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Out of the Broken Mirror: Learning for Reconciliation Through Multi-perspective History Teaching in Southeast Europe

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OUT OF THE BROKEN MIRROR: LEARNING FOR RECONCILIATION THROUGH MULTI-PERSPECTIVE HISTORY TEACHING IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead, American anthropologist.

A USAID evaluation of the regional development of Alternative Educational Materials for Multi-perspective History Teaching 2002-2005, as part of the Joint History Project (JHP) of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE).

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Executive Summary

Background and Methodology

The Joint History Project (JHP) has been an on-going social, political and educational initiative of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) aimed at informed, significant, and realistic change in historical research and education in all countries in Southeast Europe (SEE). USAID has been a key CDRSEE donor, providing support for regional development and English language publication of the multi-perspective History Workbooks, alternative teaching materials for history teachers at primary and secondary schools (2002-2005). USAID also funded the publication and translation of the Workbooks into local languages in Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina (2005-2008).

This evaluation is intended to provide an analytical review of the conceptual, developmental and training aspects of the JHP, particularly the regional development of the History Workbooks from 2002-2005. This period bridges the initial three-year phase of conceptual, research, and proposal work (1999-2001) and the follow-up phase of developing local language editions and actively promoting the Workbooks among teachers (2005-2009). The evaluation was conducted between August and November 2009, in close cooperation with the CDRSEE. The evaluation approach required solicitation and compilation of critical feedback from a diverse group of stakeholders involved in different stages of the JHP's development. The methodology of the study consisted of semi-structured interviews (in person or via phone) with 39 respondents from SEE countries involved in the JHP, in addition to an extensive research and review of JHP background documents and publications.

Evolution of the Joint History Project (1998-2001)

The SEE Joint History Project of the CDRSEE is an initiative which emerged in the late 1990s out of a growing concern among open-minded historians, educators, civil activists, and philanthropists about the status of history education in the Balkan region, and as a part of the broader European debate on the abuse of history education. In contrast to the prevailing "broken mirror" of divided Balkan historical narratives that reproduce stereotypes among younger generations, the JHP offers a new joint approach of comparative and multi-perspective history teaching.

The JHP is based on the belief that changes in how history is presented and taught are brought about by motivated individuals rather than impersonal institutions. It is therefore important to nurture and sustain a Balkan community of critical thinkers (researchers, educators, and teachers) who embrace a multi-perspective approach. This community can influence the future of the region by developing future generations of critically thinking citizens cognizant of their shared past and "immune" to nationalistic manipulations of interpretations of history.

The JHP concept was shaped by systematically facilitating sets of regional, issue-based discussion groups between 1999-2001 that set the agenda, mapped the problems, and developed a proposal for action and the means of verifying it with teachers. These discussions resulted in several key publications and a joint platform for action to implement the developed concept.

Development of the History Workbooks 2002-2005

Development of the Joint History Workbooks was guided by a bottom-up approach. The JHP is based on the premise that introducing comparative methods and pluralistic historical sources into the classroom will change the prevailing nationalist paradigm of teaching “only our truth.” But this cannot be accomplished solely through the revision of textbooks. Teachers are the primary interpreters of history in classrooms. Change depends on their ability to apply modern methods of teaching that will stimulate students’ independent thinking based on understanding of multi-perspective views of history.

Rather than waiting for education policies and official textbooks to change, the JHP rapidly responded to teachers’ requests by creating the History Workbooks as practical supplemental teaching materials with diverse sources and perspectives from the different countries in the region. The follow up task was to translate the Workbooks into local languages and to design and implement training for teachers on how to adopt a new multi-perspective teaching method. Both tasks were guided by the strategic assumption that developing a critical mass of teachers who apply this new teaching method will bring about gradual change within educational system.

The History Workbooks focus on four subject areas that are a part of school curriculums throughout the region: The Ottoman Empire, Nations and the States, the Balkan Wars, and World War II. Each Workbook provides resources (both text and images) that are absent from the official textbooks – a wide selection of original accounts of events in Balkan history from the perspectives of various people and groups coming from different strata in the countries in the region. In this way, they serve as practical tools for teaching comparative history, drawing on diverse historical sources. The Workbooks were drafted by a writing team of 20 people (a general editor, five Workbook editors and 14 contributors) coming from different countries in the region. The drafts were tested and further refined through four workshops with over 40 teachers from across the region.

Participants in this phase indicated during interviews that the process of developing the Workbooks was very effective, given that it was based on value-driven objectives and had enabled productive dialogue between diverse participants from all countries represented. Involvement of high profile academics ensured quality research, while participation of teachers provided linkage to the actual practice of teaching, thus enhancing the Workbooks’ pedagogic value.

Interviewees considered the History Workbooks to be unique, in that the publications were both the result of a regional consensus (“a small miracle” given that they were completed in only two years), and useful tools for implementing innovative new approaches to teaching history. For teachers, the primary added value is that the Workbooks provide direct access to historical resources from every country in the region which would otherwise be unavailable through their current textbooks. Teachers and researchers also believe that the interactive and engaging lessons provided in the Workbooks have the potential to stimulate students’ imaginations and to develop their ability to think critically and empathize with the views expressed by individuals or groups from the other countries involved in a conflict.

Outcomes and Impacts

- (1) **Internationally, the History Workbooks have become effective advocacy tools** for further raising awareness and putting on the EU policy agenda the importance of multi-perspective history teaching in promoting reconciliation.

- (2) **The History Workbooks have supported national advocacy to endorse a new approach to history teaching.** In the past five years, the Workbooks have been translated into seven languages of the region. The CDRSEE and their in-country partners (NGOs or individuals) have urged their governments to endorse the initiative, but “buy-in” is inconsistent. Government responses have often consisted of promises for support with little to no follow up; some individual and very few institutional endorsements; and shifting commitments depending on whether ministers in each successive administration are inclined toward or opposed to change.
- (3) **The Joint History Project has started growing local support for multi-perspective history teaching.** The JHP provided training to more than 700 teachers in seven countries. Teachers who have used the Workbooks in the classroom report increasing interest from the students in discovering differing ways of reflecting on historic events and experiencing new interactive forms of class work. The CDRSEE together with local partners has also successfully put on the public agenda a dialogue for a new multi-perspective approach to history education. In the environment in which the Workbooks were compiled, open debate on history is either avoided or presented only as divided monologues dominated by nationalist rhetoric.
- (4) **It is critical that the JHP work continue in order to sustain achievements and impacts, especially in the current context of nationalism that still exists in the region.** In the past 10 years, the JHP has taken significant steps toward shaping the future of history education in the SEE region by developing a method and platform for innovation – the History Workbooks – and by growing core groups of teachers trained in its method. However, too many generations have been growing up with different nationalistic propaganda, and that thinking will not change overnight.

Lessons and Observations

The Joint History Project is a unique initiative that has successfully mobilized the expertise and civic energy of an expanding network of researchers and teachers from the countries in SEE. This network has helped to put a multi-perspective approach of teaching history on the educational and public agenda and raise awareness about the importance of such education for national reconciliation. The JHP also provides broader lessons for stimulating programming in the area of democracy and reconciliation:

- (1) **Comparative and multi-perspective teaching of history is considered an effective instrument for assisting reconciliation efforts in conflict-affected regions.** The JHP experience indicates that it is better to start joint history work on topics from a relatively distant historical past, as shared interpretation of still active or recent conflicts or wars is difficult if not impossible. Commonalities and shared past – history and culture, as well as joint suffering from mutual conflicts—exist even in the regions most divided by past conflicts. The comparison of historical events from a variety of perspectives helps to demystify the national historical narrative of “only one truth” and replace the interpretation of past conflicts through a lens of “moral superiority or victimization”. Hearing opposing viewpoints helps students to develop critical thinking skills and to understand the complexity of conflicts, how they emerge, and how they affect the different sides involved.
- (2) **To maximize impact, support needs to be planned as part of a longer funded project that provides for participatory processes involving expanding circles of diverse participants from both the academic and teaching communities.** These activities are an essential part of the confidence-building effort itself. In the case of the JHP, the preparatory work took three years of systematic issue-based discussions and publications; the development of the History Workbooks and

multi-perspective teaching methods took another two years. Involving teachers as key stakeholders in the development process rather than merely as target audiences was critical to the success of the initiative.

(3) To be effective, such initiatives need to be locally driven, rather than donor initiated.

A core group of local initiators with a high level of professionalism in research, teaching, and inspirational leadership can energize an expanding community of teachers, researchers and civic activists in the different countries affected by past conflicts. The JHP has built a dynamic system of values, people and processes. It is not confined within an NGO or other project as is the case with a number of regional initiatives. Instead, it is based on a broader understanding of civil society that brings academics, researchers, and teachers together with the NGOs to effect real change.

(4) Building capacity of teachers in interactive teaching methodology and comparative approaches needs to continue. First, the number of teachers involved in interactive training in the SEE countries needs to expand. Second, **work needs to continue with the teachers already trained, both on country and regional levels to discuss teaching experiences and develop and share model lessons.** Interviewed teachers stated that in addition to training and pedagogical discussions, they will benefit from methodological guides (printed and visual) that demonstrate the practice of a multi-perspective method and model lessons.

(5) It is important to keep the regional network linkage strong and to revitalize the regional strategic asset of the JHP. Current funding tendencies have “fragmented” SEE into sub regions of donors’ priorities or country-focused activities. Support for true regional civil society initiatives is limited. If it is difficult to organize regional meetings involving all countries from SEE, smaller, issue-based meetings of participants from at least two or three countries should be organized, especially in tension or conflict areas. Issue-based discussions and workshops with researchers and teachers from different countries in the region will foster the practice of multi-perspective teaching and further strengthen the JHP impact.

Introduction

Purpose, Scope, and Methodology of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide an analytical review of the conceptual, developmental and learning aspects of the JHP, by exploring the regional development process for the History Workbooks (2002-2005). Within the JHP, this phase bridged the initial three-year conceptual, research and strategy development work and the development of local language editions and their promotion among teachers.

Specifically, the objectives of the evaluation were (a) to document and analyze the development and implementation of the JHP; (b) to identify best practices and lessons learned (both positive and negative), taking into account as appropriate the specific socio-cultural and/or political circumstances; (c) to articulate general lessons and approaches, based on the insights gained, that could be applied to other regional and cultural settings; (d) to describe the impact (or types and levels of impacts) of this activity to date on the participating textbook authors and teachers trained during the workshops devoted to the development of the English-language Workbooks.

The evaluation was carried out between August and November 2009 in close cooperation with the CDRSEE. Our approach was based on facilitating critical reflection of the various stakeholders involved in development of the JHP and implementation of the History Workbooks. Due to the complexity of the initiative and our limited knowledge as outsiders, the approach and methodology were gradually revised based on our interactions with participants in the study and the feasibility of obtaining existing data. More concretely, this approach supported our mandate to outline, where possible, the outcomes and impacts of a process that occurred half-way through an ongoing program. Throughout the evaluation process, on-going support and communication with the CDRSEE was critical for the Evaluation Team in gathering information, shaping the focus, and learning from JHP challenges and achievements. The Team thanks the CDRSEE management and former and current staff, as well as all the participants in the Joint History Project who, despite busy schedules, found the time to assist this evaluation study by providing their thoughtful input regarding shared lessons and the practice of this initiative throughout SEE.

Our approach to this task was based on three main considerations:

- **The History Workbooks as active products of an ongoing process and project.** The Workbooks are not the end product of a project as the JHP is continuing its work. Many of the individuals (researchers and teachers) who were involved in the process five years ago were also involved in the follow up processes regionally or in SEE countries. Naturally, most of the views expressed in the interviews regarding outcomes and impacts at different levels encompassed a scope broader than the development process five years ago;
- **The nature of evaluating a project component which is part of an ongoing initiative.** This evaluation documents and assesses a four-year key activity that occurred in the middle of a 10-year program, and it serves as background for a USAID impact assessment that will look further into the outcomes and impacts of the past five years;
- **The need to adapt the instruments of the study in accordance with our learning about the JHP.** Adaptability became important as constraints to data collection presented themselves. For example, the initial approach to solicit responses from the 41 teachers who

participated in the 2003 workshops through a written survey turned out to be ineffective. Most of these teachers participated only in these assessment workshops, carried out six years ago and for this reason the contact data provided by the CDRSEE was not updated.

Approach and Data Collection Methods

The analytical nature of this outcome review required an approach that facilitated critical reflection of key stakeholders involved on the initial assumptions and expectations, perceived outcomes and their meaning within the JHP objectives, the lessons emerging from practice and their broader applicability. The study was done in close cooperation with the CDRSEE to identify best approach and most precise sample of people to be interviewed.

The main methods of information gathering included:

- Extensive document review of project documentation and key publications of the JHP, as well as other relevant research.
- Semi-structured interviews with 39 key participants in the JHP (mostly by phone and some in person).
- Written survey sent to 41 teachers participating in the History Workbooks assessment workshops in 2003, as requested by the technical directions. Due to a low response, this was later supplemented by additional interviews with eight of the 41 teachers who participated in one or more of the workshops in 2003. Two no longer taught in schools, and four have been using the Workbooks on an on-going basis (two in Croatia, one in Greece, and one in Bulgaria).
- Review of secondary data to obtain additional views from the teachers' perspective – teachers' evaluations at the end of the training in the different countries done in the next phase (2005-2009), as well as follow-up email messages from 15 teachers from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and the Republic of Macedonia sent to the CDRSEE in the first months after the training in their countries (mostly late in 2008 and the first half of 2009).¹

Based on the review of project reports and CDRSEE interviews, we have identified six groups of key respondents: 1) CDRSEE key staff and team leaders; 2) CDRSEE Board Members, History Education Committee members and Academic Committee members; 3) History Workbooks research team; 4) readers and reviewers of the English version of the Workbooks; 5) coordinators and regional country partners; and 6) teachers workshop participants. Questions were developed according to the role each group played in the project. In some cases, the survey questions were adapted in the process of the interviews to reflect the multiple project roles of the 39 respondents. Methodology and instruments for the study are explained in more detail in Annex II (the evaluation plan for the study).

