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History and Identity

Insights into the *dvv international* History Network

Matthias Klingenberg (Ed.)



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International Perspectives in Adult Education – IPE 65

The reports, studies and materials published in this series aim to further the development of theory and practice in the work of the Volkshochschulen (VHS) as it relates to international aspects of adult education – and vice versa. We hope that by providing access to information and a channel for communication, the series will serve to increase knowledge, deepen insights and improve cooperation in adult education at an international level.

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The authors provided the photos for us, if it is not other stated.

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Matthias Klingenberg

Introduction

History and Identity

The title can easily be understood and explained in a historiographic, ethnological or political scientific way – but let me explain what the title means for me, in my very personal understanding.

My grandfather died in 1993. This was the year I finished my A-levels, and we were all in party mood, drinking, dancing and hanging out with our classmates. It was a day in May, the sun was shining and it was extremely hot for that time of the year – in the evening he died.

Realising he was dead took me some time – but later I understood what I would inherit from him. Before he died, about the last 10 years of his life, he opened up more and more about his past – mainly about the war. He didn't open up freely – it was because I forced him to dig deeper into the burial site of his memories.

At that time I was 21. I had been through the whole history of the war, the holocaust and Germany's guilt for it several times in school and in all of the youth movements I had joined. But one question I couldn't let go of was: *"What did my grandfather do in that war"?*

This is the same question the first post-war generation in Germany asked their parents. This type of questioning happened a lot in the sixties, and we all know that as a result it led to the '68 Cultural Revolution in the West.

My grandfather, 25 years later, still hesitated a lot and didn't want to tell all these sad and brutal stories to his young grandson. But I asked and asked and didn't let him go without an answer. So finally he opened up, being careful at the beginning, talking more about war anecdotes and funny stories about his comrades. Then, after a while, he talked about fighting, lying in the trenches, about weapons, shooting and killing. The first real story I remember now was about a deserter who shot himself in the arm through a loaf of bread in order to get to the hospital and therefore away from the front-line. He was caught because they found bread crumbs in the wound. He was then shot by an execution commando. Was my grandfather personally involved in that execution? I can't remember. Other harrowing stories followed – even about the SS and their killings on the way back from Russia.

It was the first time, after almost 50 years, that he had talked about these dreadful memories and I felt that for him it was like getting rid of a trauma.



This talking about the past, on the other hand, showed me an up to then completely unknown side of my grandfather and changed my perception of him enormously. After having learned about his story I better understood the habits, behaviour and convictions of my grandfather and his generation. And it had a strong influence on my identity. One of the results was that I started to study history. I felt, and still feel, closely linked to my family history and hence to the history of the people from past generations.

Nowadays I feel that I know where I come from and what the special responsibilities are of this ancestry. And I'm not talking about guilt – I could never feel guilty for something that happened before I was born.

Now you may ask: *“Interesting, but how is this very personal and emotional life story connected to the publication at hand and the projects presented therein?”*

In my opinion, very much connected! We may all very well understand and share abstract convictions, concepts and paradigms, but if we are able to add our personal dimension to that, we get a deeper insight. What I want to tell you is that the projects reported in this book are not only trying to support reconciliation (e.g., between Armenia and Turkey, as you can read on page 47), or successful nation building (e.g., the projects in Uzbekistan, on page 61), at a learning and teaching level, but with empathy as well – which adds a very individual and specific form of ownership for the participants to the overall educational approach. All the projects in our *dvv international* history network are asking – in different contexts and formulations – the same three cardinal questions: *“Who am I?”*, *“Where do I come from?”* and *“Where will I go?”* The answers to these questions affect not only the personal lives of the questioners but also the societies and political systems they are living in.

I hope the reader will enjoy the book and feel encouraged to ask him/herself these questions, and maybe these best practices can then help to launch other projects in this area on their way!

Matthias Klingenberg
Bonn, December, 2010

Vanya Ivanova / Violeta Stoycheva

Adult Education and Interactive History Teaching in the Balkans

A History Project in South Eastern Europe

History and history teaching play an important role in developing personal, national, and European identity. They are key issues for reconciliation and strengthening democracy in South Eastern Europe (SEE). Hence, the work in this field can help ensure long-term stability to the region. However, during past and recent ethnic, cultural and national conflicts, governments have been using history teaching as an instrument for promoting nationalism and encouraging strife.

The History Project is being conducted by the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (*dvv international*). The project aims to confront the issues of the uses and abuses in the recent past of the region by implementing multilateral initiatives in history education which encourage mutual understanding as well promote skills and values for the development of civic society in the region.

A predecessor of the History Project was a seminar entitled “Remember for the Future” held in October 2002, in Germany. This was launched by *dvv international* with the support of two German Ministries (the Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). In this seminar, 15 young adults from six South Eastern European countries were trained in methods to confront the traumas of the recent past. The current History Project was a direct result of the “Remember for the Future” seminar, further developed by some of the participants of its predecessor. Thus, one of the principles of *dvv international* projects – to focus educational activities on groups of multipliers – was already fulfilled.

During the first regional workshop in September 2004 in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the discussion was focused on the reopening of the Mostar bridge which was destroyed in 1993. This event was seen as a symbol of peaceful cooperation. Part of the program was devoted to a discussion about reconciliation: “Places of Memories and Meetings for Dialogue” through the World Café method. Some of the results of one of the questions “How can we contribute to the reconciliation in SEE?” motivated



and inspired the core team of the project for the activities to come in the following five years. The answers came as follows: Training seminars and workshops; visiting each other; do not forget the consequences of the past; lobbying decision makers; writing books about similarities in the region; introduce SEE history in the school curricula; create a common Folk Team; the power of music and dancing; exchange recipes / cooking together; find ways of making things together; promote neutrality and maintain a distance from history; SEE TV and radio; exchange programs within SEE; exhibition presenting the countries / pictures from Balkan countries; bringing SEE to my country; bringing reconciliation to the people from small towns and rural areas – awareness; find messages to “inculcate” people with reconciliation vocabulary; intercultural and inter-religious marriages; SEE sports league, etc.¹

The results and reflections are given exactly as they are. They speak for themselves. Besides that, in most of the formal and non-formal talks, the first thing that always came up in the discussion was how vulnerable the teachers are when confronted with the direct questions of their students about what happened in the recent past in the region. Puzzled about how to answer in a caring way, the history teachers, openly shared the need for tools, methods, approaches: how to deal in such sensitive and not-so-easy-to-handle situations. Thus, trainings in interactive methods of teaching became one of the main fields of action of *dvv international* History Project in the region, proving at the end that Adult Education is a powerful tool for bringing improvement of the quality of work and life to the people involved.

All the activities of the project had the aim of improving the quality of history teaching through various interactive methods and formats. In this article we would like to explore further some aspects of theory, approaches and practice that we have implemented and experienced during these five years.

Theoretical Framework: Teaching History in South Eastern Europe

As a school subject, history has a broad range of possibilities in shaping concepts and perspectives for young adults. To a large extent, history forms their identity and positioning in the world. History has an even greater role when put in the context of dynamic mutual interconnection, the economics and social factors in a globalized world.

The changes that concern the teaching of history as a school subject, are closely connected with new perspectives that focus on preparing the individual to be an active part of civil society. The expected results are connected not so much with the quantity of knowledge gained, but the quality of the scientific knowledge taught to students,

¹ More information about the whole world café can be found in: Ivanova, V. / Kien-Peng Lim (ed.). (2004). History Project 2004 “Remember for the Future. Teaching Methods, Ways of Interaction and Reconciliation in South Eastern Europe.” IIZ/DVV – Regional office Sofia. <http://www.historyproject.dvv-international.org/>

its depth and meaningful content. The school curriculum guides the new aims of history teaching towards the formation of a complete picture of the world, understanding change as a principle characteristic of the past and of the modern epoch and understanding and learning determined cultural patterns of activity.² Thus, it must be stressed that engaging young adults to understand cultural values is essential to shaping their attitude toward the world as well as the world's attitude towards them. As P. Bourdieu writes: *"What the child receives from the education environment is not only the culture (in*



Discovering places in the Balkans and enjoying being together

*an objective way), but also a certain type of attitude towards this culture that comes exactly from the way it is gained".*³ In practice, the education of the personality becomes the connecting point, the factor that plays an important role in the opening of cultures and the communication between them, praising the differences in the name of the common good in the modern multicultural world.

The Heritage

The traditional approach that is used when teaching school history could be characterized as mono-cultural, ethnocentric and elitist.⁴ The stress is placed on the term *"ethnocentrism"*, since for a long period of time ethnocentrism determined the philosophy of the history narration. History was told from the position of perception of the own culture as dominant in contrast to others. The application of the ethnocentric approach in history is based on the assumption that the national story coincides with the one of the biggest national group of the country and with the dominant language and cultural group. This way of constructing the past follows the creation and the development of the national state, which for Europe dates back to 18th-19th century. Moreover, in

2 "State education requirements of school curricula for history and civilizations – State newspaper", issue 48, 13. 06. 2000, 44.

3 Bourdieu, P. "The School as a Conservative Force: Scholastic and Cultural Inequalities". – In: J. Eggleston (Ed.) "Contemporary Research in the Sociology of Education". London, Methuen, 1974, pp. 32-46.

4 Stradling, R. "The multiperspective approach in history teaching. Council of Europe". 10; see as well: Stefanov, Sv., Robev, N. "The Doomed Peninsula: Confronting National Stereotypes in the Balkans from the Enlightenment until World War II" – <http://socsci.flinders.edu.au/scanlink/nornotes/vol5/articles/stefanov.html>

a larger sense, ethnocentrism determines the existing stereotypes in relation to close and not-so-close neighbors, the so-called notion of *the other*. In terms of our Balkan neighbors, historical memory is connected with the aspiration for independent existence and affirmation through the triad nation=territory=state.⁵

With this as a starting point, the school curriculum is based on a large and detailed chronological presentation of the national (or European) history, and the historical narration mainly stresses the events and actors from political life. The predominance of political and constitutional history in history textbooks determines the existence of the author's text more than other non-text components. These characteristics could be challenged because they consist of positive elements, connected with the systematization of the gained historical knowledge. That is why it is important to pay attention to this condition; that the students are given mainly results of somebody's understanding – the author of the textbook, the painter, the analyst, etc., but the interpretations are presented as depersonalized information and truth that cannot be doubted. In practice, the mono-culture of the history textbook complements the ethnocentrism, because in this way the logic of the national narration is constructed as a heroic epos. In such conditions, the mechanical teaching of ready facts by the teacher and their repetition by the students creates a prerequisite for old myths; those that build stereotypes towards the other, the ones who are different from us. In this way, history in contemporary society continues reaffirming stereotypes, labeling the neighboring countries as the "bad ones", and thus in the Balkans, history keeps on dividing us.

The Challenge

Present world dynamics challenge history education to find innovative and effective strategies for teaching the past. Although in the Balkans, as in other European states, a curriculum is mainly knowledge⁶ oriented, there is a need and aim for constant education reforms in the post-totalitarian societies, aiming at student centered lessons.⁷ This learning approach fosters a better understanding of the past and transforms history education into a dynamically organized process of rational study, based on various

5 Stoycheva, V. "Ethno-demographic and territory identification of the Bulgarian community in the History textbooks (1878-1944)". – *Образование*, 2001, №6, pp.62-71. (in Bulgarian)

6 Van der Leeuw, Roord, J. Introduction. In: "Changes and Continuity in Everyday Life In Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia 1945–2000". Teacher Resource Book, EUROCLIO, Skopje 2003, p. 3; See also Pingel, F. "The European Home – Representation of 20th century Europe in history textbooks". Council of Europe, September 2000, p. 199; Лоу-Беер, Э. Совет Европы и История в школе. Страсбург, 1997; Leclerc, Jean-Michel. Report from the seminar "The teaching of national history in secondary schools in South East Europe", Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 13-15 June 2002.

7 Damjanova, A. "Constructivism – The new educational paradigm. Bulgarian language and literature" (web version), 2005, No. 5; See also "Constructivist Learning Design": <http://www.prainbow.com/cld/cldp.html>

sources and points of view. This gives students the opportunity to go further, beyond their personal set of values, and to also understand the values of *the other*.

The new school history programs in the Balkan countries with the methodological framework containing the aims of the modern historical narrative offer the following common elements:

- Balanced presentation of political history through the development of new topic curricula connected to the active and creative role of the people in their lifestyle, labour, everyday life, coexistence with other ethnic and religious communities etc.;
- Development of the document base for learning the past and changing the diverse attitudes and interpretations of history toward multiperspectivity and multiculturalism;
- Students' guidance towards critical thinking and competent learning approach;
- Development of attitudes and values as behavioral norms;
- Practical implementation of the acquired knowledge.

Thus, the teachers from the Balkan countries are "*becoming involved*" in the "*new reading*" of the past, starting with the events from 1989 – 1990. In order to find answers, the educators need to look in several directions. On one hand, relevant documents should be found in the new school documentation. Following the common European context, the new history teaching program focuses on the cultural essence of the scientific knowledge, prioritizing the personal dimensions of the historical content.

The next step is to change the direction towards didactical importance – from factual based history to discursive history. Such an understanding of history does not stress the quantity of learned facts, but the analysis of facts, thus leading to competence and skill formation. The necessity of competences connected with understanding of the meaning of the historical information from various texts from the past and constructing of meanings in the production or transmission of information, introduces active learning. In this way, the students learn strategies connected with their search



Getting to know each other

for explanations. Instead of agreeing with a certain point of view, the students form a personal point of view in the process of learning many different facts, explanations and opinions related to the interpretation of the past. This new methodology is built on a “*multiperspective approach*”, “*multiculturalism*” and “*plurality*” by the British scholar R. Stradling.⁸ With the increased popularity of the “*new approach to history*”, the term “*multiperspectivity*” started being used broadly in Europe at the beginning of the 1990s.

K. Peter Frischke calls the critical looking at the past through simultaneously presenting various perspectives *a process, a strategy of interpretation, in the frame of which the other opinion/s is/are also presented, beside the one of the author.*⁹ The main characteristics of this strategy are connected not only with the way the historical facts are interpreted, but also with the necessity to look at them from various angles, while the basic rules of history as a science are used, and at the same time, being aware of our own prejudices and biases.

All these new approaches to history teaching were included as core concepts while creating the interactive teacher trainings of the History Project, discussing topics like: “*Minorities and Majorities in the Balkans – Ways of Interaction; Everyday Life before and after the Fall of Communism; The Balkans – between Stigmatization and European Integration; Reflecting and Handling Recent History in Memorial Places; ICT in History Teaching; A Portrait of a Neighbor,*” etc.¹⁰

New Methodology

The application of the multiperspective approach to the process of teaching history is connected with:

- The ways history is narrated in textbooks
- The selection of sources
- The methods used to interpret the sources¹¹

A review of the current history textbooks and the history curricula in Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia explores the presence of the past as a multilayered process. The results show that in the new history textbooks the multiperspective story is expanding in several directions. The points of view of the “*invisible*”

8 Stradling, R., “*Teaching 20th Century European History*”. Council of Europe Publishing, F-67075, Strasbourg Cedex, 2001.

9 Fritzsche, K. Peter, “*Unable to be tolerant?*” – In: Farnen, R. et al. (2001), “*Tolerance in Transition*”, Oldenbourg. In: Stradling, R., “*The Multiperspective approach...*”

10 More about all the trainings could be found at: <http://www.historyproject.dv international.org/>

11 See: Kusheva, R., “*Multiperspectivity, choosing sources and how to work with them*”. – Dialogue in History, issue 7, 16–31 (in Bulgarian).

groups and social categories (women, children, slaves, and immigrants, and even linguistic, ethnic and religious minorities) that are usually “neglected” from the official political history are more frequently presented. The linear process of the chronological narration is enriched by a set of events that happened “in the meantime...”¹² by the other events of “other important personalities”. In this way the presentation becomes much more complex and rich, established by interconnected stories, that expresses the change in the points of views of the various participants.

