population of Moldova – has merely developed ethnocentric narratives of the nation is strange to say the least. In both grand narratives, it is the dominant *ethnie*, i. e. the Romanian-speaking majority of Moldova (plus all the Romanians in Southeastern Europe, in the case of the Romanianist narrative), which is the subject of history and is thus marching down history's path. The minorities of Moldova/Bessarabia figure only as enumerative minorities, i. e. in certain contexts it is stated that such and such numbers of Bulgarians, Russians, Ukrainians, Gagauz, Germans, and Jews also lived there, that they had so many houses of worship, etc.[41] Although these minorities make up a considerable part of the region's population in modern times, they figure only marginally in the narratives. If they achieve some prominence in these discourses, then only in a negative fashion, most markedly as »colonizers« of the Moldovan/Romanian people and as instruments of Russia. In the Moldovanist narrative, they tend to be portrayed in a much more favorable manner than in the Romanianist discourse, but what is strikingly similar in both accounts: the minorities are at no time and under no historical circumstances part of the projected »Self.« There is no civic or modern(-ist) idea of a nation formed through voluntary acts, common experiences and values, or any other circumstances. Nor is there even the idea of a possible conversion to the Moldovan or Romanian nation present in the narratives. The minorities are part of foreign nations, regardless whether these already existed at the time the minorities came to Bessarabia, and they continue to be a part of these foreign entities. What we have in both cases is a double exclusion of the minorities from the narrative: first, in terms of space devoted to their histories and shared experiences with the majority population; and second, in their exclusion from the narratives' projected »self.«

Another striking dissonance between society and narrative can be found in the conflict regarding the political dominance of Moldovanism and the dominance of Romanianism in teaching. This was possible because the Romanianists were able to place their discourse at the center of society through textbooks. But this does not account for the narrative itself. The Romanianist narrative of the history textbooks fervently advocates the abolishment of the Moldovan state. At conferences and in articles, Romanianist historians have claimed that »to be

41 For example: Boris Vizer and Tatiana Nagnibeda-Twerdohleb, *Istoria Românilor – Epoca contemporană, Manual pentru clasa a IX-a* (Chişinău: Ştiinţa, 2003), 30.

Romanianist does not necessarily mean to advocate unionism.«[42] However, the textbooks speak a different language. Both historiographic Romanianism and Moldovanism convey clear programs of political action in their narratives. The primary carriers of such programs are the postulated national characteristics as well as glorified »golden ages.« In the Moldovanist case, it is the characteristic of seeking and protecting independence that guides the overall narrative, and in the Romanianist case, it is the struggle for unity. A clear national agenda is conveyed in combination with the modern »golden ages« – the interwar period for the Romanianists and the Soviet period for the Moldovanists. But the Romanianist discourse does not stop here; it moves on to a very explicit program of action. Already the covers of the history textbooks clearly communicate what the texts do with so many words. Two textbook covers show the Great Union of 1918 in combination with scenes of nationalist euphoria in 1989, in one case the Flower Bridge and in another the Great National Assembly. They clearly suggest what the natural path of the nation is supposed to be. Another cover consists of a collage of slogans and symbols with the word »unification« at its the center.[43]

Given the way Greater Romania is portrayed in the textbooks, it is apparent that the nation can reach its potential only when it is fulfilled in complete national unity with all other Romanians. Just as the Moldovanist narratives suggest a clear Eastern path for the Moldovans, with some kind of Eastern development under the protection of Russia, so the Romanianist discourse postulates unity and a Western form of development as the only viable options for the Romanians in Moldova. When the textbook narratives reach the events of the 1990 s, the Moldovanist political elites are criticized for subduing the nation and for obstructing the natural course of Romanian history.[44] The history of most recent events poses problems for the Moldovanist discourse and results in yet another discrepancy. The Communist Party, the Moldovanists in power since 2002, strives toward »the West«, Europe, and especially a future EU membership. However, the Moldovanists' »own« historiography suggests that Moldova and Moldovanism can have a future only at the side of Russia and along some kind of »Eastern path« of development. Nothing could illustrate better the dangers and shortcomings of highly politicized historiography: It simple cannot account for

42 Igor Caşu, »Some Considerations on Ethnic Identity and Nationalism in Bessarabia in the 19th – 20th Centuries,« in *In memoriam professoris Mihail Muntean – Studii de istorie moderna*, edited by Valentin Tomulets (Chişinău: Cartdidact, 2003), 257.

43 Ioan Scurtu, et al., *Istoria Românilor – Epocă contemporană. Manual pentru clasa a XII-a* (Chisinău: Prut Internaţional, 2001); Nicolae Enciu, *Istoria Românilor – Epoca contemporană. Manual pentru clasa a XII-a de liceu* (Chişinău: Civitas, 2003); Boris Vizer, *Istoria contemporană a Românilor – Materiale pentru clasa a IX-a în ajutorul elevilor şi profesorilor* (Chişinău: Ştiinţa, 1997); see reproductions in Stefan Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier?*, 160 – 163.

44 Cf. Stefan Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier?*, 158 – 165.

the developments and twists and turns of politics, it cannot keep up, and it cannot accommodate what politics de facto can.

What is particularly striking about the historiographic debates is not only how much energy has been wasted on the matter so far, but how much the ethnic Romanian elites have focused on their own ethnic group. There is an almost narcissistic aspect to the whole development. Even if history teaching is always politicized to some extent, in Moldova the degree of politicization – with history teaching as the main arena of the identity conflict – suggests that the respective combatants have no consideration for the pupils. The pupils and their teachers have become foot soldiers in a struggle determining the fate of the state.

Textbook reform and yet another new history

It is to be expected that the Moldovanists in power could not be happy with the textbook situation. The same goes for the minority populations. After the last of the textbooks of the first generation of Moldovan history textbooks (1995–1998) were published, the discussion about history textbooks gathered pace. But it was only in 2002 that the freshly elected Communist government launched a new initiative to reform history teaching and to replace the existing history course with Moldovan history. The outcome was, as already discussed, another series of demonstrations, this time lasting even a month longer then those in 1994 – three months in total. Following mediation by the Council of Europe, another moratorium was again agreed upon. It reinforced the previous 1994 moratorium, which, it seems, had not had much weight anyway, and proclaimed that the history as well as the language issue would not to be touched. It was at this point that the Moldovan government appealed to the Georg Eckert Institute. Clearly, this moratorium was not to be the end of the matter.