Report Structure

This report follows the main aspects of the task of this evaluation as described in the Technical Directions (SOW), as well as the nature of the study as described above. **Section One** looks at the context in which the JHP emerged and outlines the key steps that shaped the focus and central concept

¹ The assessments were done at the end of each workshop in all countries to get the teachers perspectives on level of applicability of the workbooks and the effectiveness of the training workshops. Tabulated answers and summarized overviews of the teacher training workshops assessments for some of the countries are available on the CDRSEE website.

of the initiative. As requested, the examination of the phases proceeding the period of this study was necessary to provide a better understanding of the JHP and the strategic meaning of the History Workbooks development. The decision to develop alternative teaching materials was the direct result of the analytical work completed during the first two years of the JHP and a key goal to test the feasibility of the JHP concept of social change through bottom-up teacher-oriented activities. **Section Two** addresses the effectiveness of the process of developing the four History Workbooks as a regional effort between 2002 and 2005. It outlines the key strategies of the JHP, as well as the organization and effectiveness of the initiative's implementation. **Section Three** looks at the different levels of outcomes and emerging impacts from the JHP, particularly from the History Workbooks as a regional process and product. **Section Four** discusses lessons learned from the JHP experience that can serve programming and applications in other regions.

Background

The Joint History Project (JHP) is a long-term initiative of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE), with a stated goal of achieving informed, significant, and realistic change in historical research and education in the countries of Southeast Europe (SEE). The JHP is the core project of the CDRSEE, and has evolved into an on-going and open-ended educational, social and political program with a growing number of projects and initiatives supported by a variety of donors since its establishment in 1998. The countries that have been involved in the JHP are: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Greece, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey.

The idea and implementation of the Joint History Project in SEE evolved in three stages:

- **Stage one, the conceptual stage (1998-2001)** of the JHP, consisted of a two-year in-depth regional assessment of history education in Southeast Europe and formulation of the concept and approach for multi-perspective history teaching. Activities included seven regional workshops to analyze history textbooks used in schools throughout the region and seven teacher-training workshops. The assessment of history education was published in the final report, "Clio in the Balkans: The Politics of History Education." The idea for developing alternative teaching packs for history teaching stemmed from the participation of the training teachers.
- **The second stage (September 2002-2005)** involved regional development and publication of the History Workbooks in English. This stage involved intensive drafting, assessing, publishing and disseminating the English version of four History Workbooks on the following topics: The Balkan Wars, The Ottoman Empire, The Second World War, and the Nations and States in Southeast Europe. Activities included joint research and development of the four Workbooks (gathering, selecting, and translating materials from languages of various SEE countries into English); four regional workshops in 2003 with teachers from all participating countries to assess and provide feedback on each of the Workbooks as part of their finalization; review of the Workbooks by a team of critical readers, and editing and printing of the four Workbooks.
- **The third stage (2005-present)** included the translation of the History Workbooks into seven local languages of the SEE countries and their proactive promotion throughout the region through capacity building outreach to local teachers. Activities in each of the countries included identifying local partner organizations or coordinators to provide implementation, dissemination and outreach support; translation and review of local language versions; publication and public

presentation; and training of local teachers to use the materials. Funding for this stage comes from multiple donors as a result of the effective fundraising and promotion work of the CDRSEE.

USAID has been a key donor of the CDRSEE, providing support for the regional development and publication in English of the multi-perspective History Workbooks for history teachers at the primary and secondary schools (2002-2005) and funding for their local language translation and publication in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (2005-2008).

From Research to Action: The Birth and Evolution of the JHP Concept (1998-2001)

Why a Joint History Project?

The SEE JHP emerged in the late 1990s out of growing concerns among open-minded historians, educators, civic activists and philanthropists from the region regarding the presentation of history in education. Telling the story of historical events shapes the narrative of ensuing history and often legitimizes and reproduces contentious political and social relations in Southeast Europe. The “broken mirror” of divided and conflicting Balkan historical narratives has often been the nurturing ground for sustaining nationalistic feuds.

The search for a new approach to teaching history became a question of immediate concern, especially given the context of the vulnerable 1990s when fresh wounds of the wars followed the break-up of Yugoslavia and a variety of unresolved disputes, waking conflicts or sleeping tensions appeared to be rooted in Balkan history and its interpretation over time. Progressive researchers and civic activists started an intensive debate on the role of history education: Which versions of history are being retold and which ones are being left out? How do we teach history, and what are the implications of historical narratives of the Balkan past in shaping the future of South East Europe?

Interview respondents and early publications of the Joint History Project such as “Clio in the Balkans: The Politics of Education,”² indicate that the need to revisit the history of the Balkans and the way it is taught has been linked to several developments in the area of history education both in Europe and in the SEE region in particular.

First, the debate about the teaching of history in the Balkans was part of a broader European debate on history education, which had been evolving for decades. In part, it was inspired by successful initiatives among European states for revising textbook history as a reconciliation and peace education effort, such as the Franco German and German Polish textbook commissions. These initiatives, as well as the groundbreaking work of the Georg Eckert Institute in Braunschweig, Germany for analyses and debates on history textbooks in Europe served as a catalyst for discussions on a new approach to addressing conflicts and dealing with the past in SEE.³ Another aspect of the European history education discourse was rooted in the search for a European identity. Immigration and labor mobility led to increasing diversity within European countries, and the concept of multiculturalism and ethno-cultural education methods were introduced to the educational agenda of the 1980s⁴.

Second, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 brought the countries of Central and Eastern Europe into the debate. For many of these countries, paths to democracy were also led by the drive to “get back into Europe.” The transition to democracy brought a new intensity to the on-going discourse surrounding

² CDRSEE, “Clio in the Balkans: The Politics of History Education,” http://www.cdsee.org/publications_clio.html (accessed December 30, 2009).

³ Georg Eckert Institute is a leading international center for comparative textbook research and has numerous initiatives and publications in that area, as well as one of the richest libraries in Europe in this field. <http://www.gei.de/en/georg-eckert-institute-for-international-textbook-research.html>

⁴ Some of the broad tendencies of development of the stages of the debate on education and dealing with diversity that have led to the ideas of multi-perspective history teaching are described in-depth in the publication of Dr. Robert Stradling. “Multiperspectivity in History Teaching: A Guide for Teachers”. Council of Europe, 2003.

history and education. For Western Europe, “the return of the Balkans” meant the new challenge of dealing with diversity - of differing cultures, languages, and religions. It also demonstrated the potency of nationalist ideologies to distort history as justification for reigniting conflicts.

For the “newcomers” – the post-communist countries – the fall of the Berlin Wall created the need to revise history textbooks and eliminate the ideological layers of communist interpretations of history. The process of changing history textbooks differed in approach and intensity among the countries of the region, as well as within each country. But among the diversity of approaches, changing history textbooks was ultimately a process that carried with it a re-defined political message. For most of the countries, a fresh look at the national past meant absconding from the “looking East” agenda that predominated for decades and embracing the new democracy agendas of “returning back to the West.”⁵ This change of direction in the interpretation of national histories resulted in either limitation or complete loss of representations of a long heritage of interaction, cultural exchange, and mutual influence within the common history of the region. The only “meeting points” presented in the history lessons were conflicts and wars. How they were presented in the numerous new versions of history textbooks differed among countries and within countries, reflecting the level of political shifts in the discourse of history interpretation.

Based on the interviews, the change of history textbooks in the countries emerging after the dissolution of Yugoslavia, in the early 1990s is one example that illustrates the influence of politics on curriculum development. First Serbia and Croatia and later Bosnia-Herzegovina developed new history textbooks. Textbooks were characterized by an ethnocentric paradigm that serves the interests of the national elites. According to several key respondents: “This was a process of changing the past, to put the present wars into a particular historical context”; it involved dismissing evidence of connections and positive relations among ex-Yugoslav peoples and emphasizing conflicts and division; it was based on victimization (especially in Serbia) – “our people, who are historically just, but surrounded by enemies” – and a gradual creation of national mythology and paranoid images. The main approach involved selecting some historical facts and ignoring others in order to justify history as the “inevitable destiny” of continuity of conflicts. This approach resulted in three histories with completely different interpretations of historical facts and even differences in chronology where it seemed that all these people did not interact historically except for through fights. These alarming trends spurred on the civic response of historians and emerging civil society organizations. For example, in Serbia, the fight against this propaganda approach of “controlling the past to control the present” became a part of the civic action of progressive intellectuals who have developed alternative publications about the dangers of patriotic education based on conflict and used to justify new interpretations of history.⁶

For SEE countries that were not part of the Soviet bloc, the intense changes of the 1990s reopened the need to revise ethnocentric historical discourse focused on their own national greatness (Greece and Turkey), or the continued divided historical narrative, both as an outcome and an instrument for blocked conflict resolution (Cyprus).

Politically, the 1990s also brought the increasing international attention to and assistance for projects addressing regional cooperation as an instrument for reconciliation and stability in the region. History

⁵ Christina Koulouri. Introduction, *The Tyranny of History. Teaching History in SEE*, (Thessaloniki: CDRSEE, 2001), p.19.

⁶ The Center of Antiwar Action in Serbia led by Vesna Pešić launched the project to analyze the educational function of the new textbooks for elementary schools, published in the early 1990s, including representation of history and historic events, and promotion of socializing patterns. It resulted in the publication of “*Warfare, Patriotism, Patriarchy: The Analysis of Elementary School Textbooks*” (1994) (Serbian, English). Dubravka Stojanović, “History Textbooks Mirror Their Time.” *Warfare, Patriotism, Patriarchy*, 81-110.

teaching as an instrument for reconciliation was high on the priority list of EU initiatives such as The Graz Process⁷ (1998), which focused on supporting and coordinating educational projects in the region as part of promoting democratic development in SEE. The Stability Pact for Southeast Europe, established in 1999, formed a special Working Group on “History and History Teaching,” within the Task Force Education and Youth Working Table I: “Democratization and Human Rights.” This history workgroup, coordinated by the Council of Europe, stimulated a number of cooperative initiatives and projects in the area of history teaching.⁸

The late 1990s was a time when numerous projects that aided in the democratization of history teaching emerged in the Balkans. These initiatives became a meeting point for active groups of progressive historians and educators from the region along with well-established institutes and organizations in Europe. A number of interesting projects were developed through the Georg Eckert Institute in Braunschweig, as well as the European-based platform of history teachers like EUROCLIO – European Association of History Educators, which also assisted in assembling and strengthening associations of history teachers in the different countries in the region.⁹ Expanding opportunities for support from the outside and increasing activism among progressive historians and educators in the region resulted in a number of significant publications and emerging new practices.

The Council of Europe supported a number of initiatives, among them a collaborative development with the OSCE of official textbooks for postwar Bosnia. Other projects such as the Council of Europe’s, “Learning and Teaching about the History of Europe in the 20th Century” (1997-2001), focused on developing innovative teaching resources for secondary schools and has led to the adoption of a Recommendation(2001)15 of the Committee of Ministers on history teaching in twenty-first-century Europe. It is considered the first, and currently the only European instrument in the area of history education that clearly sets multi-perspectivity as a leading methodological principle of history teaching in a democratic and pluralist Europe and positions history teaching to develop responsible and active citizens.¹⁰

The JHP emerged from this environment as a result of the European debate on history and as a catalyst for new, regionally-based discussions on the multi-perspective history teaching method. As noted in most of the interviews, two aspects of the JHP make it unique among the various efforts that address inadequacies in history teaching. First, it includes all of the countries in Southeast Europe and second, it is a regionally-initiated effort toward a joint response by the historians from the different countries to change the future of history teaching. The JHP approach for shaping this new positive response was based on mobilizing assets from within the region to optimize support from the outside. Another leading principle in the JHP approach was expanding partnership with all actors working to develop new approaches to history teaching, including most of the initiatives mentioned above.

Shaping the Idea

The idea for the JHP stemmed from the commitment of the founders of the CDRSEE, representing a variety of backgrounds, expertise and shared spirit of critical thinking and social engagement with the issues of the region. The JHP is also rooted in the history of the creation of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in SEE. The movement that stimulated the establishment of the CDRSEE started in

⁷ With more countries joining the Graz Process, it has been renamed the Enhanced Graz Process.

⁸ <http://www.stabilitypact.org/education>

⁹ <http://www.euroclio.eu/site/>

¹⁰ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/historyteaching/Projects%5CTwentyCentury%5CTwentyCenturyIntro_en.asp

1995 with the creation of the Association for Democracy in the Balkans. Although incorporated as a Greek organization, the founders' intention from the very beginning was to create something broader. The founders of the Association - Costa Carras, Nikos Efthymiadis and John Brademas were key to initiating this process. The JHP was the first program of the CDRSEE which at the suggestion of Chairman of the Board Matt Nimetz, would follow up on discussions of history textbooks initiated during the 1997 Culture and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe Conference, organized by the Greek Association for Democracy in the Balkans. Based on our interviews, Costa Carras has been the leading advocate for the JHP idea and the catalyst for mobilizing resources from the region (both human and financial) and expanding the circle of supporters from the outside.

