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Mutual understanding and the teaching of European history: challenges, problems and approaches

Prague, Czech Republic, 24 - 28 October 1995

Report

Council for Cultural Co-operation

Strasbourg 1996

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- the promotion of an awareness of European identity;
- the search for common responses to the great challenges facing European society.

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SYMPOSIUM ON

**Mutual understanding and the teaching of European
history: challenges, problems and approaches**

Prague, Czech Republic, 24 - 28 October 1995

* * *

Report by

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Symposium was jointly organised by the Council of Europe and the Ministry of Science and Education of the Czech Republic. It brought together over 80 participants from 37 different countries in Europe and included historians and history teachers, curriculum planners, observers from non-governmental and international organisations. In addition to the members of the organising committee and the speakers from the Czech Republic, who participated in all aspects of the Symposium, a number of other Czech experts (teachers, academics, officials and representatives of non-governmental organisations) also attended specific sessions during the week. Proceedings for all four days were ably chaired by Mr Derek Paton of the Institute for Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Science, Prague.

In thanking the Czech Authorities for hosting the symposium, Mr Maitland STOBART, on behalf of the Council of Europe, observed that it was very fitting that we should meet in Prague for a conference on mutual understanding and the teaching of European History since "the city and the Czech lands symbolise - in a very special way - the positive mutual influences and the torments, the disappointments and the hopes of our shared history".

The Symposium was the culmination of a two-year Project on "History Teaching in the New Europe", which had been implemented in response to the Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe's member States. The Project had also involved:

- a symposium on "History teaching and European awareness" (Delphi, Greece, 11-14 May 1994);
- a symposium on "History, democratic values and tolerance" (Sofia, Bulgaria, 19-22 October 1994);
- a meeting of curriculum developers and educational publishers (Strasbourg, 8-9 December 1994);
- a meeting of experts on educational research on the learning and teaching of history (Strasbourg, 19-20 June 1995);
- a meeting of representatives of regional and multilateral pilot projects on history (Strasbourg, 6-7 July 1995).

In addition, the Project took into account other relevant activities in the Council of Europe, in particular:

- European teachers' seminars on a wide range of themes and topics relating to the teaching of European, national and local history through the Council of Europe's In-Service Training Programme for Teachers;

- publications from a range of regional and multilateral pilot projects on school history;
- the CDCC's Project on "Democracy, human rights, minorities - educational and cultural aspects";
- the project on local and regional history of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe;
- the Colloquy on "The learning of history in Europe" organised in 1994 by the Committee on Culture and Education of the Parliamentary Assembly.

It is important to stress that this project was not, and should not be seen as, an attempt by experts in Western Europe to set the agenda for curriculum reform in Central and Eastern Europe. On the contrary, what emerged from the discussions in Prague (and in other recent Council of Europe symposia) was that:

- i. the wider perspective offered by the New Europe introduces new opportunities for history teaching in all European countries;
- ii. colleagues from Central and Eastern Europe are raising several new issues for the teaching of history, which challenge some of the assumptions made by other countries about history teaching;
- iii. in all our countries, we are facing a number of similar issues and concerns regarding the development of history curricula and classroom teaching. These include:
 - getting the balance right between national, regional, European and world history;
 - getting the balance right between political, social, cultural, economic history and the history of ideas;
 - helping young people develop an historical perspective that enables them to establish links between what they have learned about different periods and events;
 - learning how to handle sensitive and controversial themes and periods in a nation's or a region's history;
 - encouraging the majority of teachers to use a variety of teaching methods and different perspectives in their teaching;
 - resourcing and implementing curriculum change effectively.

2. THE AIMS OF THE SYMPOSIUM

The two main aims of the Symposium (and of the overall project on "History Teaching in the New Europe") were to:

- i. identify innovatory approaches to the teaching of the history of Europe in the spirit of the final Declaration of the Vienna Summit, in particular, the urgent need to strengthen "programmes aimed at eliminating prejudice in the teaching of history by emphasising positive mutual influences between different countries, religions and ideas in the historical development of Europe";
- ii. provide policy makers, curriculum developers and history teaches with practical advice.

This report, taken in conjunction with the other publications which have emerged from this Project, seeks to fulfil these aims, but, in reading its conclusions and recommendations, two caveats need to be kept in mind. Firstly, as Deputy Minister Miroslav BARTOSEK observed in his welcoming address, a symposium of this kind cannot be expected to solve all of the problems associated with promoting mutual understanding through the teaching of European history but it is an important "symbolic step in the right direction". Secondly, as Mr STOBART pointed out in his opening address, while history teaching can contribute to mutual understanding and an awareness of the richness and diversity of European history, it can also be misused to promote and reinforce feelings of national antagonism, cultural and racial superiority, chauvinism and aggressive nationalism. This, he concluded, was why the Council of Europe hopes that the Prague Symposium would provide clear and practical guidance to both policy-makers and practitioners on how the teaching of European history can contribute to greater mutual understanding within the "New Europe".

3. THE PROGRAMME

Following the usual pattern of Council of Europe Symposia, the programme included:

- plenary sessions and panel sessions where historians and educationalists provided specialist input;
- four permanent working groups of participants which met twice a day throughout the Symposium. Each group was multi-national and represented a variety of experiences and interests. Two of the groups were English-speaking, one was French-speaking and the other was bilingual.

The presentations and the deliberations of the working groups have been summarised in this Report, and their conclusions have been taken into account in the recommendations made in the final section.

4. SUMMARY OF THE PLENARY SESSIONS

4.1 Professor Otto URBAN, Keynote address on "Mutual understanding and European history"

Professor URBAN began by observing that the changes which had been taking place since 1989 had revived academic discussions about the phenomenon of "Central Europe". However, it was apparent that the concept could only be understood in relation to the wider European context. He, therefore, set out initially to show how the twin concepts of Europe and Europeanism were historically conditioned. He started by exploring the usefulness and limitations of a geographical definition of Europe. The problem for geographers has been that Europe is a continent which is not a continent but rather a geographically distinct area of Asia. As a result, historically, the eastern and south eastern borders at any particular point in time tended to reflect the political and national realities of the period. To illustrate the point, he referred to the way in which the eastern border gradually moved further east coinciding with the western expansion of Russia initiated by Peter the Great in the 18th Century, the subsequent expansion to the East in the 19th Century and Russia's greater involvement in European politics and international relations.

However, whilst virtual consensus amongst geographers about the geographical shape of Europe emerged by the end of the 19th Century, it was apparent that cultural and political concepts of Europe had seldom coincided with geographical definitions. Sometimes a clear idea of Europe emerged because of a perceived or actual external threat, but this was not always the case (eg., it did not happen during the Crusades) and, even when it happened, it was usually only a part of the geographical entity of Europe that was united by external threat. In other eras, the idea of Europe emerged in contrast to another culture, but again this was usually only in a region of Europe and often while some other part of the continent was under non-European control and influence. Finally, there were times also when one major power exercised political hegemony over much of Europe, but such power was never universal or even culturally unifying. Most of the time, Europe has been characterised by its divisions, and its political, cultural and religious diversity rather than by any common or unifying features. The contrasting cultures, the religious divisions, the rise of nationalism, and political and economic conflicts have meant that there has been an almost continuous process of defining and re-defining Europe throughout its history.

Professor URBAN then went on to examine the position of Central Europe in these developments. Until the Reformation, the borders between west and east had been changing continuously, sometimes characterised by greater integration with Western Europe, sometimes by greater unification within the region and sometimes by tendencies towards disintegration. He discussed the role of the Habsburgs in Central Europe, who sought to unite a mosaic of diverse linguistic, cultural, ethnic, religious and political groupings. By the late 18th and early 19th Centuries, the area controlled by the Habsburgs was the eastern edge of western Europe and the western edge of eastern Europe, more socially and culturally diverse than its neighbours, with different economic concerns and, particularly after the Napoleonic Wars, too weak to establish a third and non-aligned state in the region alongside Germany and Russia. Nevertheless, he felt that the Habsburgs had created a cultural tradition - a

mixture of Germanic, Romanic, Slavic, Jewish and Hungarian elements - which has survived the break-up of the Empire and the fall of the Monarchy. It was this cultural tradition which, he felt, was both an enduring myth and a source for new thinking about Central Europe and Europeanism within the region.

He then moved on to look at the scope for creating new perspectives on Europe in the post-Cold War era and concluded with the following four points:

- i. most Europeans have now rejected authoritarian political and social régimes, but the development of civil societies in their place still requires a significant "demilitarisation" of thinking;
- ii. Europe is now more "introspective", focusing less on global responsibilities and interests and more on its own internal problems;
- iii. there are signs of the conditions emerging for greater European unity although the possibility of a United States of Europe is a long way off;
- iv. modern communications technology makes the European continent "smaller" and can serve as a medium for greater "Europeanisation".