An outright replacement of the history courses was now out of the question. Accordingly, the Moldovan government adopted a discourse of »textbook reform.« The obvious shortcomings of the existing textbooks – and we have not yet commented on their didactic shortcomings – called for an ongoing and intensive process of reform. International experts and expert institutions such as the Council of Europe and the Georg Eckert Institute were to assist the Moldovan government in this endeavor. But this was only half the truth. In hindsight, it is possible to acknowledge that the Moldovan government never gave up on its aim to abolish the »history of the Romanians.« Improving the existing curricula and textbooks was a mere pretext to build up rhetoric and to distract. With »the history of the Moldovans« deemed unacceptable by an impressively mobilizable public, a new vessel to carry Moldovanist historiography had to be found. The specter of an »integrated history« had already been haunting the Republic since

1994. Then, Valentina Haheu, who was to become a prominent educational expert, pointed out that the integration of national and world history into one curriculum would be a favorable step, bringing Moldova in line with recent European didactic trends, especially regarding the general conversion toward a »European history.«[45]

At first Moldovan textbook reform focused on such issues as multiethnicity and multiperspectivity in history textbooks. Again in hindsight, it appears as if all the activities focusing on improving the current history textbooks were a mere cover up for and diversion from the real project: the integrated history course. While textbook authors of the first generation, curriculum experts, and history teachers were debating the existing courses, the integrated project rapidly unfolded. In September 2003 the teaching of this new course was introduced into 66 schools as part of a pilot project. Only a year later, 263 schools had already participated, and in the school year 2005/2006, still before the official introduction of the course, 469 schools (or 35.5 percent of all schools) took part.[46] In 2004 a call for manuscripts for new history textbooks was published in the official state newspapers.[47] This came as a shock to the public in Moldova. The fact that potential authors had only a narrow window of time – about two weeks – to hand in new manuscripts, making it virtually impossible to participate in the new project if one had not been informed about it beforehand, aggravated this shock even further.

The integrated history: Back door or an end to all history (conflicts)?

Before the new history textbooks were launched – indeed, before they were even written – a new Moldovanist grand narrative entered the scene, that of Victor Stepaniuc's *History of Moldovan Statehood (Statalitatea poporului moldovenesc)*.[48] Stepaniuc, himself an ardent supporter of Moldovanism and also the chairman of a parliamentary committee on such varied matters as education, history, youth, and sports, had already repeatedly voiced his opinions on history and textbooks. In his book, printed by the state publishing house, he set out his

45 As early as 1994, Valentina Haheu, Vasile Haheu, and Pavel Cerbușca wrote an experimental textbook, which presented an »integrated history of antiquity.« However, the reviews were so negative that the first small scandal concerning the »integrated history« took place and the project was dropped. Maria Neagu, »Istorie,« 23 – 24.

46 Numbers according to Galina Gavriliţa: »Experimentul la istorie: Finalităţi şi perspective,« the presentation given by Gavriliţă at the Holercani conference in her position as a consultant for the Moldovan ministry of education.

47 Cf. »Istoria integrată – Un Cernobîl cu efect latent,« *Cugetul* 1 (2006): 44 – 47.

48 Cf. discussion in Stefan Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier?*, 187 – 200.

own Moldovanist vision of national history. His central motif is statehood, which he uses as a substitute for nationhood. His central argument and his technique are similar to those of the other post-Soviet Moldovanist narratives. For him Moldovan statehood is a historical fact and can be traced back through the centuries. Now, all of Moldovan history evolves around this theme – from Ştefan cel Mare to the present-day debates. The main novelty of his approach lies in his treatment of »multiethnicity« as a central ingredient in Moldovan statehood; indeed, Moldovan statehood is founded upon the will of all inhabitants to live together, Moldovan and non-Moldovan. While this approach sounds like a civic-minded one, Stepaniuc is unfortunately not able to fully integrate the minorities into the projected »Self.« They remain outside the national body, as in previous narratives, and receive their rights by mere grace of the Moldovans. Still, his is an attempt to overcome one of the major shortcomings of the previous narratives.

The new »integrated history« textbooks follow Stepaniuc's lead. They again tell a Moldovanist history, but one now peppered with the concepts of statehood and multiethnicity. The latter is now used to discredit all things Romanian. The way the Moldovan state is able to handle multiethnicity, in the past as well as in the present, is advanced as a major justification for the state's existence. Accordingly, one textbook on the twentieth century expresses its main theme on the very first page of the book by way of two fitting quotes – one by Pan Halippa and one by Süleyman Demirel. The Halippa quote is a reflection on Bessarabia's dire situation within the Greater Romanian state in the interwar period. It is intended to show how inept Greater Romania was (and present-day Romania still is) at accommodating ethnic minorities. The quote from the then Turkish prime minister is used to show how, in contrast, not only is the Moldovan state able to accommodate its ethnic diversity, but living in Moldova is beneficial to its minorities. Demirel is cited as saying: »When it comes to the topic of ›tolerance‹ in the field of inter-ethnic relations, Moldova can be a role model for the international community. Autonomy has provided the Gagauz with access to democratic values.«[49]

The concept of multiethnicity is now interwoven with that of the Moldovan state; one textbook states that »from its foundation the Moldovan principality was a multiethnic state.«[50] Here we find also an attempt to found Moldova's very own myth of the melting pot: »The father a Russian, the mother a Russian, but

49 »Moldova poate servi drept exemplu pentru comunitatea internațională la capitolul ›toleranță‹ în sfera relațiilor interetnice. Autonomia le-a deschis găgauzilor accessul la valorile democratice.« in Sergiu Nazaria, et al., *Istorie. Manual pentru clasa a IX-a* (Chișinău: Cartea Moldovei, 2006), 5. The last script before publishing is cited here.

50 Petru Boico et al., *Istorie. Manual pentru clasa a VIII-a* (Chișinău: Univers Pedagogic, 2006), 48. The final version before publishing is cited here.

Ivan – a Moldovan« (*Tata rus, mama rus, dar Ivan – Moldovan*).[51] While this language might appear positively soothing in regard to the minority populations, especially in contrast to the outright hostility of the previous textbooks, the new textbooks are still a long way from actually including the minorities in the »Self« of the projected national concept. The integrated history textbooks circumvent the difficult question of ethno-genesis and speak merely of »our forefathers« or just simply of »us, Moldovans.« In the course of the narrative it becomes clear, however, that the »Self« is still an ethnically exclusive category. Thus despite »Ivan« being Moldovan, the minority populations at large remain members of different nations (why are they not all »Moldovan Ivans«?). Also, the minorities and their history, or their part in the general history, are still grossly underrepresented in the narrative. Featured on no more than two to four pages in the books, they are, again, treated merely in an enumerative fashion.