Initially, the JHP was seen "as a long-term, sustained effort to introduce subtle, gradual, but profound change on the level of difference-producing elites, such as academics and educators."¹¹ The creation of cross-border networks between historians and other academics in the humanities, as well as textbook scholars was the primary focus. The Academic Committee of the CDRSEE oversaw the work of bringing together progressive academic researchers, while the Textbook Committee (later renamed History Education Committee, HEC) organized education-related strategies.

The 1998 strategy of the CDRSEE Board sought to achieve the above goals through several phases which would provide opportunities to engage and seek input from historians from the region.

Phase One: Setting the agenda- Bring progressive academics together at the Halki conference (1999)

The International Conference, "National Memory in Southeastern Europe" (June 1999) on the island of Halki, Greece, is considered to be a defining event in the development of the JHP. Overseen by the Academic Committee of the JHP then chaired by Professor Maria Todorova,¹² the conference brought together over 50 leading historians and textbook scholars to debate the cultural aspects of nationalism, both as secular religion and cultural construction (of languages, literature, etc.). The conference was organized around three themes related to production and application of national memories and contained a special session on transmission of national memories through education and history textbooks. It set the recommendations and conceptual framework for the next key phases of the JHP, a series of regional workshops to examine textbooks and other means of education and communication in the field of history.

Phase Two: Mapping problems and searching for solutions in the area of history education (1999-2001)

This phase included a series of seven regional workshops with the goal of systemizing the problems with history textbooks and teaching of sensitive and regionally controversial historical issues in the primary and secondary schools, as well as exploring the potential for change in existing textbooks, based on analyses of curriculum, systems of authorization and state control. These meetings were organized in 1999-2001 in different Balkan cities. The driving force was the History Education Committee that had elected Professor Christina Koulouri as its chair. Each of these seven issue-based workshops encouraged the participation of a growing number of researchers and textbook authors. Some of the

¹¹ First Strategy Plan of the JHP, 1998. Working Archives of the CDRSEE.

¹² Of the University of Florida (author of *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford & New York, Oxford University Press, 1997).

key reports and recommendations of these meetings were initially published in two JHP publications: "Teaching the History of Southeast Europe"¹³ and "Clio in the Balkans."¹⁴ In brief, the key issues outlined in the two publications include:

- **The ethnocentric approach in history education is predominant in all textbooks of the region.** A tendency toward selective exclusion of certain events and selective inclusion of others can produce national stereotyping. Commonly used terminology often perpetuates negative attitudes and stereotyping;
- **Textbooks in the countries in the region include little on Balkan history.** The focus is on national histories and to a different extent on western history. This approach results in ignorance and lack of knowledge of one's neighbors. In these textbooks, neighboring countries only encounter each other through narratives of conflicts and wars, and usually in the role of "the enemy." The historical narrative is often dominated by portrayals of "historic injustices." This element is present with a different intensity in the textbooks of all countries; the strongest case of "victimization" is in the textbooks of Serbia;
- **National histories are based on opposing or mutually rejected national myths; events are described and named completely differently, depending on who is telling the story.** For example, the Greeks and other Christian people in the Balkans use the term the "fall of Constantinople," while the Turks use the term "conquest of Istanbul." In this way, the common history of the region becomes often fragments of a "broken mirror;"
- **The state maintains a monopoly on history education.** Systems of production, authorization and distribution are different from one country to another; in some countries they are centralized while in others they are more open to free market principles and alternative textbooks are in use. The more centralized the system is, the less innovation in textbooks is possible; however, in all cases, any attempt to make changes in the curriculum must be authorized by the relevant ministry;
- **Teachers are critical for shaping new generations.** Prejudice is perpetuated both through textbooks and by teachers. A new approach to history teaching cannot be achieved only by the revision of textbooks, but will depend on the ability of teachers to apply modern methods of teaching historical thinking. One of the recommendations that emerged from the seven regional workshops that discussed the issues of textbook development was to organize regional discussions and training sessions with teachers.

Phase Three: Expanding the debate by involving teachers to test feasibility of potential solutions (2000-2002)

The second series of regional meetings included seven teacher training workshops organized under the name "The Southeast European History Teachers' Education Project."¹⁵ The workshops involved

¹³ CDRSEE, "Teaching the History of Southeast Europe," http://www.cdsee.org/publications_history_see.html (accessed December 30, 2009).

¹⁴ CDRSEE, "Clio in the Balkans: The Politics of History Education," http://www.cdsee.org/publications_clio.html (accessed December 30, 2009).

¹⁵ This initiative was supported within the projects of the History Education Workgroup, Task Force Youth and Education, of the Stability Pact for SEE. The teachers' training workshops included the following: 1) The Balkan Wars, 14-17 December 2000, Thessaloniki, 2) The First World War and the Creation of Yugoslavia, 26-29 January 2001, Thessaloniki, 3) The Second World War: Collaboration and Resistance, 8-10 March 2001, Thessaloniki, 4) The Balkan Wars and the Creation of the Albanian State, 11-13 May 2001, Tirana, 5) The Ottoman Empire and the Creation of Nation-States, 1-3 June 2001, Bucharest, 6) The Balkan Wars, 14-15 December 2001, Skopje, 7) The Republic of Cyprus: Investigating a Common History, London, February 2002.

participants primarily from Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and the Republic of Macedonia.

The goal of these meetings was to explore together with history teachers the existing teaching methods, especially in approaching controversial conflicts and wars, and to examine alternative methods that do not perpetuate stereotypes. These meetings provided valuable information on the perspective of the teachers, the challenges they face and what can assist them in adopting new teaching methods. The lack of access to historical sources from neighboring countries emerged as a major issue. The teachers articulated the need to develop practical alternative teaching packs, consisting of diverse sources that could aid the teaching process.

The two-and-a-half years of regional discussions¹⁶ further shaped the focus of the JHP within the broader goal of affecting informed, significant and realistic change in historical research and education in the countries of Southeast Europe. Two strategic points emerged from the variety of discussions, meetings and publications and remain the leading principles of the JHP:

- **Motivated individuals will bring about changes in history education rather than impersonal institutions.** It is of critical importance to nurture and sustain a Balkan community of critical thinkers (researchers, educators, and teachers) who base their research and teaching on an approach that emphasizes multiple perspectives and interpretations of events.
- **Together with academics and textbook authors, teachers are key actors that can make a difference in history education.** Without providing new techniques that can be applied practically by teachers, even valuable changes at academic levels (such as research or textbook writing) will not reach the final beneficiaries of the education process – the students who represent the next generation of engaged citizens.

Based on the findings of the regional discussions, the next step in the JHP's strategy was the development of alternative educational materials and methods to meet the needs of teachers in the region who practice a multi-perspective approach to history teaching. This initiative was launched under the name "Teaching Modern Southeast European History" within the broader platform of the JHP and consisted of two main phases: first, from 2002-2005, the regional development and publication in English of the alternative educational materials for teachers (which is the focus of this study); and second, the translation of the publications into all Southeast European languages. Initially, this second phase was conceived of as a year-long process following the publication of the English edition. Ultimately, it became a much longer (five year), but successful endeavor that continues to this day.

¹⁶ The outcomes of the regional brainstorming have been summarized in the two key publications of the CDRSEE referenced above – "Teaching History in Southeast Europe" (2001) and "Clio in the Balkans: The Politics of History Education" (2002). Both were edited by Dr. Cristina Koulouri. The publications provide increased comparative knowledge of existing problems in the area of history education and setting up the agenda for possible changes.

Teaching Modern Southeast European History: The Regional Process of Developing Alternative Educational Materials 2002-2005

Concept and Approach

Based on the joint regional work accomplished between 1998-2001, the JHP goal of stimulating change in the teaching of regional history was guided by several strategic principles:

- **Create and expand a community of teachers capable of stimulating critical thinking among their students.** In the long term, this will assist young people of the region to become responsible citizens able to critically evaluate different interpretations of historical events and, in this way, become more “immune” to nationalistic manipulations.
- **Introduce a comparative and multiple-perspectives approach to history teaching.** Change the nationalistic paradigm by challenging the traditional “only our truth” approach to history teaching. This cannot be done by replacing national histories but by stimulating a common approach to history teaching based on introducing the variety of perspectives of historical events and processes. This is especially important in teaching conflict issues. Comparative methods and work with pluralistic historical sources help students understand diversity and recognize the legitimacy of the views of “others”, even if they do not agree with them. These methods also assist identifying bridges and commonalities between Balkan neighbors.
- **Utilize a bottom-up rather than a top-down approach to advocating for change.** What actually happens in the classrooms is usually more important than the content of the curriculum. Teachers face the students every day and they are the ones who can create effective or ineffective classes. Rather than waiting for education policies and official textbooks to change, JHP chose to respond to teachers’ needs in a more rapid and flexible way. Creating alternative educational materials with a diversity of sources from the different countries in the region was a practical way to assist teachers with their methods and to overcome deficiencies of existing textbooks. At the same time, new resource materials alone could not be effective if they were unaccompanied by expanding capacities of teachers to use them by applying new teaching methods based on facilitation of participatory learning rather than lecturing. Adopting a modern method of teaching was a challenging task by itself, especially in this region where teaching in many countries has consisted of one-way communication in which the teacher speaks the “truth” and the students listen and memorize. Debates and discussions have not been welcome for decades.
- **Stimulate gradual systemic change by demonstrating new practices.** Practicing a different, more effective way of teaching history (by developing alternative materials and methods) and growing a critical mass of teachers thinking and teaching in a modern way will bring change to the system. It will provide for evidence of the benefit of the multi-perspective approach to teaching and for pressure groups of teacher constituencies to advocate for change within the educational system.

The JHP’s task was ambitious and innovative. The following challenges to the development of alternative teaching materials and their promotion in different countries were identified:

- Within a predominantly nationalistic environment, many teachers grew up with nationalistic interpretations of history and teaching methods, which may be difficult to overcome;
- It will be necessary to identify the groups of teachers able to cooperate without “nationalistic pollution of the idea,”¹⁷ both regionally as well as on country levels;
- The initiative might meet severe resistance from ministries of education and will fuel negative reactions (against historians, media, etc). Critical challenges will include convincing governments to cooperate and work with an initiative that identifies common points and generates commitment for change within the system.

Organization and Implementation Process

The Workbooks’ tasks and challenges

The main purpose of the alternative education materials, first named “Teaching Packs” and later “History Workbooks,” was to provide a practical tool for applying multi-perspective and comparative history teaching methods by providing teachers with a collection of diverse historical sources from all countries on the same events from Balkan history. To this end, an important consideration during the drafting of the Workbooks was how to make them useful and meaningful for all teachers in the region within the diversity of local contexts. First, it was important to identify thematic areas that were relevant to and compatible with different curricula; and second, within each theme a balanced presence and equal representation of historical sources from across SEE had to be provided. The JHP decided not to address the most recent wars in the 1990s; wounds were too fresh, and it was still too early for neutral and balanced research on all sides of the conflicts. As expressed in one of the interviews, at this stage, inclusion of recent events would be “political suicide” for the JHP.

Four subject areas that are mutually important and correspond to the curricula in all countries were selected based on discussions within the previous stages of the JHP and consultations with researchers and teachers from the different countries. They are as follows:

- History Workbook 1: The Ottoman Empire (14th to early 19th century)
- History Workbook 2: Nations and the States (18th to late 20th century)
- History Workbook 3: The Balkan Wars (1912-1913)
- History Workbook 4: World War II (1939-1945)

The task of developing these Workbooks extended far beyond collection of historical sources. Gathering materials involved responding to challenges of a different nature:

- **Pioneering and strategic character of the initiative:** There were no precedents of such publications in the region; strategically, this was not just a publication, but an active product that should serve further outreach and promotion of the new methods in history teaching;
- **Handling highly sensitive topics:** Each of the four selected subject areas relate to historical periods and events that have been critical for all countries in the region; often they have been the subject of exclusive nationalistic interpretations. The composition of the History Workbooks needed sound historical expertise on the relevant periods and events;
- **Finding balance among the diversity of historical sources and countries:** The idea was to collect different types of sources documenting the events – pictures, diplomatic texts,

¹⁷ Interview with a teacher

treaties, memoirs, literature, testimonies, newspapers – providing documents or personal evidence related not only to political and diplomatic history, but also to cultural history and everyday life. Any imbalance of representation of sources among the countries could ignite the national sensitivities that the four subject areas may inspire.

Organization of work: roles and responsibilities

Selecting the right people to implement the different stages of the innovative process with clear roles and effective communication among them was critical for meeting the challenging task of developing the History Workbooks within a short timeframe. Several key groups worked in constant collaboration with one another.

The History Education Committee (HEC) of the JHP was the engine for the JHP educational strategy and the sounding board for shaping the concept of the Workbooks and overseeing the process of their development. The HEC provided knowledge, experience and contacts to create the additional teaching materials, and consisted of 17 committed individuals: university professors of history, textbook authors and schoolteachers, as well as experts in the field of education working within the region. Additionally, the board assigned Costa Carras as its rapporteur to oversee and assist the work on the JHP and the development of the Workbooks in particular, and to ensure strategic consistency with the mission of the CDRSEE.

The regional Workbook writing team consisted of 20 people with different roles and responsibilities: a general coordinator and editor, five Workbook coordinators, and 14 contributors from all countries of the region.

