Responsible History Education in a Globalising World

Steven Stegers
Deputy Director, EUROCLIO – European Association of History Educators
History Education: A politicised subject

Burning tensions: South Korean protest over Japanese textbook in 2001, BBC
REFLECTION ON THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING HISTORY

“History is a rear window mirror, you must always check back but unless you keep focussed on the way ahead you’re going nowhere”

Quote Mural in Belfast
How do we mostly picture ourselves through (the learning and teaching of) history?

We are Proud

Scientific Achievements

Arts and Culture

Wealth and Power

National Heroes

Victories

Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, ‘This was their finest hour.’

-Winston Churchill
How do we mostly picture ourselves through learning and teaching of history?

We experienced Pain

Wars and victimhood

Occupation

Human Right

Violations

colonialism
3 What do we leave out?

What is missing?

Not mentioned

In the same period almost 200,000 Jewish people were killed in Lithuania and 200,000 Polish people were expelled.

Possible responsibility for inflicting pain
What do we leave out?

Issues in which we consider not to be involved

A different map?

Nation Centrism
One’s (national) historical hero might be the others enemy.

The Others Inflict Pain
About EUROCLIO
December 1991, Council of Europe Conference
History Teaching in the New Europe

November 1992, EUROCLIO, the European Association of History Educators, established
**EUROCLIO**

A Democratic Association

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<th>Since 1992</th>
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<td><strong>68</strong> Independent <em>Member</em> Associations of History and Citizenship Educators from <strong>45</strong> countries</td>
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<td><strong>19</strong> Associated <em>Members</em> from <strong>14</strong> countries</td>
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EUROCLIO represents approximately 25 000 history educators!
EUROCLIO MISSION
EUROCLIO supports the Development of Responsible and Innovative History, Heritage and Citizenship Education

Some principle for high-quality history, heritage and citizenship education

• Does not attempt to transmit a single truth about the past.
• Deconstructs historical myths and stereotypes
• Raises awareness on the fact that the past is perceived differently
• Promotes long-term reconciliation in divided societies
• Recognises that its significance is related to current experiences and challenges
• Introduces global perspectives and encompasses the multiple dimensions of the study of the past
• Addresses a manifold of human values, beliefs, attitudes and dispositions
• Embraces cultural, religious and linguistic diversity

EUROCLIO’s manifesto, adopted during the general assembly in 2014 in Ohrid, Republic of Macedonia
Target group: 
*Independent history, heritage and citizenship professionals* willing to act as learners

(Board) Members of EUROCLIO  
Member Associations  
Teachers in primary and secondary schools  
Teacher trainers  
Trainee teachers  
Textbook authors  
Curriculum developers  
Assessment Experts  
Advisors and inspectors  
Academic historians and specialists in history education  
Educational staff in museums and institutes  
Representatives of Educational Authorities
Role of Civil Society
House of Cooperation, Cyprus
Sharing experiences through cross-border between colleagues from Cyprus, Jordan, Morocco, Lebanon, Tunisia, Turkey and the UK
Why history also matters

• Ability to make judgements based on evidence.
• Ability to peacefully disagree.
• Ability to construct an argument.
• Ability to take the perspective of another.
• Sensitivity to cultural differences.
• Sensitivity to possible abuse of history by opinion makers.
• Research skills.
• Media literacy.
Issues that history educators are confronted with
Does the content reflect the diversity in the classroom?
What are appropriate methods and resources to teach about dark pages in history?
What kind of image of the other does the history teaching promote?
Which history do you focus on?

Do you focus on the Ottoman Empire at the height of its power?

Or... Do you focus on the empire during its decline?

Or both? Or not at all?
Some examples of EUROCLIO’s work
Balancing social, economic, cultural, political history

Looking at history through the lens of ordinary people.

This EUROCLIO Publications was produced with the subtitle 'A History of Yugoslavia 1945-1990 in 20 lessons', and was written by a collective authors team. The publication is made in Bosnian, Croatian, English and Serbian.

Themes: Ideology, Standards of Living, Mass Culture
Balancing social, economic, cultural, political history

Themes:
- Conflict and Cooperation
- Ideas and Ideologies
- Life and Leisure
- People on the Move
- Rights and Responsibilities
- The Environment
- Work and Technology
Challenging Stereotypes

The Dutch people are natives of Holland, and are a very industrious race.

Chinese children are very obedient to their parents.

An early nineteenth century children's book “A peep at the world and a picture of some of its inhabitants.”

Challenging Stereotypes

Who are the people in the picture? What connects them?

