



INTERVIEW WITH JONATHAN EVEN-ZOHAR, PROJECT MANAGER AT EUROCLIO

Jonathan Even-Zohar (MA) has a degree in History from Leiden University, relating to World-Historical perspectives in History Education with an honorary Crayenborgh-degree in Islam and Europe. At EUROCLIO he has assisted Joke van der Leeuw-Roord in the History Education Projects in Bulgaria, Cyprus and Former Yugoslavia during various visits to the countries, including the practical preparation of international conferences, seminars and workshops; the processing and dissemination of the results into financial, methodological and practical reports.

He coordinated the funding for and execution of a study visit to Turkey for 20 Dutch History Educators in October 2007. This trip was a great success and increased the participant's knowledge of the cross-cultural comparisons with Turkish History Educators, regarding aspects of publishing, curriculum development, political influence and

general attitude. More recently, in 2008 he managed the project "Connecting Europe through History – Human Rights Education", funded by the European Union and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs amongst others.

M-R Kire Filov

1. WHAT IS EUROCLIO?

EUROCLIO, the European Association of History Educators, established in 1992, promotes a responsible and innovative teaching of history based on multi-perspectivity, critical thinking, mutual respect, and the inclusion of controversial issues. The Association advocates a sound use of history and heritage education towards the building and deepening of democratic societies, connecting professionals across boundaries of

countries, ethnicities and religions. It seeks to enhance the quality of history and citizenship education through capacity building for educators and producing and implementing innovative teaching tools. EUROCLIO has been able to define and pragmatically refine a methodology building on the practical work it carried out. Its approach is process-orientation centred and believes in reinforcing professional talents as fundamental resources for innovation and change. In 2012, EUROCLIO represents 81 independent and volunteer History heritage and citizenship Educators' Associations and related Institutes from 58 mostly European countries and reaches out to a network of at least 25.000 history, heritage and citizenship educators. In their daily work they contact up to 5.000.000 students and pupils per year.

The Association works on preventing abuse of history by promoting respect for diversity, human rights, intercultural dialogue and collaboration between stakeholders. It stimulates the transfer of reliable academic historical knowledge and innovative educational theory and inspires methodological discourse to the school and training institute levels, and the development of history and citizenship curricula, teaching tools and assessment procedures. In order to achieve these goals EUROCLIO utilizes knowledge and experience transfer through peer-learning, exchange of expertise and a system of expert, peer and student reviewing.

2. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT SOME OF EUROCLIO'S PROJECTS RELATED TO MACEDONIA?

Since 2001 we have cooperated with ANIM – Association of History Educators in Macedonia in a variety of projects. This interethnic association is a non-political, volunteer civic society organisation, protecting and developing history teaching in primary and secondary education in Macedonia, promoting peace, democracy, stability and improvement of interethnic relations in Macedonia and the region.

Our first cooperation was in a project between 2000-2003 with History Teachers Associations in Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia. The National History Teachers Associations as national core-group of history educators matured in the democratic process and with respect and tolerance for other people and societies in the region. The Association acts as multiplying agents of change in the further development of history curricula, textbooks, assessment strategies and teacher training in their country. Additionally, a network of teacher training institutes which fosters innovative approaches to the learning and teaching evolved - a regional network for the learning and teaching of history within an international context such as EUROCLIO.

Together with ANIM followed a project between 2006-2007 in which a unique and award-winning publication was produced. This publication is the result of the project Macedonia: Retelling the History, a one year common project between the AHRM, and EUROCLIO, funded by the United States Institute of Peace. The three versions of Retelling the History are also available freely available for free on the EUROCLIO site. The book

includes 4 exemplar history teaching modules on the period after 1991, as well as a design core-curriculum for History for Macedonia. Leading History Educators from ANIM have represented Macedonia at many EUROCLIO Annual Conferences, and the association has participated in the Democratic Association through sharing expertise and experiences across Europe at various Training Events and conferences. ANIM strives to improve the teaching of history into a tool for cooperation and understanding and to influence the young generation in the construction of proper attitudes and views on the world, especially Europe and the region.

3. ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE HISTORY OF MACEDONIA?

I am an avid reader of history books, and throughout my visits to the country, which also include many visits to historical sites and excavations, I have acquainted myself with many themes in the history of the region. Thanks to the work in international projects which include all countries in the region, I have come to start to understand the complexity of the political history of the 20th century, but also to gain insights related to cultural and social history.