Through such sources in the history textbook, the authors aspire to “visualize” the distance of time, and the proposed questions and tasks allow different points of view to be discussed. In this way, a possibility for reflection is opened for the students in relation to their personal values, points of view and the teaching tools being used. A broader¹³ understanding of the term “document” allows various kinds of sources to be accepted with equal value for the time period being studied. On the other hand, this means that besides the skills for analyzing written sources, the students learn techniques to decode other documents: images, sounds, colors, noises, fragrances, etc.¹⁴

Last but not least, the multiperspective approach is connected with the enrichment of the techniques used in school history classes. This happens when various opinions of the events being studied are discovered, as well as when analyzing the cultural context and the attitudes illustrating the concrete point of view of the author. The variety of the school content, the broadening of sources and the repudiation of mono-ideology gives perspectives for a dialogue pedagogy that changes the history lessons in an essential way.

Using empathy as a strategy and an approach to achieve better understanding assumes an aspiration for reconstructing the experience and the feelings of the people who lived in the time-period being studied, which provides positioning in the time and a setting aside of contemporary opinions and points of view. It is connected with the wish to walk in the shoes of others and to see the world through their eyes – to be compassionate.

The formation of sensibility towards a multiperspective historical reality is not only a condition for sensibility towards the other, but also for creating an adequate explanation for our own complexes. Such competences cannot be gained automatically. It requires the construction of appropriate pedagogical situations, interaction and tolerant dialogue between the students in the learning process.

12 Stradling, R., “The Multiperspective approach...”

13 Kusheva, R., “Methodology of history teaching”. Paradigma. Sofia, 2000, p. 138 (in Bulgarian).

14 Clairaut, Jean-Louis, “Interdisciplinary reading of the landscape”. – In: “Interdisciplinary reading of the landscape. Faber, V. Tarnovo”, 2007, 9-23 (in Bulgarian).

The complexity of the transformation of the modern teaching of history into a “process” consists of teaching the young adults to critically compare and contrast various sources. “The dialogue” with the various “traces” of the past, such as the official archive documents (preserving the memory of the state system) and on the other hand with the oral sources, “coding” the memory of the individual, which is often distinguished by subjectivity and contradiction, helps students, by the way they look at the recent and the distant past, to see in their own way the clash of ideas between the new and the old myths imposed on them.

Such a reflection on our own stereotypes is a condition of forming “analytical” citizens, critical of the manipulation of history. In this way the teaching of history can support the social communication skills of young adults from their position as citizens of their countries, which means a broader understanding of the national identity in the sense of belonging to the civic community of the country.

Oral History as a Resource of Present Education

In the framework of the development of the educational reforms and “new reading” of the past in the Balkan countries, the oral history method has become a relevant and integral method that offers teachers the opportunity to undertake flexible actions in implementing the new school plans and finding successful and concrete solutions for an active learning process. Since 2005, the History Project of *dvv international* has focused its efforts in all the Balkan countries in developing trainings and educating teacher trainers in oral history. In addition to the training of teachers and educators from the region through seminars and workshops, the team has compiled an Oral History Teachers’ Guide “*Enjoying Teaching*”. This guide¹⁵ was created by a Balkan team of history teachers and educators and is intended to raise the teachers’ and educators’ awareness about the everyday life of people through the testimonies of the eyewitnesses. In order to learn about the lives of our parents and grandparents, and thereby learn more about ourselves and *the other*, this guide adapts a sensitive approach and focuses on the recent past. What makes this kind of a teachers’ tool unique is not only the process of making it together but also the lessons already tried and taught through which we have a common model of teaching our recent history in a positive, tolerant way, based on the principles of multiperspectivity and multiculturalism.

15 The Teachers’ guide can be downloaded for free at the project website: <http://www.historyproject.dvv-international.org/> In addition to that guide, there are several more publications having the same practical approach, aimed for use by adult educators and teachers – 2004: “*Remember for the Future and the Traveling Exhibition*”; 2008: *Balkan Stories – Good Practices of History Teaching in South Eastern Europe and A Portrait of a Neighbor*”. (DVD)

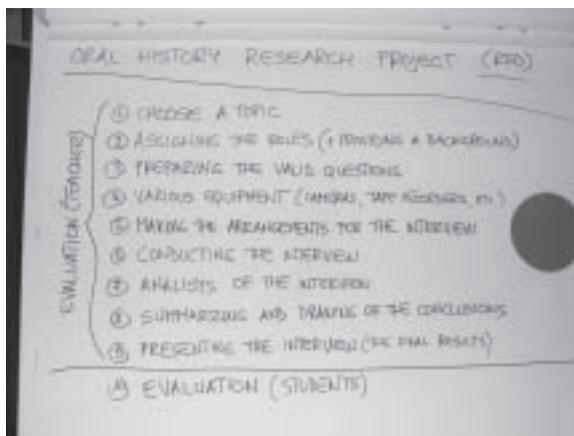
For example, the possibility of using Oral History and Oral Evidence in schools in Bulgaria is limited by the state educational regulations included in the school curricula. The number of documents and the expected competency the students must achieve through their interpretation are specified in the "Sources of History" section. One of the methodological grounds for using Oral History during the teaching process is the interpretation of the documents, which are seen as *"an entity of all the traces of human activities, which have contributed to the studying of History"*.¹⁶ The broader understanding of the term *"document/source"*, included in the school documentation, gives opportunities for:

- Inclusion of oral evidence in the school textbooks as sources of official information about an event or historical process;
- Additional teacher's presentation about the oral evidence as bringing various and alternative points of view of an event or of a historical personality;
- Conducting students' research and discussion about sensitive and contradictory related issues or events from the recent and distant past.

The use of oral evidence as one of the sources for learning about the past enables teachers to organize a challenging teaching/learning process based on multiperspectivity, connecting the development of the historical consciousness and national identity with the improvement of critical thinking skills. History teachers can implement oral history at every level of education, from undergraduate school to graduate school and in the community educational programs as well.

The use of the oral history method in the classroom requires students to possess:

- Technical knowledge to connect the oral evidence with the tangible historical context;
- Competence in defining the reliability of the source and the common processes connected with the concept of the source;



Oral history research project

¹⁶ Kusheva, R.: *"Methodology of Teaching History"*, Sofia 2000, p. 138.

- Critical thinking and interpretation skills;
- Ability to understand the essence of the historical information and its written structure through key words or notes and various kinds of plans and skills to compile the history school texts based on the gathered evidence;
- Opportunities to synchronize and to asynchronize the chronological differences and regional particularities in the historical and cultural developments of the different societies;
- Opportunities to synthesize the knowledge and the methods in history, literature, philosophy and other study fields.

Using Oral History in Primary School History education from the 5th to the 8th grade is based on understanding the world. In most of the Balkan countries, where the systematic history course starts with the authentic past (Serbia, Macedonia, Slovenia), the main idea on which knowledge is based, is on the notions about the distant epochs through the actualization of the modern social experience from the children's everyday life. When students are able to present historical events in a chronological order, they are also able to build the notions of time and space. Opportunities to use the oral history method in the frame of the obligatory curriculum are made possible when students learn about topics which are connected to their cultural history or the history of everyday life. The teachers could assign students interesting tasks which are related to national and world cultural heritage monuments and are located in their state's territory or preserved as museum exhibitions. The governments in the different Balkan countries have tried to preserve the buildings or entire streets in the old parts of the towns or cities which have a historical atmosphere and capture the rhythm and the psychology of the people who lived there. Such "open air museums" give teachers the opportunity to organize open classroom lessons, along with the well known lessons in the regular museums. Besides that, the cultural heritage offers students the opportunity to conduct various creative tasks connected to the gathering of oral evidence through interviewing parents or other acquaintances. History teacher Donika Xhemajli from Prishtina, Kosovo, has implemented this method in her history classes.

Other resources used as oral history might be the traditional songs and legends which contribute and offer more meaning and content to the better understanding of the past. These resources are included in the textbook and the teacher has the opportunity to develop various didactical situations in order to encourage the students to actively participate as researchers in the learning process. The Roma folklore might be purposefully used not only to integrate the children in the learning process, but also as an acquisition tool, to learn more about the Roma culture in school.

The task connected with Balkan people's everyday life culture and their involvement in the clear historical representation of the events as a source of a systematic learning

can also be interpreted as a relation between collective and historical memory. Oral history allows students to articulate the visual signs such as emblems, costumes, jewelry, customs and ceremonies, and traditional social organization, so that the memory of one historical community becomes meaningful to the students as historical evidence of life in the past and its different type of contact with the other. The teachers could assign additional tasks to the students, more than the ones presented in the school curricula and thus stimulate them to learn more about their country.

The collection of personal memories and autobiographical stories are also valuable sources for the pupils in the primary schools. For example, when teaching modern Bulgarian history in the 6th grade the teacher could assign students the task of collecting various stories about the cooperative farms, the migration of the people, the construction of the new houses, the first television at home, evening activities or participation in the youth brigades. All these memories engage relatives and parents, neighbors and other people, and at the same time they motivate the pupils who come from different locations and might consider the traditional way of teaching history as boring and difficult to learn and understand. The skills that the students of the 5th to the 8th grade of primary education need in order to use the oral history method are mainly related to the techniques of gathering information such as talk, investigate, family tree and interview.¹⁷ Due to the fact that the development of the specific historical skills requires a step by step implementation of the oral history method, teachers should be well versed not only on the theoretical explanations and guidelines, but also show students working models, involving them in didactical situations with an aim at training them on how to do it.

Many interesting tasks on additional history learning could be performed in the classroom or outside it through open space activities such as workshops, clubs, cultural heritage classes, etc. Here are some suggested topics which might be used during the academic year or through a period of two to three months work:

- The history of my family (family history, family calendar, family working days and holidays)
- The life of my parents during the Communist Regime
- The pride of my family
- My school
- My city / town / village
- The story of my name
- The story of my street

¹⁷ The author has used the terminology introduced by the methodology of R. Stradling and popularized by the project "Learning and teaching about the history of Europe in the 20th century" because of the terminology differences which are typical in various schools that implement oral history.

- The children's games in the past¹⁸

Special classes could be devoted to famous families that have played an important role in the development of a country. These history classes would contribute to the further development of the students' skills to work and implement oral evidence in the study of history. Examples of some oral evidence:

- Family pictures
- Family tree
- Traditions and holidays of my family
- My autobiography, etc.

There are many considerable opportunities to use the oral history method **in secondary school education**. Compared to elementary school, where oral history is used to help students become more aware of their surroundings, in high school oral history tends to be more closely connected to the subject matter taught in the history class. The students learn the same oral history techniques but implement them in various subjects.¹⁹ Due to their different ages, the students present considerable sets of competencies while using various sources. The history teachers have diverse opportunities to create didactical situations, enabling students to transfer the general skills they have acquired into other subjects. The teachers could assign individual tasks to the students, connected to the gathering of oral evidence, as well as conducting a research activity under the framework of various projects.

The use of the oral history method included in the obligatory school program is conducted based on the new history school textbooks full of oral evidence and didactical tasks, which facilitate the process of interviewing about the traditional and cultural heritage the political and socio-economic history from the second half of the 20th century, and the life of the ethnic minorities. These tasks synthesize the character of the evidence and suggest other combined usages of oral history with ethnology, political science, art, sociology, linguistics, literature, geography and informatics.

The elaboration of the complex tasks for gathering oral evidence on some key topics presents an opportunity for a multiperspective and multicultural approach to the learning of history. It also provides space for various levels of interpretation of facts from local, regional and European history. The example presented above is considered adequate for the humanistic schools, where the teachers teach more than two hours of history per week.

¹⁸ Some of the topics are proposed by Tudor Hebean from Romania.

¹⁹ Donald A. Ritchie: *Doing Oral History. Practical Advice and Reasonable Explanations for Everyone.* Twayne 1995, p.165.

In most of the cases, the limited number of history classes allows teachers to assign the oral history tasks as homework and further present the findings, analysis and synthesis of the gathered information during the class hour. History teachers often assign students interesting tasks about family and local history which are more advanced and have a more complex character than the ones assigned to pupils in elementary schools. The importance of the research work by students and the gathering of the oral evidence is based on the complexity of the research objectives, the variety of the sources used, the level of the analysis and the interpretation of the gathered information, which is also connected to the abilities to compare and select, to conduct critical analyses and synthesis, as well as with the writing of individual analytical essays.

a) Research on the history of the family that includes several subjects:

- The family origin and its history through several generations.
- Personalization of people in the family who have contributed to the great historical events in the national history; state activists, scientists, sportsmen, national fighters.
- Research on the topography of the places which are connected to the history of the families.

In this way students learn the algorithm of researching the genealogy of the family roots, which raises awareness of family memories and their place and contribution in the collective community development. The students could also conduct research on the place where they live.²⁰ The task could include various aspects, such as:

- Historical information about the old village/town/city center.
- Geographical research on the village/town/city center (the main square).
- The present modern conditions of the architecture and the natural heritage, situated in the village/town/city center.
- Topography research on the street names.



Remember the past as a role play

²⁰ The example is adapted from Macedo, F., L. Macedo: Cultural Patrimony. In: "European Citizenship Education. Teacher's manual", edited by the European Information Center, V. Turnovo, Bulgaria, 2004.

Each of the researched objects requires the performance of several tangible tasks. For example, the gathering of information about the present conditions of the architecture and the natural heritage that is situated in the central part of the town requires:

- Research and gather pictures which are connected with the present conditions of the buildings in the center of the town; the houses, fountains, decorations etc.
- Compilation of files about the different buildings following the model:
 - Present name
 - Location in the village/town/city
 - Urban relations
 - Location in time (project dates, construction dates)
 - Owners of the buildings
 - Materials in use
 - Decoration elements
 - Living conditions (hygiene, reservation)

b) Research on the cultural traditions which are cultivated in various locations and geographical regions in a certain country, for example the fire walking custom in the Aegean Trace region of Greece.²¹ The delivery of the tasks investigated as connected to the cultural traditions, in addition to the challenges concerning the oral interview, offer students the opportunity to become aware of the continuous development of the peoples' civilizations. It also makes "visible" the cultural parallels and common customs which we easily find in the Balkan regions. It is in this context that the oral history method supports the rationalization of the individual identity as well as the identity of *the other*, learning to tolerate and respect the differences. Apart from the obligatory curricula, the oral history method could be used in the framework of an elective preparation course for students. Some relevant topics could be:

- Childhood in the past
- Women and men in the past²²
- Everyday life during communism²³
- Religion in the communist regime
- Economic and social problems after 1989²⁴

21 A similar idea in the framework of this Teachers' Guide is presented by Pantazis Miteloudis from Greece.

22 In support of the teachers, in 2001–2002 two teachers' manuals were published that were created in the framework of the History and History teaching in South East Europe project. The researchers were participants in the International seminar of the Balkan research and specialists, Southwest University "N. Rilski", Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria.

23 Teachers from three Balkan countries have worked in the framework of the Stability Pact, Euroclio and the national associations of the history teachers in 2000–2003. See Teacher Resource Book "Changes and Continuity in Everyday Life in Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia 1945–2000", Euroclio, Skopje, 2003.

24 Tudor Hebean from Romania has suggested the last two topics.

Most of the textbooks' diachronic themes, which focus on some aspects of historical development over an extended period of time, could be studied through a pedagogical approach which includes the use of oral testimonies. Some of the themes might be the following:

- How has the technological development influenced people's domestic and working lives?
- What differences has the expansion of the urban areas brought to the people's lives in the towns and rural areas?
- How has the labour market changed through the years (decline of employment rate, establishment of new professions and industries, decline of manual work and development of high technology)?
- How have the relationships among generations changed?
- How has the people's everyday lifestyle changed?
- How has transport and communication affected people's lives?
- How have changes in medicine improved people's lives?
- How have our ideas and perceptions changed, i.e. ideas and perceptions about religion and faith, crime and punishment, poverty and welfare, education, art, fashion, the role and responsibilities of the individual and the state, national identity and patriotism, etc.²⁵



Talking with eye-witnesses

Parts of the quoted examples are appropriate for open class lessons such as in museums or memorials, because they combine oral history with archived data, which are preserved in these local research sites, as well as with the professional support and consultancy of the experts working in these research sites. For example, a topic like *"The development of the game of football in your village/city through the two World Wars"*, offers students various opportunities to conduct research on the culture and sport tradition of the people in the local community that they have selected as a research site. While portraying the trainers, the football players, the coaches, the football fans, the journalists and the representatives of the administration from the field of sport, the students could

25 Stradling 2001.

also do research on life in the village or the city during the post-war years. Students could also plan and conduct various thematic interviews such as: post war everyday life, the labour market, the economy, fashion, nutrition, leisure time, likes and dislikes related to football, favorite football team and the importance of football in their lives.