4.2 Professor François AUDIGIER - Presentation on "Educational research on the learning and teaching of history"

Professor AUDIGIER reported on a meeting organised in Strasbourg on 19-20 June 1995 by the Council of Europe to survey the findings, themes and problems of research on the teaching of history in European countries. The meeting had focused on four main themes:

- i. studies of history curricula. These, he reported, have tended to concentrate on:
 - curriculum aims and general principles;
 - structures and frameworks for organising curriculum content;
 - analysis of textbooks (which have tended to focus either on the use of textbooks in teaching or on the ideological values and biases underpinning them);
- ii. the impact of history teaching. This raised research questions which are difficult to answer, such as the relative influences of different sources of information on the past and the links between history teaching and young people's civic attitudes;
- iii. how young people learn about history. This can involve research on appropriate content and teaching approaches for different age ranges of pupil; how they develop basic concepts for

understanding history; how history teaching can relate to the pupils' experience and understanding of societies and human actions;

- iv. teaching history in a multi-cultural context, particularly the need for more research on how to make connections between national history and the diversity of other kinds of history, for example, the history of minorities, regions, continents, global history, and so on.

Professor AUDIGIER then went on to observe that, in their discussions at the Strasbourg meeting, participants kept returning to the same issues relating to history teaching. For example:

- the implications of enlisting history to help create and reinforce a sense of collective identity. Whilst the need to construct a national identity has underpinned much past and current thinking about the teaching of history, it needs to be recognised that we all have multiple identities and belong to a variety of communities, some of which may be more central to an individual's identity than others;
- the ambiguous relationship between the academic discipline of history and folk or collective memory: interdependent yet potentially antagonistic;
- the tension between, on the one hand, the role of school history in introducing pupils to their national heritage and collective past and generating a sense of identity, and, on the other hand, teaching them to think critically and to understand that each historian offers an interpretation based on evidence and not just a factual description;
- the potentially different functions performed by the history teacher, as a member of a social institution, and by the academic historian.

4.3 Professor Otto ZWETTLER - Presentation on "Historical Consciousness of Students in Europe: the Comparative European Project on 'Youth and History'"

Professor ZWETTLER reported on an ongoing cross-national research project involving 32 countries in five regions: Northern, Western, Southern and Eastern Europe and the Near East (Israel and Palestine). The resulting opportunity sample was not only geographically diverse, it also included a variety of language groups and cultural and ethnic minorities, and ensured that young people from countries with widely different political systems and stages of economic development were included in the study.

The research, using a questionnaire completed by 1,000 15-16 year-olds in each country, was carried out in the winter of 1994-95. It focused on young people's historical consciousness: their understanding of basic concepts and ways of thinking about the past and their cultural, social and political attitudes, particularly regarding the present and the future. In addition, information was collected about the backgrounds of the students (age, gender, religion, home background, type of school, etc.), their sources of information on the past and present; their attainment in history at school,

teaching methods employed, etc.

This project provides an opportunity to test a number of important hypotheses relating not only to how young people learn about history and think historically but also how this in turn relates to their political socialisation:

- how does historical consciousness relate to national identity and other collective identities?
- are there important differences in the historical socialisation of young people in different countries and regions?
- which socialisation agencies influence historical consciousness, and how?
- what changes take place in young people's historical consciousness when their countries experience a significant change of régime or when they enter a larger political community or confederation?
- are there culture-specific patterns of thinking and ways of coming to terms with the past?
- how do their interpretations of the past correlate with their perceptions of the present and their expectations for the future?

Professor ZWETTLER explained that the data are still being analysed and so he was not yet able to report any findings. However, he was confident that the findings would shed light on these research questions and raise new questions for further research, at both national and comparative levels.

4.4 Positive mutual influences in European history

In a panel session, three speakers were invited to give presentations on specific examples of positive mutual influences in European history. Their presentations, which will be published separately, are briefly summarised below followed by a more general comment about some of the broader implications for teaching European history which emerged in the discussions.

i. Dr Manuela MARIN: al-Andalus

Essentially, this presentation was divided into three distinct parts. In the first part, Dr MARIN gave a brief outline of the development of al-Andalus from the beginning of the Eighth to the end of the 15th Century. At one level, the medieval history of the Iberian Peninsula could be described in terms of conquest and reconquest. Initially, the influence of Arabs and Berbers was confined to the cities and the majority of the population was Christian, with a significant, if small, Jewish minority. Three centuries later, the majority of people in the country had converted to Islam, the common language was Arabic,

and three-quarters of the Peninsula was governed by the Caliphate of Cordoba, whose influence spread widely across the western Mediterranean. However, a mere century later, the situation had changed dramatically. Internal divisions within al-Andalus had encouraged the small Christian kingdoms in the north of the Peninsula to unite to recover territory in the south - the so-called "Reconquest". By the beginning of the 14th Century, Islamic power was confined to Granada in the south east which, in turn, was finally conquered in 1492 by Castille. The Christian kingdoms had not only won back the land, they had also become united and, in so doing, had created the conditions necessary for the emergence of the nation-state of Spain.

But, Dr MARIN emphasised, the history of the region during this period could not be reduced to a series of battles and conquests. First, periods of peace were longer than periods of conflict. Second, the two communities of Muslims and Christians were not in a state of permanent antagonism. Many of them lived alongside each other and merged their different traditions, customs and cultures (indigenous Latin and Visigoth merging with cultural traditions brought from Egypt and Iraq as well as the Arabian peninsula) to create a culture which was unique not only in Western Europe but in the Mediterranean as a whole. She then described some of the many positive influences between the two cultures (intellectual, literary, artistic, architectural and legal) which emerged during this period.

However, although some of these influences survived the Reconquest, the following century saw, firstly, the emigration of some Muslims and the enforced conversion to Christianity of the rest, and then, at the beginning of the 17th Century, the expulsion of those who had been converted. As Dr MARIN put it, "the making of the modern state of Spain was, thus, founded upon the elimination of the Islamic traces in the Peninsula".

She then went on to look at how historians have subsequently presented the history of this period. In particular, from the 19th Century to present times traditionalist historians have tended to regard al-Andalus as an aberration which did not have a significant long-term impact on Spanish history. This has been the prevailing view, but, in the 20th Century, a school of Arabic studies emerged in Spain which has struggled for legitimation within a context dominated by the traditionalist perspective. In the early stages, Arabists did not use the term "al-Andalus" but wrote about "Muslim Spain" and tended to emphasise that what made this period in the history of the Iberian Peninsula so unique was its Spanish character. In contemporary academic circles, al-Andalus is now accepted and recognised as a part of the historical legacy of the Peninsula, but this perspective is not yet widely accepted by the population at large and, as Dr MARIN pointed out, this is unlikely to change while most school textbooks only reproduce the traditionalist view of Spanish history.

ii. Dr Gun WESTHOLM: The Hanse

This was a presentation on one of the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes projects: "Hanseatic Sites, Routes and Monuments". Dr WESTHOLM began by explaining that the Project had set out to provide materials that would contribute to the development of cultural and historical tourism in the former Hanseatic area, including the Baltic, but it was also hoped that the Project would also provide useful educational activities as well.

She then went on to provide a brief history of the Hanseatic League in northern Europe from the Mid-12th Century to 1669, when the last Hanseatic Diet was held in Lübeck. In doing this, she traced the development of the League from what was essentially the first commercial and trading union - trading in furs, wine, grain, fish, metal, wool and salt - to an extremely powerful military and political power capable of intervening in the affairs of individual States all over Europe. Dr WESTHOLM drew attention to a range of mutual positive influences: increased economic interdependence, more political co-operation, common technological developments. However, it was also apparent that other factors besides the Hansa itself contributed to this process of mutual influence. To illustrate this, she pointed out that the Christian church was an important trading customer for the League, needing wax for candles and lead for stained glass windows but also creating a demand for certain goods through its religious practices (e.g. fish for fasting days which in turn required developments in the drying and salting of fish).

Dr WESTHOLM then described the guidebook on the Hansa which she had produced as her contribution to the Project. The core of the book comprises descriptions of the towns that formed the Hanseatic League. Fifty-four of these towns have been selected as being highly recommended for cultural tourism, and these are described in much more detail. The guide also contains a brief history of the League, maps of the trade routes from different periods, and a list of museums with Hanseatic exhibits. She finished by observing that, although it was hoped that the outcomes of the Project would also be used for educational purposes, it was also necessary to develop specialist teaching materials for schools, as well as materials for cultural tourism.

iii. Dr Helena KREJCOVÁ: The Jews in Prague

Dr KREJCOVÁ began her presentation by observing that Jews had recently celebrated the millennial anniversary of their coming to the Czech lands. She then went on to briefly outline their history, focusing particularly on the period since the reforms introduced by Emperor Joseph II in the late 18th Century. During the period from the reforms to the 1848 Revolution, a liberal movement gained influence within the Jewish community in Bohemia and played a significant part in the social and economic changes which took place during this period, e.g. the development of banking and commerce, industrialisation and the spread of new ideas. But liberal ideas were not universally accepted within the community, and divisions emerged between liberal and conservative Jews, with the latter fearing increased assimilation and consequent loss of religious and cultural traditions. At the same time, there were also divisions within the Christian community in the Czech lands regarding the so-called "Jewish question".