- The general coordinator and editor of the project was Dr. Christina Koulouri, Chair of the HEC. Dr. Koulouri also led the organization of the regional meetings in previous JHP stages and has edited the resulting publications. She effectively organized the development, assessment and editing of all the Workbooks, and she wrote an overall introduction on the alternative teaching materials as part of a new method in history education.
- The coordinators of each of the Workbooks designed, organized and oversaw the collection of historical sources from all countries. They wrote an introduction for the Workbook and for each of its thematic sections, and they conducted an overall edit of each Workbook. The coordinators¹⁸ selected to lead the work on each theme were established professional historians with expertise on the relevant period, experience in research and writing of history textbooks, and a commitment to the objectives of the JHP. Most were also members of the History Education Committee, and all had been involved in previous phases of the project.
- The contributors collected sources for the four Workbooks and described each source in an agreed upon format to compose a chronology of events in their individual countries for all four periods and to write an annotated bibliography in their languages. The 14 contributors came from all countries in SEE (1 to 2 per country) and from a variety of professional backgrounds - history researchers,

¹⁸ Dr. Halil Berktaş of Sabancı University in Istanbul, and Dr. Bogdan Murgescu of the University of Bucharest (co-editors of the Workbook on the Ottoman Empire); Dr. Mirela Luminita Murgescu of the University of Bucharest (editor of Workbook on the Creation of Nations and States); Dr. Valery Kolev of the University of Sofia (editor of the Workbook on the Balkan Wars); and Mr. Kresimir Erdelja, history teacher from Zagreb, (editor of the pack on the Second World War).

university professors or lecturers and history teachers. Some had been actively involved in previous phases of the JHP; others were selected based on recommendations of the Workbook coordinators.

A group of more than 41 teachers from the region served as a sounding board to test and evaluate the first drafts of the Workbooks at four participatory assessment workshops (one workshop per subject area). The teachers were selected based on recommendations from the HEC or the History Workbooks coordinators. The main criteria was to select teachers mostly from secondary schools, who were open to innovative teaching methods and the values of the project, and who expressed interest and openness toward participative processes. Some of them were members of the HEC: others were teachers involved in regional workshops in previous phases of the project, and some were new to the process. The goal was to assemble different groups of teachers for the assessment of each of the Workbooks in order to provide broader feedback.

A team of five critical readers¹⁹ provided quality reading and feedback on the final versions of the Workbooks from a variety of perspectives – pedagogic, historical, political and methodological. The critical readers were leading professionals with different backgrounds such as history, political science, and education. Some were “insiders” from within the JHP; others were outside experts. All were familiar with the concept of the JHP and expressed commitment to its objectives.

Organizationally, the work of the regional writing team was supported by the coordinators and the CDRSEE management, who assisted with on-going fundraising efforts, organization of meetings and communication between the different participants, development of relationships with donors to expand support for the effort, as well as publicity.

Implementation

Developing and publishing the History Workbooks occurred between June 2002 and June 2005. The process consisted of five main stages:

1. Drafting the Workbooks

The process of composing the Workbooks started in the summer of 2002, prior to receipt of the USAID grant. The CDRSEE organized a planning meeting of the general coordinator and Workbook coordinators to discuss design and selection criteria for collecting sources. The meeting was followed by a joint meeting of coordinators and contributors in November 2002 to discuss the aims, methodology and concrete formats and tasks. The process of collecting documents and images was also accomplished through intensive communication between each coordinator with the contributors. Toward the end of the creation phase of the Workbooks, a second joint meeting of contributors and coordinators helped to identify and discuss omissions. After that workshop, the contributors submitted the final materials for all four Workbooks.

2. Assessing the drafts and convening focus groups of teachers for four workshops (one for each History Workbook) organized in different Balkan cities, from June-November 2003.

¹⁹ Critical readers include: Prof. Robert Stradling, Professor of Education, University of Edinburgh; Prof. Maria Todorova, Professor of History, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Prof. Peter Vodopivec, Professor of History, University of Ljubljana; Ivan Vejvoda, political scientist, Executive Director, Balkan Trust for Democracy, German marshal Fund; Mr. Costa Carras, cofounder and member of the Board CDRSEE

The process involved careful preparatory work. Drafts of the Workbooks were sent to participants, along with a set of assessment questions regarding content and pedagogic applicability for students 15-18 years old. The workshops were organized to be interactive, with teachers working in groups to assess the different sections of the relevant Workbook. Their purpose was to formulate a set of questions and tasks for the students for the end of each section. In each workshop, several teachers were asked to develop and demonstrate model lessons within the subject area of the Workbook, highlighting possible applications of diverse sources and applying multi-perspective and comparative teaching methods. Presentations and discussions generated important feedback for each Workbook, particularly on the balance and accuracy of the collected materials and on increasing their pedagogic value by providing questions and sources for teachers after each section. During the workshops, the teachers confirmed the usefulness of the Workbooks in regard to effectively introducing multi-perspective and comparative methods of teaching. In order to increase the Workbooks' potential, teachers stressed the need for intensive local teacher training organized around interactive discussions and model lessons that would accompany the dissemination of the Workbooks.

3. Finalizing the drafts and printing

Based on the teachers' suggestions, the team of Workbook coordinators and editors revised and finalized the Workbooks, considering the balance of information, representation of all thirteen countries, pedagogical content, relevance of each source, and sensitivities of each participating country. All Workbooks also passed through English proofreading. The feedback, provided by the team of critical readers, on historical content, pedagogic values and aspects of reconciliation was also addressed in the final general editing completed by the general coordinator. These suggestions led to some substantive amendments and improved quality of the History Workbooks. The time involved for this process differed for each of the Workbooks throughout 2004. The Workbooks were printed in June 2005.

Effectiveness of the Process as Seen by Participants

All of the respondents who participated in the development of the History Workbooks assessed the process as very effective. Some of the most valued aspects that were outlined in the interviews can be grouped as follows:

- All respondents who participated in different roles in the Workbook development described **the process as “very effective” due to the productive combination and interplay of diverse actors - academicians and teachers representing all the countries of the region.** The involvement of high profile academics guaranteed a quality process. The involvement of teachers provided a link between the books and the actual practice of teaching, enhancing their pedagogic value. As stated in one of the interviews, “the process of developing the books itself set an example of practicing multi-perspective and critical thinking”.
- According to the interviewed teachers, **the process was effectively participatory, usefully combining theory with practice and promoting openness to new ideas.** Most valued was the interactive format of workgroups, which provided freedom of communication and exchange of opinions, practical work for testing the method through modeling new types of “empathy” lessons and the opportunity to meet and share ideas with colleagues from the region. For some of the teachers, it was the first opportunity to meet colleagues from neighboring countries. The process allowed these professionals to get to know each other learn from each other's experience.

- Teachers also commented on how different the approach of the JHP is from other programs. **Teachers were not treated as a “target groups” but as colleagues and part of the publication development team.** They had a say and contributed ideas to shape the teaching method.
- **The only negative comment addressed a lack of follow up.** Two teachers from the Republic of Macedonia and one from Serbia who participated in the workshops did not receive the Workbooks when they were published. This relates to one weakness in the dissemination of the English version of the books. There was no planned budget for sending them to all participants; consequently, they were delivered to teachers using the opportunity of staff travel to countries in the region or the travel of others associated with the JHP.

Several aspects of the approach and process of the initiative were identified by most respondents as critical factors to the success of the development of the alternative teaching materials:

- **One key factor was the responsiveness of the project to the concerns and ideas of a wide and diverse group of people** from all the countries involved, including teachers, historians and others. The JHP was based on an inclusive, “bottom-up” approach, which was the main factor for its success;
- **Another was the productive and charismatic leadership in developing the Workbooks.** This involved Costa Carras in his role of advisor and advocate for the initiative, and especially the professionalism and energy of the general coordinator, Dr. Cristina Koulouri, as the catalyst and support to the coordinators and contributors. Many referred to her as key to the project’s success because of her professional caliber as historian and for her personality and talent as a communicator;
- **Consistent interaction between the different levels of the CDRSEE Board, management, staff and the outside consulting Workbook development team was also key for success.** All of the people working within the CDRSEE invested their energy to make this project a success. The CDRSEE, the Workbook development team, and the various teams and committees within the JHP comprised a “joint enterprise of commitment”²⁰ toward a multi-perspective future for history teaching in the region;
- **The genuine commitment of all involved in different roles throughout the process** could be felt in all interviews in the way people reflected on this part of the JHP. Despite the six years that had passed since their involvement in the development of the workbooks, passion and enthusiasm were still alive. Based on experience with other evaluations this is rare, as usually as time passes, reflections become more distant too. For most of the respondents, the commitment and productive teamwork of over 60 researchers, university professors and teachers who believed in what they were doing was the most telling evidence of the effectiveness of the process;
- **Finally, building trust among people from different countries from the region was crucial.** As noted in several interviews, the process of developing the History Workbooks was a practice of bonding likely minded people. It created a shared communal space for people committed to the cause of a new approach to history education. They have worked within JHP

²⁰ Interview with a respondent.

in various roles over time, and continue to be passionate about its cause, even if they are currently not directly involved in concrete JHP activities.

On the question of anticipated and unanticipated challenges, answers provided by respondents can be summarized as follows:

- As discussed in several interviews, **the “process of creating the books was an experiment with many unknowns and open-ended questions,” but in practice, it went very smoothly.** National, ethnic or political misunderstanding did not arise within the working groups of researchers and teachers, a result of the careful selection process of the participants. Selection was based on personal recommendation and trust. A main criterion for including participants was their proven commitment to multi-perspective, anti-nationalistic history teaching, or recommendation from the already existing network about their credibility as experts and their value systems. As noted by General Coordinator Dr. Christina Koulouri, the entry point was to start the work with those “who are intellectually ready, with open minds and critical thinking.”
- **Challenges were primarily technical, not national, ethnic, or political misunderstandings as anticipated.** Main challenges involved differing expectations of work pace among team members which led to late contributions that in turn delayed the overall process. In some cases, the general coordinator assisted the process directly to ensure timeliness of submissions. Additional challenges to collecting historical sources concerned the uneven development of history archives and research in the Balkan countries and, respectively, the ability to quickly identify diverse types of relevant documents.
- **Maintaining a balance of historical sources from all countries was challenging.** Though there was an agreement to avoid using solely political history sources, in some cases they predominated, and additional sources needed to be collected. In other cases, when chosen sources caused contradiction, consensus was reached by leaving out some of the documents. According to some respondents most challenging was the work on the period of the Second World War which required additional time to identify the right balance of documents and composition of the workbook.
- **Language presented an additional challenge.** First, there are hidden stereotypes in terminology and identifying the right language for presentation required a major effort throughout all drafting and editing processes. The second challenge involved the use of English as a common working language, which was spoken diversely depending on the level of knowledge and the mother tongue of participants. The translations needed careful checking, as wording could change meaning and, in the context of the Workbook tasks, could offend readers’ sensibilities.
- **Two weaknesses from a design point of view were identified.** The first addressed the limited time for joint work and process. For some of the teachers participating in the assessment workshops, two days were not sufficient for their designated task, or they preferred more than one meeting. For people from within the CDRSEE, the greatest challenge was the underestimation of the size of the Workbooks project in terms of required time, resources and finances. Initially, it was determined that local publishing in all local languages could be done simultaneously for one year and with a much smaller budget. “Only when we were implementing the project did we realize what a huge feat we had undertaken. At the start, it

was hard to predict how big the scope of the initiative was.”²¹ This underestimation of necessary time and resources put significant time pressure on the different phases of the JHP, both in its regional process of development of the alternative teaching materials, as well as on the follow-up outreach phase for the Workbook translations.

The Result of the Experiment

All the respondents considered the four History Workbooks to be unique teaching materials for the region and practical tools for history education. Based on the interviews and the background documents provided, their values can be grouped as follows:

- **The Workbooks met the objective to present a multi-perspective view from all the countries in the region.** As outlined in the introduction of the published Workbooks, instead of presenting one general view of the major historical periods covered, the Workbooks show the perspective of the “other” through comparison of different versions and interpretations of the same event. They provide sources, both texts and images, which are not included in the official curricula – a broad choice of various original historical accounts by ordinary people on how key events affected everyday life, as well as accounts by historians, textbooks, and propaganda from the time. In this way, the Workbooks expanded the pool of diverse views from different countries surround each event or period.
- **From the teachers’²² perspective, the greatest asset of the Workbooks is that they provide historical sources from all the countries in the region, which are otherwise not accessible.** Their presentation makes them very usable, and they can make the teachers’ work more interesting. The main values of the books are conveyed through their multi-perspective and comparative approach, providing for more interactive and interesting lessons that can stimulate students’ imaginations. Introducing them to the “laboratory of a historian,” the Workbooks compare primary and secondary historical sources to interpret history and to develop critical thinking and empathy. In the words of one of the interviewed teachers: “There were many discussions about the need for multi-perspective history teaching. But the question was how to do it practically. The Workbooks answer this question. They provide many views on the event and do not impose one official interpretation of its meaning.” Because the books are not part of the official curriculum but are supplementary, the level of their usage in the classroom will depend on the willingness, capacity and creativity of the teachers.
- **The multi-perspective value of the books is also highly regarded by the team of the critical readers who reviewed the books.** One example is a strong endorsement by Dr. Robert Stradling, Professor of Education, University of Edinburgh, who has been involved in various projects and publications related to multi-perspectivity in history teaching. He considers the Workbooks “excellent collections of source material drawn from across the whole region” with a “well-balanced selection of sources, i.e., reflecting the experiences and perspectives of a wide range of people from different social, ethnic, national and religious backgrounds across the whole of S.E. Europe.”²³

²¹ Interview with program staff.

²² This feedback is based on the written assessment done by the teachers within the teacher assessment workshops in 2003 and validated by those whom we could interview.