That the new narrative is in fact neither a fusion of previous narratives nor a totally new one becomes especially apparent in the textbooks' portrayal of the other. Again the Romanians and the Romanian state are responsible for the bleakest moments in the history of Moldova (especially the interwar period) and are the main threat to Moldovan statehood. One of the few differences to previous narratives is that the role of the Soviet Union has changed: It is now no longer solely a positive factor but has actually become the target of criticism in the new textbooks. This is a novelty for post-Soviet Moldovanism. At the same time, the Soviet Union, as well as Moldova's time as part of it, is now much more widely used to discuss developments and society in the twentieth century. Thus there is simultaneously »more« Soviet Union and more criticism of it.

The identity conundrum fourfold: Gagauzia and Transnistria

Another new feature of the integrated history is the inclusion of Transnistria in its narrative. Previous Romanianist and Moldovanist grand narratives had simply left out the Transnistrian territory. This now changed with the integrated history; here Transnistria is casually included in the narrative, and illustrations of Tiraspol feature in the general narrative as if there were no separatist problem at all.[52] The secondary literature on Moldova has stressed that the inclusion (or exclusion) of Transnistria in historical writing is an important test for the civic tendencies of the proposed national project.[53] In this respect the integrated

51 Ibid.

52 Cf. Stefan Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier?*, 234 – 240.

53 Wim van Meurs, »History Textbooks in Moldova. Expert Report – Update for the Moldova Seminar of the Georg-Eckert-Institute for International Textbook Research,« Braunschweig,

history seems to score well. The previous narratives of both sides tended to neglect and exclude Transnistria. While this was somewhat expected of Romanianism – in the early 1990 s no Romanianist laid serious claims to Transnistria – this was surprising in the case of Moldovanism. Stati's narrative is equivocal on Transnistria. One cannot be sure if he claims Transnistria for his national project. But his cover illustrations as well as the illustrations inside the book speak a clear language. Here Moldova or the area where Moldovans live includes much of present-day Romania, but clearly excludes Transnistria. Thus, before the arrival of the integrated history, Transnistria lay outside all national projects.[54]

The question of how Transnistria is represented in the narratives opens up another dimension of the identity conflict in Moldova. If one takes the whole internationally recognized territory of the Republic of Moldova, then there have been at least four different identity-building efforts within the borders of Moldova since the early 1990 s. The most dominant projects are the two already discussed, Romanianism and Moldovanism. In addition there are the efforts of the breakaway Republic of Transnistria (Transnistrianism) and those relating to the Gagauz identity (Gagauzianism). All these identity-building projects interact with one another in some fashion. If Transnistrianism and Gagauzianism were in some form reactions to Romanianization efforts in the early 1990 s – indeed, some scholars have called them reactive nationalisms[55] – then we would expect them to continue to react in some form to whatever is happening in Chişinău. Even though the conflict between Romanianism and Moldovanism is played out mainly in the capital city, and even though in the end it focuses almost exclusively on the Romanian-speakers of the Republic, there are indeed far-reaching interactions among the four isms. On the one hand, there are the reactions from the periphery to the latest tendencies of the dominant historiography, mainly to Romanianist claims. And on the other hand, in at least one case, the Transnistrian periphery has provided an impetus for the Moldovan center.

Since autonomy had been granted, Gagauz historians have displayed a marked disinterest in creating a national Gagauz grand narrative, indeed in writing their history at all.[56] But in the early 1990 s, when Romanianist na-

26th – 27th of June 2003, 5; Nina Petrovski, »Ausgewählte Aspekte der Vorbereitung neuer Geschichtsschulbücher in der Republik Moldau,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 5 (1998): 442.

54 Vasile Stati, *Istoria Moldovei*; Petre Moldovan, *Moldovenii*; Vasile Stati, *Dicţionar moldovenesc-românesc* (Chişinău: Tipografia Centrală, 2003).

55 Stefan Troebst, »Separatistischer Regionalismus.«

56 Cf. Stefan Ihrig, »Die Gagausen – Nation-building ohne Geschichte? Oder: Nation ohne nation-building?« *Jahrbücher für Geschichte und Kultur Südosteuropas* 7 (2005): 75–99.

tionalists claimed that the Gagauz did not historically belong in Moldova, Gagauz historic and historiographic tempers briefly flared. This led to a refutation by Gagauz historians and politicians claiming that the Gagauz did indeed belong in Moldova because they were autochthonous to the region.[57] Regardless that it was widely known and historically established among scholars and non-scholars alike that the Gagauz had immigrated from the Dobrudja region in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century – historians and politicians, at least for a short time, claimed otherwise. Mimicking similar discourses in the Romanian context, it was claimed that southern Bessarabia was the true and only »ethno-territory« of the Gagauz.

Transnistrian historians also repeatedly felt the need to answer to the latest claims formulated in Chişinău. Both the Transnistrian case and that of the Gagauz illustrate that the Romanianist-Moldovanist conflict created something of a closed discursive system, which necessitated that every participant use similar language, similar concepts, and similar methods of historical proof. This seems also to be true for historiographic literature at large in the Republic.[58] Given its own specific situation, Transnistria, however, achieved some kind of historiographic emancipation. It had already started constructing its own national history, indeed its own nation, early in the 1990 s.[59] With the participation of some historians who had earlier been prominent exponents of Soviet-style Moldovanism, a history laboratory was founded in Tiraspol. A central figure here is Nikolai Babilunga, who authored a series of books and pamphlets on Transnistrian history. Transnistria's attempts to invent itself historically were from the start a much more difficult endeavor than similar post-Soviet attempts centered in Chişinău. Before the establishment of the Soviet Union, the region had no character of its own; »Transnistria« had never existed as an entity. The only historic precursor to the present-day breakaway republic is the RASSM. Transnistria also has no real dominant *ethnie:* In 1989 it consisted roughly of 40 percent ethnic Romanians, 28 percent Ukrainians, and 26 percent Russians.[60]

57 Anatol Munteanu, *Sacrificu şi trădare – Războiul de secesiune din Republica Moldova* (Bucureşt, 2005), 93; cf. Stefan Ihrig, »Unsere Gagausen! Wahrnehmungen zwischen Kanon und Kontext,« in *Schnittstellen. Gesellschaft, Nation, Konflikt und Erinnerung in Südosteuropa. Festschrift für Holm Sundhaussen zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Ulf Brunnbauer, et al. (München: Südosteuropäische Arbeiten, Vol. 133, 2007): 361 – 373.

58 Cf. discussion in Stefan Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier?*, 219 – 251.

59 For developments in Transnistrian historiography see: Wim van Meurs, »Review article on Transnistria,« *Habsburg/H-Net* (31 May 2002); Stefan Troebst, »Review article on Transnistria,« *H-Soz-u-Kult* (27 March 2002); Stefan Troebst, »Separatistischer Regionalismus«; Wim van Meurs, »Moldova – zwischen National-, Staats- und Regionalgeschichte,« *Österreichische Osthefte* 1 – 2 (2002): 237 – 246.