Whilst there was evidence of increased integration and co-operation between the Jewish intelligentsia, (the young liberals), and the Christian intelligentsia (particularly those who looked to Germany for a lead), this was less apparent amongst the bourgeoisie and the working classes, especially the artisans, where there was mutual fear of increased competition. While Jewish liberals joined in common cause with Czechs and Germans in the 1848 Revolution, the old divisions persisted so that in the years immediately afterwards many Jews either returned to the Ghetto or emigrated to America. These divisions were further reinforced by the Constitution of 1867 which granted Jews equal rights thereby strengthening pro-German sympathies within the Jewish community. And yet, at the same time, there was also growing support for Czech nationalism, particularly amongst Jewish students. This led to a Czech-Jewish assimilation movement seeking to adopt the Czech language and to help create a common culture, economy and politics. Dr KREJCOVÁ went on to observe that, from the late 19th Century onwards, the idea of Czech-Jewish assimilation became more widespread and many Jews actively participated in the establishment of the first Czech Republic in 1918. However these developments must also be looked at within the context of the pro-German Jews and the traditionalists becoming increasingly alienated (a minority within a minority), the growth of Zionism, and increased anti-Semitism within the Czech population which often could not be distinguished from anti-Germanism.

Dr KREJCOVÁ completed her presentation by looking at what happened after the Munich Agreement and the German occupation. She talked about life in the ghetto in Theresienstadt during this period and the subsequent deaths of so many Czech Jews in the concentration camps.

iv. General comments:

These three presentations have been reported in some depth because, in many respects, they represent case studies of the kinds of approaches to national and European history which the Council of Europe's Project in general, and the Prague Symposium in particular, were seeking to encourage and promote.

Several general points emerged during and after these presentations which have implications for the development of any materials on positive mutual influences:

- working through case studies of this kind can be an excellent way of making the rather abstract notion of positive mutual influences more concrete and real to classroom teachers and teacher trainers alike;
- it is important to ensure that any materials developed on this theme convey the complex interactions, exchanges and inter-dependencies involved. In the presentations on al-Andalus and the Jews in Prague, it was apparent that the groups who were influencing each other were not homogeneous. The internal differences within each group (e.g. between traditionalist and liberal Jews, pro-German and pro-Czech, young and old) were as distinct and significant as those between the different national or ethnic groups;

- teaching about positive mutual influences can counter some of the stereotypes and historical myths that may be prevalent in society, but, unless due care is taken, they can also reinforce other historical myths and stereotypes;
- at present, the timelag between the emergence of new thinking by academic historians and changes in school history to accommodate that thinking is too great and needs to be significantly reduced.

4.5 Approaches to the teaching of national and European history

Discussion on these themes was led by three speakers:

i. Ms Susan BENNETT: The role of history in the formation of national identity.

This was a report on the proceedings of a European Teachers' Course which was held in York, England on 18-24 September 1995. The conclusions of this Course took the form of a checklist of questions that could be asked of history teaching in any education system (see Appendix III). The questions relate to curriculum, resources, classroom activities and teacher training and professional development. Ms BENNETT observed that there are a number of widespread misconceptions about the notion of national identity:

- it need not be narrow, restrictive and exclusive;
- it is possible to identify with more than one national grouping or community without experiencing a crisis or conflict of identity. She gave as an example, the possibility of being Jewish, Welsh and British at the same time, but similar examples could have been given from most other European countries;
- national identity is not static; it changes over time.

However, she also pointed out that, although the Vienna Declaration's objective of strengthening "programmes aimed at eliminating prejudice in the teaching of history by emphasising positive mutual influences between different countries, religions and ideas in the historical development of Europe" was an important and laudable one, it was clear from discussions at the York Course that much needed to be done before most history teachers and textbooks would fulfil this aim. In her view, good practice in the teaching of national history should include the perspectives of different communities and different historians (as should good textbooks); seek to develop pupils' critical thinking skills, make use of source material, use role play and drama, and make use of computer simulations, particularly when looking at historical events and developments which are highly complex. She concluded by suggesting that it would be useful to work with history teachers across Europe to collect examples of good practice for dissemination by the Council of Europe.

ii. Mr Paul VANDEPITTE: Approaches to the teaching of national and European history - the views of a representative association of history teachers

Mr VANDEPITTE attended the Prague Symposium as Vice-Chairman of EUROCLIO, the European Standing Conference of History Teachers Associations. A set of recommendations on mutual understanding and the teaching of history were circulated at the Prague Symposium by EUROCLIO and these are included in the report as Appendix IV. In his presentation, Mr VANDEPITTE provided some background about the establishment and subsequent development of EUROCLIO. He then went on to identify a number of issues relating to the task of meeting the aims of the Vienna Declaration in the context of the New Europe:

- the need for clarification on what exactly is meant by the idea of working together in "the New Europe";
- the need to recognise that history teaching is undergoing a period of transition in some European States, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, and that more needs to be done to support that process of change;
- the need to identify those countries with the most urgent needs;
- the need to find additional financial and material resources to permit effective support and international co-operation. EUROCLIO hopes that some of these constraints might be lifted through access to some of the new programmes of the European Union, such as PHARE.

iii. Mr Herbert SPECHT: The approach of the European Schools to the history of Europe

Mr SPECHT teaches history, geography and German at the European School in Brussels. This is one of nine such schools currently established within the member States of the European Union to provide education for children of EU officials and administrators. They cater for children from kindergarten through to the Baccalaureate. Basic education is taught through the medium of three languages: English, French and German, and all children are taught in their mother tongue plus at least two other languages.

Having provided some basic background information about the European Schools, Mr SPECHT went on to provide an outline of the history syllabus which is only taught to pupils of secondary age. In Years 7-9, history is only taught within a broader multi-disciplinary context, along with geography and the social sciences. So, for example, in Year 8 there is a general multi-disciplinary theme: "*The Adaptation of Human Beings to their Environment*", which includes a historical perspective (e.g. the origins of humanity, pre-history, the Middle Eastern civilisations). In Year 10, pupils encounter what might be regarded as a more conventional history syllabus which provides a broad historical survey of

European history from the Middle Ages through to modern times, including Imperialism, European rivalries, industrialisation, mass movements and revolutions, Communism and contemporary international relations. Taken merely as a list of topics, this would seem to be a fairly conventional syllabus. The main differences lie in the approach adopted:

- teaching offers a genuinely European-wide perspective;
- the history teacher has to teach his or her subject through a foreign language;
- the textbooks and teaching materials used are of French, German and British origin.

5. THE FOCUS OF THE WORKING GROUPS

The four working groups were asked to seek answers to the following questions:

- i. how can we ensure that national history does not become nationalistic history?
- ii. what should be the balance and links between local, regional, national, European and world history in our curricula?
- iii. what are effective approaches for teaching the history of Europe in the spirit of the Vienna Declaration? What are the positive mutual influences mentioned in the Declaration?
- iv. what are effective approaches for teaching about controversial, sensitive and tragic issues in our shared history of Europe? How can teachers be helped to handle such issues?
- v. do our history curricula have a fully European dimension? In particular, is the richness and diversity of the history of the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe reflected in curricula in other parts of our continent?
- vi. how can the learning of history outside the classroom contribute to greater mutual understanding and confidence in Europe? What can be the contribution of history clubs in schools, museums, field work, school links and exchanges, and the mass media, in particular school radio and television?
- vii. how can the conclusions and recommendations of the Prague Symposium be implemented? How can they be integrated in curricula, textbooks and teaching resources, teacher training and classroom practice?

There was a considerable degree of overlap in the views of the four groups and so, rather than reproduce the reports from each group, their views have been incorporated into the main body of this Report. Although the opinions expressed in the following sections are those of the General Rapporteur, it is hoped that they do justice to the depth and breadth of the working groups' reflections.

6. TEACHING NATIONAL HISTORY

There seemed to be considerable agreement amongst participants that teaching in a nationalistic way goes beyond simply teaching students about the history of their national group or nation. Instead, it presents them with a particularly one-sided or biased view of their nation's history in order to promote two related ideas:

- i. that, in some way, they are superior to other groups or nations;
- ii. that their distinctiveness can only be expressed through political sovereignty over the homeland, regardless of any other nationalities who may be living there.

Expressed in this way, the distinction between the two positions appears to be clear-cut. But these are not polar opposites. Rather, they are positions on the same continuum. At one end, there is the teaching of national history as part of raising historical consciousness and awareness and as an important element in everyone's general education. At the other end of the continuum is the teaching of national history from a nationalistic perspective. Somewhere between them on the continuum are a number of other positions. For example:

- a strong emphasis on national history in order that students can recover or re-discover their history. Several participants pointed out that this may be a temporary or intermediate phase which will be superseded in time by a broader, more outward-looking curriculum;
- the teaching of history in order to develop or reinforce a sense of national identity;
- the teaching of history to engender a sense of national pride.

Moving along this continuum from teaching national history for its own sake towards teaching it to promote nationalistic attitudes, the following tendencies can be noted:

- i. a greater element of intentional exclusion in the selection of topics and content. It ranges from the sub-conscious or unthinking exclusion of the histories of ethnic and linguistic minorities, women and the poor to the more conscious exclusion of anything negative which might present a nation's history in a less than glorious light;
- ii. a greater inclination to present school history and other subjects such as civics and the social sciences, as panaceas for society's problems. The argument is familiar: rapid social, economic and technological change, combined with high unemployment for young people, leads to alienation, disillusion and a loss of national confidence. But instead of finding political, social and economic solutions to political, social and economic problems, it is assumed that they can be solved in the classroom;

- iii. an increasing emphasis on the active involvement of the history teacher in the inculcation of certain attitudes in an uncritical and educationally invalid way.