²³ Direct quotes and references from assessments done by the critical readers are in CDRSEE Quarterly Report No. 9.

The following shortcomings and limitations of the History Workbooks were described in interviews:

- Some of those interviewed reported that in certain cases there is not enough story behind the sources. According to others, the Workbooks' variety of sources from so many countries provided little space for methodological guidance for the teacher. As noted in the interviews, the teachers who were already familiar with modern teaching methods (group work, debates, participatory interaction, etc.) would be able to use the sources creatively. For the rest of the teachers, accompanying training or a guide to using the Workbooks would be useful.²⁴
- According to a few, despite the effort to balance the sources, some countries were represented by fewer sources than others. However, this imbalance was interpreted by the coordinators as natural, due to the fact that though the subject areas were common, some countries were less involved in certain events than others. Also, the variation in number and availability of existing documents in the different countries and the efficiency of access and collection determined what would be provided by the relevant contributors.

²⁴ Such a guide has been recently developed and is in the process of translation. See also p. 35.

Outcomes and Impact from the Regional Workbook Development Process 2002-2005

Levels of Impacts

Teachers who participated in the History Workbook development workshops indicated during interviews that these increased their knowledge of historical events, introduced them to new teaching methods and expanded their horizons through exchanges with like-minded colleagues. Respondents from the researchers group also considered the process to be beneficial to their work and a valuable supplement to their academic research and university teaching. Both respondent groups felt that they had benefitted from their participation in a community of individuals working toward a common purpose, becoming personally acquainted with people from neighboring countries and participating in constructive communication.

Many of the respondents we spoke with had been involved with the JHP beyond the 2002-2005 Workbook development process either in earlier phases, or in follow-up country outreach activities. A number of researchers, for example, were involved in promoting the Workbooks in their countries or served as trainers in local teacher trainings. Naturally, their views regarding the outcomes and impacts extended beyond the development of the History Workbooks. These broader interpretations helped us to further outline levels of impact that derived from the regional process in 2002-2005.

Several interviews noted that it was “a small miracle” that the Workbooks emerged as a product of regional consensus in only two years, especially given the vulnerability and diversity of the region. “For other attempts of developing practical instruments in the history for reconciliation like the joint effort of Germany and France, it took many years to come out with practical products, or other attempts created no product like the German-Polish committee.”

This achievement indicates an impact that extends beyond the production of an educational publication by a regional group of professionals. In the past years, we have seen many worthwhile publications resulting from successful processes for democratization and reconciliation in the region, but many have remained just one more “historical account,” more visible or silent than others within the time that they were created. We consider the History Workbooks to be **an active product**, designed, planned and developed as a tool capable of generating processes of change in the approach and practice of history teaching across the region.

According to interviews, by 2005 the JHP had generated two interrelated “practical impacts:” the History Workbooks as a collective product of a long-term process of more than 60 participants of different backgrounds and roles in the process; and a regional network of these participants with a shared commitment to move forward. In the words of Christina Koulouri: “This is not a dead network or dead books. They are active impacts, because they have been activating innovation and potential new impacts.”

Based on this notion of “activating impacts,” we looked at the levels of outcomes and impacts from the regional process in 2002-2005 in a dynamic framework from two aspects:

- First, to broadly map how the main outcomes of the regional process in 2002-2005 (created Workbooks, method and regional network) have been applied in the follow-up phase and to

determine what impact meaning has emerged in regard to the objectives of the JHP;

- Second, to determine what from the follow-up application is validating the effectiveness of the regional process (2002-2005) in terms of acceptance of the JHP History Workbooks by local stakeholders – teachers, students, broader audiences and governments.

Outcomes from the Regional Process: the Workbooks in Action

Raising international awareness of the potential for new methods of history teaching to encourage reconciliation

The English version of the four History Workbooks published in 2005 became the backbone of an intensive and on-going advocacy campaign for the ideas and methods launched by the JHP and for raising support for its continuation. The Workbooks were sent to virtually all western embassies in all the countries in the region, to a number of key research institutes in Europe and to private and public donors interested in work for reconciliation and democratization in the region.

The English History Workbooks served as a proactive tool for international advocacy in over 50 presentations delivered by the CDRSEE in the past five years at a variety of levels and to diverse audiences – researchers and donors at conferences and international meetings on issues of the SEE region, at high-level presentations at the U.S. Department of State and to USAID in Washington DC in 2005, and at numerous presentations in Brussels – among the most significant were the presentation at the European Parliament (February 2008) and the meetings with the European Commission's Directorate General Enlargement.

Major outcomes of these advocacy efforts have been the growing awareness of key international organizations and decision makers regarding the importance of the work for change from the nationalistic paradigm of history teaching to sustained democratic processes in the region of SEE. Evidence of the success in this direction can be discussed according to the following interrelated developments:

- **First, a growing number of diverse donors (both public and non-governmental) have recognized the importance of the JHP concept by providing support for different aspects of the initiative.** This support made possible the follow-up work of translation and promotion of the Workbooks in the different countries in the region, which was of critical importance for direct reach out and training of the teachers in the region.
- **Second, and even more important, is the growing international political recognition of the importance of a new approach to teaching history.** The outcomes from the international proactive use of the English History Workbooks (the visible proof of effectiveness of the JHP approach) extend beyond promotion of a project and fundraising. The central aim of the international response over the years has been to put on the policy agenda, especially at the EU level, the need for long-term practical work in the area of history and reconciliation as part of a democratic re-thinking of the Balkans.
- Probably the most important development for effective advocacy of the CDRSEE was the “*Resolution on the Stability and Prosperity in the Western Balkans,*” adopted by the European Parliament in April 2009, which makes direct reference to the Joint History Project as a very important initiative and encourages the future support of such action. Section 34 of the

resolution addresses the importance of education for reducing inter-ethnic tensions in the region. The European Parliament calls on the Western Balkan governments to improve the quality of history education. It points out “that the teaching of history in schools and universities in the Western Balkans must be based on documented research and must reflect the different perspectives of the various national and ethnic groups in the region if lasting results are to be achieved in promoting reconciliation and improving inter-ethnic relations; fully supports initiatives, such as the Joint History Project of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, aimed at writing and disseminating joint history-teaching materials that provide a multi-perspective account of Balkan history, and calls on the competent ministries, educational authorities and educational establishments in the region to endorse the use of joint history teaching materials; calls on the Commission to support such initiatives financially and politically.”²⁵

- The Joint History Project, based on its achievements and also the visibility of its practical approach through the regionally developed History Workbooks, has been recognized as a much needed initiative by the Stability Pact in SEE, as well as by the Regional Coordination Council (RCC), which is its successor. The brief interview in Sarajevo with Jelica Minić, Deputy Secretary General of the RCC, also recognized the importance of such an initiative as “innovative and promising for sustaining peace and democracy.”
- Most recently, the director of the CDRSEE was invited as a speaker at the public hearing of the Subcommittee on Human Rights of the European Parliament on 9 November, 2009. He presented the JHP workbooks and approach as an example of a reconciliation method within the overall presentation on human rights in the Balkans. The meeting, named “Human Rights in the Western Balkans” can be web streamed online at the European Parliament Internet page.²⁶
- A second edition of the English version of the History Workbooks has been recently published and will continue to serve the campaign by promoting the importance of new history teaching for reconciliation in the Balkans.

Generating processes for adopting new methods of history teaching in the different countries in the region

The regionally created History Workbooks and network of participants became **the catalyst for proactive local outreach and promotion** of a multi-perspective history teaching method in the countries in the region. The strategies and the practical implementation in each country in the past five years have been diverse and flexible enough to respond to the dynamics of the various local contexts. What bonds them is the common, regionally-developed concept of the Joint History Project to work from the bottom up to develop the capacity of the teachers as “difference producing elites” – promoting critical thinking and raising awareness at the level of students and in coalition with other parts of civil society in order to promote change of history education approaches and methods.

As a result, the History Workbooks have been translated and published in seven languages of the region: Albanian, Bosnian, Croatian, Greek, Macedonian, Serbian and Turkish. The JHP was officially launched

²⁵ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&mode=XML&reference=A6-2009-0212&language=EN>

²⁶ http://europartv.europa.eu/ParliamentLive.aspx;http://www.europarl.europa.eu/eplive/public/default_en.htm (accessed on December 30, 2009).

through the public presentation of the corresponding language editions of the Workbooks in Serbia (2005), Greece (2006), Croatia (2007), the Republic of Macedonia (2008), Bosnia-Herzegovina (2008), Albania (2008), and Kosovo (2008). Presentation of the Workbooks was followed by 29 interactive training workshops in these seven countries (three to five per country), with over 700 teachers in participation. The JHP received broad media coverage, with an estimated 100 plus press publications, TV debates (especially in Greece) and several documentaries about them.

Behind these achievements are the intensive efforts of the CDRSEE to find local partners²⁷ in each of the country and together with them to promote the program with the Ministries of Education and other educational institutions; to organize the workbooks translation and publishing, which was a challenging process due to sensitivity of terminology and even location names; to organize training workshops in the capital and in other cities for teachers from different regions and ethnic communities; and to provide on-going publicity and presence in the media.

This challenging and rewarding period of introducing the History Workbooks and methods in the different countries was not part of the current evaluation period. In view of our task to identify levels of impact from the regional process (2002-2005), we broadly outlined progress in five **outcome areas of importance**:

First: Validation of the effectiveness of the developed regional multi-perspective method and participant network

The regional community of shared knowledge, tested methods and professional network created through the previous phases of the JHP proved to be very effective for supporting the processes at the country levels:

- The challenging process of developing the local language editions was assisted by use of the method tested during the regional Workbook development – creating teams, using the support of the regional writing team and general coordinator, and synchronizing the changes where needed with all local language editions. Development of each of the local language editions also involved a continuation of the regional consensus team work;
- The drafting of the local editions, the design of the local teachers training workshops, and learning from teachers feedback were overseen by the History Education Committee which continued to be the active regional group providing support for the expanding country activities;
- A number of participants involved in the previous phases of the JHP continued as trainers and facilitators in the follow-up local teachers training workshops. The trainings also used the methods tested in the previous years – interactive formats, group work and development of model lessons. Engaging colleagues from neighboring countries as trainers and facilitators was valuable both for expanding expertise and for representing the regional perspective within the local country trainings.

Second: Acceptance of the method and the Workbooks by teachers from the different countries

Based on the assessments completed at the end of each training workshop in the different countries carried out in 2005-2009, teachers describe the Workbooks as interesting and useful teaching material,

²⁷ Finding local partners differed per country – in some, the partners were local teachers' associations other non-governmental organizations, or committed individuals; and in others, country partners changed over time.

and over 90 percent said that they will use them in the classroom.²⁸ This feedback validates the positive findings from the previous teachers' assessment workshops in 2003 as part of the development of the Workbooks. The positive feedback also provides evidence that the JHP has achieved its 2001 objective to develop regional teaching materials that will be practically useful and applicable in the diverse cultural, country and educational situations in which teachers work.

Interviews with some of the teachers participating in the assessment workshops in 2003, as well as the correspondence of teachers from the region with the CDRSEE following the country training in 2008,²⁹ illustrate the use of the Workbooks and the JHP approach in the classroom. Usually, this involves group work, with four to five groups of students analyzing sources relevant to a particular event and then reporting to the class and debating the meaning of the perspectives represented in the sources. Some of the teachers use the model lessons developed during the training sessions; others develop their own.

At the same time, teachers' email messages address some of the challenges of using the Workbooks in the classroom. Concerns relate to the limited time for some of the subjects in the official curriculum. Despite this, they demonstrate the commitment of teachers to use the Workbooks and multi-perspective methods. Some teachers also use the Workbooks outside of the classroom – in history interest groups or clubs. Other types of challenges include the limited resources of schools and sometimes the difficulty to even make a copy of the sources needed for the students' class work. They mentioned that teachers, who are typically underpaid in countries across the region, pay for copies of the materials themselves, which testifies to the teachers' interest and commitment to use the JHP teaching methods.

Third: Acceptance of the Workbooks and multi-perspective method by students

Teachers report that students are accepting the Workbooks with interest (described differently – “very enthusiastic” or just “interested”). Students are interested because it is the first time they can hear other points of view. They like the new way of work– comparing texts, debating, feeling more important and free, encouraged to think, discuss, reflect and express their own opinions based on multiple sources. All this is something that is not commonplace in class.

Regardless of this acceptance, some of the teachers interviewed shared that it is not always possible to interest students to think on their own. It also depends on their personal motivation for studying and their interest in history in particular. To offset such complications, some teachers also use the Workbooks outside of the regular classroom. In one case, a teacher in Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina is using the Workbooks for a history workshop as an out-of-class activity for 12 students. As stated in the e-mail message to the CDRSEE, “They have embraced the workbooks,” which is the main material used for the workshop and “their interest is much higher than the interest in regular classes.”

Fourth: Responses by governments and educational institutions

As complementary teaching materials, the Workbooks do not need the official approval of ministries (as do textbooks, which are part of the curriculum). But as articulated in the interviews, it was important

²⁸ The assessments were done at the end of each teacher training workshop that were carried out in 7 countries at different times in the period 2005-2009. They provide the teachers perspectives on level of applicability of the workbooks and the effectiveness of the training workshops. Tabulated answers and summarized overviews of some of the teacher training workshops assessments for some of the countries are available on the site of CDRSEE.