In the framework of the school projects as part of the various national and international programs such as “Europe”, “Culture 2000”, “Socrates – Comenius”, etc., teachers could motivate their students to conduct an oral history research project. For example, if working on the theme “Women during the 20th Century”, students might select various sub-themes for their micro projects:

- Women and industrialization
- Women and family life

The topic itself could be composed of separate smaller issues:

- Technology and women: time-saving or not?
- Motherhood
- Women and consumerism
- Happy society – the responsibility of women?
- Women and cultural life
- Political power and equality
- Women and wars during the 20th century
- Women and revolutions²⁶

The use of the oral history method in contemporary schools allows teachers to use more than the required history textbooks and offers students the possibility to better understand the research information from various sources such as state and personal archives, memoirs (diaries, letters, and memories), oral evidence, autobiographies and family stories, photos and other family heirlooms. Although the students might encounter difficulties in finding the data or make “discoveries”, the oral history method offers them the chance to research not only the very well known official sources but also unknown ones and bring to light new official historical facts as well as become authors of “oral evidence” themselves.²⁷

The complexity of the transformation of the present history teaching method into a “process” requires young adults to critically compare and learn from different historical sources. Independent of the circumstances, students discover the discrepancy between the old and the new myths imposed by the recent or the distant past, through “com-

26 Ruth Tudor, expert in the Council of Europe, has commented on some of the topics during a seminar with history teachers in Veliko Tarnovo in October 2005, “Citizenship Education and Gender Equality”.

27 Stradling 2001, p. 213.

munication" with various past "traces", such as the official archive documents, the memories of the state system, the oral evidence. Nevertheless, "coding" the individual memories during a research project has resulted in subjectivity and contradiction in many cases. When students reflect on their own stereotypes, they become more "thoughtful" citizens who would be more critical and analytical while observing cases of manipulation of national and world history.

Conclusion

The quick political transitions in Eastern Europe during the 1990s required the reconsideration of written history and the enrichment of the written records with the oral data, especially in those countries where history was manipulated and censored by the totalitarian regimes. The Eastern Europeans got more and more interested in knowing the facts and were fascinated by the concrete historical evidence distributed to them through the tangible evidence of oral history in the early 1990s.

The classrooms of today are often multiethnic and multicultural. Moreover, the modern media supply of information is a challenge for the critical mind. All data needs to be critically constructed into knowledge in order to be personally and socially useful. Instead of a one-way transmission, a modern process of learning of history is active, dynamic and critical. The process is expected to result in expansive, relevant knowledge, which enables people to come to terms with the past and to face up to the future.

Multiperspectivity can be used with success when political and social conflicts are explored in order to help students to understand how and why the participants in the conflict perceive the actions and reactions of *the other* in a different way by using cross-interpretations and prejudices. In such cases it is important that the empathy method is used.

The changing curricula, the new textbooks, teachers' guides, the interactive ways of approaching the issues are a proof of the enormous progress which has been made in the handling and teaching of history in the countries of South Eastern Europe during the last few years. Many history teachers, researchers and adult educators from various international projects connected with interactive history teaching in the Balkans have contributed in this direction.

One of them is the History Project of *dvv international*.



Cosmin Budeancă

The Anticommunist Resistance in Romania and the Oral History Methods

Oral History and Oral History Methods in Romania

Memory was often referred to from the beginnings of historical writing. Herodotus and Thucydides used oral testimonies or their own memories so as to reconstruct various events. In the centuries to follow, memory represented a trustworthy source. The development of techniques after the Second World War allowed the preservation of oral testimonies on audio or video devices that ensured their status as documentary sources.¹



In the second half of the 20th century a change in the way to approach the characteristics of historical writing also took place. Microhistory – as a form to present history opposed to macrohistory – was increasingly promoted. The specialists in the reconstruction of the past became more preoccupied with the significance of an event rather than with its positivist reconstruction; nevertheless, this change did not exclude a certain factual validity. Within the new context, oral history may reveal unknown happenings or unknown aspects of well-known events, or shed a fresh light on the unexplored areas of the everyday life of non-hegemonic classes.² This postmodernist approach may also contribute to reconstructing certain aspects related to the history of private life.

In the above-mentioned circumstances, during the last decades, oral sources stood out, especially in the writing of recent history, however, without excluding other documentation approaches.

Still, oral history was not accepted by all historians. Traditionalist historians are inclined to maintain a certain reserve towards oral testimonies. They accuse oral sources of lacking reliability because of the limits of memory as well as of the witnesses' subjectivity.³ Nevertheless, if one refers to the "truth" and the "objectivity" of documents, it may be asserted that documents can be doubted as well or considered subjective.

1 Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History*, Sage Publications, 1994, p. 3.

2 Alessandro Portelli, *What makes oral history different*, in: *The Oral History Reader*, p. 67.

3 *Ibidem*, pp. 68-71.

In this respect, the history of communist regimes is a relevant example since official documents were written under political influence so their account of the past is biased and subjective. In these circumstances, oral testimonies may be invested with as much credibility as any document. Moreover, the accounts of those who lived through the communist period and participated in certain events are extremely useful in order to obtain a perspective as close to the truth as possible on the history of those years.

The Setting-up of the Communist Regime in Romania

After the Second World War, in Romania, as well as in other European states, the communist regime was gradually gaining ground with the help of the Soviet army. In the years to follow, the Communist Party took actual measures to eliminate opposition; all means were used to this purpose, and most of them were inspired by the Soviet realities of the 1930s. Political parties were dissolved; on 30 December 1947, King Mihai I was forced to give up the crown and the People's Republic of Romania was thus proclaimed.

The destruction or the politically-controlled functioning of representative institutions followed; the Romanian Academy was bolshevised, the Orthodox Church was subjugated to the official propaganda, the Greek Catholic Church was outlawed in 1948 and its representatives were arrested.⁴ At the same time, the Communist Party started a complex process to transform the economy according to Stalinist patterns. Both the urban and rural economy became targets of the process. The factories, the shops and the banks were nationalised; the system of compulsory quotas was implemented and the collectivisation of agriculture began as well,⁵ generating dramatic effects on the population in rural areas.

In approximately five years, the Communist Party, strongly supported by the Soviet Union, succeeded in replacing the existing political, economic and social system with one entirely different from Romanian realities.

The Anticomunist Armed Resistance

This severe change of the natural flow of events triggered the powerful discontent of the population, so manifestations of rejection surfaced quite soon. One of the most important ways to oppose the new communist regime was organising the anticommunist armed resistance in the mountains, which was represented by partisan groups.

4 *"The Black Book of Communism – Crimes, Terror, Repression"*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1998, pp. 737-738.

5 Victor Frunză, *"The History of Stalinism in Romania"*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1990, pp. 411- 413; Ghiță Ionescu, *"Communism in Romania"*, Litera, Bucharest, 1994, pp. 218-222.

The resistance movement emerged and developed because people were not aware of the Yalta Agreement between the representatives of the West and of the Soviet Union; moreover, they were animated by the hope of starting a new war that was expected to end with the freeing of Romania from communism. Furthermore, Western radio stations were constantly broadcasting messages of support and encouragement in the fight against communism.

The anticommunist resistance movement was formed of several tens of groups but it was not united. The groups were created rather spontaneously, in certain areas, so the connections established between them were rather scarce. At the same time, it should be mentioned that such forms of opposition were not specific to the entire territory of Romania, but to a few representative places situated in mountainous regions that were forested and difficult to reach.

The groups of partisans were active in the years following the war until the beginning of the 1960s. They were usually made up of 10 persons, usually young men, but also women, who had different political options before the war.

The actions of these groups varied from writing and spreading leaflets to attacking state institutions. In many cases, it was not the partisans who started the fight; they were defensive and would normally wait until the beginning of a new conflict in order to react.

The leaders of these groups were military men expelled from the army, former local political leaders or common people. Among the most well-known groups of anticommunist partisans one may mention the "Ion Gavrilă Ogoranu" and the "Arnăuțoiu-Arsenescu" groups in the Făgăraș Mountains; the "Spiru Blănaru", "Gheorghe Ionescu", "Ion Uță", "Petru Domăjineanu" groups in the Banat Mountains; the "Paragină", "Vlad Țepeș II", "Vladimir Macoveiciuc", "Constantin Cenușă", "Gavril Vatamaniuc" groups in the region of Moldova; the "Teodor Șușman", "Leon Șușman", "Dabița-Macavei", "Capota-Dejeu", "Cross and Sword" groups in the Apuseni Mountains; the "Ion Ilban" and "Nicolae Pop" groups in Maramureș; the "Babadag Forest" and the "Tatar Group" in Dobroudja.



*Cosmin Budeancă and the
farmer political prisoner
Gheorghe Pascalau*

State institutions used both terror and repression not only against the partisans, but also against the population inhabiting the above-mentioned areas. The main opponent of the partisan groups was the Securitate (the political police), aided by the Militia and the Prosecutor's Office. The efforts of these institutions to eradicate resistance intensified in the intervals 1948-1953 and 1957-1960. The consequences of the repressive actions that had been undertaken at that time were dramatic, since many people lost their lives: some of them were imprisoned while others were sentenced to forced labour for life or were given the death sentence. The traumas that families and entire rural communities were exposed to are still apparent today.⁶

The Anticommunist Armed Resistance, Oral History and the Education of Adults in Romania

After 1989, it became obvious that the historical discourse had been severely altered during the communist regime in Romania. From the numerous subjects that had been put aside before 1989, the anticommunist armed resistance emerged as one of great interest to historians. Because of the long period of time that had elapsed since the events and the gradually smaller number of survivors, it became obvious, since the 1990s, that the retrieval of as many testimonies as possible from the people who had been involved in the resistance was more than necessary.

The first institutionalised measure aiming to involve adults in the process of studying the anticommunist resistance by means of using oral testimonies was taken in Cluj-Napoca, in 1997; the initiative concluded with the setting up of the Institute for Oral History within the "Babeş-Bolyai" University. Furthermore, a master's programme in the field of oral history was established. The first research project of the Centre referred to the anticommunist resistance, and a great number of students wrote papers on the subject. Starting with 1999, the doctoral programme that was initiated within the Centre prompted the development of other research projects on the anticommunist armed resistance.

The preoccupation for the anticommunist resistance manifested not only in Cluj-Napoca, but also in other towns, where it usually limited itself to publishing the results of research, and overlooked the education of adults.

The importance of the anticommunist armed resistance in the recent history of Romania made it a point of reference within numerous projects that implemented oral history. Thus, between 1–6 July 2005, the training entitled *From Seed to Fruit, Doing and Teaching an Oral History Research Project*⁷ took place in Sibiu and then

⁶ C. Jurju, C. Budeancă, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

⁷ For more details, see <http://www.historyproject.dvw-international.org/>

in Făgăraş; 24 history teachers and trainers involved in projects on the education of adults, from several countries in south-eastern Europe, attended the event. The training included applications related to the using of oral history and offered many examples from the field of anticommunist resistance.

A series of five trainings on the dissemination of the methods that are specific to oral history took place within the same project in 2006. The participants were history teachers from various towns in Romania (Suceava, Oradea, Cluj-Napoca, Craiova, Slătina), under the same conditions and following the same themes as the trainings in Sibiu and Făgăraş.⁸

Furthermore, starting with 2006, the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile has developed a series of educational projects⁹ centred on adults (mostly history teachers but also students studying humanities); the specific research methods of oral history were presented and the examples were mostly chosen from the field of the anticommunist armed resistance.



Students meet veterans of the Second World War

The Advantages and the Purpose of Using Oral History in the Education of Adults

The advantages of using oral sources in the education of adults are extremely important. Among the most important elements that recommend such an approach one may mention:

- Dynamism, which is triggered by the interaction with the witnesses or the participants in the events. Information is directly and easily intercepted. Clarifications or additional data are immediately available.
- Spectacular character – The accounts of a participant in the anticommunist resistance movement are extremely captivating and arouse interest easily.

8 For more details see <http://www.historyproject.dvw-international.org/>

9 For more details see http://www.crimelecomunismului.ro/en/projects/educational_programs

- Originality – Having a witness to an event as a “teaching aid” represents a great alternative to traditional educational methods as information is acquired in a pleasant manner.
- Low costs – Considering the issue of the costs related to the educational process, it is worth mentioning that using oral testimonies implies low costs. The account of a participant in an important event may be recorded and used as many times as necessary.

Based on our experience, we may assert that the using of the methods which are specific to the field of oral history in the education of adults has a multiplying effect, as these methods and techniques are easy to assimilate and pass on to others.

Last but not least, one should mention the purposes of those who are using these methods. An oral history interview may be, for example, published in a newspaper, magazine or book (a *life story* kind of an interview); it may be published on the Internet in its original audio or video format or it may be written out; it may be used in the making of a film or a radio broadcast; it may be used in the educational process for different age levels. No matter what dissemination method is used, the message may reach a great number of potential receivers, with relatively little effort and a high informative and educational effect.

Conclusions

In the former communist countries, recent history is still little known by both adults and the young generation. Taking into account the fact that school curricula include the study of recent history to only a small degree, the projects aiming at educating adults (and especially history teachers) are extremely necessary. The advantage of oral history in the studying and understanding of the communist period resides in the opportunity of involving witnesses and direct participants in various events in the educational process. As the evolution of human society as a whole makes the educational field embrace renewal as well, we believe that referring to oral history may be a solution, especially in the field of humanities.

Vasja Rovsnik

Srebrenica – Everyday Life after Genocide

Using the Oral History Methode (OHM) in practice

Exactly 50 years after the biggest slaughter in the history of mankind, genocide took place in the heart of Balkans, in Bosnia. This genocide happened in the middle of Europe, the so-called home of western civilisation. And it was happening right in front of the cameras, in front of the eyes of the whole world. It was like the worst reality show ever.¹ But the Balkan war was a much more complicated tragedy. It was a war between ethnic groups, war between the military and civilians, a religious war, a war between the rural areas and urban areas, it was a clash of generations, a war between east and west.... Almost all types of war were happening in the former Yugoslavia.



By doing research on the war in Bosnia, I was faced with many dilemmas, questions that emerge from the black or white point of view which both sides (Serbs and Bosnians) have. Are the Bosnians just Islamised Serbs or are they descendants of an Illyrian tribe that lived here centuries ago and had a cultural centre in mythic Argentaria?² Did the international community want to prevent the formation of an Islamic state in the Balkans? How was it possible that the international public didn't take the possibility seriously, that genocide could take place in the Podrinje enclaves? What was Lieutenant-Colonel Tom Kaaremans, the commander of Dutch troops in Srebrenica thinking when he drank a toast with Radko Mladic, while the Chetnik hordes had already started killing all of the males in Srebrenica? What were ordinary DUTCHBAT soldiers thinking while they were helping Serbs to sort out the Bosnian men and women? What were war criminals Mladic, Krstic, Karadzic and many others thinking while they were planning and later realising the mass murder

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- 1 The system of controlled democracy and the police state give us a good subject for comparison of the reality show concept and the last Balkan war. Let us imagine that Big Brother is the international community (and its public opinion in all its forms), and the states of the former Yugoslavia from 1991-1995 are the competitors in the Big Brother house – the Balkans. The scenario is very similar. In both cases the public is just watching what is happening in the field but no-one is doing anything. Both models would be the same if the Big Brother competitors would start to kill each other, since the show wouldn't stop because of high public-media interest and a lot of money put in.
 - 2 Near Srebrenica the Romans built a mining town called Argentaria, even then one of the largest settlements in the Balkans. S. Salimović, *Knjiga o Srebrenici*, p. 19 (onwards, *Knjiga o Srebrenici*).

of more than 8000 Muslims in Srebrenica? These and many other questions cannot be answered clearly.

