Council for Cultural Co-operation

"Learning and teaching about the history
of Europe in the 20th century"

Follow-up seminar

"Initial training for history teachers in thirteen member
states of the Council of Europe"

Prague, Czech Republic
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Final Report

by Maria Luisa de Bivar Black

The **Council of Europe** was founded in 1949 to achieve greater unity between European parliamentary democracies. It is the oldest of the European political institutions and has forty one member states[1], including the fifteen members of the European Union. It is the widest intergovernmental and interparliamentary organisation in Europe, and has its headquarters in Strasbourg.

With only questions relating to national defence excluded from the Council of Europe's work, the Organisation has activities in the following areas: democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms; media and communication; social and economic affairs; education, culture, heritage and sport; youth; health; environment and regional planning; local democracy; and legal co-operation.

The **European Cultural Convention** was opened for signature in 1954. This international treaty is also open to European countries that are not members of the Council of Europe, and enables them to take part in the Council's programmes on education, cultural, sport and youth. So far, forty-seven states have acceded to the European Cultural Convention: the Council of Europe's full member states plus Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Holy See and Monaco.

The **Council for Cultural Co-operation** (CDCC) is responsible for the Council of Europe's work on education and culture. Four specialised committees – the Education Committee, the Higher Education and Research Committee, the Culture Committee and the Cultural Heritage Committee help the CDCC to carry out its tasks under the European Cultural Convention. There is also a close working relationship between the CDCC and the standing conferences of specialised European ministers responsible for education, culture and the cultural heritage.

The CDCC's programmes are an integral part of the Council of Europe's work and, like the programmes in other sectors, they contribute to the Organisation's three main policy objectives for the 1990s:

-   the protection, reinforcement and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and pluralist democracy;

-   the promotion of an awareness of European identity;

-   the search for common responses to the great challenges facing European society.

The CDCC's education programme covers school, higher and adult education, as well as educational research. At present, there are projects on: education for democratic values; history; modern languages; school links and exchanges; the reform of secondary education; access to higher education; the reform of legislation on higher education in central and eastern Europe; academic mobility; and educational documentation and research.

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1. Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

Due to the very extensive theme (and sub-themes) of this seminar, this report summarises the main ideas that were debated and relates these ideas to the aims of the seminar and the problems that were mentioned in relation to IT (initial training).

The general aims of the seminar were: *(1)* to recognise and evaluate the results of the comparative study of IT for history teachers in the thirteen participating countries; *(2)* to show the most positive and developed systems of IT in some of these countries as examples and inspiration for those countries that are striving to build up a better model of IT; *(3)* to discuss and develop new attitudes and new concepts of IT for the future training of European history teachers; and *(4)* to prepare new concepts, ideas or essential working materials for a future publication on IT for history teachers.

In very general terms, we should point out that we were committed to establishing how the specific field of IT relates to one of the fundamental aims of the Council of Europe, namely the promotion of tolerance, mutual understanding and democracy.

With regard to the first aim of recognising and evaluating the results of the comparative study on IT:

- Alois Ecker, Christa Donnermair and Heinz Strotzka presented the results of a comprehensive comparative study, based on a long questionnaire that not all the members had answered;

- there were also five presentations of the precise and focused comparative analysis linked to the specific reports of the Vienna seminar working groups;

- the comprehensive comparative study is, for the time being, a pilot analysis that needs further development;

- it was agreed that this study could become a good instrument for all countries that are facing or will face reform in the near future;

- the working groups were encouraged to debate the questionnaire and define the most relevant issues of IT, and also the issues that should be further compared on a European level;

- during the debate that followed the presentation of the comparative study, its potential was stressed and it was suggested that some of its results data be compared with the results of the project on "Youth and history"[2].
- the authors of this study were aware of the methodological problems facing them and of the difficulties involved in the analysis they were undertaking.

In relation to the second aim of showing the most positive and developed systems of IT as examples and as inspiration:

- in the five presentations of the reports of the Vienna working groups, based on a more restrictive and focused comparative analysis, it was not possible to come up with an example of the most positive and developed system of IT;

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2. *Youth and history - a comparative European survey on historical consciousness and political attitudes among adolescents*, eds. Angvik and Bodo von Borries, Volume A - Description; Volume B - Documents (Edition Korber-Stiftung, 1997).

- these presentations stressed the diversity and similarities existing in the different countries and showed these as very brief case studies to exemplify both unique and very common situations. All of the presentations contained conclusions and suggested recommendations or questions for further debate by the working groups.

Group I - models of IT/entrance requirements
Presentation by the co-ordinator: Julieta Savova

Throughout Europe all IT is institutionalised but in different organisational structures. The main models are consecutive and concurrent and the length of IT depends on the model adopted. The main organisations involved in IT are universities and polytechnic institutes, plus a variety of training institutions.

Selection procedures and policies are unavoidable, but the group stressed that they should be relevant to the contents of IT and to the job. There is a general admission policy that determines the selection procedures, which are applied upon entrance to the university and, in some cases, also (in addition to), at the beginning of professional training or at the end of it. The selection procedures may be either in written or in oral form, though the written form of selection is more common.