²⁹ We were provided with a summary of e-mail messages from fifteen teachers from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Macedonia sent to the CDRSEE in the first months after the training in their countries.

to have the endorsement from the ministries to provide “legitimacy to the initiative.” Even a formal approval (or no obstruction) “from above” was a sufficient indicator for the teachers that the Workbooks were permissible. This was important especially within the remnants of authoritarian culture, or still centralized systems where the use of “alternative” additional materials was too new or traditionally more controlled, and in view of the still highly politicized and nationalistic sensitive contexts of the region (more explosive or “sleeping” in the different countries).

In order to get support for the initiative, governments in all countries were approached by the CDRSEE and local partners with explanation of the benefits of the History Workbooks as teaching materials and pedagogic method. The responses were diverse, and they shifted over time. In many countries, the Ministers or Deputy Ministers of Education attended the JHP official launch, or the opening of some of the training seminars, thus recognizing the initiative with their presence or even public speeches endorsing it. The speech of the Minister of Education of Serbia, Slobodan Vuskanovic, at the launching of the History Workbooks in 2005 provides an illustration of initial support and the lack of follow through. In the speech, the Minister stated that the Workbooks were the first teaching materials he was not ashamed to show to his teenage daughter.³⁰ However, start up endorsement did not always lead to immediate institutional approval. In the case of Serbia, the initial enthusiastic endorsement was withdrawn under the pressure of nationalistic circles; the first teacher trainings were conducted despite lack of support “from above.”

The Serbian response is just one example, but similar **patterns of unstable and changing attitudes of educational institutions** were noted from respondents from all the participating countries. They varied in expression and intensity: initial endorsement and follow-up withdrawal or silence due to fear of heated debate and attacks; “token support” to look good from the outside at the monitoring reports of EU institutions; promise for support with no action; in some cases endorsement of the initiative from people working in the educational system, but as individuals, not as representatives of their institutions. The last pattern is exemplified in the support and involvement of the four regional inspectors of the Agency of Education in Croatia, who participated in the teacher training workshops in their regions; although some were very helpful in organizing the workshops, they did it more as individuals and former teachers, rather than representatives of their institution. There were also cases of positive institutional approval of the training workshops, for example, the decision of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Tuzla Canton in Bosnia (2008), but with some conditions on how terminology would be used.

The change of attitudes and the levels of support of the educational institutions to the JHP reflect the internal politics and policy changes of governments, with new ministers more open or completely closed to the project’s idea and multi-perspective approach as compared to their predecessors. As shared in some interviews: “Nationalism is still quite alive in institutions related to education (within ministries or textbook approval commissions). They try to keep the major share of the right to interpret the national history and will not abandon their approach so easily.” However, as the director of the CDRSEE put it, “Even this little support we were gaining over time was beyond our wildest dreams. We were anticipating much higher resistance.” The most recent positive development is the written endorsement of the JHP and the History Workbooks, signed by the Deputy Prime Minister of Croatia on 12 November 2009.

³⁰ Balkan History. A Better View of the Bad Guys. The Perils of Teaching More One View of History. The Economist, 17th December 2005

Fifth: Responses by other audiences and media

The Joint History Project and its History Workbooks have been highly visible in the public space in the different countries. The innovative approach of the JHP elicited extremely negative reactions in some circles of more nationalistic academics and politicians. This led to sometimes heated debates in some of the countries. Usually, the attacks were highly politicized and often completely irrelevant to the actual content of the books or the nature of the books themselves. They were interpreted as “textbooks,” written by “foreigners” trying to “rewrite” and “substitute” the national history of the country in question. The discourse surrounding this type of reaction involved the irrational language of propaganda and conspiracy and was present in some publications in most of the countries. Especially heated was the debate in Greece, where Costa Carras and Christina Koulouri appeared together in a TV debate arguing the public stance for a multifaceted historical perspective against the single storyline habitually preferred by nationalists.

The Workbooks were also debated at a high level in the Orthodox world and caused differing reactions. For example, while criticized by some of the more nationalist-oriented leaders of the Greek Orthodox Church, they were endorsed by the Ecumenical Patriarch, Vartholomaios, who sent to the CDRSEE a warm message of support for the first launch of the Workbooks in Belgrade in November 2005.

The JHP received significant positive coverage, too, and was welcomed by the progressive media, academia and liberal circles. In addition to positive articles in leading newspapers, supportive documentaries were broadcast on national TV (for example in Greece). A featured video shown on South-East TV exchange is still present on their Web site. It is an insightful report on the JHP in action – showing direct footage from classrooms in Kosovo and in Serbia, opinions of students and teachers, as well as interviews with some of the trainers and members of the Workbooks writing team.³¹

A major outcome of the Joint History Project so far is that it succeeded in putting on the public debate agenda the issue of a new multi-perspective approach to history education.

As many respondents noted, agreeing or disagreeing, the JHP succeeded in opening the public debate on the role of historical interpretation of the past for the future of the region. In the past, open debates on history were either avoided or presented only as divided monologues dominated by nationalisms. Again, the initial expectations were for much more resistance at all levels, but as discussed in one of the interviews, “it happens that after some years of search for transitions to democracy, people are becoming more open to change.”

Impacts for the Future of History Education in the Region

Progress and emerging changes

Changing the course of history education in Southeast Europe from ethnocentric and politicized interpretation of the past to a modern, multi-perspective approach is a challenging and long-term task. The CDRSEE and all people who have been involved in the Joint History Project have embraced the commitment to start this long-distance run for improved history teaching in the schools of all countries in Southeast Europe and to introduce younger generations to new types of thinking.

³¹ The featured video report “History Teaching in the Balkans” can be downloaded at <http://www.seetv-exchanges.com/code/navigate.php?ld=369>

What is the progress toward the Joint History Project long-term objective and what can indicate emerging impacts as change on the ground?

As noted in the interview we had with Christina Koulouri, the Chair of the HEC and the General Coordinator of the History Workbook development: “Measuring impact will be very challenging. Change of people’s minds cannot be calculated. Many generations have grown up with different nationalistic propaganda, and this will not change overnight. All we can do is to stimulate innovation and look for usefulness. But it will be critical that work continues, especially in view of the current context of a global shift to nationalism and regression.”

The JHP is a system of values, processes and people, and the core group in the system is the history teachers in the region. Most respondents underscored the belief that the importance of the Joint History Project goes beyond research, publication and training. History books (supplementary materials or even textbooks) cannot make changes happen by themselves. “Anachronistic modes of teaching clash with dialogue and comparativeness.”³² The priority of the JHP is to work for forming and expanding the critical and independent thinking of history teachers and their ability to teach in a pluralistic way. In the words of one of the respondents, “teachers who think critically can create good teaching from bad material; bad teachers with no such skills can create bad teaching from the best material.”

Work with teachers is at the core of the activist aspect of the JHP approach. Entering the school system from below and gradually developing teacher constituencies in favor of the regional multi-perspective method of teaching will stimulate and support the change of history education from within the system. From this perspective, **the main “impact generators” for the future of history education in the region will be the teachers, and the main indicator for the success of the JHP will be the level to which teachers have embraced this approach and how they are practicing it in the classroom.** Impact, as overall progressive change in history education in the Balkan countries, will depend on a variety of factors: readiness of society for change; the level of politicized and nationalistic divide among political and historic elites; the level of development and cohesion of the civil society related to the issues; and progressive historic researchers, teachers and their associations, and broader groups of NGOs and progressive media working in a variety of aspects of democracy, education, human rights and reconciliation.

According to all people who participated in this evaluation, **significant progress has been made in the past ten years:**

The JHP succeeded in activating and growing circles of people interested and committed to the idea of developing a regionally shared process of mapping, analyzing and finding solutions. It also produced the History Workbooks, a practical, active educational product comprised of alternative materials. The comparative nature of the Workbooks requires a multi-perspective method of teaching. Use and development of this method in classrooms throughout the Balkan countries has generated active outreach in the different countries of the region and internationally.

The effectiveness of the JHP approach is based on the collaboration of progressive academic community, textbook writers and teachers – a joint work of experts and practitioners – for innovative action-oriented research. Through systematic campaigns, they raised awareness, expanded capacities of teachers, and brought to the front of the public debate the need for change.

³² Participant’s interview

In the words of a teacher interviewed in-person in Belgrade, “The CDRSEE has started a process of creating free *diversity thinking*, but there is always need of time for things to grow.” As outlined in the previous chapter and noted in the interviews with coordinators or trainers of the teacher training workshops, core groups of teachers that are prepared to use this material are emerging in the different countries in the region. Some of the teachers are already becoming promoters of the History Workbooks by disseminating them to colleagues or making presentations about the new teaching method to broader groups of teachers. In cases teachers are introducing the History Workbooks to educational institutions, this way stimulating their approval of their use in class.³³ The JHP was also successful in putting on the public debate agenda the issue of a new multi-perspective approach to history education.

Challenges

Most respondents believe that despite the successes of the JHP, the impact of the projects and the Workbooks will be limited if work does not continue. Six critical needs emerging from the interviews can be outlined:

- **The major challenge will be to effectively reach out to broader groups of teachers in each country.** Training of 700 teachers across the region is a successful start, but realistically there is “not a lot of room for idealism.” As noted in the interviews, the teachers involved with the project are educated, liberal thinking, innovative, critical thinkers. The majority of teachers in countries throughout the region do not match this profile. Many are not prepared to work with comparative methods or to facilitate students’ thinking rather than lecture about the textbooks’ “truths.” Even if broader circles of teachers receive the published alternative teaching materials, many will not be able to immediately apply the method in class. They will need practical assistance in learning to work with these methods. The major challenge remains expanding beyond the initial groups of teachers who are open minded and “intellectually ready and reaching teachers who are not predisposed to new methods of teaching.
- **Teachers who have been trained need support for further capacity growth.** In many cases, teachers received just one training session and a basic introduction to innovation, which often is not sufficient. There is a variety of other trainings organized for teachers within the educational system, or by outside programs, but very few of them provide opportunities for sharing practical teaching experience and especially for approving new teaching methods. E-mail messages from teachers to the CDRSEE following the more recent trainings in several countries express an eagerness to share model lessons, to exchange suggestions and to be part of a learning community. Providing space for meetings to exchange ideas and teaching experience will assist further capacity growth in applying multi-perspective methods of history teaching.
- **It is important to convince larger audiences that the JHP approach “is not changing historical identities, but is changing nationalistic identities.”³⁴** Many respondents expressed the critical need to keep the new approach to history in the public debate. After the past intensive years of pro-active local outreach as part of a vocal and joint regional initiative, it is

³³ This statement is taken from a letter from a teacher from Mostar to CDRSEE in 2008 who showed the books to the History Counselor in the Mostar Pedagogical Institute who approved the use of the books in classroom.

³⁴ Respondent’s interview

critical to maintain the message to the public, especially among teachers, that the Joint History Project is alive and continues. Without this, impact will be limited.

- **The amount of regional-level meetings of interactive issue-based discussions as a core part of the JHP approach has decreased due to limited funding.** The CDRSEE has tried to raise funds for teachers from the region to meet, but this is challenging in the current funding environment of reduced support to regional level activities. The last regional meeting for teachers was organized by CDRSEE in Ohrid in 2008, using some of the funding that remained from the country-level program. This meeting brought together teachers from several countries to discuss and share pedagogical ideas about using the Workbooks in the classroom. According to the coordinators of this meeting, the teachers highly valued the meeting, and there are high expectations for follow up regional activities.
- **A major challenge for the future of the JHP and for growing and sustaining its achievements and impact will be the changing nature of funding support in the region.** Support to regional civil society initiatives has decreased dramatically compared to the time of the Stability Pact. To meet eligibility criteria to manage larger grants for most of the country-based support, especially of the EU funded programs, strong organizations based in-country are required, as are partnerships with governments and institutions proved by signed agreements as demonstration of government commitment.
- **Acquiring officially signed agreements from governments is very challenging especially for initiatives aimed at changes of approach in history teaching.** This will require time and consistent advocacy work. In the SEE region, there are many cases when governments shift to nationalistic interpretations and propaganda. It is not yet realistic to expect quick and genuine buy-in from governments for change of approach in a sensitive area like history education. As expressed by respondents, sustained government endorsement for such initiatives will be a longer and gradual process of building supporters and broader civil society constituencies to keep the subject on the agenda for policy changes.

Priorities for the future to increase impact

Respondents from across the region identified the following priorities:

- **Capacity building of teachers in the SEE countries needs to continue, expanding the circle** and involving more teachers in interactive training in various localities out of the capital. More national seminars and conferences would also effectively motivate teachers and increase the opportunities for people to connect;
- **In countries where there has been training, it will be beneficial to provide follow-up meetings and work with the “first generation” of already trained teachers** by getting them together on a country- and regional-level to discuss successful teaching experiences, to share and develop model lessons;
- **Developing methodological guides and model lessons, especially if they are audiovisual or downloadable documentaries** will assist better reach out to teachers who do not otherwise participate in training activities. Other suggestions related to creating new materials - adapted workbooks for younger children or developing similar workbooks for other historical periods;

- **It is important to translate the Workbooks in Bulgarian, Slovenian and Romanian.** Respondents from these countries acknowledged that translating the Workbooks into these languages and providing follow-up training will be of great benefit for teachers in their countries;
- **Respondents from all countries consider it important to keep the regional linkage alive.** “There is a need for oxygen to revitalize the network,” one teacher responded in an interview. It will be beneficial to organize issue-based meetings for diverse participants of two or three countries, especially in tension or conflict areas. Issue-based discussions and workshops with mixed audiences – both researchers and teachers – will enhance the practice of the multi-perspective teaching method. Such meetings would also assist mapping the current needs and opportunities within the contextual changes in the past years.
- **In addition to meetings, more consistent regional channels for sharing information will also contribute to expanding the innovative aspects of the JHP.** Some see this as improving the CDRSEE Web site with more model lessons and visual or documentary products that can be downloaded; others prefer a newsletter or circular mailing to provide information on practices and the way methods are applied throughout the region;
- **More media products will be beneficial for reaching larger audiences.** Some suggestions related to better use of new media, others for developing and promoting Balkan history TV programs.