For centuries the Srebrenica area was well known as a territory rich with silver, lead, zinc and gold and therefore interesting to many conquerors. Illyrian tribes in the 2nd century B.C. exploited the ore there. Mining continued with the Romans, the Slavs (Bosnian state in the Middle Ages), the Turks (more than 400 years), the Austro-Hungarians, in the Kingdom of SHS-Yugoslavia and in Tito's socialist Yugoslavia. After World War II, Srebrenica tried to catch up with the world, since many modern factories and new mines were built.³ In the mid-eighties, there was a rapid increase in the educated population of the two main ethnic groups (Bosnians and Serbs) in the municipality as a result of many young people from Srebrenica going to famous Yugoslav universities. At the beginning of the 90s a lot of young intellectuals were willing to help in the overall development of the city and municipality. However, instead, a tragedy occurred.

In the second half of 1991, it was already clear that the great-Serbia nationalists were preparing for aggression in Bosnia and Podrinje. In April 1992, Serb units, still constituted as JNA (Yugoslav People's Army) led by general Mladic, together with local Serbian collaborators and paramilitary units, occupied Srebrenica, but this did not mean the city surrendered. For more than three years, Srebrenica heroically repulsed a number of Serb offensives in the area of the city, which because of its geographical position close to the Drina, represented one of the first objectives of Serb nationalistic and criminal policy. When in April 1993 the agreement about the demilitarisation of the city was reached (resolutions 819 and 824 by the UN Security Council), Srebrenica was declared a safe area under the protection of UNPROFOR. In the enclave there were about 40,000 starving local Bosnian residents and refugees from other neighbouring cities which were dying daily from grenades, disease and hunger.⁴

The final Serb attack on the city (9 July 1995) resulted in the fall of the city two days later (11 July) and consequently the massacre of men and boys in Srebrenica. On the Serbian side, units from the Drinski korpus were mixed with various paramilitary Chetnik and even paramilitary foreign units. All the killings and deportations were happening in the presence of Dutch blue helmets in their base in Potocari. Some reports claim that in a few cases DUTCHBAT soldiers even helped Serbian troops by sorting people by gender, helping in the deportation and consequently helping in the mass murder. A few days after that, Srebrenica was ethnically cleansed; almost the whole Muslim male population was killed, some others deported, while a small group of them fought their way to Tuzla. In the week after the 11th of July, more than 8200 Bosnian

3 Knjiga o Srebrenici, p. 21.

4 J. Pirjevec, *Balkan wars*, Ljubljana 2003.

men were killed in the neighbouring villages of Srebrenica, in the hills and forests by Serbian paramilitary units led by Mladic and Arkan. It was the largest massacre in Europe after World War II, which will echo in the centuries which follow, with all the tragic heroism that can be expressed in just one word: Srebrenica.⁵

Genocide

Lemkin,⁶ the father of the modern theory of genocide, defines it as *“acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group”*. The aim of such a plan is the demolition of the main political, social and cultural institutions, language,

national feelings, religion and economic viability of one national group. Genocide is directed against national groups and ethnic groups. Genocidal campaigns are directed against individuals as members of a national group. Lemkin participated in forming the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide⁷ in 1948. According to that convention, acts of genocide are:

- a) Killing members of the group
- b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group
- c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
- d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group
- e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group

Perhaps the most general definition of genocide today is the one given by the Webster 3rd International Dictionary which states: Genocide is the deliberate implementation of systematic actions (such as killing, mental and physical damage, inhumane living conditions, prevention of births), which is intended to exterminate a racial or cultural group, or the destruction of it's language, religion and culture.⁸



Potoöari Memorial Center

5 Right there.

6 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raphael_Lemkin

7 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convention_on_the_Prevention_and_Punishment_of_the_Crime_of_Genocide

8 Century of genocide, p. 30.

Ethnic cleansing and genocide in Srebrenica took place in the urban as well as in the rural environment, where the population was widely ethnically mixed. The main characteristic of the Srebrenica genocide is that it is also a gendercide. Gendercide is a gender-selective mass killing.⁹ The Bosnian-Serb propaganda machine claimed that everyone, including unarmed Bosnian men are a potential risk and therefore not civilians. “*Serbs are fighting with Muslims,*” was the phrase often uttered at the summit of international politics. The unwritten rule of the international community was “*Save the civilians.*” This meant women and children, but not the thousands of men and boys of Srebrenica, aged 12-80 years, who were sentenced to death.¹⁰

Post-genocide Period

After the act of genocide, the post-genocide period is characterised by universal dominance of a particular group over another. Frequent violence is reduced, the area is cleared of the hostile elements. The post-genocide period lasts to the present (it is never-ending), but its consequences may be immune to temporal distance, as well as the historical situation. Everyday life is characterised by a large demographic change and economic poverty.¹¹ Also significant for the post-genocide period is denying the genocide and, on the other hand, seeking to justify the killings. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the media, poisoned by dangerous and bloody ancient myths, and the old “*eye for an eye*” philosophy, justified the genocide that took place pretty successfully. This fact has the worst influence on young people, as they are even more burdened with the lives of their parents and are not properly educated about the genocide. In the social life of Srebrenica today, there are many indicators pointing to a certain conception of otherness in defining the basic values of an ordinary everyday life.¹² The consequences of genocide are evident not only in the demolition of houses, but also in the minds of people that have survived.

9 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gendercide>

10 For such a bold assumption there is more than sufficient evidence. In the Srebrenica region full mobilisation of all Serb adult men to the VRS (Army of the Republika Srpska) including the soldiers of the former JNA (Yugoslav National Army). In some places, soldiers only exchanged their military uniforms for Chetnik uniforms, while in Srebrenica, only 10 % of the Bosnian troops were armed. The relationship between the presence of soldiers of DUTCHBAT and CANBAT is illustrated by a video conversation between the Canadian and Dutch military observers from the end of June 1995 in which they talk about how they do not care for the fate of Bosnian men in the city. Such a sick perception, mixed with the fake belief that something like this could never happen was one of the key causes of the Srebrenica genocide. Mladić understood this as a green light for the massacre. H. Nuhanović, *Pod zastavom UN-a*, str. 38-41 (onwards Nuhanović).

11 Right there, str. 34-35, *Century of genocide*, str. XII-XVIII.

12 It turned out that Yugo-nostalgia is especially a predominant emotion in middle-aged or older people.

Oral History Method (OHM)

In my research I used the full knowledge I gained through *dvv international* conferences and seminars, where the focus was on the interview methods by scientifically collecting historical materials. The use of the interview requires theoretical and practical preparation. Since the interview is “first hand” information, in the view of some, it has a higher value than a written source. It is a sort of time machine (a footprint in time) that takes the researcher into the very centre of development in everyday life. But it can also be very subjective. Besides the questionnaire and the interview itself, the OHM process also includes the analysis methods, information gathering methods, critical evaluation and a final synthesis or conclusion. Before the start of the interview, the researcher must systematically prepare a questionnaire covering the thematic field of the research. The interview itself is a carefully managed set of scientific procedures. It begins with finding partners.¹³ At the beginning of the interview, the researchers must present themselves and their work and ask if they can also record the interview (audio/video).¹⁴ Questions should be precise, systematic and logical. The researcher must be trained in different techniques, including how to be flexible in the discussion, which is different for each person being interviewed. The researcher must also inform the interviewee of where and how the research will be published and documented.¹⁵



Interview with local intellectuals

My Research 2006-2008

My research in Srebrenica was done from 2006 to 2008, using the same questionnaire.¹⁶ I taped more than 50 interviews with members of both main ethnic groups. In my questionnaire, I focused on a comparison of everyday life before and after the war. In my research I tried to make a time-footprint of one year of everyday life in

¹³ This also depends on the social climate in the local community and the character of the researcher.

¹⁴ When recording with a camera, it often happened that some people refused to participate in the interview.

¹⁵ More about OHM on <http://www.historyproject.dvv-international.org/materials/HistoryProject2006.pdf>

¹⁶ The analysis of my first research (2006) was presented at the IIZ-DVV conference of Balkan historians held in Belgrade (October 2007).

Srebrenica. I'm also aware that for a detailed analysis of the post-genocide period, such work is far from enough. But at least I tried to highlight the basic events, causes and consequences of genocide in Srebrenica in the everyday life of its Serb, Muslim and Croat inhabitants. In my questions I focused more on the parameters of everyday life and especially its comparison on the timeline past/present (1991/today). The most complex problem of my research was the delicate issue of the role of religion and nationalism, their participation in the genocide and their role in everyday life in Srebrenica today. In the end, I tried to present the consequences of genocide in Srebrenica and the impact of this tragic event on the everyday life of the inhabitants in the decade after the genocide. I also tried to evaluate the global impact of the Srebrenica genocide on understanding the very concept of genocide, and what we can learn from the events in Srebrenica.

The questionnaire was divided into the following topics:

- The economic situation and relations in everyday life
- Local authorities and the international community in Srebrenica
- Education and the everyday life of the youth
- Religion
- The future of Srebrenica

Economic Situation and Relations in Everyday Life

According to the 1991 census, over 37,000 inhabitants lived in the municipality of Srebrenica (28,000 Bosnians, 8000 Serbs, 600 Croats and 43 "other"). More than 11,000 people were employed. Today the population of the municipality does not exceed 11,000, of which only 1500 are employed. The ethnic ratio in the municipality of Srebrenica (the city itself has no more than 4000 inhabitants) is about 60% Serbs to 40% Bosnians (6000 Serbs, 4000 Bosnians and 40 Croats). Nationality is completely identified with religious affiliation (Orthodox-Serbs, Muslim-Bosnians, Catholic-Croats). Poor infrastructure and the consequent isolation of the main economic routes (unlike before, when Srebrenica was the most prosperous mining centre in the Balkans) is inhibiting the development of the region at all levels. The economic and social situation in the municipality of Srebrenica today is very difficult. Before the aggression, Srebrenica was one of the most developed municipalities in Yugoslavia, providing 11,500 jobs. Now it doesn't even have that many inhabitants. Srebrenica today is the third largest municipality in Bosnia and Herzegovina (530 square kilometres), but by far the poorest. Living in Srebrenica before the war was almost idyllic. Industrial development, particularly the mining industry, timber resources and consequently large factories in the area (bauxite production, battery factory, wood-processing indus-

try, etc.) was very successful. Most of the population was employed, many were farmers. Srebrenica also lived very well from tourism. Today, some 1,500 people are employed, many of them are poor farmers. The international community encourages them through the UNDP mission and the CARE International organisation, their only source of income. Unemployment could even be, according to some sources, around 80%.

It is impossible to compare everyday life in Srebrenica before and after the war from the economic perspective. Today there is a special situation in which the inhabitants try to satisfy their basic existential needs for survival,

such as employment. International, national and local institutions also partly failed with their post-genocide development program. Reconstruction of buildings was the primary objective, while they forgot to create new jobs and to speed up the social reconstruction.¹⁷ The poor economic situation is a key cause for why the population is not returning. Everyday life relations between the two main ethnic groups were incomparably better before the war than they are today. Srebrenica before the war was a model of the multicultural municipality; Bosnians, Serbs and Croats were working together and had common social events. All my interviewees also said that they had (and still have) some good friends from other ethnic groups. The police patrols in today's Srebrenica are ethnically mixed. Before the war there were some mixed marriages, although rare. In the period 1996-2000 only Serbs lived in Srebrenica (many of them arrived in Srebrenica immediately after the war from the former Serb territories in Bosnia and Croatia). The slow return of Bosnians to their homes began only in 2000, 5 years after Dayton. Otherwise, life in Srebrenica is slowly returning to normal, although it will never be completely normal again. Today some enthusiastic individuals are trying to revive the tradition of good relations and neighbourhood again, once reflected in visiting each other in times of religious holidays.



Interview with members of the multicultural political party

¹⁷ Lots of interviewees stressed that they would rather have a new job than a new house. "We will rebuild our houses for ourselves, just give us a job!"

The Local Authorities and International Community in Srebrenica

Srebrenica today (after the Dayton Agreement in 1995) lies in the Serbian part of Bosnia, under the authority of the so-called Republika Srpska (RS). Today the city is more Serbian than Muslim. A local municipal authority is headed by the mayor; his administration is multi-ethnic.

Many Srebrenica Muslims have not returned to their homes yet (around 11,000 are now living in the Federation as well as in many parts of the world), but they have the right to vote. However, the trend of voting from abroad is in decline. In the Bosnian political reality, Srebrenica today is a kind of isolated wedge, the island inside the Serbian territory in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The fact is, people are fleeing from Srebrenica again; many do not see any perspective. The most activity among international organisations working in Srebrenica today is from the UNDP (UN Development Program). According to most interviewees, Srebrenica today is a kind of political ring, front page news, which is used for the accumulation of political points with the help of nationalistic slogans. Many wrong projects have been carried out by the international community, local and federal politicians.¹⁸ On the other hand there is also a belief which is a little too idealised, that the international community will take care of everything because it is its duty. I'm not convinced that the international community is

fully capable of carrying out a social reconstruction of Srebrenica, since its priorities in many cases do not coincide with the priorities of the people. However, the role of the international community and its organisations still have a vital part to play in the survival of Srebrenica. Together with the projects and work on the return of the population, in May 2000 in New York the international community organised a special conference of donors for Srebrenica, called The Srebrenica Action Plan, in which \$12 million was collected to start the most urgent reconstruction work in Srebrenica (the water pipeline, electricity and infrastructure).



Local rock band

¹⁸ Maybe the biggest conceptual mistake of the international community in the reconstruction of everyday life in Srebrenica was that the main symbol of the reconstruction was a rebuilt house, not a rebuilt factory which could give people jobs. This help was not balanced with the long-term needs of the population.

The mandate for this was given to the UNDP and its development program. There are also many other humanitarian organisations situated in Srebrenica (SARA, CARE International, Mothers of Srebrenica, OSC, OHR, Nansen Institute for Dialogue and others). All these organisations help to normalise relations and the situation in Srebrenica.

Education and Everyday Life of the Youth

Before the war, more than 11,000 children attended primary and secondary schools (medical, technical, high

school) in and around Srebrenica. Today the total number of pupils is 1500, of which only about 250 are Bosnians. The biggest problem is the poor physical condition of schools, which affects the quality of education. The Federation and Republika Srpska have different curriculums. In Srebrenica they use the curriculum of Republika Srpska, so many Bosnian children attend schools outside the county, schools that use the curriculum of the federation.¹⁹ These schools are in the surrounding villages, where the Bosnians are in a majority. Where Srebrenica students go to study is determined by national origin. Serb students study in Zvornik, Bijeljina, Pale, Banja Luka and Beograd, while Bosnian students go to study in Tuzlo and Sarajevo. Many of them never come back. On the other hand, it is a positive development that in the autumn of 2006, Economics and Law departments of Sarajevo University were opened in Srebrenica, so young people have the opportunity to study in their home town.



Local child plays a video game

Religion

Today, the ratio of believers (Orthodox and Muslim) is similar to the ratio of the ethnic structure, which is 2:3 in favour of the Serbs throughout the municipality. In Srebrenica before the war there was a tradition of a common celebration of religious holidays. Muslims, Orthodox and Catholics visited and honoured each other with small gifts.

¹⁹ Bosnia and Herzegovina is constitutionally divided into three neutral, self-governing administrative units: The (Bosnian-Croatian) Federation, Republika Srpska and the Brcko free district, which is a part of both entities.