So, the further one moves along this continuum, the more problematic it becomes and the more important it is that the reasons behind such a move are openly debated and critically scrutinised by the teaching profession.

Even where there is not a concerted effort on the part of governments or school authorities to introduce a more nationalistic note into history teaching, it can still emerge by default. To prevent this happening, it is crucial that those responsible for devising or revising history curricula and syllabuses and those who teach history ensure that:

- the criteria for selecting curriculum content are clear, unbiased and publicly justifiable;
- the content selected does not present the nation's history solely in a positive and uncritical light;
- the history curriculum is not so content-rich that it leaves little time for pupils to reflect critically on what they are being taught and to develop the skills which are fundamental to the discipline of history;
- curriculum content is not just limited to political and military history, where there tends to be more scope for nationalistic rhetoric than in, for example, the history of ordinary people;
- pupils will be given the opportunity to examine national history from a variety of perspectives;
- pupils are encouraged to examine critically evidence and make use of primary and secondary sources as well as textbooks;
- teaching will be sensitive to the past, present experiences, and future aspirations of any minorities and formerly oppressed groups within the national borders;
- textbooks are scrutinised for deliberate and unintended biases.

7. THE BALANCE BETWEEN LOCAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL, EUROPEAN AND WORLD HISTORY IN THE CURRICULUM

Before addressing the intrinsic issues regarding balance in the curriculum, there was some discussion in most of the working groups about the meaning of some of the terms used here. There was some confusion, for example, about the use of the term "*regional history*". Does it refer to geographical or administrative regions within a nation state (such as the Autonomous Authorities in Spain) or to larger geo-political areas which incorporate a number of nation states (such as the Baltic, the Balkans, the Nordic States, etc.)? It could be argued, quite reasonably, that historians use the term in both senses, but it needs to be recognised that both meanings could have different implications for the pedagogical approach which is adopted. One school of thought which is well-established in curriculum development, favours the spiral curriculum approach whereby the pupil is introduced initially to local history on the grounds that it is closer to his or her own immediate experience and then the content "spirals" outwards to encompass areas which are increasingly more remote from the pupils' own lives and localities. In this situation, a region within a nation state is clearly more immediate and tangible to pupils than a geo-political area of which their country is only a part. There was also some discussion about what is meant by European history given that in most countries the practice was to focus on those regions of Europe which were most relevant to understanding national history - a point which was also raised in discussions about the meaning of the term "global" or "world history".

Once the working groups had reached some consensus on terminology (or agreed to differ), discussion moved on to issues relating to the balance between the different historical dimensions. It emerged that, in most countries, five factors have traditionally been critical in determining the balance:

- i. **location** - countries in the heartland of Europe, for example, have tended to provide more coverage of European history than those such as the United Kingdom and the Scandinavian countries which are on the geographical periphery, although the recently revised history curriculum in Sweden is distinctly more "European" in scope;
- ii. **colonial experience** - those with a strong colonial past have often tended to give more emphasis to world history (though usually only modern history and predominantly focusing on their colonial pasts);
- iii. **relations with neighbouring countries** - much of what appears to be European history when looked at more closely tends in fact to be regional history: the Mediterranean, the Baltic, the Nordic States, the Balkans and so on;

- iv. **the degree of flexibility in the structure of the history curriculum** - some curricula are rich in content. In three or five years of secondary education, they offer a sweeping survey from prehistoric times or ancient civilisations through to modern times. This usually means that there is little scope for the introduction of more European or global history. In some other States, the structure of the curriculum is much more open and flexible, particularly in those which leave the choice of topics to the teachers or which only cover a few periods in depth rather than trying to be comprehensive;
- v. **the willingness to change** - in some cases, this is clearly related to political will, but it should also be recognised that, in the 1990s, many countries in central, eastern and western Europe have been going through major curriculum reforms. In some cases, innovation fatigue has set in amongst administrators and teachers alike. In some countries, a moratorium has been declared on any more changes in the history curriculum after periods of what seem to have been non-stop change.

As these factors suggest, discussion on this issue tends to focus upon national priorities (often linked to the current state of political and economic development of the nation) and the constraints within which the curriculum planners and history teachers have to operate. The constraints and practical problems which inhibit curriculum change were a common theme in the working group discussions, and are raised again in Section 10 when looking at the scope for more coverage of European history, particularly the history of Central and Eastern Europe in the schools of Western, Northern and Southern Europe. It was also generally recognised that there are times in the political and economic development of a nation (often related to major changes or public confidence about the future) when it might be appropriate to give more or less emphasis to national history

However, it is interesting that discussion on this question (both at the Prague Symposium and in other recent Council of Europe meetings and documents) has tended to assume that balance essentially relates to the amount of *content* or the amount of *time* allocated to each historical dimension. It is possible, however, to resolve this issue in a different way through the approach of the teacher. That is, regardless of whether the topic is primarily concerned with local, national, regional, European or world history, links are consciously made with the other dimensions wherever they are relevant and help to shed light on what is being studied. So, for example, in the context of teaching *local history* this might entail looking at:

- a local family with national and international connections;
- a war memorial which can provide information about the histories of local families but also links the locality to broader national and international developments in the past;
- the international trading links of a local firm and how they were affected in the past by national, regional and global developments;
- the trading links of a local port and how they have evolved over time, often reflecting changing political alliances and conflicts;

- local place names and their origins;
- buildings which do not follow local architectural styles (e.g. Hanseatic-style warehouses across northern Europe).

Such an approach not only sets the topic under study into a wider historical context, it also places "mutual influences" at the heart of any attempt to broaden the pupil's historical perspective.

8. POSITIVE MUTUAL INFLUENCES

The issue of how mutual understanding could be reinforced through emphasising positive mutual influences was central to the planning of the Prague Symposium and a key focus in the discussions of the working groups. Five questions were addressed on this issue:

8.1 In the context of history teaching, what do we mean by the term "positive mutual influences"?

The notion of positive mutual influences suggests some kind of two-way exchange between groups, nations, religions or cultures. It also suggests some degree of interdependence, interaction and willingness to learn from each other. The three presentations to this Symposium on al-Andalus, the Hanse and the Jews in Prague all provided vivid illustrations of these processes at work.

It is also important to recognise that these two-way exchanges do not necessarily take place at the same point in time. The process of interaction and "borrowing" between one culture and another, one legal system and another, or one language and another takes a long time, and, often happens so subtly that it is hardly noticeable. One good example of this long-term process would be the interchange of ideas on human rights and the conduct of international relations between Europe and the United States of America over a period of 250 years.

The concept of "positive" also needs some clarification. It is clearly historically conditioned; developments perceived to be positive at one time (empires, invasions, etc.) may not necessarily be perceived as such at a later date, and vice versa. Similarly, political and cultural ideas, which appear to influence a whole continent in one era, become widely discredited in another. There is a risk then, and some of the working groups identified this, that the history teacher is being asked almost to equate history with progress. This raised a number of concerns within the groups and a feeling that the positive mutual influences would need to be balanced by coverage of the more negative influences and the darker side of history.

8.2 What kinds of mutual positive influence can we identify in the curricula of European States?

The working groups have, between them, provided an interesting, though by no means exhaustive, list of topics where mutual influences could be explored. These, along with those positive mutual influences identified in the Council of Europe's Meeting of regional and multilateral school history pilot projects, are listed in Appendix I. Appendix II indicates the organisations which participated at this Meeting of regional and multilateral school history pilot projects. The following points should be borne in mind when examining positive mutual influences:

- i. most of our examples of positive mutual influences tend to be found primarily in economic history, the history of ideas and the history of culture and demographic history. It is important to recognise that culture, ideas and trade are often the conduits or channels through which political and diplomatic changes occur. For example, the gradual shift from absolute government to various forms of representative government in much of Europe in the late 18th Century and 19th Century owed much to the free exchange of ideas between groups of intellectuals in different countries, but history curricula and textbooks often treat the development of representative government as if it took place in a political vacuum wholly uninfluenced by events and developments in other countries;
- ii. there is also a tendency to identify positive mutual influences between neighbouring States and within regions, and yet this was not always the case. Sometimes, the process of mutual positive influence owed more to political alliances through marriage, the travels of pilgrims, the movement of monks between monasteries, or diasporas.

8.3 If we focus on positive mutual influences, then what are the implications for the way we teach?

A number of points can be raised here:

- i. it may sometimes be difficult to focus on positive mutual influences of the types previously described within the constraints of a curriculum segmented into periods. They often need to be explored over a long period of time. This is easier when examining history in the first millennium and in the Middle Ages, since curricula typically focus on four to five centuries. But, the nearer we come to modern times, the shorter the time periods;
- ii. it should be apparent from what has already been asserted in this Report that a greater emphasis on positive mutual influences in the teaching of history necessitates a lot more than just the substitution of one list of topics for the list which constitutes the existing history syllabus in a given country. Apart from the logistical problems of introducing major changes into the curriculum - which have been reviewed elsewhere in this Report - it also calls for sophisticated historical analysis in order to clearly identify the influences which are both positive and mutual. In the case of some of the topics listed in Appendix I, this analysis is not readily available to all teachers in all European countries. The resource materials do not exist and the teachers have not been trained to undertake that kind of analysis. In such circumstances, there is a danger that any attempt to focus on positive mutual influences may be too simplistic and artificial and lead to a fragmented treatment of the topics under study;
- iii. history teachers and textbook writers need to be encouraged to introduce a comparative perspective which specifically focuses on how given events, processes and developments at a national or local level were influenced by (or influenced) what was happening elsewhere in Europe at the time or later;

- iv. breadth as well as depth needs to be introduced into the history curriculum in order to demonstrate how linkages through trade, education, religion, travel and print have facilitated mutual influences. This also involves recognising that some historical phenomena, such as the world of the Vikings, the Hanseatic League, the Voyages of Expansion and the French Revolution, do not belong to one single "national" history, but to the history of the continent as a whole, and that to study them from a purely national perspective is to display a profound misunderstanding of the period;
- v. positive mutual influences need to be integrated into history teaching rather than merely identifying one or two examples which are "bolted on to the history syllabus".