The CDRSEE is already working intensively to meet some of these needs and suggestions:

- It is fundraising to “double the footprint” of the number of teachers trained in the Western Balkans and to republish the books in some of the local languages;
- A methodological guide to accompany the Workbooks has been developed “pro-bono” by Ruth Sutton³⁵ and Inez Sutton. It provides guidance for modern methods of interactive work and includes three model lessons as examples. The guide is now in proofreading and scheduled to be published by the end of 2009. It is in the process of translation into Albanian and Bosnian and then into Serbian and Croatian;
- A cartoon book for young children is in the planning stages;
- The CDRSEE continues fundraising to complete translation of the History Workbooks in local languages. Most recently, there are some opportunities to raise funds to support the work on a Bulgarian language edition and the CDRSEE is in talks with the OSI Sofia, which has expressed interest in becoming involved.

³⁵ Ruth Sutton has been working with the CDRSEE in the past, and was English language proof-reader of the History Workbooks in 2004. She has also developed her Masters theses in participatory education methods based on the case study of the JHP in Serbia, which she kindly shared with us for this study.

Lessons and Observations

The Joint History Project has received interest from countries outside of the SEE region looking for educational tools for reconciling the past and working toward a cooperative future. After the publication of the History Workbooks in English in 2005, Tokyo University approached the CDRSEE to learn more about the JHP approach and method, and the Workbooks have now been translated into Japanese. This interest is also linked with the initiative of Tokyo University to expand its work on Southeast Asia comparative history studies. Several representatives of the History Education Committee were invited to Tokyo and made presentations on the methodology and principles applied by the JHP. Based on interviews with them, as well as reflections of other key respondents who have been involved through the years of the JHP, we identified several general lessons that can be applied to other cultural settings and regions that have a history of conflicts and wars.

Some of the broad observations coming from different respondents can be grouped as follows:

- **A regional look and approach to history and education provide opportunities for overcoming narrow, national ethnocentric interpretations of past conflicts that perpetuate division and conflicts in the present.** It is important to support regional initiatives that are able to formulate positive responses to the politicized nationalistic justification of conflicts based on a comparative and multi-perspective historical approach to the shared past of the countries involved. This can help to open the discourse on the responsibility of history education for shaping the minds of the next generations and avoiding new expressions of conflict thinking and stereotypes.
- **It will be very difficult or impossible to apply directly such an approach of developing shared historical interpretation of still active or very recent conflict or wars.** The JHP did not approach the most recent wars in the Balkans in the 1990s. It was too early and would produce a counter-productive response. The chosen four topics for the History Workbooks focused on subject areas common to the SEE region, including wars throughout a more distant historical past.
- **The principle of comparativeness of multiple perspectives of historical events can demystify the “only one truth” national historical narrative and replace the superiority and/or victimization framework of nationalistic interpretations of past conflicts.** Commonalities and a shared past, in terms of history, culture, and suffering from mutual conflicts, exist even in regions most divided by past conflicts. The JHP provides alternative teaching materials and a multi-perspective method derived from a search for such commonalities as a historical heritage of a variety of relations and cultural influences, as well as joint suffering in times of conflict. Hearing the voice of the other side, as well as the voices of various actors and groups within each of the countries at the time of conflicts advances understanding of the complexity of why conflicts happen and how they affect both sides involved.
- **History and education are politicized and sensitive areas which raise complex issues, especially in regions with a history of conflict. Introducing new comparative history teaching in such regions requires a consistent preparatory process.** The JHP practice showed that a serious intention to search for a comparative and multi-perspective approach to history teaching requires convening researchers and teachers from countries throughout the region to analyze the situation, identify key problems, and gradually develop potential solutions. This process involved three years of intensive discussion groups focused on contentious issues and

comprised of participants from diverse countries with various expertise (academic researchers, university lecturers, textbook authors and teachers).

- **Effective, locally driven leadership and motivated people are critical for successfully initiating and implementing new approaches to history teaching in regions affected by conflicts.** The main strength of the JHP is that it is not a donor-driven initiative. It originated from the region. Critical to the success of JHP is that it started by involving professionals “who are intellectually ready,” curious about change, and interested in their own professional development. Many had met before in profession settings – in international conferences or within other international research projects. Starting with a small group of socially concerned individuals, the JHP gradually expanded to a broad, diverse community motivated by a common cause.
- **Another strength of the JHP process was its receptiveness to on-going input from expanding circles of participants.** Involving teachers and researchers as equal participants in the process from the beginning helped to shape the concept and methodologies for practical use in the classroom. This involved developing the History Workbooks as alternative teaching materials and later enhancing the pedagogic value of the Workbooks and promoting the multi-perspective method of teaching with interactive training and model lessons.
- **It is not realistic to anticipate that governments in conflict-affected regions will quickly endorse and apply reform the way history is taught, despite practical evidence of the usefulness of new history teaching methods and the political support of the international community.** In many cases, governments perpetuate “nationalistic” interpretations of history in official education systems. Based on the JHP experience, change of policies in the area of history education will be a long-term process including consistent communication with the relevant governmental institutions and gradual growth of constituencies that support new ways of teaching history – teachers, academics, journalists and the public organizations.
- **The history of the JHP and its “impact generating” products – the History Workbooks – demonstrate the effectiveness of civil society work.** JHP is a dynamic system of values, people and processes. It is not confined within an NGO or subject to restrictions of regional initiatives. It is based on broad understanding of civil society in which NGOs, academics, researchers and teachers unlock key processes on significant issues for their societies.

To what extent these lessons and observations will apply to other regions will depend on the local contexts and specificities of the conflict zones – the intensity of past conflicts and the level of their resolution – as well as the broader regional dynamics of history interpretations over time. Successful applications of these recommendations will also depend on the local driver for the initiative. An endeavor like the Joint History Project requires a core, value-based group of professional researchers and teachers, inspired and effective leadership, as well as engagement in expanding the circles of diverse participants.

ANNEX I: List of People Who Participated in the JHP Evaluation Study

CDRSEE Board

Erhad Busek,³⁶ Chair of the Board

Costa Carras (oversees JHP; involved throughout implementation, critical reader History Workbooks)

Amb. Richard Schifter

Dusan Reljic

CDRSEE Staff

Nenad Sebek, Executive Director

Sheila Cannon, Program Coordinator of JHP 2002-2005

Biljana Meshkovska, Program Coordinator JHP 2007-2009

Ruth Sutton, former associate at the CDRSEE

Core team in developing the four history workbooks (WB):

(coordinators/editors)

Prof. Christina Koulouri, University of Peloponnese. General Coordinator; Chair of the HEC

Prof. Bogdan Murgescu, University of Bucharest. Co-editor of the teaching pack on the Ottoman Empire

Assoc. Prof. Mirela Luminita Murgescu, University of Bucharest. Editor WB 2; member of the HEC

Assist. Prof. Dr. Valery Kolev, Sofia University, Bulgaria. Co-editor WB 3 Balkan Wars; member of the HEC

Mr. Kresimir Erdelja, History teacher from Zagreb. Editor of WB Second World War; coordinator of follow up JHP work in Croatia

(contributors)

Dr. Helian Demiri, Lecturer, University Elbassan, Albania. Coordinator of follow up JHP work in Albania

Assist. Prof. Niyazi Kizilyurek, University of Cyprus, Turkish Studies Department. Member of the JHP Academic committee; involved in all phases of JHP

Assoc. Prof. Bozo Repe; University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. Involved in follow up JHP work; trainer in different countries

(critical readers)

Prof. Maria Todorova, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. First Chair of Academic Committee

³⁶ Also former Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact in SEE.

Ivan Vejvoda, Political Scientist, Director of the Balkan Trust for Democracy, GMF office in Belgrade

Teachers, participants in the History Workbooks assessment workshops (2003)

Hristo Berov, Bulgaria, participated in three workshops

Margita Madunic, Croatia, participated in three workshops (also involved in follow up work of JHP in the country)

Snjezana Koren, Croatia (also member of the HEC, involved in all phases of JHP)

Mire Mladenovski, Republic of Macedonia, participated in first two workshops

Ljubka Smilanovska, Republic of Macedonia, participated in last two workshops

Vassiliki Sakka, Greece, participated in three workshops (also involved in follow up work of JHP)

Hayrettin Kaya, Turkey, participated in two workshops (also actively involved in various work of the JHP, trainer teacher training workshops in Cyprus)

Bojan Vuckovic, Serbia, participated in first workshop

Emina Dautovic, Serbia, participated in three workshops (also active member of EuroClio teacher association in Serbia, involved in follow up training in Serbia)

Other members of the HEC of the JHP

Assist. Professor Dubravka Stojanovic, Belgrade University, Serbia (also, vice-chair HEC, involved in all phases of JHP, presented JHP in Tokyo)

Assoc. Prof. Diana Mishkova, Center for Advanced Studies, Bulgaria (involved in JHP academic activities, incl. Halki conference 1999, presented JHP in Tokyo)

Assist. Prof. Aleksey Kalionski, Bulgaria (involved in throughout JHP)

Other coordinators of follow-up local edition development and promotion

Srdjan Dvornik, Croatia, former executive director of the Helsinki Committee (CDRSEE partner for development of the Croatian edition of the History Workbooks)

Dzevdet Tuzlic, Bosnia-Herzegovina, coordinator of JHP work in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Spomenka Lazarevska, Republic of Macedonia, FOSIM, coordinator of teacher trainings in the country

Dr. Irena Stefoska, Republic of Macedonia, coordinator of Macedonian edition of the History Workbooks

Others: (representatives of policy structures, donors or NGOs in the region who provided brief feedback on the History Workbooks' importance)

Jelica Minić, Regional Cooperation Council, Sarajevo. Deputy Secretary General, Head of Expert Pool

Hedvig Morvai-Horvat, Director, European Fund for the Balkans, Belgrade

Petya Kabakchieva, Chair of the Board, OSI Sofia

Rayna Gavrilova, Director, Trust for Civil Society in CEE

Kalinka Sentic Gaber, Executive Director, Forum: Center for Strategic Research and Documentation, Republic of Macedonia

ANNEX II: Evaluation Study of the “History Reconciliation in Southeast Europe project” as part of the Joint History Project of the CDRSEE - Outline of Purpose, Scope, Approach, Methodology, and Instruments

I. Background

The Joint History Project (JHP) is a long-term initiative of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) aimed at informed, significant and realistic change in historical research and education in the countries of Southeast Europe. The twelve countries involved in the JHP are: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, Greece, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey.

In 2002-2007 USAID was among the key donors that supported the “*Teaching Modern Southeast European History*”, or the ‘*History Reconciliation in Southeast Europe*’ (renamed in 2003), under the umbrella of the JHP initiative. The objective of this project was to develop alternative teaching method and materials (Teaching packs, later named History Workbooks) for history teachers at the primary and secondary school level in the countries in SEE, that provide for comparing of various versions and multiple interpretations of key historic events coming from the different countries and to stimulate critical thinking and reflection among students. In the long term the project aimed to bring for reconciliation in the region by new and more inclusive type of history teaching, overcoming the ethnocentric and politicized interpretation of common for the region events that reproduce stereotypes and divide in the Balkans.

The idea and implementation of the History Reconciliation in SEE evolved in several stages:

1. Conceptual stage: (1999-2001). This involved two years of collective effort for in-depth assessment of the history education in the Balkans at the initial phases of the JHP. Activities included: seven regional workshops to analyze history textbooks used in schools in the different countries in the region and seven teachers training workshops. The assessment of history education was published in the final report “*Clio in the Balkans. The politics of History Education*”. The idea for developing alternative teaching packs for history teaching came out from the participating teachers. Main stakeholders involved in this conceptual stage were: the JHP’s History and Education Committee (HEC), consisting of 17 individuals – university professors of history and education, textbook authors, schoolteachers, experts in the field of education working within the region; the JHP Academic Committee consisting of leading researchers in the region, and the CDRSEE Board.
2. Second stage (September 2002- 2005): Regional development and publishing the English version of the history workbooks. This involves intensive regional work for drafting, participatory assessment, publication and dissemination of the English version of four History Workbooks. Activities included joint research and development of the four workbooks (gathering, selecting, and translating materials from the different countries into English); four regional workshops in 2003 with teachers from all participating countries to assess and provide feedback on each of the workbooks as part of their finalization; review of the workbooks by a team of critical readers, as well as editing and printing of the English version of the four workbooks. Main stakeholders/participants at this stage included the international research team consisting of four research coordinators and one to two contributors from each of the country; about 40 teachers participants in the four regional history workbooks assessment workshops ; the critical reviewers/readers team, the leadership and staff

from the CRDSEE. The bodies overseeing the process at this stage are the HEC, as well as the Board of the CDRSEE

3. Third stage (2005- to present): Country level work which involved translation of workbooks in local languages of participating countries and introducing them with local teachers. Activities in each of the countries included identifying local partner organizations or coordinators to provide for implementation, dissemination and outreach; translation and reviewing of local language versions; publishing, public presentation; and training of teachers in local languages to use the materials. Funding for this stage came from multiple donors as a result of the effective fundraising and promotion work of the CDRSEE. It is mostly on country basis to cover all or some of the above activities in the relevant country. Key stakeholders/participants in each country were the local partner organizations or coordinators (local partner) ; the participating in the training workshops local teachers, as well as teachers associations and/or informal networks, Ministries of Education, local media, local research community. Process was overseen by the CDRSEE (both management, and the HEC), as well as the local partner.