A new car factory

Today, this tradition is trying to be revived in the House of Trust project. The roots of this multicultural tradition were completely destroyed because of the nationalistic-xenophobic role of religion in the Bosnian war. Therefore, religious organisations in Srebrenica today are operating more individually. Religious education in Srebrenica today is a part of the Republika Srpska educational program but is optional and separate. The two largest religious communities in Srebrenica (Islamic and Orthodox) also have their individual donors, who come mainly from abroad or from the diaspora, which is a major donor to the Serbian

Orthodox Church. On the other hand, the Islamic religious community is financed by the diaspora around the world (there is an organisation in Chicago that raises funds for the Islamic centre) and in many Islamic countries (the Malaysian government for example is building a mosque). It must also be stressed that all three religious communities are also partly financed by local authorities. Models like the House of Trust, organised by an enthusiastic director of SARA (organisation for better quality of life for women and youth) and a multicultural folklore dance association Vaso Jovanović led by the one and only Ahmo, are some of the strong bright lights over the dark sky of Srebrenica.²⁰

The Future of Srebrenica

Before the war, Srebrenica was a successful tourist community (Spa Domavija, river Drina, lake Perućac), so the future potential of Srebrenica lies in tourism. One of my interviewees said Srebrenica should not propagate death but must propagate life, which should take place in the various tourist attractions. The more than 600m deep canyon of the river Drina, whose forests are rich with wild animals, could be an excellent destination for hunting, fishing, recreation and camping, as it was before the

²⁰ I would say that it is admirable, how these local humanitarians and enthusiasts, both Bosnians and Serbs, want to awaken the spirit of solidarity and tolerance, which is so much needed in Srebrenica. But just the fact that each year on the anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre there are various nationalist incidents happening shows us that the situation is far from normal.

war. Lake Perućac also belongs to the category of potential common tourist attractions. Srebrenica could also offer skiing, trekking, extreme sports and a possibility of tourist nights. Srebrenica is also very rich in natural resources (wood, ore, agriculture) and it has a future for the mining and timber-processing industry. The source of a healing mineral water, Crni guber, and a once-successful spa, Domaviija, is also a great potential for Srebrenica. There is also a very successful Slovenian car factory in Srebrenica and a new wine producer. But the city will not emerge from the crisis alone. The goal of different international organisations and local authorities must be enabling the correct use of natural resources. However, first it is necessary to complete the project of building the infrastructure, especially roads.

Abstract

Srebrenica today is an underdeveloped municipality, so comparison with the period before the war is impossible. Many people have wonderful memories of their industrial and tourist-developed municipality before the war, an exemplary model, where multi-ethnic tolerance went hand in hand with economic progress in the socialist system. That is the reason that today, Yugo-nostalgia among the population is so idealised, and thus largely justified.

The economic situation in Srebrenica today has some indication of a bright future. Since everything was destroyed, it is necessary to start from the basics, such as infrastructure, jobs and relations among the population. High unemployment and poor living conditions could generate new conflicts. A bright spot could be tourism. Lots of people feel they have no perspective and use the earliest opportunity to leave. After what happened, it is of course unrealistic to believe that love will replace hatred completely. The smile a Serbian boy gives a Bosnian girl across ethnically separate tables in a bar can be enough to sow a seed of love, or at least tolerance.

Schools in Srebrenica are in poor condition, but things have improved since the Economics and Law faculties were introduced. There is also a high percentage of youth drinking alcohol



Srebrenica today



Srebrenica today

and taking drugs. Young people have a strong sense of “No Future” and are completely resigned to their fate. In the future more should be done. Young people should also take a little more responsibility, since it is they alone who have the future in their own hands.

Religious relations in Srebrenica are mostly in the spirit of ignorance, although recently some multicultural events show positive trends (House of Trust). However, religion is still too much incorporated within the (dangerous) ancient myths and prejudices, which have been and are still, unfortunately, the main reason for ethnic hatred and violence.

Despite the obvious problems, many of the inhabitants of Srebrenica believe in a better future. These people know that there is nothing worse than war, so promoting life is the only option. War is not an option. That is clear in today’s Srebrenica. Therefore, perhaps in Srebrenica you can experience the great genuine Balkan hospitality and you have the feeling that these people would do everything they can in order to live in peace.²¹ The most amazing thing to see in Srebrenica today are the individuals (Bosnians, Serbs and the so-called Yugoslavs²²) who want to revive the multicultural society Srebrenica once was.

After my research, I had more questions than answers,²³ but I know for sure that I have become a better person. Today you can sit in one of Srebrenica’s bars and watch a football match with Serbs and Bosnians. Maybe this means more than we think. The heavy shadow of Srebrenica lies over the entire human civilisation; it covers all of us and should guide us to actions that will prevent the barrel of Balkan gunpowder from exploding again. And like one of my interviewees said: *“We will never be brothers again, but we can be good neighbours, who live together in peace and tolerance.”*

21 J. Sacco (author of the excellent comic *Gorazde – safe area*) also had such feelings and experiences.

22 In Srebrenica I met three very interesting middle-aged men who were forming a multicultural party. They said they are Yugoslavs. Maybe they are a model for a better future of Srebrenica.

23 Most visible, the complexity of the Balkan paradox describes an event that I have experienced in the History Project in Sofia. After a very emotional dispute between two friends, a Bosnian and a Serb, about the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it was not clear to me how they were, a couple of hours after that, drinking beer together and having fun. When I told them that I did not understand their behaviour, they started laughing. One of them replied: *“Hey Slovenian, there are lot of things you don’t understand yet.”*

Nazaret Nazaretyan

Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation via Adult Education and Rethinking History – Practical Experience

We encountered the topic “*Rethinking History*” for the first time in Armenia during the presentation by Mr. Uwe Gartenschlaeger (Deputy Head of *dvv international*) within the framework of Adult Education Week in Armenia in 2006. In his presentation entitled “*History and Identity, or Why We Need History*”, Mr. Gartenschlaeger outlined the experience he gained in the course of project activities in this area in Germany, South Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The presentation awoke an interesting discussion among the event participants at that time.



When making plans for 2007, we discussed the idea of project activity on “*Rethinking History*” and decided to try to develop a project aimed at Armenian-Turkish Reconciliation.

We are now able to present you with the initial results of our activity.

Prerequisites

Before we proceed to the project itself, we would like to briefly discuss its prerequisites.

On the occasion of the football match between teams of both countries within the framework of a qualifier for the World Cup, in April 2008, President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan invited his Turkish colleague Abdullah Gul to Yerevan so they could watch the match together. The match took place on September 6, and both presidents attended it.

Historically, relations between Armenia and Turkey have not been not easy. The genocide, which according to different sources claimed up to 1.5 million people, is still questioned by the Turkish government.

Both countries are over-saturated with prejudice and stereotypes. Armenia lacks confidence in Turkey, and Turkey lacks confidence in Armenia.

The past two years have already witnessed certain processes leading to the reconciliation of the two societies. In addition, more and more discussions arose in Armenia and Turkey.

The January 2007 murder of Hrant Dink, a Turkish journalist of Armenian descent, had a strong impact on public opinion in Turkey. Thousands of people in Istanbul took to the streets holding posters “*I am Hrant*”, “*I am Armenian*”.

In early December 2008, 200 Turkish intellectuals launched the Internet campaign “*Apology*” (<http://www.ozurdiliyoruz.com/foreign.aspx>). Before late February 2010, the site was visited by some 30,410 people. They all signed the apology text.

Some progress has been seen in political dialogs as well. In October 2009, the Foreign Ministers of Turkey and Armenia signed two protocols: on renewal of relations and on development of relations between the two countries. The Constitutional Court of Armenia recognised the compliance of the protocols with the Constitution. Currently, the documents have to be ratified by parliaments of both countries.

Three Project Stages

Stage 1: Gathering Experience

International Conference “*Adult Education and Intercultural Dialog at the Crossing of Millenniums*”

The conference was held within the framework of the Adult Education Week in Armenia in 2007. The conference participants were experts from nine countries. The topic “*History and Identity*” was the focus of a separate session with presenters from the Balkans, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Turkey and Armenia. Mr. Dogu Ergil from Turkey also took part in the conference. He dealt professionally with the issues of “*history and identity*”. All presentations were interesting and new to conference participants. The participation of Ms. Vanya Ivanova and Ms. Elena Sabirova, who presented the projects in the Balkan states and Uzbekistan, was essential as well. At the end of the conference, we discussed opportunities for further cooperation with Mr. Ergil and Ms. Ivanova and outlined cooperation for 2008.

Stage 2: Project Ideas Development, Identification of Key Actors

Implementation of Activities to Rethink History (History and Identity) in Armenia

In 2008, we started activities aimed to rethink history. In October 2008, the first workshop under our project was conducted on Armenian-Turkish dialog. It was titled “*History and Identity: Building Bridges for Dialogue and Understanding*”. The workshop program was developed by Ms. Vanya Ivanova, “*Project History*” Coordinator, *dvv in-*

ternational in the Balkans. Mr. Dogu Ergil, Professor, Ankara University, helped select partners in Turkey. We were responsible for the selection of participants in Armenia.

From Turkey, the workshop was attended by four professors, including Dr. Dogu Ergil, sociologist, professor, Ankara University, Dr. Fikret Adanir, historian, professor, Sabanci University, Dr. Leyla Neyzi, sociologist and ethnologist, associate professor, Bilgi University. From Armenia, the workshop was attended by Dr. Anush Hovhannisyanyan from the Institute of Oriental Studies of the



Initial workshop in Istanbul

National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, Dr. Hranush Kharatyan, Center for Ethnological Studies of Armenia "HAZARASHEN" and the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, and Mr. Hrachya Hakobjanyan, Adult Education and Lifelong Learning Association. The workshop was conducted by Ms. Vanya Ivanova from *dvv international*. The Authors of this article also participated in this workshop.

The workshop aimed to start a discussion about reconstruction of history using the Adult Education methodology. Another aim was to process various project ideas in the area of Adult Education, which could be implemented within the framework of *dvv international* activity in Armenia.

During the three days of the workshop, various topics were discussed, including stereotypes in societies of both countries, presentations of history and oral history methods.

The working groups visited the Genocide Museum in Yerevan, there the excursion was conducted by the Museum Director Dr. Hayk Demoyan.

At the end of the workshop, the following ideas were proposed and discussed for further potential project activity of *dvv international* in the area of Armenian-Turkish reconciliation.

The following ideas were tentatively proposed and discussed:

- Research in Armenia and Turkey on people's perception of each other;
- Joint writing of a book (sharing common history) about events in the 19th and 20th centuries in Armenia and Turkey;

- Collection of stories by people of Armenia and Turkey about the 19th and 20th centuries
- A series of Summer Schools on oral history for young people and adults from Armenia and Turkey

Two weeks following the workshop, Turkish mass media published a number of articles. Among them was the English language newspaper *"Turkish Daily News"*, which published an article entitled *"Academics Grasp a Mantle of Peace"*, where participants from Turkey expressed their ideas with regard to the workshop and prospective projects.

Stage 3: Project Implementation

Adult Education and Oral History Contributing to Armenian-Turkish Reconciliation

After the workshop in Yerevan we had a lot of discussions about which of the developed projects could be implemented and of interest to our further activity in the area of Armenian-Turkish reconciliation based on our experience.

We selected the two topics:

- Collection of stories by people of Armenia and Turkey about the 19th and 20th centuries
- A series of Summer Schools on oral history for young people and adults from Armenia and Turkey.

After identification of the topics, we started working on the new project concept and writing the project proposal

Who Are Our Partners?

It was essential for us to find relevant partners in Armenia and Turkey who were open enough to implement this project with us.

First of all, we selected scientific advisers – Dr. Leyla Neyzi from Sabancı University in Istanbul and Dr. Hranush Kharatyan-Arakelyan from the Institute for Archeology and Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences of Armenia.

Both experts participated in the first workshop *"History and Identity: Building Bridges for Dialogue and Understanding"* in October 2008 and have extensive experience in ethnographic research.

Supported by scientific advisers, we also selected two partners among NGOs in Armenia and Turkey.

“HAZARASHEN”, Center for Ethnological Studies in Armenia, and “ANADOLU KÜLTÜR” in Turkey.

Here, we would like to inform you about our partner organisations.

Partner in Armenia: “HAZARASHEN”
“HAZARASHEN” was established as an independent and social NGO in August 1997 in Yerevan. The primary purpose of “HAZARASHEN” is to research, assess and project social-economic, cultural and ethnic processes in Armenia and its neighbouring regions using up-to-date ethnological and ethnographical methods. Thus, this organisation aims to contribute to both peaceful consideration and resolution of interethnic conflicts in the region and development of open civil society in Armenia.

In this regard, it cooperates with ethnic and cultural minorities in the country; they primarily include disadvantaged populations such as refugees persecuted for religious beliefs, and the poor.

In addition, “HAZARASHEN” contributes to development of ethnology and ethnography as sciences (socio-cultural ethnography) in Armenia.

In recent years, “HAZARASHEN” has successfully cooperated with other international organisations, such as GTZ (various surveys on the poverty level in Armenia), World Bank (in the area of small and medium-sized agricultural enterprises), UNESCAP (poverty and employment analysis), UNHCR (research on refugee status and intercultural conflicts), and Open Society Institute (analysis of migration and governance techniques).

Partner from Turkey: “ANADOLU KÜLTÜR”

(Please see the NGO presentation at www.anadolukultur.org/en/calisma_alanlari.asp)

NGO “ANADOLU KÜLTÜR” was set up in 2002 in Istanbul and aims to build bridges between cultures and nations via art and culture. Extract from the NGO Charter:

ANADOLU KÜLTÜR believes that people of various origins, identity and religion can communicate via artistic forms of self-expression and that exchange between cultures may result in mutual understanding and empathy.



First workshop on reconciliation in Yerevan



Armenian Church in Istanbul

The organisation has extensive experience in cooperation with a number of Turkish, Caucasian and international partners. It also partnered with the Goethe Institute to conduct a week of short films.

In addition to activities in all areas of art and culture (cinema, literature, photography, contemporary art, performance, music and protection of cultural heritage), it is of importance to this project to gather also experience, primarily in intercultural dialog and the special program "*Caucasus Initiative*". Under the program "*Caucasus Initiative*", in Kars city (close to the border

between Georgia and Armenia) in 2005 the "*Kars Arts Centre*" was opened; it aims to revive intercultural dialog via Turkish-Caucasian cultural events, primarily with Armenia in order to reduce existing fears of contact.

Also, a part of the intercultural dialog program is dissemination of instruments and methods of *oral history* and work with eye-witnesses of historical processes, and this principle will be of use during the second summer camp in Turkey as well.

When developing and implementing the project we also pursued the following goals:

- Contribution to the reconciliation process between Armenia and Turkey;
- Reduction of prejudice with participants and others involved in the project;
- Learning methods, techniques and instruments for peaceful conflict resolution;
- Learning and testing methods of historical processing and witness work;
- Implementation of methods, techniques and instruments for peaceful conflict resolution;
- Completion of the historical picture through "*history from below*" (*oral history* method).

Who Were Our Target Groups?

The direct target group was twenty students from Armenia and Turkey who could get acquainted, work on examining the prejudice existing in both countries and learn the techniques of oral history and methods for working with witnesses throughout the project. Most students were able to use the knowledge obtained during the student camp in interviews with eye-witnesses later on. In addition, after the last workshop in Istanbul students could present the accumulated experience and contribute to preparation of the publication.

We believe that the capacity for conflict resolution exists mainly in the youth.

Civil society in both countries, as well as the global expert community in this area, is also a target group. Publications will appear in three languages: Armenian, Turkish, and English. It was important for us to present each other with the stories of eye-witnesses from both societies and thus contribute to their further rapprochement.

The indirect target group of the project was all the experts involved in the project. Successful cooperation of experts from both countries at the scientific level was a challenge the whole team managed to meet.

Indirectly, presentation of witnesses' history in Armenia has changed already. Experts from various institutes and universities have changed their attitude to *oral history* methods and take quite a different attitude to stories narrated by eye-witnesses, which in turn will influence their students. In the long run, it will produce an effect on social sciences in Armenia as well. In Turkey, the method has already been integrated in the curricula of some universities.