60 Since 1998 the Transnistrian government has been using the following numbers: 33.8 percent ethnic Romanians, 28.8 percent Ukrainians, and 28.7 percent Russians. Oleh Protsyk,

The invention of the nation in history therefore had to be very creative from the beginning. One of the key concepts employed here was that of multiethnicity. Arguably, because »invented« as a key historiographic concept of the nation much earlier by Tiraspol than by Chişinău, »multiethnicity« can be seen as a Transnistrian contribution to the broader Moldovan identity conflict. It is with multiethnicity that the mechanism of action and reaction is reversed, and it is a Transnistrian-born concept of multi-ethnicity that the integrated history now has to live with.

Explaining Moldova: Historiographic deadlock

The various dissonances and interactions in Moldova may seem difficult to grasp, and they are. There are three aspects of post-Soviet change that are of seminal importance to the understanding of historiographic conflict in Moldova. The first two go hand in hand, as they both relate to the historians themselves. Many scholars abroad have noted that post-Soviet Moldovanism simply lacked the historians to develop and write its history.[61] This indeed accounts for a lot. Many Soviet historians left the Republic in the wake of independence. Those who, like Stati and Stepaniuc, did write Moldovanist history were not historians by training. The only exception is Vladimir Ţaranov's team of authors, but their impact seems to have been very limited. Meanwhile, early Romanianization of the history faculties and institutes was very successful. From the early 1990 s onward, historical academia was firmly in the hands of the Romanianists. As Wim van Meurs stresses, this was an exceptional case of cohabitation between a historic academia with a Romanianist grand narrative on the one hand, and a state in need of a Moldovanist narrative but no historians to create it on the other.[62] Only in recent years have there been attempts to rid history faculties of their overly fervent Romanianist historians.

Another crucial factor explaining the discrepancies of discourse is the way history was perceived in the post-Soviet era. Peter Niedermüller has stressed that historians in a period of »transformation« take on a specific role – indeed, are assigned that role by society. They become something like »archaeologists of historical truth.« Given the prevalent perception of the previous period as one in

»Moldova's Dilemmas in Democratizing and reintegrating Transnistria,« *Problems of Post-Communism* 4 (2006): 39; Ekkehard Völkl, »Bessarabien – Moldova,« In *Der ruhelose Balkan*, ed. Michael Weithmann (München: Dtv, 1993), 60.

61 Wim van Meurs, »Moldova – nationale Identität als politisches Programm,« *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen* 4 – 5 (2003): 34.

62 Wim van Meurs, »Historiographie,« in *Moldova-Handbuch*, ed. Klaus Bochmann, et al. (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2008).

which history was dominated by propaganda and deceit, historians are expected to uncover the »true history« of the nation under a rabble of lies and distortions in an act of »renovation, reconstruction, and re-nationalisation.«[63] Under such circumstances, the task of historians is less a matter of historical method and scholarship than one of quasi heroics involving the ability to withstand the siren song of past lies and to ferret out the real national historical truth. One event illustrates this notion of historical truth in a very symbolic fashion. In 2004 a debate erupted about the possible re-erection of the old Lenin statue that had previously adorned the space just in front of Parliament. Both sides of the historiographic conflict sent representatives to discuss the matter in a televised debate.[64] All came equipped not only with a fighting spirit but also with historical monographs. In the course of the debate, these monographs would be picked up by one of the speakers and held aloft in a gesture suggesting something along the lines of »beware the truth!« Even the most innocent non-Orientalist, non-Balkanist viewer could not help but be reminded of the cross being held up in Dracula's face to ward off the vampire's evil. But there are many other instances that illustrate how well Niedermüller's analysis fits the Moldovan situation. Take as an example the monographic grand narratives by Stati and the Romanianist book *The National Consciousness of the Moldovan Romanians*, by Gheorghe Ghimpu, which was composed as an answer to Stati.[65] Both consist mainly of quotations from historical sources. Each time such a source text mentions the nation by its »proper name« (Romanian or Moldovan depending on the discourse), these passages are set in bold print.[66] Who can disagree with the »truth« if it is printed in bold letters?

All this is not to ridicule the beliefs of the people involved. It is to show, rather, that they are serious and certain beyond doubt. But their pursuit is more a matter of being a believer than being a historian. That is where the problems begin and where they end. There is always a degree of doubt when it comes to history writing – there may be other sources, our sources may be forged or they may have been misread, they may mean different things to different historians. In the historiographic conflict between Romanianism and Moldovanism, however, there is neither space nor time for professional doubt. Rarely have there been two so bitterly and clearly delineated historiographic camps, encompassing virtually all of the historical profession in one country with so much at stake. And there

63 Peter Niedermüller, »Zeit, Geschichte, Vergangenheit – Zur kulturellen Logik des Nationalismus im Postsozialismus,« *Historische Anthropologie* 5 (1997): 245 – 267.

64 TV show »Buna seara!» 23 April 2004 (TV Moldova, 7.30 – 8.30 p.m.).

65 Gheorghe Ghimpu, *Conştiinţa naţională a Românilor Moldoveni. Lucrare de sinteză cu texte antologice, ediţia a II-a, revăzută şi completată de autor* (Chişinău: Garuda-Art, 2002).

66 Cf. the reproductions in Stefan Ihrig, *Wer sind die Moldawier?*, 98 – 99.

was much at stake, for the very state of Moldova seemed in jeopardy if history gave the wrong answer to the question »who are we?«

Between a rock and a hard place: External intervention in the Moldovan conflict

The preconditions for external intervention seeking to mediate and improve the overall historiographic and didactic situation in Moldova could not have been worse: History was perceived as an unquestionable truth, society appeared clearly split on all fundamental historical issues, and nevertheless, history was turned to as the guiding light for the future. In the Moldovan case, external intervention seems to have been doomed from the beginning. And doomed it was in many ways, but the reasons for the shortcomings and failures of external intervention are not limited to those cited above. As is the case with any conflict, especially if a historian is telling the tale, the external intervention in Moldova has its own history. The birth of Soviet Moldovanism was itself already a kind of external intervention in the historiographic matters of the region. The initiative and the justification for it were located more in Moscow than in Chișinău. Externality is also a dominant characteristic of Romanianism. Many of its fundamental historic works bear either the mark of being written outside Moldova or during the interwar years.

The external intervention of the 1990 s did not lay the best of foundations for later intervention. In the early post-Soviet period until the country's own textbooks were written, Romanian textbooks were imported and used as an interim material. When the first generation of indigenous textbooks, the Romanianist textbooks, were finally written, they were published with money from the World Bank. The World Bank label meant that the textbooks had in fact received their own kind of outside approval before they ever entered the schools. This at once enhanced the credibility of the books and at the same time made their deficiencies all the more scandalous. Against this backdrop as well as that of the generally weak civil society, which provided few potential partners for bilateral projects, it is understandable that external intervention was initially limited to low-key cooperation. However, after the three-month demonstrations of 2002, this situation changed, at least in the sphere of textbooks and teaching.