The multicultural dimension of today's societies and globalisation have a positive impact on the educational systems and enhances reform. Nevertheless, IT should pay special attention to information and communication technologies so that history teachers will be confident in using different resources and the new information technology.

The major function of history teachers (that is their job description) – their autonomy, their profile – needs to be very clearly defined and only after this is done should entrance requirements be established.

Admission policies depend on the degree of centralisation of the educational system and on the autonomy that is given to the teacher.

IT and INSET should be combined and teachers aware of the importance of lifelong learning.

During the working group sessions these issues were further debated.

The main conclusion was that evidence suggested that the concurrent model was favoured by eastern European countries, whilst the consecutive model was most usually adopted by the western European countries, naturally with variations. For some in the west there seemed to be a movement away from the consecutive to the concurrent. The choice of a model is often a reflection of the historical traditions of educational systems and education establishments of each country.

The main recommendations were the following:

- whatever the chosen model, its aim should be the thorough integration of academic, pedagogical and practical competencies and it should allow for a coherent student experience.

- the future work of the Council of Europe might provide opportunities for collaborative, comparative research and analysis into the effectiveness of the different models of IT – consecutive and concurrent. The findings of this research would allow IT to make the most effective use of their chosen/inherited model.

- a European network of history teacher trainers should be developed, which could provide key-issue seminars, workshops, sharing and exchange of ideas, and stimulate practical and continuous international co-operation.

Group II: - institutional links - partnership models
Presentation by the co-ordinator: Christa Donnermair

All countries have established more or less developed links between different institutions. The degree of existing co-operation between institutions depends on the type of institution, as one of their common characteristics is diversity. There is general agreement on the importance of school-based training and this assumption is the basis of all institutional links.

The example of the United Kingdom was mentioned because of its uniqueness. The contract between the higher education institution and the school is flexible, locally designed and includes precise specifications. The Office for Standards in Education and the Teacher Training Agency grade and rank the institutions.

In order to establish school links that are effective, the report advised training institutions to define their aims and objectives – paying attention to teacher motivation and the expectation of the parents, to clearly establish the model of co-operation with the school and to clearly design the specifications of the co-operation. During the working group sessions these questions were further debated.

The main conclusion was that if effective teacher training is to take place, it is important to establish strong links between the various parties.

The main recommendations were:

- history education institutions should have partnerships with more then one school, to allow for a broader student experience;

- the notion of links and partnerships might be extended to include those involved in INSET; IT could benefit from their experience as it is one point in the continuum of teachers' learning and development;

- the key role of teachers in IT needs to be given full recognition by the educational structures and teachers should be provided with the circumstances and support within schools to enable them to carry out their roles effectively;

- training institutions should make full use of the available information technologies to strengthen their links with schools, and they should be given the support and opportunities they need to enable them to do this;

- the Council of Europe's future work should encourage active collaboration between academic historians (including those not involved in teaching trainee teachers), academic history pedagogues and school history teachers (on an international level) in the interest of all parties in both the training of effective history teachers and in developing young people's interest in the learning of history.

Group III - History teachers in multicultural countries
Presentation by the co-ordinator: Joke van der Leew-Roord

This report disseminated the results of a recent study on different aspects of history teaching based on a questionnaire done on a European level and was also based on the inputs of the multicultural experience of the countries involved in this group.

There was focus on how the curricula of secondary schools in different countries covered some issues, which are relevant to the multicultural question. Those issue are: the building of national identity; heritage as a key-concept; the space for national history; the history of migrants and minority groups, and teaching about national heroes.

The general conclusion was that there was very little attention or space given to multicultural teaching. In fact, multicultural teaching depends highly on the interest of the teachers and the economy of the local communities.

In reference to IT, the report stressed that much had to be done to make history teachers aware of and to work in a multicultural environment. It would be advisable to promote activities on multicultural learning in the curricula and whenever possible involve minority or migrant teachers.

It is interesting to point out that some of the main questions of this report have direct relevance to the project "Learning and teaching about the history of Europe in the 20th century", namely the themes of population movements and nationalism.

During the debate that followed, it was agreed that multicultural education still needed much reflection but it was stressed that in reference to IT it was clear that the need to interrelate selection procedures to the content of ITT should also include the multicultural dimension. During the working group sessions these questions were further debated. **The main conclusion** was the general acceptance of the need to develop multicultural teaching, both in IT and schools.

The main recommendations were:

- that all teacher training programs should at least offer courses in multicultural awareness and teaching;

- future work of the Council of Europe might allow a sharing of good practice in this aspect of IT, to provide those trainers committed to this area of teaching with examples of effective programmes;

- academic historians should be encouraged to research the history of ethnic groups, especially where that history helps to explain the present and shows the shared history of communities now living together.

Group IV - academic and practical competencies
Presentation by the co-ordinator: Elka Drosneva

This report informed extensively about similarities and differences of IT models and stressed that, in order to develop the competencies of the history teacher, a job description of the history teacher was an urgent first step. This description would bring about and enhance reflection (and decision-making) on competencies, methods and styles of training, institutions for IT and balance between academic competencies and practice. The report also established a very detailed and extensive list of competencies for the working groups to develop. During the working group sessions these questions were further debated.