Key Actors:

In addition to scientific advisers, the following persons were involved in the project activity

From Turkey

Osman Kavala – ANADOLU KÜLTÜR
Sibil Cekmen – ANADOLU KÜLTÜR



Armenian Cimentary in Istanbul

Haydar Darıcı – Assistant, Sabancı University – scientific team
Ezgi Güner – Assistant, Sabancı University – scientific team
Sibel Maksudyan – Assistant, Sabancı University – scientific team

From Armenia

Anush Hovhannisyan – Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, Institute of Oriental Studies – scientific team
Lusine Kharatyan – Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy – scientific team
Mikael Zolyan – UNESCO chair on human rights and democracy, Europe and democracy studies; Yerevan State Linguistic University after V. Brusov – scientific team
Ara Gulyan – Center for Ethnological Studies of Armenia “*Hazarashen*”
Samvel Karabekyan – Yerevan State University, Department of Oriental Studies

dvv international

Matthias Klingenberg – Head, Asia Region
Vanya Ivanova – Project on the history of the Balkan states
Nazaret Nazaretyan – Head, Office in Armenia
Varuzhan Avanesyan – Project Assistant
Patricia Rozenberg – Intern

Project Activities

The project envisaged two major activities:

Activity 1: “*Summer camp for young adults from Armenia and Turkey*”

Activity 2: “*Remembering together: Instances of common historical perception with Turks and Armenians*” (oral history components)

Project Progress

Preparation Workshop in Istanbul

The working meeting in Istanbul in late August 2009 was organised as the first project activity. Over two days the partners were able to get acquainted with each other, develop key rules for cooperation, and start planning the summer camp (Activity 1). Scientists presented their considerations regarding research (Activity 2).

Due to time limitations, it was important to properly plan project implementation. Even today we can state that despite a two-month delay we managed to implement the project with the extent and quality as planned.

Activity 1: “Summer camp for young adults from Armenia and Turkey” in Dilijan

The selection of students was essential to ensure high efficiency of the student camp. To make a selection in the best way, we asked the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) bureau in Yerevan and Istanbul to carry it out.

Application forms developed in English were sent to DAAD partners and other academic organisations and NGOs in Armenia and Turkey.

Requirements for participation in the camp were good knowledge of the English language, Armenian or Turkish nationality and involvement in social sciences.

There were 45 applications from students of various universities from Armenia and over 80 from Turkey. Selection was organised in two stages. First, the selection was based on applicants’ resumes. Then, the selected students were interviewed. Finally, 10 students were selected from each country.

Students from Yerevan State University, Yerevan State Language University, Russian-Armenian University and Regional European Academy in Yerevan and from Bogazici University, Koc University, Sabancı University in Istanbul and Ankara were selected.

Along with students, we selected trainers for the summer camp with the help of our scientific advisers.

The student camp lasted 7 days. All participants were accommodated at “Dilijan Resort” hotel in Dilijan city. “Dilijan Resort” hotel has everything needed to conduct a workshop. Dilijan is a small city 100 km to the north of Yerevan.

During the camp, our main topics were:

- Intercultural dialogs in theory and practice;
- Historical network of *div international* – experience gained in Central Asia and in the Balkans;
- Oral history in theory and practice;
- Examples of books on history in the Balkans and South Caucasus;
- Training in the *oral history* method in practice, interviewing in Dilijan and neighbouring areas.

Ms. Melanie Moltmann, Vice-Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Armenia, attended the opening of the student camp.



Summer camp in Dilijan

We started with the topic *“Intercultural dialogs in theory and practice”* to bring together young people and create an atmosphere of confidence to avoid possible conflicts.

After that, Matthias Klingenberg, Vanya Ivanova and Patricia Rozenberg presented the *dvv international* history network. Successful projects in various countries were presented. Thus, students could better understand what type of project they supported.

Ms. Christina Koulouri from Peloponnesus University of Greece presented the project *“History Textbooks in the Balkans”* and its results.

Mr. Mikael Zolyan from the State Linguistic University, in his turn, presented results of the project *“Narratives of National History in the History Textbooks of the South Caucasus”*.

Following theoretical introduction to the *oral history* methodology, practical interviews were carried out in Dilijan and its suburbs. On that very evening, students could exchange impressions from their interviews.

On one of the student camp days, 10 October 2009, Armenian-Turkish Protocols were signed in Zurich. All the participants monitored the three-hour signing process.

Cultural programs are vital to reconciliation of the two countries. An extensive leisure program aimed to help the participants to get to know each other better, reduce prejudice and fear of contact. During the camp, a visit to the Parajanov Museum in Yerevan was organised. Mr. Zaven Sargsyan, Museum Director, conducted the excursion.

For the evening program, *“ANADOULU KÜLTÜR”* provided two films relevant to the project topic area with the authors' permission.

Yerevan celebrates its birthday in October each year. Students from Turkey could walk around Yerevan and take part in various cultural events.

Students from Turkey also visited the Genocide Museum in Yerevan.

More detailed information on the project in Armenian, Turkish, and English is available at www.learningtolisten.de

Activity 2: *“Remembering together: Instances of common historical perception with Turks and Armenians” (oral history components)*

After the student camp, both scientific groups in Armenia and Turkey began to conduct interviews.

A professional photographer in Yerevan carried out a short training in photography and video shooting for students. In the course of research, both advisers, Ms. Neyzi and Ms. Kharatyan, were the key supporters to their groups. In Armenia, students having participated in the camp, were involved in interviewing in addition to the scientific group. All students could ask questions during interviews, prepare manuscripts, and some made photos and videos.

Both scientific teams from NGO “*Hazarashen*” and Sabancı University, were fully equipped with up-to-date computers, audio, photo and video technology to implement *oral history* projects.

In Armenia, 35 persons were interviewed, in Turkey – over 80. In Armenia, more than 1,000 pages of text were written, and hundreds of photos and several hours of video were made. Interviews were conducted from October to December 2009. The publication was issued in February 2010.

Interviews were conducted in various areas of Armenia and Turkey including Yerevan, Gyumri, Vanadzor, Uyan, Ashnak, Echmiadzin, Armavir in Armenia and Istanbul as well as areas in Eastern parts of Turkey.

A detailed list of interviewees in Armenia is published in the book.

They narrated both their personal stories and their parents’ stories. Many emotional moments can be found in the book.

We hope that the book will attract attention and pull at the heartstrings of normal readers as well.

In Armenia, all audio, photo, video and text documents are available from Ms. Hranush Kharatyan, scientific adviser, and after the project will be transferred to the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia for further use and archiving.

Final Workshop in Istanbul

The final meeting under the project was held in Istanbul. Within three days, all the project participants, scientists, and students considered and discussed research findings and the design of the available publication.

Also, students could share their experiences gained during their research activities.

Armenian and Turkish students went sightseeing together and visited exhibitions of the cultural capital of Europe 2010 – Istanbul.

Finally, there was a press conference with the participation of a representative of the Consulate of FRG in Istanbul.



Summer camp in Dilijan – Interviewing an eye witness

The conference was held in three languages (Armenian, Turkish, and English) and was covered by various communication media in Armenia. A number of items were published in the Armenian and Turkish press.

The following can be considered as specific project outcomes:

- Promotion of the *oral history* method in the academic community in Armenia and Turkey
- Contribution to reconciliation of societies in both countries
- Direct contacts between students and scientists
- Publication of eye-witnesses' stories
- Reports in the mass media
- Cooperation of experts
- Practical training for students

Here, we would like to express our cordial gratitude to our donor organisations – the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany. Project implementation would be impossible without their support. We also would like to thank our partners, “ANADOLU KÜLTÜR” and NGO “HAZARASHEN”, as well as our advisers, Ms. Hranush Kharatyan and Ms. Leyla Neyzi, Mr. Matthias Klingenberg, Project Leader, Ms. Vanya Ivanova, Expert, and other experts and students.

More information on the project is available on the project website in Armenian, Turkish and English at www.learningtolisten.de

Central Asia: History and Identity (Nationbuilding)

Komil Kalanov

Socio-Cultural Almanac of Uzbekistan

It has been almost twenty years since the breakup of the Soviet empire. In this period, a lot has changed in Uzbekistan and the other republics which were part of the Soviet Union. A new mentality and new views have developed, drastic changes have occurred in the country's infrastructure, and private ownership has emerged. The Roman alphabet has been introduced at schools to replace the Cyrillic alphabet, all government agencies have created an environment for record management in the Uzbek language, people have been able to practice their religion, etc. There were some achievements, and naturally, sometimes mistakes were made which continued in various forms. However, whatever happens, this is the history of the Uzbek people.



When presenting historic evidence, some researchers express their subjective attitudes. We study history not to repeat mistakes; to respect our forefathers and parents or draw conclusions about an era and its achievements; we repeatedly refer to it to understand the reason why we live in this world. What is most important is that each generation should remember the positive spirit of the *"human factor"*, and for this purpose we scrutinise each page of history.

Recently, experts in various branches of linguistics, sociology, religion, as well as journalists, teachers, and geographers began serious studies of contemporary history. As a result of reasoning about identity in independent states, specialists in various areas began to consider it necessary to participate in important nation building. We might mistakenly use the word *"necessary"*, and the truth is that experts in various areas (over the past ten years) expressed their attitude to the historic process and tried to take an active part in it. We do not deny that some historians may not like this, but the reality is that sometimes specialists in other areas to some extent make a contribution from their research toward the interpretation of the historic process.

In short, initially the identity process and implementation of the new national idea in independent states was driven by justified and unjustified ambitions. Later on, specialists began to understand that nothing good would come out of that. Sometimes, arguments and disputes over national and religious topics resulted in conflict, a situation due to a stressful, tense environment that gave an impetus to geopolitical and geo-economic problems.

The views and opinions presented to the reader in this article are mainly of an informative nature.

In 2009, the Representative Office of the German Adult Education Association (*dvv international*) operating in Tashkent initiated and supported the start of a unique project under the “Adult Education Development” program. The project is entitled “Socio-Cultural Almanac of Uzbekistan”. The “Almanac” covers existing values and traditions in the socio-cultural life of Uzbek society, everyday life and the mentality of people representing various ethnicities and religions. They are all examined using the oral history method.

From 16-19 June 2008, the Representative Office of the German Adult Education Association (*dvv international*) sponsored a study tour for specialists from Uzbekistan to the city of Krasnoyarsk (Russia) on **Current Trends in Adult Education**. The research group included Matthias Klingenberg, Elena Sabirova, Gauhar Khudaybergenova, specialist in the Adult Education program, and Komil Kalanov, the author of this article. During the conference, we became interested in the book-Almanac “Baikal Siberia. Introduction to the 21st Century”, which resulted from a scientific experiment conducted by a group of Siberian researchers headed by Mikhail Rozhansky. The issue was raised about performing a similar experiment in Uzbekistan. The parties began to discuss its implementation. From 25-30 August 2008, the scientific-practical professional development seminar for sociologists “Generations, Social Energy, and Historical Alternatives in Soviet and Post-Soviet Society” in Irkutsk developed theoretical and stylistic types of the project for its implementation in Uzbekistan. Based on this, a research group was established which was comprised of people of various ethnicities, age and occupations from different parts of the country.

We engaged participants from institutions of higher education and specialists from academic institutions. Authors of the prospective Almanac included historians, journalists, sociologists, philologists, psychologists, geographers, ethnographers, and biologists. Instead of 20, the group had



Participants in the oral workshop

34 members. 2 of them were doctors of science, 15 were candidates for doctorates of science, 5 were teachers and researchers from universities and research institutes, 1 graduate student, 4 candidates for a master's degree, 4 undergraduate students and 3 staff of nongovernmental organisations. The oldest member of the research group was 72 and the youngest was 20. The ethnic composition was diverse – representatives from Uzbek, Russian, Tatar, Kyrgyz, Armenian, Tajik, Korean, Azerbaijani, Turkish, Karakalpak, and Uighur ethnic groups. In addition, the Almanac authors were local specialists able to highlight all the characteristics of the country's regions.



Group of authors of the socio-cultural almanach

The project had four stages:

1. Seminar 1: *"History and Identity: Local Characteristics, Research Program and Methods"*, 2-5 March 2009, Tashkent.
2. Seminar 2: *"History and Identity: Social Space (City, Town, Village) as a Research Subject"*, 13-16 May 2009, Tashkent.
3. Seminar 3: *"Examining Memorial Places: Concepts, Opportunities, and Models"*, 19-25 August 2009, Tashkent. The Russian researcher Professor I. Steinberg was invited to participate in the seminar. The participants discussed draft articles. Some participants changed the subject of their research in the course of discussion.
4. Editing: preparation for publication.

The working group members suggested that the content of the Almanac be split into five parts, namely:

- Section one, *"Polyphonic Tashkent"* presents the following articles: *"Yards of Rental Housing Cooperative Associations in the 1960s"*, *"Foreigners' Perception of the City"*, *"Block-Based Makhalla"*, *"Bridge 'Shape-Shifter'"*, *"Life in a Hostel"*, *"Heart of Tashkent"*, *"There Where It's Lucid and Warm"*, *"Tashkent Bazaars"*.
- Section two, *"Cities and Kishlaks (Villages)"* offers its readers the following articles: *"Miners' City of Krasnogorsk"*, *"Madrasah (Mir Arab) in Bukhara"*, *"Djuma – the*

Friday City", "Armenian Church in Samarkand", "Navoi City", "Termez City", "Forgotten Kishlaks", "Trip to Kungrad".

- Everyday life is reflected in section three, "People and Life". It presents the following articles to readers: "House of My Childhood", "Childhood in Kandi", "Women-Shuttle Traders in Navoi City", "Where the Rivers Flow...", "Recollections of Sherdjan".
- Section four is "Destinies". In this section, authors covered pages of their life history. Here we can read such articles as: "Language That Became Necessary", "Grandfather's Genealogy", "And a Fate Speaks to a Fate...", "Rishtan: Links Between Generations", "Intelligent", "Customs-Driven Destiny".
- "Lifestyle" is the final section and is about our fellow countrymen's way of life during independence. There, one can read articles entitled: "Those Ahead of Their Time", "Multi-Level Marketing with Tashkent Accent", "Youth in the Internet", "Eaten Gardens", "Take a Large Cast-Iron Boiler", "Khorezm Potters", "Dawn in the Big City".

The capital of Uzbekistan, Tashkent, is home to some 3 million people. In this huge megalopolis, contrast between eastern and western cultures draws the attention of many people. Section one of the Almanac presents articles about the traditional part of Tashkent, buildings that still preserve the spirit of the Soviet era, the student community, and urban transport.

Among the states of Central Asia, Uzbekistan is considered to be the most densely populated one. Data for 2009 suggest that the country's population was 27 million people. In section two "Cities and Kishlaks", authors depict everyday life in small cities and villages in various parts of the country. When reading articles in this section, the reader can coexist in two eras and become a witness of a drastic change in the socio-cultural profile of a village or a city in the Soviet period and during the years of independence.

In section three, the "People and Life" authors describe past and current events and experiences of common people; how the centrally planned economy-



Certification of seminar participants

based life in the Soviet period adapted to the market economy throughout the years of independence.

In Uzbekistan, an agrarian-industrial country, most values, customs and ceremonies developed in the context of land and water.

In the first half of the 20th century, USSR state leaders initiated the deportation of a number of small ethnic groups to a country with congenial climate to grow food crops. One of these groups were the Koreans, and in addition to their way of life, language, and customs, articles about the Korean people's destiny will leave a strong impression on readers. This section is

associated with people's destinies, where authors inform us about unknown destinies and hardships faced by the Uzbek people during the years of repression.

In the final section, "Lifestyle", the articles present information on ceremonies and customs which have already become (to some extent) a tradition in the everyday life of citizens throughout the years of independence. There, the reader will observe how people adapt to a new society.

In general, based on the project prepared by the Representative Office of the German Adult Education Association (*dvv international*), the Almanac is aimed at a wide range of readers and thus follows a scientific-journalistic style.