The Council of Europe had already intervened directly as a facilitator in the conflict in 2002. It was substantially responsible for establishing a feasible interim peace between the two sides. In the wake of the conflict, the Council of Europe as well as the Georg Eckert Institute became involved in the textbook

question in a more long-term fashion.[67] Their involvement took place at the express invitation of the Moldovan government.[68] In hindsight, it seems the Moldovan government was insincere in its dealings with the outside organizations. It appealed for help in a process of »textbook improvement,« when indeed it was planning outright textbook replacement.

However, in the spirit of assisting Moldova to find its way toward a more appropriate take on history and an improvement in history teaching, the Georg Eckert Institute organized a conference at its seat in Braunschweig in 2003. The conference was attended by leading international experts as well as national experts on both sides of the Moldovan history conflict. Discussions got stuck on fundamental questions of historical perspective; the two Moldovan sides were especially intransigent in their statements. A final report was written by Wim van Meurs focusing on the content and discourse of the first generation of Moldovan history textbooks.[69] It illustrated the bleakness of the historiographic and didactic situation. The Braunschweig conference also illustrated that no compromise between the leading historians could be established that might serve as an entry point to a solution for this intricate problem. It seemed as if this modest test balloon had already signaled failure. With little chance of facilitating a workable historiographic compromise between leading Moldovan historians, the Georg Eckert Institute adopted a policy of low-level intervention. In tandem with the efforts of the Council of Europe, the strategy now was to train textbook authors in current techniques of history teaching and textbook writing. In particular, a more multiperspectival approach to teaching complex historiographic issues was championed by both organizations. This method as well as the overall strategy attempted to build upon the likelihood that, while an outright compromise might be impossible, the prime players would agree that certain changes were imperative. The teaching and textbook presentation of minority questions and minority history were especially central concerns – and ones that

67 The Georg Eckert Institute had already been asked to assist in an earlier textbook commission on the way Transnistria is represented in Moldovan history textbooks, but this project never took off. Magda Telus, »Zum Aufbau einer Schulbuchkommission in Moldau,« *Informationen des Georg-Eckert-Instituts* 38 (1999): 8 – 9. There was also a small project on some former Soviet countries, Moldova among them; the project involved an authors' workshop in 1999, which included Moldovan authors. Magda Telus, »Ukraine, Belarus, Moldau, Georgien, Aserbaidschan – Das VW-Projekt geht zu Ende,« *Informationen des Georg-Eckert-Instituts* 39 (2000): 7 – 9.

68 Wolfgang Höpken, »Wo die Geschichte die Gesellschaft spaltet – Zum Konflikt um die Reform des Geschichtsunterrichts in der Republik Moldova,« *Informationen des Georg-Eckert-Instituts* 45 (2003): 14 – 15.

69 Wim van Meurs, *History Textbooks.* (This was originally an internal report, but was subsequently partially reprinted without authorization in Moldovan dailies.)

none of the actors in Moldova could turn a blind eye to, especially as they were now dealing with outside actors.

Accordingly, the first workshop following the Braunschweig conference – already the format of activities alone suggested a more low-key approach – centered on the question of multiethnicity in history textbooks.[70] Even before the workshop started, one Moldovan newspaper featured the front page headline »Workshop at the Georg Eckert Institute: The future of the Republic will be decided in Braunschweig.«[71] This headline is telling in many respects. Not only does it show how important history teaching was in Moldova and how much the society seemed to look for answers and guidance in its history, but also how it perceived outside interference. The fact that, regardless what happened in Braunschweig, final decisions had to be made in Moldova by the relevant actors themselves seems to have been entirely overlooked in the newspaper article. And while the headline is certainly a propagandistic overstatement of the role of the Eckert-Institute (as well as of the Council of Europe), it is, as developments were to show, representative of the view many Moldovan actors had of outside intervention.

What this and subsequent workshops of the Georg Eckert Institute[72] set out to achieve was the dissemination of skills, techniques, knowledge, and self-confidence among those responsible for writing textbooks and curricula. It was hoped that at the end of the process, the old textbooks would be improved substantially and, over the long run, a second generation of better books would be ushered in. But there were a variety of factors that did not favor such an outcome. Three aspects in particular hindered an open and sustainable process: the politics of historical truth, the lack of a transparent process of textbook development, and the limited civil society in Moldova, or more precisely, the limited access the Moldovan government afforded outside actors in the historical reform process. What had already become clear at the first Braunschweig conference was that the two camps in Moldova were utterly unyielding in their opposing stances. There were, at this point, neither intermediary positions nor discernable »moderates« in either camp. This and the overall limited number of capable historians in the small republic meant that any project would either have

70 »Multiperspectivity in History Textbooks,« 16 – 21 December 2003, Braunschweig.

71 The state newspaper, for example, used the same workshop to claim that »the international organisations support the ›integrated history,‹« even though there was no direct connection. »Organismele internaţionale susţin implementare cursului integrat de istorie,« *Moldova Suverană*, 22 January 2004.

72 »Minorităţile etnice în manualele şcolare,« 17 – 22 February 2004, Braunschweig; »Workshop cu autori din Republica Moldova,« 11 – 15 December 2005, Braunschweig; »Workshop (biblioteca) cu autori din Republica Moldova,« 22 – 28 December 2006; »Timpul interbelic in istoriografia şi manualele – Transfer,« 14 – 16 December 2006, Braunschweig.

to deal with the hardliners and/or have to be, obviously, very limited in thematic scope. Although never completely abandoned as a possible future project, the idea of additional alternative teaching materials had to be put on the back-burner.[73] This was also due to the fact that the textbook market is very limited in Moldova. The textbook market is small for two reasons: Firstly, the relatively small Moldovan population is too poor to sustain a plural and creative textbook market, and secondly, the Moldovan government wanted to tightly control what was entering their schools, and thus further stifled the market. Unlike in other Southeast European countries, the textbook publishing houses in Moldova have yet to take the initiative for innovative textbook development. Moreover, Moldovan civil society is still relatively weak, especially with regard to NGOs. In the sphere of history teaching no institution emerged that was independent of the government and could therefore assume a leadership position or facilitate a joint project. Thus the Georg Eckert Institute and the Council of Europe had to rely on the government itself for bilateral projects.