The main conclusion was the general agreement on the competencies of a history teacher – academic and practical – and a general concern with the methods of organising and addressing those competencies.

The main recommendations were targeted at teacher trainers and would possibly serve as guidelines to IT:

- there should be good integration between the different types of competencies;

- practical competencies should take place in a range of schools;

- promoting a single model of an effective teacher should be avoided;

- recognition of the differences of the trainee students, their own qualities and strengths and the inclusion of those differences in the structuring of the training programmes would enable individual progression;

- IT trainers should not overwhelm the trainees with the competencies required, but they should encourage trainees to realise that they are beginning teachers and that their expectations of achievement should remain realistic;

- there should be further collaboration between IT trainers to discuss the assessment of student-teacher competence (who assesses? how? by what criteria? and the place of national standards in the accreditation of qualified teacher status).

Group V - The training of the trainers
Presentation by the co-ordinator: Maria Luisa de Bivar Black

This report focused on university IT and its first conclusion was that there is no systematic policy for the training of teacher trainers.

The main question used as a starting point for reflection on this subject was whether it was possible to improve the didactic qualifications of teacher trainers by special courses, such as INSET and so forth. This question was then linked to the image/status of the teacher trainer and the emerging idea was that teacher training was, for the time being, seen as an occupation within the teaching profession and therefor the training of trainers was not considered a priority issue.

It was further pointed out that there was no career for teacher trainers and the activity they developed, though very complex and specialised, was not recognised as a full credited/qualified profession. The attention that was given to the training of the teacher trainers depended on the perception of the activity they developed.

This report was further debated and the questions that it raised were considered to be important. The principle conclusion of the plenary debate was that there was a need to create a structure to enable the recognition of the teacher trainer's professional activity and further develop the framework of this activity. During the working group sessions these questions were further debated.

The main conclusion was that there were significant deficiencies when it came to training for teacher trainers and that even in countries where IT was highly centralised and where there were rigorous and ongoing priorities, evaluation, inspection and assessment of IT against national criteria, such as in the United Kingdom and France, there was very little systematic or formalised training of teacher trainers. In consequence, there was a consensus on the need to enhance the professional status of trainers and to look towards the increasing professionalisation of teacher trainers.

The main recommendations were:

- the establishment of history teachers' educator organisations on a national level;
- the establishment of such organisations on a European level.

 This type of organisation would enable trainers to:

- to support each other in their work;
- to share and exchange examples of practices;
- to allow for in-house INSET; and
- to allow for co-operation on research and projects.

In relation to the two remaining aims (to discuss and develop new attitudes and new concepts of IT of the future training of European history teachers and, to prepare the new concepts, ideas or essential working materials for the publication on IT of history teachers in the future), Alois Ecker explained how the work would be developed and what was expected of the co-ordinators, and that from February onwards the editorial work should be carried out with a view to publication.

Carole Reich also explained how the Council of Europe would manage the different aspects of the project and how the project group would have to centralise the final report, recommendations and guidelines during second half of year 2000.

On the basis of the recommendations of the two working groups, the following guidelines for action on the different themes debated in this seminar were drawn up.

Training of history teachers:

- special publications on training issues;

- re-evaluation of national policies on teacher training for history teachers;

- prioritising teacher training issues;

- permanent evaluation of the quality of teacher training;

- elaboration of criteria, indicators system for evaluation of the quality of teacher training;

- evaluation (re-evaluation) of the content of selection procedures;

- permanent up-dating of TT courses;

- evaluation of professional requirements;

- employment of a variety of forms of effective institutional communication;

- systematic studies/research on the quality of history teacher training;

- identifying example of good practice – criteria for identification.

Multicultural issues and history teaching:

- curriculum evaluation (re-evaluation);

- place and extent of multicultural issues presented in the programmes (textbooks);

- subject inter-relations in the light of multicultural environment and teaching history;

History teacher's competency:

- evaluation of the place of academic and professional training in the curriculum; content of the programmes;

- evaluation of practical training;

- identification of successes and failures in developing the competencies;

- team work;

- problem solving situations;

- using the experience of others;

- up-dating of the description of history teacher;

- ideal profile of history teacher's analysis;

- innovation and experimentation approaches;

- trainees needs assessment;

- qualification analysis;

- up-dating curriculum and content of the courses;

- project work orientations;

- participation in variety of projects for history teachers.

IV. Training of history teacher trainers

- identification of the responsible bodies for training;

- creation of organisation patterns for training;

- publication on teacher trainers' issues;

- new information technology for training purposes;

- attainment targets;

- differentiation of the competencies.

V. Social status of history teachers

- establishment of stable relations between the institutions concerned with social status of history teacher;

- intensive inter-institutional communication;

- opening of the possibilities for up-grading history teacher qualification and promotion chances;

- professional and students' groups support;

- development of strategies to draw the media's attention to history teacher concerns.

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