The Almanac is planned to be published in three languages (Russian, Uzbek, and German). We believe that this Almanac will be of interest to readers and will help them get acquainted with some aspects of the everyday life and activities of people living in Uzbekistan. It reflects a part of the unique culture of this country's population.

During preparation of the Almanac, the experience of Russian specialists, namely M. Rozhansky, was used. As a result, we were able to not only properly prepare the Almanac, but also to accumulate the huge scientific-academic and human capital represented by our team of authors. We are confident that the capacity of the established research team will enable us later on to conduct unique research not only in the context of the country, but also for the whole of Central Asia and the post-Soviet region. For this purpose, it is advisable to establish an independent research centre, and its core has already been formed by our team. For example, A. Sabirov, doctoral



Participants discussing



The Almanac

candidate in History, has already taken a number of steps to set up the Oral History Centre in Tashkent.

Currently, in the course of globalization and the development of the information society, ideas change at a rapid pace. The issue of preserving the older generation's historical memory has been raised, and so, based on this, the *oral history* method proposed above is a legitimate way of recording the past.



Presentation of the Almanac

Alisher Sabirov

Oral History – from *dvv international* Projects to Practice in Uzbekistan

Recollections for the Future

Out of more than 20 various projects implemented by *dvv international* in Central Asia and geared toward improvement of the overall social situation in the region, a joint project with the Goethe Institute, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Friedrich Ebert Foundation and Gerda Henkel Foundation “*History and Identity*” is quite an interesting one.



Historical identity is an assessment of the past in all its variety, intrinsic and characteristic of both an entire society, and various social and ethnic groups and individuals. Thus, many people rethinking their past can reproduce it in space and time in all its three dimensions – in the past, present, and future – promoting continuity and links between generations.

The German project was launched in Uzbekistan in 2005. According to our German colleagues, the region was used to viewing its history more like a symbol rather than something to be reconsidered and rethought. According to the Uzbek historian, Ravshan Abdullayev, “*excessive fondness of one’s own history, which is legitimate from a moral perspective, as a rule has led to (and leads to) extreme subjectivism from a research viewpoint...*” (R. Abdullayev, “*Historic Awareness and Contemporary Historical Studies of Uzbekistan*” – in the book “*History and Identity II. Uzbekistan and Germany in the 20th century.*” Tashkent. 2007)

Central Asia has a long shared history of (predominantly) peaceful co-existence of various peoples. Most residents of this region have an individualistic approach to this topic; these may be relatives living in a neighboring country or the periods (for example, education) spent in a different part of the region, or the history of one’s own people beyond the borders.

German organizations operating in Uzbekistan believe for a good reason that their experience of rethinking their history and the unification of Europe, which is predominantly a historical process, may be of use for the post-Soviet independent nations of Central Asia.

For the Germans – who only a few years before the founding of the European Economic Community (1957) had covered the entire continent with death and devastation – the confrontation with their own past, burdened by guilt, the steps toward confession and repentance were prerequisite for active participation in European unification. It is no coincidence that one of the project weeks within the framework of “*History and Identity*” was held under the common theme of “*Regional Integration and History of Uzbekistan and Germany*.”

Under this project, the Goethe Institute focused on the debate about the role of institutions in the processes of regional integration using the example of the European Union. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation worked on the issue of the structural links between the evolvement of national identity and ascertainment of national and state interests; the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) considered the establishment of national states; the Friedrich Naumann Foundation concentrated on working with the younger generation; and the Gerda Henkel Foundation continued working in the format of “*Two countries, two perspectives*.”

One neglected aspect of historical identity is the historical memory that embodies historical views of the people and their attitude to history. If a nation is focused on the future, it must keep the memory of the past. Each nation is learning lessons from the past, harsh and heavy, bright and memorable days, historical tribulations and achievements. As the leader of Uzbekistan, I.A. Karimov, rightly noted “*There is no future without a historical memory*.”

In this regard, *dvv international* has clearly aligned its focus in this project – **the principle of realizing history through personal perceptions of eyewitnesses of events.**

My observations and personal participation as a local expert in this project show that *dvv international*, starting at the beginning of the project, managed to formulate the strategy of the project with competence and in a way to take into account the local context.

At the initial state, the Representative Office of *dvv international* in Uzbekistan announced its initiative to work with eyewitnesses of history in *makhallas* – a traditional communal type of social institution whose residents are engaged in the self-administration of Tashkent city. (Project “*Tea-House Talks*”. *Chayhana* (Tea House) is a cultural and communal center in Uzbekistan).

Work with eyewitnesses of history was conducted on the basis of biographic methods. These methods allowed learning history and presenting a vivid picture of events in the past based on a specific individual’s past as well as in terms of biographies of *aksakals* (senior citizens). By virtue of this work, senior citizens in *makhallas* became more active in educating the younger generation, helping it to rethink the best national traditions through learning history.

Workshops are a logical continuation of this *dvv international* strategy, since there was an urgent need to provide a paper-based account of eyewitnesses' stories for future generations. They became a kind of a master class for those who decided to take up a pen to express memories of the past. Participants included both representatives of the *makhallas* of Tashkent and specialists in the field of Adult Education. The result is a book of memories about an event of 40 years ago – the Tashkent earthquake of 1966 – to pass on information to the younger generations in Uzbekistan and other countries (*"The Tashkent Earthquake of 1966. Memories of Eyewitnesses"*. Tashkent, 2006).



Regional tea-house talk in Tashkent

This was sort of an impetus for many activists taking part in the project to continue their work in this direction. There was now a motivation to put down their own recollections on paper, publish books, shoot movies, and create photo-websites. A *dvv international* project component *"History and Identity"* is emerging in a higher quality and at a more complicated level – a previously poorly researched subject of oral history.

Oral History

Oral history means tape-recorded recollections by people about their lives and events which they witnessed in the past.

Back in the 19th century, the tradition was to document, a tendency that went along with the process of professionalizing history. Leopold von Ranke was the founder of the professional training of historians, whose scientific seminar at Berlin University has now become the most prestigious centre in Europe. Influenced by the German Historical School, researchers from the Sorbonne, Charles-Victor Langlois and Charles Seignobos, compiled a classical textbook entitled *"Introduction to the Study of History"* (1898) with a categorical assertion that *"there is no history without documents."* Thus, the development of scientific criticism of sources and then assertion of positivism resulted in the establishment of a certain *"cult of fact"* in historiography that relied on the idea of the unconditional authenticity of a written document.

However, by the second half of the 20th century the documentary method was no longer as popular among historians as the main one. Most social scientists, for

example, the English philosopher, archaeologist, and historian of Ancient Britain, Robin George Collingwood, in his *"The Idea of History"* (1946) encouraged critical analysis and comparison of various sources to establish facts. One of the founders of the Annales School, Marc Bloch, who combined archival research and a study of the shape of fields, geographic names and folklore, and had a lot of talks with peasants in the French countryside. Nevertheless, oral history can be considered a relatively young phenomenon in historiography.

Oral history as a contemporary technique of collecting historical sources and an autonomous scientific field, took shape after World War II.

More and more, oral history came into use in education and even replaced history textbooks.

European historical science, at first, was critical about the oral tradition, but in the last quarter of the 20th century it turned to oral history. It was dominated by plots related to social cataclysms and disturbances – wars and revolutions. Beginning with meetings in Bologna (1976) and Colchester (1979), international conferences on oral history were held once every two years, and then the International Oral History Association was founded.

Research in the area of oral history is underway today throughout the world. In the 1990s, National Oral History Associations were established in Mexico and Brazil. In Australia, an Oral History Association has been in operation since the late 1970s, relying on the cooperation of experts in local, social history and anthropology of the indigenous peoples. In the 1980^s, an American, William Hinton, created a masterpiece of oral history based on materials from China *"Shenfan: The Continuing Revolution in a Chinese Village"* (1983). For Israel, in the post World War II period, all oral evidence has become part of the battle for national and cultural survival. The first memorial to this battle was the archive of the *"Yad Vashem"* museum in Jerusalem. Subsequently, this activity became internationalized, acting as a catalyst for a multitude of research projects around the world, as well as of individual campaigns such as the creation of the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., and a large-scale Spielberg program for videotaping the evidence. In South Africa, oral history as a scientific discipline has been developed since the 1980^s, as an important technique for collecting sources about lives and repression in the context of apartheid.

In Germany, oral history that relies heavily on surveying *"witnesses of the epoch"*, developed in parallel with day-to-day history. Projects were devoted primarily to the period of National Socialism and the history of the GDR. Researchers concentrated their efforts on the *"life experience"* of their contemporaries, thus transforming the main contribution of oral history into historiography. The late start of the oral history movement in Germany is attributed to the consequences of Nazism, which discredited the folklore movement and left behind a generation ashamed of its experience. None-

theless, by 1980, the program of socio-historical research of Ruhr employees, headed by Lutz Nitzhammer, took an intermediate position between a growing number of projects on local history and a society of social scientists-biographers who managed to work out an intensive “hermeneutical” method of analysing interviews influenced by Gabriela Rozenthal.

In the former USSR, scientists also applied oral history methods in practice. In the 70^s and 80^s, oral surveys were made of the “foremost workers”, best collective farmers, combine operators, as well as war veterans. These sources enshrined the festive and optimistic image of Soviet routine as demanded by the authorities, which was only used to illustrate a general pattern of official historiography. According to the Russian historian S.O. Schmidt, “the very core value of information, in particular of oral history, more open as compared to other (written) sources, was lost” (Schmidt S.O. *A Way of a Historian. Selected Works on Source Studies and Historiography*. M., 1997, p. 106.)

P. Thompson called these investigations “a mockery of oral history” to create “a propaganda genre” of Soviet research (Thompson P. *Oral History. The Voice of the Past*. M., 2003, p.74.)

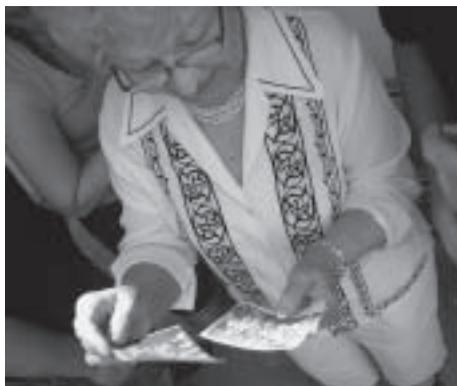
In Uzbekistan, ethnographers have traditionally been working in the area of oral history. A specific feature of native ethnography has always been its historicism (in contrast to the western tradition where ethnological research was always closer to sociology).

Nevertheless, Uzbek historians have also used oral history methods in their research.

Investigations by Professor H. Ziyayev in the late 1950^s and early 1960^s can be considered an initial stage of using oral history as a scientific approach, when he personally collected memories of still living participants of a powerful national liberation uprising in 1916 in the Fergana Valley.

A practice of collecting oral evidence has been actively used since the Independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Specialists from the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences (K. Rajabov, D. Ziyayeva) conducted narrative interviews with children and other family members of participants and leaders of the anti-Soviet uprisings (1918-1924), repressed representatives of Uzbek peasantry, merchants, and craftsmen (1930s). These materials



Eye witness at a workshop



A map of memory

are systematised and used in displays of the Museum “*In Memory of the Victims of Repression*” of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan.

A scientist, Akhmadjon Solmonov (Fergana State University), worked with oral recollections of Muslim clergy in the Fergana Valley in relation to religious policy of the Soviet government from the 1940s to the 1980s.

A specialist, Shodmon Haitov, (Bukhara State University), used narrative interview and biography methods to study the history of Uzbek emigration from 1917 to the 1990s.

Employees of the Museum “*In Memory of the Victims of Repression*” used oral history methods to conduct research among representatives of culture, science, and clergy of Uzbekistan who had experienced significant events in the history of their country as well as among representatives of national Diaspora deported into Uzbekistan. The interviews were harmonised with the biographical data survey and other written evidence. Each interview covered not only a specific period, but a person’s entire life, and thus provided an opportunity to track tragic imprints of repression in the histories of whole families.

However, collection of memories for the national history is very fragmented and to date it has been the domain of professional researchers.

A Practical Approach of the *dvv international* Project

The fact is that the value of this method is explained by oral recollections being spontaneous and to a greater extent “*independent*” from the written ones, thus oral history attempts to “*give the floor*” to the neglected (so called “*non-historical*”) social strata thus reflecting more history that evolves from below (history from below), in day-to-day life. So, in my opinion, *dvv international* chose the right context to implement the oral history project. It has taken oral history beyond academic science, tapping into the potential and experience of researchers in Uzbekistan.

The Representative Office of *dvv international* has launched a pilot for this methodology. A series of workshops have been organised which have been attended by various groups of people, i.e., teachers, university professors, students, retirees, and scientists. Training seminars attended by experts from Russia were devoted to domain

specific thematic consultations on developing skills to work with oral information. This resulted in a team of researchers creating a socio-cultural almanac of Uzbekistan to be compiled using exclusively the oral history method.

In 2009, *dvv international* and the Kyrgyz Adult Education Association organised the Fourth Regional Academy of Adult Education “*Oral History – a Source for Self Identity and National Building*” attended by representatives of countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The academic study was intense. The participants received information about the place of oral history in history, science, and modern life, learned about various approaches to using the methodology, familiarised themselves with social projects in the area of oral history.

Another way to use oral history was discovered during this event – as a tool for regional integration. This was well manifested within specific projects proposed by the participants of the Summer Academy:

- “*People of the Lakes*” (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan)
- “*Twinned Hearts*” A Perspective of the Generation of the 1970s (Restoring the Movement of Sister Regions in Uzbekistan and Bulgaria)
- “*The Children of the Aral*” (The Aral Sea Problems through the Perspective of Young People)
- “*Inter-ethnic Marriages – Before and Now*”

Oral sources will be of special importance for these projects in order to cover issues such as the impact of key events in our history on the lives of people, how the residents of the country perceived them, how their culture and day-to-day lives have been transformed in the contradictory history of our region in the 20th century. These could also be summed up in a curt phrase: “*Common grief, common joy.*”

A target group of *dvv international* in Uzbekistan was keen on working under its oral history component as a result of working on the project “*History and Identity*”.

This was well demonstrated by a meeting held in September 2009 at the office of *dvv international* during an unofficial program “*Tashkent Evenings.*” In an informal atmosphere, the participants exchanged their impressions regarding the subject of one of the most important lines of activities of *dvv international* – oral history. The author of this article made a Power Point presentation on this subject. He also had an opportunity to watch the reaction of the audience. A very involved and competent conversation broke out. The participants of the meeting talked about the experience of running similar projects in other countries, exchanged their opinions, and gave examples of oral history from their biographies and biographies of famous people.

A Perspective of the Project

One can state with confidence that as of today, a community of oral historians is actively taking shape in Uzbekistan with assistance from the Representative Office of *dvv international*, with specific field skills and experience in analytical work.

Discussions within this community show that there is now a pressing need for combining the efforts of scientists, teachers and students, and everyone interested in the history of their land to preserve the national memory of events, facts, and phenomena that make up the historical past of our state and interdisciplinary interaction, exchange of methods and approaches that have formed within different fields of science.

This community, for example, in the format of a Centre or Association would primarily focus on day-to-day history. This means the history of Uzbekistan that is *closer* to us, the one that is intertwined with destinies of people living next door, *makhallas*, agencies, enterprises or villages, settlements and cities. Any such destiny is inseparably associated with the country's destiny.

It could have the following objectives:

- adult training – scientists, university teachers, journalists, archive archivists, school teachers – skills of a new scientific and pedagogical field of oral history;
- creation of temporary working groups that include local and foreign experts specialising in scientific research or sociopolitical journalism;
- organisation of scientific conferences, seminars, summer schools, a series of public lectures, and special courses at higher educational facilities;
- ensuring a circulation of professional information, namely: creating an Uzbekistan database from oral history and exchange of information of scientific and organisational character with stakeholders, providing methodological support;
- editorial and publishing activity;
- providing different types of intellectual services, namely: reviewing, editing, opinion surveys of foreign scientific literature, annotated bibliographies and the like, the implementation of scientific expertise and advice sourced from the oral history subjects;
- coordinating of memory collection activities.