While workshop activity at the Georg Eckert Institute continued and the Council of Europe was providing teacher-training seminars, the Moldovan government announced the official and final introduction of the »integrated history« course in schools. This came as a shock not only to the Moldovan public but also to Moldova's international partners in textbook development. Quickly, it seemed, the low-key approach was overtaken and, if not completely, then at least temporarily, sidelined by the hurried introduction of the new history course by the Moldovan government. And as if things had not already been problematic enough as regards the didactic quality and ideologically heated character of history teaching, the Moldovan government had in 2002 announced that, in the already existing pilot project, Vasile Stati's *History of Moldova* would be used as an intermediary textbook.[74] The Moldovan government entirely disregarded the fact that the book was useless for such purposes, given its lengthy passages of source citation and opaque argumentation.

The Moldovan government's latest, and unexpected, implementation of the integrated history curriculum posed urgent problems for the relevant outside actors; they now must help ensure that the new textbooks accompanying the course would be of acceptable didactic quality. The obstacles to sustainable textbook development could not have been greater, as the Moldovan de facto appointed government teams of authors to write the new books and gave them

73 However, one result of this direction of activities was a book that seeks to inspire a transfer of knowledge, facts, etc. from historical science to the schools: Stefan Ihrig et al., eds., *Istoria între ştiinţa şi şcoală – Perioada interbelica în Basarabia: Studii, materiale, surse şi sugestii. Schriftenreihe des Moldova Instituts Leipzig, Vol. 2* (Chişinău: Cartdidact, 2008).

74 Anton Moraru, *Stiinţa istorică în contextul intereselor politice* (Chişinău: Pontos, 2003), 52–53; Maria Neagu, »Istorie,« 24.

only a very short time to complete the task. At first it was ordered that the new textbooks be written within half a year. This turned out to be impossible for a variety of reasons. The appointed authors had little or no experience in writing textbooks, not to mention, worked other jobs that kept them busy. University professors led and dominated the teams, thereby sidelining the experts from the schools. Nor did it help the process that officials threatened to block the career paths of the appointed authors if the books were unsuccessful.

The new textbooks appeared in 2006, shortly before the new course was officially introduced in all the Moldovan schools. The Council of Europe as well as the Georg Eckert Institute had earlier become directly involved in the production process. The Moldovan government had asked, via the Council, that the Georg Eckert Institute commission expert reports on the manuscripts. Such reports were duly written in 2005. Their finding was that the new books were light-years away from acceptable didactic or historiographic standards. Among the many things criticized were the incoherence in historiographic concepts and narrative, the excessively fact-oriented text, the absence of integrating themes in relation to the multitude of country and topic chapters, and the exceedingly party political language of most of the texts as well as their abundant didactic shortcomings. Of all the books, only the one on antiquity displayed more or less innovative tendencies.[75]

As a result of the first expert report, the textbooks were reworked. In early 2006 the manuscripts were resubmitted and another expert report was written. The findings of this second expertise were to be presented to and discussed with the textbook authors at a workshop in Holercani, Moldova, in the summer of 2006.[76] The workshop was to be a joint effort with the Council of Europe, which wanted to conduct a teacher-training seminar for those involved in the pilot project. It was to be a »normal workshop«. But shortly after the international experts arrived, the Moldovan government announced that directly following summer break, the new history course would be introduced in all schools, thereby abolishing the previous two courses: »history of the Romanians« and »world history.« The setting for this rather »innocent« workshop had now changed dramatically. When the workshop opened, the parliamentarian and historian Ion Varta attempted to address the audience. Varta, who was one of the

75 Corneliu Popovici and Angela Popovici, *Istorie. Manual pentru clasa a V-a* (Chişinău: Lumina, 2006).

76 In general on Holercani cf. the official Council of Europe report, which was not published until the winter of 2008/9, most likely due to its incriminating nature regarding the Moldovan government: Stefan Ihrig, »Report of the Seminar on ›The Use of Multiperspectivity in Teaching History‹, Holcerani, Moldova,« *Report of the Council of Europe*, DGIV/EDU/HIST (2006/04). Also online at: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/historyteaching/Source/Cooperation/Moldova/ Holercani2006_en.pdf.

authors of the previous generation of textbooks, told the audience that he had not been invited to the workshop; in fact, he had been held up by security at the entrance to the conference premises and had had to evoke his parliamentary status in order to gain access. He spoke of the secrecy with which the new course and the new textbooks had been designed and also of the mistake the foreign experts were making in backing this project. His remarks regarding the Moldovanist government became rather belligerent and he was repeatedly barred from speaking. On later occasions he again tried to speak at great length (shorter comments by him were allowed) and also intensively lobbied the foreign experts. While his aggressive behavior was certainly not understandable,[77] his general point was very much so. He rightly drew attention to the problematic role of the foreign institutions: They were being used as cultural capital in the domestic conflict, and the Moldovanist (government) side alone had access to them. This in combination with the secrecy of the development process meant that Moldovan society and Moldovan experts had no chance of impacting said process.

The second expert report on the manuscripts of the new textbooks was, like the first, negative. Little of the previously criticized shortcomings had been tackled in the reworked versions; although some of the authors had tried their best to improve their texts, the results were still unsatisfactory. The second expert report drew attention not only to the overall poor quality of the textbooks but to a couple of new deficiencies as well. The didactic quality in particular, the experts feared, represented a step backward from the standards laid down by the first generation of textbooks, or rather, by their second editions. Although no government-sponsored textbook revision process had been implemented after 2002, many authors of the first generation textbooks had already previously issued second editions of their books. These editions strove to include more minority history, mentioned the Transnistrian Holocaust, and in general used a slightly softer language on minorities. Even though there remained many if not most of the aforementioned problems regarding the first editions of the first generation books, the second editions did establish a certain didactic standard that the newest books failed to reach.

The Moldovan government as well as the textbook authors had already received the expert reports well before the Holercani workshop and thus had time to work through the texts and the criticisms. While the textbook authors strove incredibly hard, as always, to eliminate possible points of criticism, the Moldovan government paid no heed to the content of the second expertise. In the

77 Varta's aggressive rhetoric is found in an exemplary fashion in a press statement from 2004 where he states that the »genocide of the Romanian people in Bessarabia at the hands of the Soviet regime continues under the current government of the Republic of Moldova.« Ion Varta, »Declarația Comitetului Național pentru Apărarea Istoriei Românilor,« Typescript (10 November 2004).

early hours of the workshop already, Victor Stepanuic declared, against his better knowledge, that the »international organizations had approved« the new textbooks. In his *History of Moldovan Statehood*, which was published before the first expertise had even been written, he claimed that the Council of Europe had given the textbooks a positive review.[78] All subsequent official statements, even by the minister of education, Țvircun, and the vice premier, Cristea, suggested that the international experts had found no problems with the new textbooks.[79] The capacity of the Moldovanist government to create shocks and scandals when it came to history textbooks seemed to have no limit.