8.4 Would a specific emphasis on positive mutual influences in history curricula conflict with the historian's quest for truth and the history teacher's commitment to encouraging young people to think critically?

There is no doubt that some historians and history teachers feel concerned about any attempt to use their subject for social and political purposes. But school history, as distinct from academic history, is public property. Along with religious education and teaching about a nation's literature, the teaching of history in schools, particularly national history, has always been included for social and political reasons as well as educational ones, e.g. its role in developing a sense of national identity, passing on the cultural heritage and preparing students for citizenship. This is apparent in most countries whenever major changes in the history curriculum are announced. Politicians, pressure groups, ethnic minorities and language minorities often feel that they have the right to try to influence the content of the history curriculum and how it is taught to a much larger extent than they would ever attempt to do with the curriculum for mathematics, science or geography. Several points need to be made here:

- i. there is no reason why a focus on positive mutual influences should be uncritical. Students need to be encouraged to employ the historian's interpretative, investigative and critical skills to this dimension, as much as to any other dimension, of the history curriculum;
- ii. no one is suggesting that the history curriculum in general (or those aspects of it concerned with regional, European or global history) should focus only on examples of positive mutual influences;
- iii. it is equally important that history teaching also helps pupils to become aware of "the darker side of their national and regional history" and look at the sensitive, controversial and tragic in the same investigative and critical ways.

8.5 Will a focus on positive mutual influences have the desired impact in terms of increasing and reinforcing mutual understanding and eliminating prejudice?

Dr. Gita STEINER-KHAMSI points out in her paper on "Combating Intolerance: Education for a Pluralist and Active Citizenship"¹, that educational programmes to promote ecological awareness have been more effective than educational programmes aimed at reducing intolerance, xenophobia or racism. In part, this has been because the former have more often been supported by political and economic action. However, it has also been due to the teaching approaches which have prevailed. As she points out, for years, educational programmes have sought to inform students from majority groups about the values, customs and norms of minority groups, hoping that this knowledge would eventually pave the way for mutual respect and tolerance. It has usually proved counter-productive, reinforcing rather than reducing prejudice, mainly because of a failure to recognise that prejudice is based on beliefs and not just lack of knowledge.

It will not be enough to teach **about** examples of positive mutual influences. Instead, it has to start from a recognition that:

- i. there will be a multiplicity of perspectives about events and developments;
- ii. there is usually no one definitive or correct perspective in the study and interpretation of history;
- iii. all perspectives have to be tested against the evidence;
- iv. pupils need to be encouraged to "step into the shoes of others" in order to understand how they perceive the same events and developments.

Furthermore, change will not come simply by producing a list of topics for teaching about positive mutual influences on European history. To attempt to do so will simply generate cynicism and disillusion within the teaching profession in many countries.

¹

Dr Gita STEINER-KHAMSI, "Combating Intolerance: Education for a Pluralist and Active Citizenship", International Seminar on Tolerance organised by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe/ODIHR, the Council of Europe and the Government of Romania, in co-operation with UNESCO, Bucharest, Romania, May 1995.

9. TEACHING CONTROVERSIAL AND SENSITIVE ISSUES IN HISTORY

In a sense, most of what is taught in history is *controversial*; there are disagreements about what happened, why it happened, what is its significance, and so on. Sometimes, these are purely academic controversies. Different schools of thought interpret the evidence in different ways. However, with some themes and topics, the controversy is not simply academic, it divides groups, even whole societies. In this case, we are looking at topics which have implications for contemporary people's sensitivities. The example of teaching history in Northern Ireland was raised at the Symposium. Here, the gulf between two communities is so wide that there are few areas of agreement between them when it comes to interpreting and explaining the past, and the symbols of a divided past are ever-present on the streets. This raises the question, vividly phrased by Dan McCALL at this Symposium, "How does the history teacher challenge the history of the streets when trying to teach children who live in those communities?".

Northern Ireland is an example of a topic which is both controversial and sensitive. Not all sensitive issues and themes are controversial in the sense of reflecting contemporary social and political divisions in society, they are sensitive because they relate to particularly painful, tragic, humiliating or divisive times in a country's past, and there is a fear or concern that reference to them in history lessons might renew old divisions and bring back too many painful memories. Among those raised in the Prague Symposium were: the experience of military occupation; collaboration during occupations; civil war; the Holocaust; pogroms; deportation; treatment of minorities and oppressed groups; and experience of colonialism and imperialism.

It would be an impoverished history curriculum which simply avoided all controversial and sensitive issues and topics. So, what approaches can we use in circumstances such as these? The following list is not comprehensive, but reflects discussions in Prague and at other Council of Europe symposia:

- comparing and contrasting with parallel situations in other countries and communities;
- providing students with a variety of source materials which offer them different perspectives on the same events and an opportunity to evaluate critically the evidence put forward to support each perspective;
- looking at how historical interpretations and accounts of particular events and developments have been influenced by the historian's own era and culture;
- using role play and simulations to encourage students to put themselves into the shoes of people who have a very different perspective from their own;
- using accounts from people who lived through the events under study and then comparing and contrasting these with the interpretations offered by historians;

- asking the students to test their expectations against the available evidence - a particularly useful and enlightening exercise when they themselves discover information that is contrary to their preconceived ideas and expectations.

10. INTRODUCING A FULLY EUROPEAN DIMENSION INTO HISTORY TEACHING

There is an understandable concern in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe that history curricula in other regions of our continent virtually ignore their history. This is not universally true: the closer a country or province is to the heartland of Europe, the more likely it is that history curricula will take a broader perspective. However, the criticism certainly applies to curricula in many of the European countries on the periphery and in those which have tended to perceive themselves as having long been at the centre of European politics, if not at the centre of European geography.

Given the constraints to curriculum change mentioned previously in Section 7 of this Report, the scope for introducing more on the history of Central and Eastern Europe into the curricula of other countries of our continent seems fairly limited. However, the imperative for finding the scope is very strong. Firstly, we now have to look again at how modern history is taught. In many cases, the old syllabuses have ignored the post-1989 changes, but many history teachers will know that their pupils do not ignore contemporary events and changes. If they do not discuss these changes with their history teachers, they will be dependent upon the mass media, particularly television, for their information. With some notable exceptions, television tends to present a non-historical perspective: history is what happened five years ago! They need a framework to make the links between what is happening now and what happened in the past in Central and Eastern Europe, particularly the Balkans.

There would seem to be three possible strategies here for introducing more teaching of European history in its widest sense. They are not mutually exclusive and, indeed, there seems to be a strong case for exploring all three at the same time.

Strategy 1:

It is possible, in most European countries, to look at existing topics in the curriculum which have, or could have, a European dimension and see how this might be given greater prominence. A number of recent publications by the Council of Europe provide illustrations of this strategy in action, for example when teaching about the Vikings, the French Revolution, or the rise of the nation State¹. However, for this strategy to have any impact on the everyday teaching of most history teachers, these publications and others like them will need to be more widely disseminated than is the case at present.

Strategy 2:

To focus less on what is and is not included in official curricula and guidelines but to look at how history is taught and how history teachers are trained. In other words, how can we encourage history teachers throughout Europe to introduce a European dimension into their teaching so that it

¹ "The Viking Age in Europe", Larkollen, Norway, August 1986;

"Teaching about the French Revolution in Secondary Schools in Europe", Mr S. AUDOIN-ROUZEAU, Donaueschingen, Germany, May 1988;

"The Nationalities Question - from Versailles to the present day", Ms J. Delrot, Esneux, Belgium, April 1991.

becomes a matter of course for them to introduce illustrations, ideas and evidence which provide the students with:

- i. a comparative perspective which shows similarities and draws contrasts and which explains how events and developments at a national or local level have been influenced by (or have influenced) what happened elsewhere in Europe and how national cultures have developed and been transformed through interaction and fusion with other cultures;
- ii. a longer time perspective than may be conventional in their official syllabuses;
- iii. an historical overview which enables them to make links and to feel as much "at home" when travelling through the history of Europe as they do when they travel through the history of their own country. After all, travel broadens the mind;
- iv. multiperspectivity.