Painting of an Auxiliary from Balouchistan and Moroccan Rifleman by Eugène Burnand's 104 Pastel Portraits First World War "Military Types". Both men fought on the side of the Allied Forces. Activity by Dean Smart, EUROCLIO Ambassador
“I want to learn about people just like me, but then in another time.”

“I want to learn about history that helps me to solve problems we have today.”

Students in Soroca (Moldova) in 2012 and their answers to the question: What would you like to learn about during history classes?
Making History Accessible

Focus on the experiences of people

A case study on the evacuation of children during times of war, an example from Finland

A case study from Historiana developed by Hanna Toikkanen (History Teacher in Finland)
Addressing Sensitive and Controversial Issues

This book is the result of an intensive collaborative project of the history teachers association of former Yugoslavia.

It addresses sensitive and controversial issues in the history of the region in 1900-1945.

Themes: Rich and Poor, Assassination as political tool, Conflict and Cooperation
Addressing Sensitive and Controversial Issues

“As editor I omitted the term genocide but ensured that the case study reflected the extent of the killings and deaths in transit. At the same time I encouraged the author to include something on the difficulties of estimating the numbers who died and included some material that provided additional perspectives.”
Encouraging Multiperspectivity

Different perspectives on the storming of the winter palace

An example of multiperspectivity developed by Bob Stradling for Historiana.
1. Winter Palace
2. Palace Square & Alexander Column
3. General Staff
4. District Headquarters
5. Hermitage
6. Admiralty
7. Ministry of War
8. Marinsky Palace
9. City Duma
10. Engineer School
11. Pavlov Barracks
13. Bolshevik Secretariat, Fall 1917
14. Bolshevik Printing Plant
15. Telephone Exchange
16. State Bank
17. Mikhailov Riding Hall
18. Central Post Office
19. News Wire Service
20. Central Telegraph Office
21. Kexholm Barracks
22. Baltic Crew Barracks
23. Technological Institute (Soviet of 1905)
24. Menshikov Palace (First Congress of Soviets)
25. Location of Auroa, Oct. 25
26. Ksheshinskaya Mansion
27. Circus Modern
28. Sukhanov's Apartment (Bolshevik Central Committee, Oct. 10)
29. Bolshevik Editorial Office
30. Mikhailovsky Artillery School
31. Site of Sixth Party Congress
32. Vyborg District Bolshevik Hq.
33. Fofanova's Apartment (Lenin's Hideout)
34. Lesnoye-Udelnaya District Council
35. Pavlov Military School
36. Vladimir Military School
37. Arsenal
38. Peter-Paul Fortress
39. University
40. Tauride Palace
41. Smolny Institute
42. Litovsk Barracks
43. Nikolaevsky (Moscow) Stati
44. Vitebsk Station
45. Franco-Russian Shipyard
46. Baltic Station
47. Warsaw Station
48. Putilov Factory
“Like a black river, filling all the street, without song or cheer we poured through the Red Arch, when the man just ahead of me said in a low voice: ‘Look out comrades! Don’t trust them. They will fire, surely!’ In the open we began to run, stooping low and bunching together... “How many of you did they kill?! I asked. ‘I don’t know. About ten...’”

John Reed, an American journalist with socialist sympathies, who knew Lenin and Trotsky and supported the new revolutionary government. At 2.00am on 26 October Reed was with a group of sailors in the square outside the Winter Palace.
Bessie Beatty, was another American journalist who also supported the revolution but she was not as committed to the Bolshevik cause as John Reed. Her account is less dramatic than Reed’s, even though she was also in the Palace Square at the same time and with the same group of sailors.

2:00am

“Three rifle shots shattered the quiet. We stood speechless, awaiting a return volley; but the only sound was the crunching of broken glass spread like a carpet over the cobblestones.... Suddenly a sailor emerged from the black. ‘It’s all over!’ he said ‘They have surrendered.’”
Volodya Averbakh wrote up his memories of the Revolution in 1924. He recalled that at 11.00pm on the night of 25 October 1917 he was walking home along a street just 100 meters away from the Winter Palace. And yet he heard nothing to suggest that the Palace was being attacked by revolutionaries.

“The street was completely deserted. The night was quiet and the city seemed dead. We could even hear the echo of our own footsteps on the pavement.”
By 9.00pm the Winter Palace was surrounded by Red Guards, sailors from the Baltic fleet and some army units. The Palace had been guarded by Cossacks, some cadets and the Women’s Battalion, although it appears that many defenders had left the Palace by 11.00pm.