An indigenization of conflict?

At first glance it may appear as if outside intervention in the Moldovan case not only failed to achieve its goals but actually made matters worse. The results of four years of activities by the Georg Eckert Institute as well as of the various activities by the Council of Europe have certainly been mixed, but there has been one positive outcome: a certain indigenization of the conflict. Here, »indigenization« describes the central strategy of an atoned and reformulated approach to outside intervention – one, I would argue, that was successful in the long run. Outside intervention since 2001 was able to change the parameters of conflict; decisive power was transferred back to Moldova. Previously and most markedly with the World Bank–sponsored publication of textbooks in the mid-1990 s, symbolic power in Moldovan textbook matters had been externalized. The World Bank's name was used as a »certificate of approval« – a means of symbolic power – just as were the expertise reports from the Georg Eckert Institute and the Council of Europe – even if no real »approval« was even remotely implied in these reports. Such uses of outside symbolic power seriously impeded the abilities of internal players to influence and shape the textbook development process. In this hierarchy, which the Moldovan government created by attributing symbolic power to international actors, the internal historical and pedagogical experts stood at a very low point. Certainly the internal dynamics between Moldovanists and Romanianists created the dire Moldovan historio-

78 Victor Stepaniuc, Statalitatea poporului moldovenesc. Aspecte istorice, polito-juridice (Chișinău: Tipografia Centrală, 2005), 426. The first expertise was not presented until December 2005, but his book was published some time in 2005.

79 Ecaterina Deleu, »1 septembrie – Ziua dictatului,« *Flux*, 18 July 2006, 1; Valentina Basiul, »La Holercani, aleșii pe sprânceană au discutat în secret manualul de istorie integrată,« *Timpul* 17 July 2006, 3; Irina Nechit, »Secrete ale istoriei la Holercani,« *Jurnal de Chișinău* 18 July 2006, 3; »Practici europene – Educația prin istorie, bazată pe principiu integrării,« *Moldova Suverană*, 3 October 2006.

graphic conflict in the first place. But having outside players back up a deficient project was, seemingly, no solution either – especially when, by that point, there were many more internal players eager to participate, and there were now even visible moderates, at least in the Romanianist camp.

Key for any indigenization to succeed – that is, to contribute to an improvement in the overall textbook situation – is the existence of moderates. Players who occupy a middle ground and are willing to negotiate historiographic compromises make a multilateral process possible. Although the Braunschweig conference of 2003 suggested the absence of moderates in either camp, it later became clear that there were some moderates after all. But where were they to be found and how? The Moldovan government managed and monopolized the flow of information in relation to the external players. It was even difficult for the Georg Eckert Institute to advertise its workshops. Often enough, the government did not disseminate calls for application; indeed it effectively barred such dissemination and tried in all cases to have only, and exclusively, its own candidates involved in institute activities. The way the different actors in Moldova handled information about the various projects, and the degree to which they made resources from the external players available to other Moldovans, proved important yardsticks in assessing these actors' positions in both camps.

Moderates were especially to be found among the younger historians, some of whom were willing to openly establish themselves on something of a middle ground. In general, however, it was the historians formerly aligned with the Romanianists who turned out to be the most open-minded – or at least more open-minded than the discourses they had produced would suggest. They distributed the calls for papers that the Moldovan government had held back. And this was not done only to their own advantage; they advertised the calls beyond their immediate circles.[80] In various contexts, but most strikingly at a conference in 2004, Romanianist historians not only invited »their own,« but saw to it that all societal actors were present and could participate – even if it meant picking up minority school teachers by car and driving them to the conference.[81] The official side, on the other hand, did not even accept invitations to highly representative conferences at which minorities wanted to discuss the future of history teaching.[82] That their European partners, otherwise courted and preyed upon, had come all the way to attend such conferences did not matter to them in the

80 Cf. in »InfoHIS – Buletin informativ," *ANTIM* 3 (2003), 28; »InfoHIS – Buletin informativ,« *ANTIM* 4 (2003), 28.

81 Conference »›We‹ and the ›Others‹ – Ethnic Minorities in the Textbooks of National History,« 19 – 23 April 2004, Chişinău.

82 Conference »Educaţia multiculturală ca mijloc de management al diversităţii şi de integrare în societatea polietnică,« 16 – 17 December 2004, Chişinău.

least. There was an obvious dichotomy between the rhetoric of cooperation and the realities of such projects.

It is perhaps too much to claim that low-key international intervention produced the new moderates within the Romanianist camp. But this kind of intervention seems to have helped the moderates develop their skills and confidence. It also enabled them to acquire new techniques that facilitated and substantiated voicing critique. And these moderates were not alone in their critiques. In the debates surrounding the new »integrated history« textbooks, another dimension of the conflict became obvious. Although it was becoming increasingly apparent that the opinions of outside experts were of little import to the government, criticisms very similar to those held by the outside experts were simultaneously being advanced by the internal reviewers. Many of these internal reviewers had participated in the training workshops of international institutions, most importantly those of the Georg Eckert Institute, and their language and angle of criticism very much reflected recent didactic and historiographic trends. While the detailed content of the reports of the Georg Eckert Institute could be kept secret by the government and their impact thus contained, the internal experts could not so easily be silenced. What took place was a process of indigenization of the debate.

A comparison of the anatomy of the various textbook controversies also points to a change in the dynamics of the conflict in relation to outside intervention. In past conflicts, outside intervention could, and was used to, enhance the standing of one particular side. It also could effectively intervene to achieve a temporary truce and stop the cycle of escalation. The symbolic power of the World Bank's stamp on textbooks of the first generation cannot be underestimated. Equally immense was the symbolic power of »the international expert opinion,« so often appropriated (and so often distorted) by the Moldovan government to validate its own project. And when distortion was no longer an option, the Moldovanists outright lied about the contents of the »expert opinion.« Luckily the low-key approach opened alternative routes for criticism and enabled alternative actors to contribute to the debate. The third big textbook controversy thus took a different course. It was not as dramatic as previous ones; no concerted and sustained mass mobilization of protesters was achieved.[83] More importantly, the symbolic power of outside forces was not decisive. While

83 Research on the teachers' position on the identity question carried out before the introduction of the »integrated history« by Elizabeth Anderson had shown that they overwhelmingly favored the Romanianist approach to history. The fact that they remained fairly silent during the introduction suggests that the pilot project might have been successful in convincing the teachers. Elizabeth A. Anderson, »Backwards, Forwards, or Both? Moldovan Teachers' Relationship to the State and the Nation,« *Journal of European Education* 3 (2005): 53–67.

the Moldovanist government had indeed worked mostly in secret on the new textbooks and on the design of the new course, once the textbooks were published and public opinion proved unfavorable, the government had to resort to advisory panels and committees that, at least superficially, included representatives from both sides of the conflict and different parts of society. Additionally, some of the more moderate Romanianists have since joined the teams of authors writing the last of the integrated history textbooks (the production of textbooks for some classes had been put off until this later date). This, it seems, was possible because the conflict had been internalized in a new fashion.