Strategy 3:

This calls for long-term planning on the part of the Council of Europe and individual Ministries of Education. In spite of the major constraints on curriculum reform already referred to, we should not necessarily assume that large-scale changes can never be brought about in the teaching of history through European-wide initiatives. In the 1970s, we saw a shift towards multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches to the teaching of history, geography and the social sciences. That approach had the backing of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education at the time, but its widespread adoption owed much to the work of a vanguard of academics, teacher trainers and history teachers. In the late 1970s and 1980s, we saw a similar interest in what came to be known as the "new" history approach, with its emphasis on skills and historical interpretation. More recently, there has been a shift away from both approaches in some countries, towards the teaching of history as a single subject, more emphasis on national history and more emphasis on curriculum content.

Nevertheless, some of the conditions which enabled those other changes to have such a wide impact exist again. A vanguard of innovative teachers and teacher trainers exists, there are innovative projects, some of which have been discussed here this week; there is the support of international organisations such as the Council of Europe and EUROCLIO; the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education has expressed support; the expansion of the Council of Europe and of the European Union has given added impetus. What may still be lacking is a new framework for teaching European history and a realistic strategy for managing change which works at two levels, both to convince Ministries of the need for change and to ensure that practical materials tried and tested in classrooms are disseminated to teachers.

11. LEARNING HISTORY OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The general view in the working groups was that extra-mural history clubs were not widespread and most educational authorities lacked the resources to set them up. It was also generally felt that, while museums could be excellent sources of extra-mural and extra-curricular learning, they tended to have a local, regional or national focus and were less well-organised for supporting the teaching of European or global history or the histories of other countries. One working group proposed the idea of Council of Europe history exhibitions, related to some of the multilateral projects (the Hanse, the Vikings, etc.) which could be loaned to museums, libraries and educational resource centres in different countries.

It was also felt that links between schools in different European countries, particularly through conventional correspondence, electronic mail and the Internet, had considerable potential for history teaching but, as yet, they tended to be used mainly by modern languages teachers.

Finally, it was also acknowledged that the mass media, the family and groups representing ethnic, linguistic and religious communities could be influential sources of information and ideas about the past. Sometimes folk memory, *"the history of the streets"* and the historical perspective propagated by these agencies, was at odds with that which was being taught in schools. This emphasises not only the importance of teaching pupils to critically evaluate evidence but also to use material produced by such agencies alongside the textbooks and resources specifically developed for the classroom so that pupils can access and analyse different perspectives on the same event, theme or topic rather than be unduly influenced by one particular and biased viewpoint.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

Sections 6 - 11 contain a number of specific and general recommendations aimed at curriculum developers, teachers and lecturers in institutes of teacher training. The objective in this final section, therefore, is to identify recommendations for policy makers and those who influence educational policy at national and European levels. In particular, these recommendations are aimed at the Council of Europe and the Ministries of Education of the member States of the CDCC.

12.1 Recommendations to the Council of Europe

A wide range of very specific proposals and recommendations have emerged over the two years of the Project "History Teaching in the New Europe" (see, for example, the list of pilot projects in Appendix II and the Reports summarising discussions at the various seminars and meetings held during the course of the project). At Prague, however, perhaps because it was the final Symposium of the Project, discussions tended to reflect more concern about and interest in strategic and policy issues and the future role of the Council of Europe in promoting the teaching of European history. There was general support for the aims and substance of the Vienna Declaration but also a concern that this Report, and any subsequent documentation arising out of this Project, should identify the practical issues and constraints relating to the implementation of the Declaration through the history curricula of the member States. Similarly, there was also widespread support for the work of the Council of Europe in the field of history teaching, particularly as a catalyst for encouraging new thinking about the curriculum and as an intermediary bringing together academic historians, curriculum innovators, teacher trainers and education advisers from all parts of Europe. However, there were also some strategic concerns about how best to ensure that the outcomes of the innovative work which has been sponsored and encouraged by the Council will actually come to the attention and influence the thinking of ordinary classroom teachers.

With these concerns in mind, the following recommendations are predominantly strategic.

12.1.1 The Council has expanded at a remarkable rate since the changes in Central and Eastern Europe began in 1989. Multi-national meetings and links are as critical as ever, but symposia such as the one held in Prague, whilst very useful for exchanging ideas, are not necessarily the best means of bringing about changes in classroom practice in individual countries. More thought may need to be given to bringing together representatives from different countries who are facing, or have faced, similar curriculum problems and issues. For example, there is a strong case for setting up a cross-national curriculum working group to look at the teaching of controversial and sensitive issues and topics. There is much that can be shared between, for example, teachers and curriculum experts in Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Cyprus. Equally, there is much scope for co-operation between similar groups of people working in countries which are seeking to re-cover or re-discover their national histories. In a large conference or symposium, the chances for people with common concerns to work together in this way are fairly limited. So, one possibility is to make the process of conference planning more focused

and targeted on specific curriculum issues and problems. That calls for a *long-term development strategy* which could fit in well with the Council of Europe's proposed new Project on the History of Europe in the 20th Century.

12.1.2 There needs to be a review of the Council of Europe's *dissemination strategy*. Clearly, some of the CDCC reports are specifically aimed at influencing policy makers and are written in a form appropriate to that end. The other reports, though often full of interesting ideas for the innovative teacher, are not always produced in a form which is appropriate for teachers who may have neither the time nor the skills to convert these ideas into materials and resources which they could use in their classrooms. How then to reach and influence the ordinary classroom teacher? The Council of Europe's Information and Documentation Centres in Central and Eastern Europe are clearly a step in the right direction; the discussion on the setting up of depository libraries of Council of Europe publications on education could be pursued, as could greater involvement of the universities and large reference libraries. But, perhaps, the longer term strategy lies in:

- i. improving history teachers' access to Council of Europe activities by widely disseminating an inventory of available resources. One of the working groups at Prague proposed, for example, a *Vade Mecum* or handbook which would provide a comprehensive overview of the work of the Council of Europe on history teaching and history textbooks. This would be a flexible publication, easily up-dated, which would summarise:
 - the Council's theoretical and pedagogic papers and reports, particularly on the contribution of history to European awareness;
 - a guide to the regional and multilateral pilot projects;
 - basic information on a country by country basis (key institutions and contacts for curriculum development, assessment, teaching and teacher training in the area of history);
 - strategies for implementing curriculum and pedagogic change;
 - a guide to relevant school links and exchange projects, electronic databases, international educational partnerships;
 - a register of international government agencies and NGOs with an interest in or brief for history teaching and teaching for European awareness;
 - a bibliography of relevant specialist publications in the Council of Europe's working languages;

- ii. more effective use of databases and the Internet for the dissemination of the Council of Europe's work;
- iii. more joint activities with national teachers associations (singly and in regional groupings) and with the European Standing Conference of History Teachers' Associations, EUROCLIO.

12.1.3 The third strategic recommendation is closely related to dissemination. It relates to the need for an *implementation strategy*. One of the interesting proposals, which emerged at this Symposium, was to convert the ideas presented on al-Andalus at Prague into a teaching pack. This could serve two functions:

- i. a useful means of disseminating ideas about a particular positive mutual influence to history teachers;
- ii. a useful model for other initiatives along similar lines.

It is fully recognised that the Council of Europe has only limited resources for stimulating curriculum development in every country in Europe. At best, it can show what can be done in one or two areas and leave it to others to develop these ideas further. However, if such materials are to serve their purpose, it will be crucial for them to be pilot-tested in classrooms before they are more widely disseminated. It is also important that the working groups developing such model materials include curriculum developers with knowledge of teaching practice in other countries.

Furthermore, more of the history conferences and symposia should be targeted specifically on the "*multipliers*" in different countries; that is, the teacher trainers, textbook writers and school inspectors, who can have a significant impact on curriculum practice in their own countries.

In essence, an increased focus on an implementation strategy would bring about a shift of emphasis in the Council's work on history from promoting exchanges of ideas to facilitating exchanges of expertise, and from the dissemination of ideas to the incorporation of these ideas into exemplary materials that could be used as models for further curriculum development.

12.1.4 Finally, there is a strong case for arguing that the strategic developments recommended above (which represent shifts of emphasis rather than a dramatic change of course) would need to be supported by an *evaluation strategy* aimed at finding out how Council of Europe documents and materials on the regional and multi-lateral pilot projects are used by other teachers and teacher trainers. This would provide information on:

- how transferable the basic curriculum ideas are from one context, theme, topic or issue to another; (i.e. are they useful "models" for curriculum development?);

- whether teachers find the materials useful;
- the impact on teachers' thinking about European history;
- the impact on teacher training programmes in different countries;
- the impact of the materials and ideas on the learners;
- the impact of Council of Europe reports and curriculum materials on the content and delivery of history in the member States.

Given that the Council of Europe does not usually fund research and evaluation projects, there would seem to be three main approaches that could be adopted here:

- Option 1:* an initiative on history teaching similar to the Observatory on Intolerance (or an extension of the latter's brief to cover the role of history teaching in reducing prejudice and xenophobia through a focus on mutual positive influences);
- Option 2:* to establish an informal network of curriculum evaluators and researchers across Europe who would regularly feed back the results of ongoing research projects related to teaching history;
- Option 3:* to introduce an action research component into any development projects on teaching history which the Council initiates in the future. However, this may necessitate some kind of training programme or package, particularly for teachers in those countries where action research (or even independent curriculum research) is rarely undertaken.