4. DO YOU THINK THAT MACEDONIAN HISTORY IS TAUGHT ETHNICALLY? AND WHAT IS YOUR SUGGESTION FOR CHANGE TO BETTER?

5. IS THE MODEL OF ETHNO CENTRIC STUDY OF HISTORY ACCEPTABLE FOR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES?

6. IS THAT MODEL APPLIED IN THE OTHER BALKAN STATES?

I will try to answer these questions together.

I think History is a shared story of humanity, on a very global level this means it is the story of cultural and social development of farming, city-building and new economies and political cultures. On a more local level, it is the history of one's village, town, family, district.

History is often the subject at school that is most influential in shaping the sense of belonging and identity of young people. In today's world forces and structures of politics, economy, culture and society are many, and it is not easy to find out which history is most relevant to help students understand the world they live in. Should they learn more of Asian History to be able to excel in the globalized economy of today? Should they understand more about civic and peace activists in the past to be able to deal better with inter-communal relations to try to get the world rid of conflict?

In Europe, but through the world, history education experts have since the 1960's proposed that history education should be more relevant for today, should be oriented on skills and attitudes, besides mere information.

EUROCLIO has operated across Europe and tries to frequently monitor the developments related to history education. It would go too far the purposes of this interview to go into the myriad that is

responsible and innovative history education, but it seems that everywhere the History Education community is keen to implement more of the existing UNESCO and Council of Europe recommendations for History Education. Unfortunately History is too often put first as a political tool rather than invaluable education for the development of peace, citizenship, democracy and human rights.

7. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE UNIQUENESS OF ETHNIC MACEDONIANS?

8. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL FIGURES IN OUR HISTORY AND WHAT KIND OF TREATMENT SHOULD THEY GET?

Each individual is unique. Through history we have seen many special individuals who made important changes for good. On the other hands we all have ideas about bad decisions made in the past. It is the key that we are honest and self-reflective about the roles and decisions of all individuals and their group context.

I truly believe the similarities among the world's population deserve more attention than what divides us. Controversial figures in all history are to be taught about when controversies are examined and analysis on the basis of evidence, referenced sources, using arguments for interpretations. Understanding of the past comes through careful examination. Multiperspectivity is how historians reconstruct and carefully weight all pieces of the puzzle to form our understanding of history and it's interpretation.

9. WHICH ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN MACEDONIAN HISTORIANS WITH SIMILAR EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS, LIKE ARCHIVES, LIBRARIES, MAGAZINES ETC?

10. WHAT ARE THE FUTURE PLANS OF EUROCLIO IN MACEDONIA?

11. WHAT WOULD YOU RECOMMEND TO THE READERS OF "MACEDONIAN TREASURE TROVE"?

Historians from Macedonia should always find ways to enhance the quality of their research as well as social relevance and impact of their investigations into the past. It is crucial to work across communities, disciplines and languages. International cooperation is an excellent method for research and I would recommend all Historians to get active in local, regional and international partnerships and projects. The excitement of historical research is about the sources. Working together with historians of different fields and skills enables the world-wide community of historians to access new sources and contribute to a wide body of knowledge.

The online European archive called Europeana.eu is really worth visiting, and in order to follow important trends in History Education, I can suggest the magazine of the UK based Historical Association.

Individual needs for can always be sent to ANIM and EUROCLIO, to support further the capacity and network of all members.

EUROCLIO plans in the future to continue the work in Macedonia. Through new projects, we hope to be able to work on:

1. The creation of new ready-to-use multi-lingual History classroom teaching resources that put diversity and multiperspectivity at the heart and are authored and edited by inclusive, innovative and experienced groups of History Educators and Academics.

2. National, regional and international networking, training, mobility and peer-exchange activities for motivated history educators and academics in Macedonia in order to transfer innovative European academic and practitioner's knowledge, expertise and experience.

3. Development of democratic and transparent structural mechanisms for Government – Civil Society Partnerships in the field of History Education in order to create dialogue and cooperation in the processes of curriculum reform, textbook writing, classroom practice, heritage education and teacher initial and in-service training.

We are planning much more, I suggest the readers to visit our website and find out more about our programmes across Europe and beyond.

СЛАВКО ЈАНЕВСКИ - ПОРТРЕТ КАРИКАТУРА



M-R Kire Filov

Никола Ангелкоски