Conclusion: Explaining Moldova

The Moldovan post-Soviet transition has been a difficult one, with many conflicts and at least one paradoxical outcome. The strange cohabitation in which Romanianism, a nationalism that aspires to abolish the Moldovan state through union with Romania, has been taught in schools while Moldovanism, a nationalism that wants to keep the Moldovan state, rules the country epitomizes the country's identity problems better than any other societal sphere does. A potent mixture of transitional power struggles, weak civil society, ethnic tensions, and the politics of historical truth characterized post-Soviet Moldovan developments in history writing. The legacy of Romanian and Soviet ethno-national rhetoric concerning Moldova created a historiographic deadlock at birth, resulting, if one pushes the imagery further, in a nationalist birth defect of the new post-Soviet state.

Many explanatory models have been advanced to make sense of the Moldovan transition. Florent Parmentier, for example, speaks of a »failed state« or at least a »failing state.«[84] He cites as evidence the absent state power over Transnistria as well as various difficulties of the Moldovan state to manage its responsibilities. Lucian Way speaks of a weak state, but claims that Moldova is in fact a »failed authoritarian state.«[85] The various post-Soviet elites have not been able, he asserts, to establish an authoritarian state because they were just not apt enough to push their agenda through. Ivan Katchanovski on the other hand tries to adapt Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* thesis to Moldova and the Ukraine.[86] He is of the opinion that these states are »cleft countries« through which civi-

84 Florent Parmentier, *La Moldavie à la croisée des chemins. Préface de Jacques Rupnik* (Paris: editoo, 2003).

85 Lucian A. Way, »Weak states and pluralism – The case of Moldova,« *East European Politics and Societies* 3 (2003): 454 – 482.

86 Ivan Katchanovski, *Cleft Countries. Regional Political Divisions and Cultures in Post-Soviet Ukraine and Moldova. With a Foreword by Francis Fukuyama* (Stuttgart: ibidem, 2006).

lizational lines run. These delineate different historical, religious, and political experiences that express themselves in conflicting political cultures. Stefan Troebst stresses the »anemic identity« in Moldova, which does its part to destabilize the political system.[87]

While these theories do indeed aptly describe certain aspects of the situation, in our context they fit only in an accumulative way. As Troebst and Katchanovski point out, »identity« seems to be a central factor – and it seems to be the very one from which the textbook conflict stem. But this conflict is, in my opinion, less an »identity conflict« then one in which identity is used as political capital. Iulian Fruntaşu has written an »ethno-political history of Bessarabia,« in which he stresses that all the nation-building projects in the region failed due to the »intractability« of the population.[88] He claims that the population has not been properly »reached« by the nation-building projects and remains in general »untouched« by them. As we have seen in our discussion of Romanianism and Moldovanism, both isms work with the same methods and construct similar ethnic nations. The seemingly contradictory way the population has responded to Moldovanism and Romanianism might suggest that, along the line of Fruntaşu's theory, there exists a common identity, but one that has not been properly addressed thus far.

What is also striking in the Moldovan textbook conflicts is the seemingly inverted relationship between the intensity of actual response and the intensity of threat. In other words, when in the conflicts of 1995 and 2002, the history of Moldova was *about to be* introduced in schools, huge and permanent demonstrations followed. When the integrated history was *actually* introduced, however, protest was minimal, even though that which was happening was exactly what people in 1995 and 2002 had feared. The rhetoric of the leaders had grown in vehemence and radicalism over the decade, yet their mobilizational power had declined. It remains to be seen if the »integrated history« was a successful »back door« to the identity conundrum.

The new history textbooks do not offer a more multiperspectival approach; indeed they exhibit few of the concepts conveyed in the training workshops by the Georg Eckert Institute and the Council of Europe. But the internal criticism of the books, which was voiced in Moldova itself, heavily employs these new concepts. Perhaps a third generation of Moldovan history textbooks will offer a

87 Stefan Troebst, »Moldova zwischen Ost und West. Nationale Identität und europäische Orientierung. Deutsch-moldauisches Symposium und Besuchsreise,« *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen* 3 (2002): 89.

88 Iulian Fruntaşu, O istorie etnopolitică a Basarabiei 1812 – 2002; cf. also: Stefan Ihrig, »Book Review of O istoria etnopolitica a Basarabiei by I. Fruntaşu,« Rezensionsseite des Osteuropa-Instituts an der FU-Berlin, June 20, 2005. http://www.oei.fu-berlin.de/geschichte/soe/rezensionsseite/index.html

more sound didactic approach – once the identity question is no longer at the forefront of the debate. Indeed, we can already find a glimpse of hope in the few arenas where politicization was less of an issue: The new history textbook for the fourth grade, for one, manages to stand clear of the dominant conflict.[89] The authors of the book had previously coauthored experimental early textbooks as well as books of both generations and have received the continuous support of Georg Eckert Institute scholarships. Their textbook introduces the subject of history in a very creative, accessible, and critical way. Its didactic standard can compete with that of its Western counterparts.

The fact that in the second phase of the integrated history project authors of the first generation books joined textbook teams and that the Moldovan government saw the need to include them also suggests changed parameters of conflict. Other historians have tried to introduce new methods of criticism and a new vocabulary by writing introductory works on textbook analyses.[90] In addition, some Moldovan historians have realized who was responsible for the deadlock in the first place. As Igor Şarov and Andrei Cuşco write: »It was the self-imposed militancy of the historians which has hindered the acceptance of an adequate terminology for the new realities and tendencies which are today common practice on a European and a global level.«[91] It can only be hoped that from such realizations new approaches are developed that address both didactic needs as well as the common identity of the population in Moldova in a proper and more effective way. While it seems that many actors are still standing in the rain in Braunschweig and many others feel they are stuck between a rock and a hard place, some have started maneuvering themselves out of such desolate places.

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90 Sergiu Musteaţa, *Cum să elaborăm şi analizăm manualele şcolare*, (Chişinău: Cartdidact, 2006).

91 Igor Şarov and Andrei Cuşco, »Der öffentliche Identitätsdiskurs der Historiker: Strömungen, Meinungen, Auseinandersetzungen,« in *Sprachliche Individuation in mehrsprachigen Regionen Osteuropas. Vol. 1: Republik Moldova*, ed. Klaus Bochmann and Vasile Dumbrava (Leipzig: Universitätsverlag, 2007), 131.

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