The USAID grant for the History Reconciliation in SEE has provided support to the second stage – the regional work for development, teachers’ assessment and publishing the English version of the four workbooks, and has contributed to the third stage by funding for local language versions development and publishing in Serbia, Croatia and BiH.

II. Purpose and Focus of the Study

The objective of this evaluation study was to analyze the process of development and implementation of the Southeast European Joint History Project (JHP) in order to stimulate learning from its practice and approach.

The main focus of the study was on the second stage of the JHP, namely – the regional work for development, assessment, publishing and distribution of the English version of the History Workbooks in 2002-2005. This is due to the nature and importance of this phase. First, it is the result from the problem identification work at the first two years of the JHP. And second, it was a key investment in testing the feasibility of the concept of the JHP in practice. The outcome of the regional development of the English History Workbooks as a process and product has been critical for the next phase of working in the different countries in the region.

From this perspective, this study is not a technical program evaluation of the USAID grant to the CDRSEE (with all its modifications over the years). It is **an analytical outcomes review**, focusing on the conceptual, developmental and learning aspects of the JHP, including the applicability of some of the lessons to programming in other cultural settings.

More concretely, the study explored five key areas:

- Main aspects of the JHP concept and approach, and how they were evolving overtime
- Effectiveness of the process of organizing and implementation of the regional development of the History workbooks as a key phase in the JHP
- Outcomes and effect resulting from the History Workbook development on individuals involved in the regional process and on the follow up country application of the JHP.
- Progress towards change in approaching history teaching in the region and future priorities to increase impact in the long-term

- Lessons from the practice of the JHP that can serve for applying such an approach in other regional or cultural settings

The study is to stimulate timely and critical dialogue that better informs potential USAID programming in this area. For the CDRSEE it is providing for summarized critical reflection and feedback from the variety of stakeholders involved on how they view outcomes of the JHP as a unique and long-term regional effort to grow a platform for new discourse, and approach to history research and education in the region. It will assist systematization of the JHP regional experience as a model/approach of new way of approaching history education that stimulates confidence building and reconciliation in SEE which in turn will provide for expanding the support for these efforts within the European context.

III. Approach and Method

The analytical nature of this outcome review required an approach that facilitated critical reflection of key stakeholders involved on the initial assumptions and expectations, perceived outcomes and their meaning within the JHP objectives, the lessons emerging from practice and their broader applicability. The study was done in close cooperation with the CDRSEE to identify best approach and most precise sample of people to be interviewed.

The main methods of information gathering included:

- Extensive document review of project documentation and key publications of the JHP, as well as other relevant to the project research.
- Semi-structured interviews with key participants in the JHP (mostly by phone and some in person).
- Written survey sent to 41 teachers participating in the History Workbooks assessment workshops in 2003, as requested by the technical directions. Due to a low response, this was later supplemented by additional interviews with eight of the 40 teachers who participated in one or more of the workshops in 2003. Two no longer taught in schools, and four have been using the Workbooks on an on-going basis (two from Croatia, one in Greece, and one in Bulgaria).
- Additional review of secondary data to obtain additional views from the teachers' perspective – teachers' evaluations at the end of the training in the different countries done in the next phase (2005-2009), as well as follow-up email messages from 15 teachers from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and the Republic of Macedonia sent to the CDRSEE in the first months after the training in their countries (mostly late in 2008 and the first half of 2009).

Based on reports of the project and together with the CDRSEE we have identified six groups of key respondents. Questions were developed according to the role of each of the groups. They were additionally adapted in the process of the interviews, as some of the people have been involved in more than one role in the project.

The six respondents groups are as follows:

- **G1. CDRSEE Key staff and team leaders involved with JHP** (*to discuss concept, assumptions and challenges, key development and phases of the JHP, effectiveness of process, challenges, key outcomes and levels of impact, effective practices and lessons*);
- **G2. CDRSEE Board members, more directly involved in the JHP (and members of the History Education Committee and Academic Committee)** (*to discuss concept, assumptions and challenges, key outcome and levels of impact, lessons*)

- **G3. Research Team History Workbooks development– coordinators and contributors** *(views on concept, assumptions and challenges; effectiveness of process of development of the English version of the workbooks; key outcomes and levels of impact)*
- **G4. team of readers/reviewers of the English version** *views on concept; quality of the–workbooks ; views on outcomes of JHP; lessons*
- **G5. Teachers participants in the workshops to assess the history workbooks** *Effectiveness of process of assessment of workbooks, views on approach and tools, critical challenges/difficulties; effect/impact on the individual level, level of continuing involvement of participating teachers in follow up country level activities, and in with the JHP regional network*
- **G6. Coordinators; partners country programs** *Information on outcomes and potential impact of the regional work on the English workbooks – in what way their content and method of development helped the follow up country based work; what were the key difficulties and challenges; what are some lessons learned*

Guiding Questions for the Interviews with Different Groups of Respondents

I. G1. CDRSEE key staff and team leaders involved with JHP

General information

- i. What was your role in the JHP?
- ii. In which of the key activities and phases of the JHP did you participate?
- iii. Are you still involved and how?)

A. JHP Concept and approach

1. How did the JHP emerge? What were the driving factors that helped shape the idea?
2. What are the key aspects of the concept of the JHP? What were the initial assumptions and expectations guiding the JHP?
3. How did the JHP strategy and approach evolve overtime?

B. Process and implementation of History Workbooks development

4. How were the different groups of project participants (coordinators, contributors, teachers participating in workshops etc.) selected?
5. How was the project for the development of the history workbooks organized – as structure, roles and responsibility of different stakeholders and communication?
6. What do you consider as most effective in the process of development of the history workbooks? And what do you think less effective that could be done in a different way?
7. What were the main challenges faced and what worked best in overcoming them? Which of these challenges were anticipated within the initial assumptions, and which were unexpected?
8. How and where the workbooks (English version) were distributed?

C. Outcomes and impact

9. Which aspects of the History workbooks development (as a regional process and product) contributed best to the follow up country application activities?
10. To your knowledge, in which countries you consider the launching of the History workbooks in the local languages was more successful and which less? What were the key factors for success and what were the main difficulties?
11. In what ways the participation in the History Workbooks development has been beneficial to the individual work of researchers and teachers involved?
12. What in your view are the main achievements of the JHP so far?
13. How would you assess the progress towards the long-term goal of the JHP to improve history teaching in Southeast Europe? Has the JHP brought for some emerging changes in approaching history education? If yes, at which levels?

14. What do you see as priorities for the future work in order to increase the impact towards this long-term goal?

D. Lessons and recommendations

15. If you were to start the JHP now, based on gained experience what would you repeat and what would you do differently?
16. What from the JHP approach and lessons from its practice can be applicable in other regions and countries?
17. What would you recommend to USAID and other donors in designing support for improving of history education as part of reconciliation programs?

II. G2. CDRSEE Board members and History Education Committee and Academic Committee

General information

- i. What was your role in the JHP?
- ii. In which of the key activities and phases of the JHP did you participate?
- iii. Are you still involved and how?)

A. Concept and approach of the JHP

1. How did the JHP emerge? What were the main driving factors that helped shape the idea?
2. What are the key aspects of the concept of the JHP? What were the initial assumptions and expectations guiding the JHP?
3. How did the JHP strategy and approach evolve overtime?

B. Process and implementation of History Workbooks development

4. What do you consider as most effective in the process of development of the history workbooks? And what do you think was less effective that could be done in a different way?
5. What were the main challenges faced and what worked best in overcoming them? Which of these challenges were anticipated within the initial assumptions, and which were unexpected?

C. Outcomes and impact

6. What in your view are the main achievements of the JHP so far?
7. How would you assess the progress towards the long-term goal of the JHP to improve history teaching in Southeast Europe? Has the JHP brought for some emerging changes in approaching history education? If yes, at which levels?
8. What do you see as priorities for the future work in order to increase the impact towards this long-term goal?

D. Lessons and recommendations

9. If you were to start the JHP now, based on gained experience what would you repeat and what would you do differently?
10. What from the JHP approach and lessons from its practice can be applicable in other regions and countries?
11. What would you recommend to USAID and other donors in designing support for improving of history education as part of reconciliation programs?

III. G3. Research Team History Workbooks development – coordinators and contributors

General information

- i. When and how did you get involved in the JHP?
- ii. In which activities and phases of the JHP did you participate?
- iii. Are you still involved with the JHP? If yes, how?

A. JHP Concept and approach

1. What in your view are the key aspects of the concept and approach of the JHP?

2. What were the initial assumptions and expectations guiding the development of the History Workbooks?

B. Process and implementation of the History Workbooks Development

3. How was the project on developing the history workbooks books organized – as structure, responsibilities and communication?
4. What do you consider as most effective in the process of development of the history workbooks? And what do you think less effective that could be done in a different way?
5. What were the main challenges faced in the process of development of the history workbooks? To what extent these challenges were anticipated or unexpected? And what worked best in overcoming them?

C. Outcomes and impact

6. How were the History Workbooks accepted by broader audiences in the region?
7. Which aspects of the History workbooks development as a regional process and product contributed best to the follow up country application activities? Which were the main challenges?
8. To your knowledge, in which countries you consider the History workbooks were more successful and which less? What were the key factors for that?
9. In what ways your involvement in the History Workbooks development has been beneficial to your individual work?
10. What do you think are the main outcomes of the JHP so far?
11. How would you assess the progress towards the long-term goal of the JHP to improve history teaching in Southeast Europe? Has the JHP brought for some emerging changes in approaching history education? If yes, at which levels?
12. What do you see as priorities for the future work in order to increase the impact towards this long-term goal?

D. Lessons and recommendations

13. If you were to start the JHP now, based on gained experience what would you repeat and what would you do differently?
14. What from the JHP approach and lessons from its practice can be applicable in other regions and countries?
15. What would you recommend to USAID and other donors in designing support for improving of history education as part of reconciliation programs?

IV. G4. Team of readers/reviewers of the English version of the History Workbook

A. Concept and approach of the JHP

1. What are the key aspects of the concept and approach of the JHP?

B. Process and implementation of the history workbooks development)

2. What to your knowledge was most effective in the process of development of the history workbooks? And what do you think was less effective that could be done in a different way?
3. What were the main challenges faced in the process of development of the history workbooks? What worked best in overcoming these challenges? Which of the challenges were anticipated within the initial assumptions, and which were unexpected?

C. Outcomes and impact

4. What in your view are the main values of the History workbooks?
5. What do you think are the main outcomes of the JHP so far?
6. How would you assess the progress towards the long-term goal of the JHP to improve history teaching in Southeast Europe? What do you see as priorities for the future work in order to increase the impact towards this long-term goal?

D. Lessons and recommendations

7. What from the JHP approach and lessons from its practice can be applicable in other regions and countries?
8. What would you recommend to USAID and other donors in designing support for improving of history education as part of reconciliation programs?

V. G5. Local partners and/or coordinators of country programs

A. Concept and approach

1. What are the key aspects of the concept and the strategy of the JHP?
2. How is the JHP project in your country organized?

B. Outcomes and impact

3. What have been the main achievements of the JHP in your country so far? What were the main challenges and difficulties?
4. What do you think are the main values of the regionally developed History workbooks which helped your work for launching and applying them in your country?
5. What are the key factors for successful application of the History Workbooks at country level?
6. Though it is still too early to see impact, how would you assess the progress towards the long-term goal of the JHP to improve history teaching in Southeast Europe? Is the JHP bringing for some emerging changes in approaching history education? If yes, at which levels?
7. What do you see as priorities for the future work in order to increase the impact towards this long-term goal?

C. Lessons and recommendations

8. If you were to start the JHP now, based on your practice what would you repeat and what would you do differently?
9. What from the JHP approach and lessons from its practice can be applicable in other regions and countries?
10. What would you recommend to USAID and other donors in designing support for improving of history education as part of reconciliation programs?

VI. G6. Teachers/participants in the workshops to assess the History Workbooks

General Information

- i. How did you get involved in the JHP and in which main activities have you participated?
- ii. Are you still involved with the JHP? If yes, how?

A. JHP Concept and approach

- 1) What do you think is most valuable in the concept and approach of the JHP?

B. Process and implementation of History Workbooks development

- 2) Looking back, how would you assess the effectiveness of the process of developing the English version of the history workbooks? What worked well, and what were the main difficulties?
- 3) How would you assess the content of the history workbooks? What do you find as most useful to history teachers and what as not so useful and difficult to use in class?

C. Outcomes and impact

- 4) Has your involvement in the JHP regional meetings influenced your work as a teacher? If yes, in what ways?
- 5) Do you still keep in contact with colleagues from other countries you met at the JHP regional workshops? If yes, how?
- 6) Do you use the History Workbooks in your teaching. If yes, please give some examples.
- 7) If you have used the workbooks in your classes, how is it influencing the attitudes of your students?

- 8) How have the History Workbooks been accepted in your country by the educational institutions, the media, and by other teachers?
- 9) The long-term goal of the JHP to improve history teaching in the countries of Southeast Europe. What are the main successes and challenges in spreading this new approach to history teaching in your country?
- 10) What more needs to be done in the coming years to increase the impact of the Joint History Project?

D. Lessons and recommendations

- 11) What from the JHP approach and lessons from its practice can be applicable in other regions and countries?