12.2 Recommendations to Ministries of Education in member States of the CDCC

Here too, the recommendations are predominantly strategic in nature.

- 12.2.1 It is necessary to find ways of reducing the time it currently takes for the kinds of innovative ideas on history teaching which are discussed at international symposia to influence the practice of the ordinary classroom teacher.
- 12.2.2 Linked to the previous recommendation, it is also necessary to find ways within each member State of speeding up the process whereby history teachers in schools become aware of new thinking in academic circles. The example given in Section 4 regarding teaching about al-Andalus in Spanish schools, vividly illustrates the problem and the need to bring academic historians, publishers and innovative history teachers together to develop appropriate materials and guidance for other history teachers.

- 12.2.3 One of the themes running through this Report - and through discussions at the Prague Symposium and the other meetings associated with this Project - is that the twin tasks of introducing a truly European-wide dimension into the curriculum and of combating prejudice, stereotypes, xenophobia and crude nationalistic attitudes through the history curriculum will not be effectively addressed simply by the introduction of additional curriculum content. These issues also need to be addressed in the pre-service and in-service training of teachers.
- 12.2.4 It was observed in Section 8 that the notion of positive mutual influences suggests some kind of two-way exchange between groups, nations, religions or cultures. The examples given at the Prague Symposium and in this report require an approach which takes into account a multiplicity of perspectives. Some of the pilot projects which are relevant here are, themselves, examples of positive mutual influence through bilateral and multilateral exchanges. Projects, such as the Balkan Sea Project, the Baltic History Textbook Project, the Blue Danube River Project, and others listed in Appendix II, offer good examples of how curriculum developers, publishers, textbook writers and teachers in neighbouring countries can establish partnerships to cooperate in developing materials and teaching strategies around common experiences, shared histories and mutual influences. It is clear from the comments made by those involved in these projects that the whole process of cross-national co-operation is in itself an important learning process and one which other member States are recommended to consider.
- 12.2.5 The clear message which came from the Prague Symposium and other Council of Europe conferences and reports is that significant developments of the kind proposed in the Vienna Declaration - and an attempt to eliminate prejudice and xenophobia through the curriculum is a significant change - will require:
- i. time (change of this kind takes years not months);
 - ii. resources;
 - iii. careful preparation of teachers through pre-service and in-service training;
 - iv. flexibility in curriculum thinking;
 - v. a curriculum framework which will readily accommodate the changes;
 - vi. a strategy for managing and implementing that change process.

APPENDIX I

POSITIVE MUTUAL INFLUENCES

This Appendix lists the suggestions made by the four working groups of the Symposium on topics which could be used for the teaching of positive mutual influences. It is not to be considered as exhaustive.

1. General guidelines

- topics based on a region may lend themselves more readily to an examination of positive mutual influences. They also may be more conducive to developing school links and exchanges on the topics;
- teaching about positive mutual influences could include an examination of present and future positive mutual influences, as well as those of the past;
- highlighting the impact of individuals and the achievements of ordinary people could be a way of bringing out the links between different parts of Europe;
- examining how people lived and how they worked can help pupils to understand the common links between different cultures; an emphasis on shared ploughed fields, not shared battlefields.

2. A common history and cultural heritage

Many aspects of the shared European heritage can be used to illustrate positive mutual influences. The following list provides examples of such topics:

- the Greco-Roman philosophical tradition;
- Judeo-Christian beliefs and ethics;
- the influence of Islam in Europe (for example on the Austro-Hungarian Empire);
- a common artistic heritage (music, art, etc.);
- a shared architectural heritage;

- the emergence of the nation state throughout Europe (touching on Catholic/Protestant experiences but also drawing on experiences in the Orthodox East);
- shared historical experiences, for example: feudalism; the Crusades; the Reformation and the Renaissance; the Industrial Revolution;
- the movements towards democracy and Human Rights, e.g. the liberal movements of the 19th Century, aspects of the French Revolution;
- similarities in family structures and social interactions.

3. The movement of peoples and ideas throughout European history

Reviewing demographic patterns and the exchange of ideas within and beyond Europe can promote a greater understanding of a common European heritage. Topics which could be used to illustrate this include:

- migration, e.g. European emigration to America which fashioned a new nation. Other examples of minorities which have settled successfully, in time, include: the Huguenots in Germany and England; Poles in Denmark and Germany;
- the Jewish Diaspora and its role in the spread of ideas;
- cities and demographic patterns;
- transport and communications;
- trade and settlement;
- "wandering scholars" (peregrinatio) - the free movement of students and teachers around Europe which has its origins in the Middle Ages, if not earlier;
- exchanges throughout the Ages, e.g. the training of female Russian doctors in Switzerland in the 19th Century;
- intellectual exchanges between cultures;
- linguistic influences from one language to another;
- the history of monasticism from c700 - medieval monasticism: Cistercians; Franciscans; Dominicans (the medieval period has the merit of avoiding nationalist issues).

4. Trade links throughout Europe

Examining trading networks and patterns can help develop a sense of the close interdependency of European States and of the links between Europe and the rest of the world. Possible topics include:

- trade guilds in the Middle Ages;
- the Hanseatic League;
- Venice and the Mediterranean.

5. Common progress

Most social changes have involved an exchange of ideas, knowledge and practice between various countries and regions. Any examination of social progress should emphasise the importance of this cross-fertilisation, for example:

- the role of women in society/ the achievement of women's rights;
- the development of peace movements;
- the rise of the Welfare State;
- scientific, medical and technological developments;
- sport and leisure;
- inventions;
- social changes brought about by agricultural and industrial development;
- the diffusion of knowledge.

6. Bilateral exchanges

One approach to teaching about positive mutual influences could be to examine the positive exchanges that have taken place between two States. Examples of this include:

- exchanges between Ireland and England. For example, England influenced Ireland's reform of its electoral system, reform of land legislation and reform of the education system, whilst Ireland provided a labour force for England, played a prominent role in the English Army and contributed to the English literary heritage;
- Peter the Great and his exchanges with other European countries.

7. Other topics

- The role of the Red Army in Central and Eastern Europe (this topic is more suitable for older pupils as it is more controversial).

APPENDIX II

List of Projects participating in the Council of Europe Meeting of representatives of regional and multilateral school history pilot projects (Strasbourg, June 1995)

- Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea / Association des châteaux et musées autour de la Mer baltique
- Balkan Region History Project / Histoire de la région balkanique
- Baltic Sea Project / Projet de la Mer baltique
- Baltic States History Textbook Project / Manuel d'histoire pour les États baltes
- Blue Danube River Project / Le Projet du Danube Bleu
- Council of Europe Cultural Routes Project: "Hanseatic Sites, Routes and Monuments" / Itinéraires culturels du Conseil de l'Europe: le projet "Sites, routes et monuments hanséatiques"
- Council of Europe In-Service Training Programme for Teachers / Programme du Conseil de l'Europe pour la formation continue des enseignants
- Democracy, Human Rights and Minorities: Educational and Cultural Aspects Pilot Project No. 4: "History and Identity" Co-operation between schools of five Central European Countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovak Republic, Slovenia) / Démocratie, Droits de l'Homme, Minorités: les aspects éducatifs et culturels Projet pilot n° 4: "Histoire et identité" Coopération entre des écoles de cinq pays de l'Europe centrale (Autriche, République tchèque, Hongrie, République Slovaque, Slovénie)
- European Conference for Final Year Pupils on the Paris Peace Conference and the Treaty of Versailles / Le Traité de Versailles et la Conférence de la paix de Paris: Conférence européenne d'élèves en terminale
- European Studies Project Northern Ireland / Projet d'études européennes Irlande du Nord / European Studies Senior Programme / European Studies Junior Programme / Programme des Juniors / Programme senior des études européennes

- Harmonisation and innovation in history teaching in Ibero-American States/
Harmonisation et innovation dans l'enseignement de l'histoire en Ibéro-Amérique
- Heritage Classes/ Classes du Patrimoine
- History teaching and confidence building: the case of Central and Eastern Europe /
L'enseignement de l'histoire dans les sociétés démocratiques en transition
- Local History and Minorities: Pilot Project 2: "Central Europe and the Middle Ages" /
Histoire locale et les minorités: Projet de pilote n° 2: "L'Europe centrale et le Moyen
Age
- PHARE/EUROCLIO Project 1994-95 / Le Projet PHARE/EUROCLIO 1994-95
- Pilot Project: "School twinning and local history" / Projet pilote: "Jumelages et histoire
locale"
- Project on "The City beneath the City" / Projet sur "La ville sous la ville"
- Role-playing Project on the "Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Ways" / Simulation sur
"les chemins de Saint-Jaques de Compostelle
- School Viking Network / Le Reseau Viking

APPENDIX III

**Checklist for the Teaching of National History
prepared at
The European Teachers' Course on
"The role of history in the formation of national identity"
York, 18-24 September 1995**

I. CURRICULUM

1. Does your curriculum portray national achievements and distinctiveness in a way that allows discussion and reflection? Does it place national achievements and characteristics in a wider context and show this identity over time and in different parts of the country, eg. population movements and conquest?
2. Does your curriculum encourage pupils to recognise distinctions between a national identity and an aggressive intolerant nationalism? Are conflict and isolation emphasised at the expense of co-operation and similarity or vice versa?
3. Does your curriculum avoid uncritical glorification of achievement by national groups, for example military success, technological innovation, cultural development?
4. Does your curriculum provide uncritical treatment of a few national heroes and heroines? Is the selection of such heroes and heroines based on valid criteria to allow for fair coverage of places, themes and perspectives?
5. Is your curriculum designed in such a way as to exclude people, either as individuals or groups, who are part of the nation's history, eg. those representing social, cultural, religious, economic, ethnic or geographical groups?
6. Does your curriculum allow you to consider how other peoples have treated your national identity?
7. Does your curriculum reflect recent research on aspects of history which can contribute to discussion of national identity?
8. Does your curriculum allow pupils to consider the influences on the development and perpetuation of a national identity such as manipulation for political and economic reasons?