“About 11 o’clock we broke in the doors... the officer cadets took away our guns; still our fellows kept coming up, little by little, until we had a majority. Then we turned around and we took away the cadets’ guns.”
Albert Rhys Williams had been covering the war for the American magazine, Outlook. He had been sent to Petrograd after the February Revolution. He headed for the Winter Palace as soon as he heard firing from the Battleship Aurora.

“As we come into the Palace Square the booming of the guns dies away. The rifles no longer crackle through the dark. The Red Guards are crawling out to carry off the dead and dying.”
In October 1917 Trotsky was second only to Lenin in the Bolshevik hierarchy. While the Winter Palace was being taken he was at the meeting of the Congress but receiving regular reports on what was happening.

“The attack on the Palace was opened by a few blank rounds being fired from the Fortress...followed by a massed onslaught from all sides, armoured cars and machine guns firing at the Palace from under the archway on the square...Both the women soldiers and the cadets had put up a brave defense, but they were greatly outnumbered.”
Meriel Buchanan was the daughter of the British ambassador. From an Embassy window she could see the firing from the Aurora and the Peter and Paul fortress. When the Palace was being attacked, she was inside the Embassy listening to the reports coming in from British diplomatic staff and military observers.

‘The actual bombardment of the Palace ceased at about eleven. The Women's Battalion fought heroically till the last, though luckily they did not suffer any very severe casualties. Many stories concerning the siege were circulated later on [including] that there was a Bolshevik agent inside the Palace who .. finally opened the doors leading into the Hermitage, letting in the crowd of soldiers and sailors…’
Pavel Miliukov was the leader of the Kadet Party and had been Foreign Minister in the Provisional Government but forced to resign because of his stated intention to keep Russia in the war.

"Those of the Women's Battalion who had not died under fire were seized by the Bolsheviks, subjected during that evening and night to the frightful attentions of the soldiers, to violence and execution."
The Event in Public Memory

Timeline
In 1920 on the third anniversary of the October Revolution the Bolshevik government staged a spectacle called *The Storming of the Winter Palace* in front of over 100,000 spectators. Over 2500 workers, actors and students took part and there were tanks and armoured cars and controlled explosions. It ended with Kerensky running away pursued by Red Guards and a blank shell fired by the Aurora signaled victory.
In 1926 the Bolshevik government commissioned Sergei Eisentein to make the film *Oktober* about the Revolution. Modern historians tend to regard it as Bolshevik propaganda. But his treatment of a lot of the events seems to coincide with contemporary reports. He relied heavily on John Reed’s book. The real issue is about his treatment of the storming of the Palace, which has a pitched battle between the Red Guards and the defenders. But he was not a historian. He was a film maker and he needed drama.
The Historians

- Eyewitness accounts
- Contemporary Reports
- Other Historians
- Other Sources (Public Opinion, Physical Evidence, etc.)

Personal and Cultural Perspective
The Polish-American historian Richard Pipes is widely perceived as a Cold War historian who resists any suggestion that what happened in October 1917 was the result of revolutionary action by the masses. ‘The Winter Palace was not taken by assault: the image of a column of storming workers, soldiers, and sailors as depicted in Eisenstein’s film, “Days of October,” is pure invention, an attempt to give Russia its own Fall of the Bastille.’
Medvedev, a Russian historian who was expelled from the Communist Party in the Soviet Union for his critique of Stalin and Stalinism and is now a supporter of President Putin, presents an account quite similar to that of Trotsky.

‘On the evening of October 25th, the Bolsheviks assembled about 20,000 Red Guards, sailors and soldiers... within the palace there were not more than 3000 defenders, and many of those left their posts during the night.... There were no serious battles in the capital ..and the total number killed on both sides was no more than 15, with no more than 60 wounded.’
Norman Stone, the British historian, writing just before the end of the Cold War, highlights the relative lack of opposition to the Red Guards in the Palace but states that there were fatalities.

‘There were so many entrances to the Winter Palace that the Red Guard forced their way in quite easily; and there were no scuffles – no shooting in the corridors and picture galleries. When they occupied the Winter Palace there were only six fatal casualties.’
While acknowledging that the seizure of the Palace was relatively peaceful, Orlando Figes supports Trotsky’s account in terms of the large numbers massing in the Palace Square.

‘During the evening of the 25th there were probably something in the region of 10,000 to 15,000 people milling around in the Palace Square, but not all of them were actually involved in the ‘storming of the palace’. …None of the familiar images of a people’s revolution – crowds on the street, barricades and fighting – were in evidence. Elsewhere the life of Petrograd carried on as normal.’