9. Does your curriculum allow pupils to consider the way in which the selection of evidence, the sources available and the historians' values influence interpretations of the past?
10. Does your curriculum define national identity in a clear and justifiable way?
11. Does the curriculum recognise the particular contribution of history to the teaching of national identity and the relationship to other areas which also contribute?

II. RESOURCES

12. Do your resources reflect recent research on aspects of history which can contribute to discussion of national identity?
13. Do your resources allow pupils to consider the way in which the selection of evidence, the sources available and the historians' values influence interpretations of the past?
14. Are national identities of other peoples depicted in a crude, simplistic way that depicts them as inferior?
15. Are pupils given opportunities to evaluate the portrayal of other nations depicted in resources?
16. Are some peoples or groups living within a nation state depicted as problems or valued for their positive contributions?
17. Are resources sufficiently broad in their written information and illustrations to avoid a narrow interpretation of national identity?
18. Are resources accurate and the judgments they contain properly substantiated?
19. Do resources contain evidence of offensive or crude phraseology? Is over-use made of vague generalisation?
20. Do resources use the achievements of past people to glorify and justify current power groupings in a national state?
21. Do you use a wide variety of resources which reflect different interpretations of national identities?

III. CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

22. Does your teaching allow pupils to consider the influences on the development and perpetuation of a national identity such as manipulation for political and economic reasons?
23. How do teachers determine the view of national identity possessed by the pupils?
24. How do you promote a classroom atmosphere where opinions about national identity can be freely expressed and valued?
25. How do you challenge appropriately opinions which are based on extremist views or biased information about national identities?
26. How do you promote a respect for historical evidence and the ability to analyse and criticise on matters associated with national identity?
27. Do you reflect on your own practice and identify bias, prejudice and the omission of aspects of history associated with national identity?
28. How do you evaluate your classroom practice to check whether your actions match your intentions?
29. How do you approach the teaching of national myths and legends?

IV. TEACHER TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

30. Do those training teachers and teachers themselves consider their own attitudes and values when addressing national identity issues?
31. Does teacher training and professional development provide opportunities for teachers to reflect upon issues connected with the development of national identity?

APPENDIX IV

EUROCLIO: Recommendations for the Prague Symposium

EUROCLIO, the European Standing Conference of History Teachers' Associations is enabling teachers from Europe to appreciate both the diversity and the unity of a history teaching faced with the accelerating changes which have been their experience in recent years.

We ask the Council of Europe to:

1. make national governments aware of the importance of in-service training on history teaching. Teachers are among the main agents in the process of developing mutual understanding among young people within Europe. National governments must offer opportunities for history teachers to participate in (inter)national courses, conferences and seminars for teachers and facilitate them;
2. ask national governments to offer opportunities for developing the European dimension in history education. In-service training of history teachers is of vital importance for the quality of history education, especially since the accelerating changes ask for new knowledge, approaches and methods. The development of new textbooks and other teaching materials, especially on *multiperspectivity* is important, especially for the history of the 20th Century;
3. create more opportunities for the introduction, development and implementation of new information and communication technology in classroom history education;
4. encourage national governments to include in their history curricula new teaching areas like the history of women, ethnic groups, children, human rights and mutual understanding. Encourage them to fight nationalism, xenophobia and racism in history teaching;
5. encourage national governments to strengthen their links with History Teachers' Associations which are vital partners in improving history education and mutual understanding within Europe through EUROCLIO. The partnership with History Teachers' Associations could be particularly effective in developing new programmes of study, teaching materials and in-service training which take account of the European dimension;
6. investigate specifically how the Council of Europe papers on history teaching can be disseminated more effectively to schools. At the moment, some important material does not get further than national liaison agencies. EUROCLIO may well be able to assist here;

7. stress the importance of history education in creating not only more mutual understanding, but also in the evolution of democratic values within Europe, but also point out the difficulties history educators presently face because, while the objectives of national history courses are becoming more ambitious, the time allocated to history in schools is diminishing. Methods of assessment also need to be more flexible.

APPENDIX V

Programme of the Symposium

TUESDAY 24 OCTOBER

Arrival and registration of the participants at the Hotel Olšanka

18.30 Departure of the participants from the Hotel Olšanka for the Opening Session of the Symposium at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (Rohan Palace), Karmelitská 7, Prague 1

19.00 **Plenary Session**

Opening speeches by:

- (i) the Minister of Education of the Czech Republic or his Deputy;
- (ii) Mr Maitland STOBART, Deputy Director of Education, Culture and Sport, Council of Europe;

Dinner of welcome

WEDNESDAY 25 OCTOBER

09.30 - 10.45 **Plenary Session**

Keynote address on "Mutual understanding and European history" by Professor Otto URBAN, Faculty of Philosophy, Charles University;

Discussion

10.45 - 11.15 Coffee Break

11.15 - 11.30 **Plenary Session for a presentation on the aims and outcomes of the Symposium** by Mr Maitland STOBART, Deputy Director of Education, Culture and Sport, Council of Europe

11.30 - 13.00 Working groups

13.00 - 15.00 Lunch

- (14.30 - 15.00 Meeting of the Chairs and Rapporteurs of the Working Groups with the General Rapporteur and the Secretariat)
- 15.00 - 16.30 **Plenary Session**
- Presentations on "**How do young people learn history**"? by:
- (i) Mr François AUDIGIER, French National Institute for Educational Research, Rapporteur of the Council of Europe Meeting on "Educational research on learning and teaching of history";
 - (ii) Dr Otto ZWETTLER, Faculty of Education of the Masaryk University, Brno, who will speak on the "Youth and History" Project
- Discussion
- 16.30 - 17.00 Coffee Break
- 17.00 - 18.00 Working groups
- 19.30 Dinner
- Free evening

THURSDAY 26 OCTOBER

- 09.30 - 11.00 **Plenary Session**
- Panel discussion on "**Positive mutual influences in European history**" led by:
- (i) Dr Manuela MARIN, Deputy Director of the Institute of Philology, Madrid, who will give a presentation on al-Andalus;
 - (ii) Dr Gun WESTHOLM, Deputy Director of the Historical Museum of Gotland, who will give a presentation on the Hanse;
 - (iii) Dr Helena KREJČOVÁ, Institute for Contemporary History, Czech Academy of Science, who will give a presentation on the Jews in Prague.
- Discussion

11.00 - 11.30 Coffee Break

11.30 - 13.00 Working groups

13.00 - 14.00 Lunch

14.00 - 16.30 Visit to the Jewish Quarter of Prague

16.30 - 17.00 Coffee break

17.00 - 18.30 **Plenary Session**

Panel discussion on "**Approaches to the teaching of national and European history**" led by:

- (i) Ms Susan BENNETT, Professional Officer for History, School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, United Kingdom, who will give a presentation on the conclusions of the European Teachers' Course on "The role of history in the formation of national identity" (York, 18-24 September 1995);
- (ii) Mr Paul VANDEPITTE, EUROCLIO, who will give a presentation on "Approaches to the teaching of national and European history - the views of a representative association of history teachers";
- (iii) Mr Herbert SPECHT, European Schools, who will give a presentation on "The approach of the European Schools to the history of Europe".

Discussion

(18.30 - 19.00 Meeting of the Chairs and Rapporteurs of the Working Groups with the General Rapporteur and the Secretariat)

19.00 - 20.00 Dinner

20.00 - 21.30 Working Groups

FRIDAY 27 OCTOBER

09.30 - 11.00	Working Groups
11.00 - 11.30	Coffee Break
11.30 - 13.00	Working Groups
13.00 - 14.30	Lunch
14.30 - 18.00	Free session for all participants except the General Rapporteur, the Rapporteurs of the Working Groups, and Council of Europe/Czech Ministry team (preparation of the Group Reports and General Conclusions)
18.00	Dinner
19.00	National Theatre for the Opera "Cunning Little Vixen" by Leoš Janáček

SATURDAY 28 OCTOBER

09.30 - 10.30	Plenary Session
	Presentation of the reports of the Working Groups
	Questions of clarification and comments
10.30 - 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 - 13.00	Plenary Session
	i. summing up by the General Rapporteur, Dr R. STRADLING, Deputy Head of Evaluation and Policy Studies, the National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales;
	ii. closing speeches by the representative of the Czech Ministry of Education and the Council of Europe.
13.00	Lunch
Afternoon	Bus tour of the City of Prague
19.00	Dinner

SUNDAY 29 OCTOBER

Departure of participants

12.30

Lunch

Departure of the remaining participants

APPENDIX VI

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