Public access to the data bank of oral history may be ensured through a specially created site. In addition to its own records, the site can provide disk space for storage of recollections gathered by other research groups and centres.

This community could in the future become a coordinating centre of the regional community of oral historians of Central Asia.

Mikhail Rozhansky

Oral History – Philosophy of Memory¹

When authors of this collection of articles suggested that I write an article about my experience in oral history, I offered them this text, intending to rethink goals and objectives of an exciting occupation – oral history – in the course of a dialog with myself over twenty years. I had a dialog with myself and it could result in a whole book, but the outcome of this dialog is that in twenty years, despite developments in social studies, drastic changes in social factors and the fact that even the state became different, despite personal and professional experience, the core understanding of oral history remained unchanged. More specifically, thanks to my personal and professional experience, I am still convinced that the ethics of human equality is the methodology of oral history. Thus, after twenty years, I decided to leave this text laconic, with no additions, and limit myself to a few notes in the margin.



A simple situation typical of oral history practice: an interview with two participants in the same event is conducted. If each of them is interviewed individually, one might hear stories so dissimilar that they seem to be about completely different events. There are approaches to that based on two perspectives. One can critically analyse sources and by eliminating the subjectivity of stories try to find out how it “really” happened. This is the practice used not only in court during examination of witnesses, but is the very profession of a historian, who serves the historical truth, and has always called for that. Alternatively, maybe a subject should be the subjective difference in stories, without attempts to eliminate subjectivity, but rather to stimulate it with questions. This position is professionally justified, if we understand that people’s subjective world is not only a result but also a participant in history. The two positions are not mutually exclusive, but the difference between them is considerable. In the first case, oral history is a source, in the second it is both a source and a subject of research. The very renaissance of oral history is largely associated with a change in ideas about a subject of historical research, with the inclusion of mental structures in the subject matter. However, oral history is something more than an extension of the field of his-

¹ This article is translated from the Russian version of a report prepared for the European Congress on Oral History held in Frankfurt in the Spring of 1990 – twenty years ago. In the same year, 1990, the text was published in the journal “*Obshchestvennye nauki i sovremennost’*” (The Social Sciences Today (1990, № 6, p. 141-150).

torians' attention, and the two approaches to interviewing two eye-witnesses contain a philosophical difference.

These changes in the subject matter and methods of historical knowledge enable us to enter the philosophy of history, i.e. to think about the relationship between a person and history. We can say "*rethink*" since historians, at least in our country, are no longer used to entering this area and for various reasons feel no need for that. From the perspective of the philosophy of history, the two approaches to that simple situation I started with contain philosophical opposition to each other, since they have different attitudes towards a person. Moreover, oral history aims to overcome the historiography that has dominated European culture for two thousand years.

Oral history cannot separate itself from human memory. At the same time, it is history, i.e. the prerequisite of "*written*" history (historiography). It is oral history that demonstrates to us that memory is the basis of history and, on the other hand, shows a break with memory, even violence against it. Having given rise to history as an activity and form of cognition, oral history recedes into the background, and agrees with its secondary status. The revival of oral history today is a symptom of the new relationship between history and memory, which is especially evident in the society where relations between history and memory have been suppressed for decades. And in the context of a special relationship with memory, oral history again refers us to the very fundamentals and prerequisites of History, demanding and making it possible to think about what History is, what the relationship between History and a person is, and how this relationship changes.

Philosophy of History and Memory

History as a form of a person's relationship to the world became possible thanks to human memory. Memory is selective, since there is forgetting. We are able to forget the bad and the good, essential and insignificant things. But can a person manage his memory? We always risk to involuntarily remember something strongly forgotten. The essential might become completely insignificant, while the insignificant (to the extent that we try to erase it from our memory) suddenly becomes essential. Something that went unnoticed all of a sudden comes back and appears significant in the context of subsequent events, and even turns out to be an omen. This characteristic of memory – to change the meaning of events in the past – makes it possible to arrange events, faces, words and gestures as sequential and as cause and effect, i.e., it makes history possible as a form of life.

For people who have passed away, existence in memory is the only hope. Other people's memories make history essential for a person, since that makes them able to be present after death by linking their acts and words with something universally valid

– with the world’s movement towards the future. An individual is unable to manage memory completely and can only strive to do that. History becomes a means to manage memory, attach meaning and/or deprive something of meaning and sense.

History is a form of existence where selectiveness is the essence rather than a characteristic. It does not attach meaning to everything and everyone to give direction to people and events. Events are arranged in a directed row, like a vector, at some forthcoming result, and people, their acts, gestures, words, as well as nations, their aspirations and their past, split into historical and unhistorical.

History, as selection, turns out to be a form of inequality. Its “*meaning*” serves as a criterion and measure for the meaning of people, ethnic groups, ideas, and states. To be more specific, one should say its “*meanings*”, since in history, people’s perceptions participate in identifying the essential and the insignificant, and their arrangement in making events happen, and people have different visions of the “*meaning*” of the forthcoming result of history and attach different meanings to the same words, metaphors, and gestures. We are inside history, and history is inside us determining the way we see, speak and act. History, whose essence is selection, also implies selection of “*meanings*”, i.e., it insists on truth.

By considering history this way, we enter into the realm of the concepts: Immortality, Equality, and Truth. History as a form of human existence helps a person cope with these problems, enables them to solve them, but does not make it possible to solve them completely. Since these problems are fundamental and have roots in the very foundations of history, history today is forced to refer to its foundations and overcome itself, since it is unable to give up solving them (which is equivalent to refusing history).

The revival of oral history is both evidence of history’s referring to its sources, and clearly the process of overcoming history, its depletion, as a way of human life.

Twenty years later it seems inappropriate to capitalise concepts. Pathos is also a characteristic of the historical existence of a human being and it becomes relevant in the time of sweeping changes. Currently, with the help of a computer, not a typewriter, these words can be italicised without using solemn capital letters. However, the scale of problems pertaining to historical existence did not reduce and could not be reduced over two decades: People remain hostages of history and the meanings attached to it. When we take the side of a human memory and help a person realise their relationship with history, we contribute to overcoming this dependence.

Oral History and Truth

Let us specify our situation by making it a bit fantastic. Let us imagine that we have an opportunity to hear and record the oral history of the Battle of Borodino – France and the Soviet Union each have a participant who was alive during this event. But

we need to respect old people – what will we ask them about in the hour allocated to us by their caretakers, for us to use in our recordings? Will we ask who, after all, won the battle of Borodino, and try to find out new arguments pointing to the winner? Will we specify details of Bagration's death or Murat's behaviour? Or will we ask an old man and a monsieur how each of them feels and what is the most pleasant thing for them to remember? I would ask the last of those questions, but I do understand the interviewers who would not miss a unique opportunity to hear from two hundred-year old men to get their opinions on any other issue.

Fabricated situation? Scholastic question? Not really.

In fact, it is a question about revisiting the social meaning of historical studies, and it is easy to link it with the most challenging issues pertaining to historical education, investment in humanitarian research, publishing policy, public and social censorship.

Vershina is the name of a village a hundred kilometres from Irkutsk, which suddenly became an international site and a place regularly visited by foreigners, mainly from Poland. The village is sometimes simply called "*Polish Village*". Most local residents descend from the Polish who settled there in the first decade of our century. Stolypin's reforms are considered to be the reason for their migration. However, now when numerous guests revived interest in this topic and began to ask local people about the background of the village, the Siberian Polish turned out to have no certain version regarding that. Recollections of what was narrated by previous generations create a mosaic of episodes and people, and unfold a colourful movie of memory, but the movie without a certain plot. And here, like in the case of eye-witnesses of Borodino, research objectives should be selected – reconstruct the "*historical truth*" or keep – on magnetic tapes – live stories of people, not always puzzling them with a request to remember more accurately. In addition, to select is necessary, because a village is not that big and a lot of material in the stories will disappear or take the side of the "*formal*" version as soon as this version of the village is published. Moreover, people cannot be permanent subjects for inquiry by scientists who attack their tasty morsel.

Naturally, objectives are not necessarily selected the way an agreement is signed. Such a selection may be an impromptu part of a specific conversation, but oral history is a craft of equilibrium between the reconstruction of truth and an aspiration to arouse the "*stream of consciousness*", to preserve it and communicate it to the world. And there is no strict algorithm, and this equilibrium has to be searched for continuously.

Oral history as a craft makes a historian, not only a philosopher, recall Kant. Immanuel Kant gave priority to practical reason over pure reason. Pure reason engages in cognition, its subject is Truth. Truth is always unattainable, but the search for it gives people material for their judgments about the world and life. Practical reason exists as ability to judge, and its subject is the human good. History is the realm of pure reason. It can even be called historical reason, since Truth is a concept integral to history as

a way of life. Truth is selection, an approach to indicate our feelings and reason with the criterion of relevance to some world laws. A historical man, i.e. a man feeling he is a part of some world process, transfers selectiveness of history to the area of cognition. In European culture, the human need for knowledge of the world took the shape of cognition, where Truth is an end in itself.

Historical reason finds its logical conclusion in several social forms of our century, established within the framework of the embodiment of Truth, harmonising the order of things with the order of ideas. This refers to our country as well. In such a logical and coherent option, Truth no longer belongs to cognition and becomes a synonym for a small set of ideological symbols. Pure reason becomes ideological reason absolutely disconnected from practical reason.

Thus, history denies itself.

First, since some symbols and concepts become an absolute value, the present, where the values are respected, separates itself with a wide gap from the past where those values were not implemented and which lost its own value due to that. After disposing of the past, history may be just ersatz history.

Second, from the perspective of ideology as a value in itself, any person and human life can be only accidental with regard to the fundamental laws of the world. And this deprives a person of the ability to feel like a participant in history, he can just experience it. That is, history stops being a person's meaning of life. In the realm of ideological reason, it is the concept of Truth that serves as the justification of coherent falsification. In the 1960s, where attempts were made to reconstruct the truth about the Stalin era, opponents of such reconstruction wrote that there was "*truth of the fact*" as opposed to "*truth of history*".

I needed this theoretical digression to show our contradictory context for oral history development today. Freeing life from ideological fetters also envisages the freeing of memory, its liberation. However, in a situation of ideological confrontation, a historian with a microphone still remains a person with certain ideological positions, and it is difficult for him to weaken his dependence on them in his work. It is helpful to some extent that historical science declares it is serving the Truth, but in some aspects it is extremely hindered from overcoming ideologisation.

The journal "*Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya*" (*Social Studies*) published memories of A. Rybin, Stalin's former security guard – extremely biased and very interesting (see "*Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya*", 1988, No.3). It was interesting to an extent that hardly anyone could read to the end the nicely written comments by a well-known sociologist on the historical value of memories which was published there as well. The editorial board received letters. In one of them, an old philosopher was surprised with how it was possible to seriously speak about historical value of evidence which contradicts facts of common knowledge and, moreover, contains an "*obvious lie*".

That famous philosopher also wrote in his letter (quite distinctive) that it was senseless to replicate notorious tales of the Stalinists and that they “*should stop playing games with people...*” (“*Sotsiologicheskije issledovaniya*”, 1989, No.5, p.93).

Interest in Rybin’s memories and responses to their publication identify two attitudes towards human memory.

The first one is ideological. It manifests itself not only in coarse forms, and has serious motives today – concern over the future. If children write letters defending Stalin, their grandfathers’ idol, to the newspaper “*Pionerskaya pravda*” (Pioneers’ Truth), no one is surprised that there is a “*Young Stalinists*” society; and there is even a “*Brezhnev’s Club*”. So therefore it is hard to abstain from exposing Stalinists’ fabrications. And is it worth abstaining from that? Responsibility for those ruined by the Stalinist system requires that Truth be reconstructed. And the very requirement of Truth obliges us to examine “*from the inside*” what is called the Stalinist consciousness.

Concern over the future, as well as a careful attitude toward the memory of our ancestors, also requires a different approach to memory – from the perspective of the human good, *practical reason*. The possibility of the coexistence of various beliefs, positions, and consequently various worlds of memory, is a practical issue for us. “*Brezhnev’s Club*” and advocacy for Stalin are not only idealisation of the past, but also symptoms of ideological violence against memory. Giving priority to *practical reason*, Kant formulated a moral imperative requiring an attitude towards oneself and any other person, no matter how alien his world is to you, as a value in itself. This is a truly practical requirement in our research situation.

The renaissance of oral history is evidence of strengthening Practical reason. In the work of a historian with a microphone, interest in a person is not less than interest in truth. Moreover, interest in a person is a precondition for such work, the basis for professionalism. It is easy to deny the right to exist of a published text, but what historian will refuse to listen to a narrator speaking about the past, even if his story is an “*obvious lie*”?

Oral History and Equality

A. Rybin’s memories exist not only on paper. Film director Semyon Aranovich, having recorded Rybin’s monologues, created the film “*I served with Stalin’s Guard*” – a brilliant example of oral history. The film came out and triggered even stronger reaction than the publication: in contrast to the journal, the director did not even express his attitude towards his character. The material was assembled not to expose; rather, it helped his “*hero*” express himself better. If the director gave his opinion, he would reduce the film’s effect – it would be easier for viewers to condemn and separate this phenomenon from themselves by the act of condemnation. However, thanks to the director, gazing into the face of that old man with an unconquerable spirit, you can be in no haste to condemn, but recognise your own characteristics and traits of the

people you live with in this world you must get along with. If the film director gave his opinion, he would be dishonest towards the old person who sincerely expressed himself before the video camera. Deep in our minds, we can consider him a criminal and a moral cripple, but we can also appreciate that having exposed his memory, he enables us to understand his spiritual experience and avoid our own crimes. A criminal's spiritual experience turns out to be as significant as our own.

Again, it is time to recall Kant and the concept of "*ethical community*", a community of different, but equal, people – the coexistence of worlds of memory, various experiences and views of the world. And every person needs this diverse unity of Humanity, experience of Humanity constituting his personal experience as well. Thus, a person should treat Humanity, represented by himself and any other person, as an end, but not as a means.

It is easy to note that this requirement of equality is in contradiction with History as a way of human life. History treats a person exactly as a means, and not all people are equal before History. Thus, a historian can easily disregard the requirement of human equality, unless he is a historian with a microphone.

Oral history practice is a school of equality. The revival of oral history is associated with the need to refer to live human memory rather than only to its physical evidence documented on paper or represented as things. Human memory is not concentrated in literary salons, party offices and public archives. Oral history is revived with its interest in a village, workers' suburbs, and illiterate old men. Declaring equality is one thing, and proving it with activities is another. For oral history, the issue of equality happens to be a regular working problem.

If we consider the relationship with those we interview, the example of Rybin's recollections clearly demonstrates the common difficulty. It is this example that makes it clear that a historian refusing to interview a person he dislikes is at risk of losing unique historical evidence: a live image of the very world outlook that future historians will have to reconstruct with the help of disappearing traces. And if we set a task to present this character in its entirety and help a narrator express himself, we must acknowledge his right to his interpretations, illusions and memory, i.e., overcome our dislike.

The problem of equality exists even with the greatest sympathy. Your interviewee is an interesting person with his unique world and invaluable memories, but for you he is also an object, a source of memories. Moreover, your hero is also an object of your methods and techniques that help make him talk.

And, finally, attitude toward a person as a means is shown in the most difficult ethical problem of oral history – the problem of a hidden microphone. The easiest way to resolve this difficulty is to refuse a hidden microphone as an immoral means. However, by that we refuse unique human evidence. An extreme case is the interview with former executioners, heads of camps. It is an extreme example, since in these situations a hid-

den microphone is a wilful deceit rather than just a technique: certainly, such a character will not permit recording of his revelations, and moreover he will not sanction their disclosure. However, there is a more “flexible” option – when a hidden microphone is used just to preserve clarity and spontaneity of a story by a person who is not used to microphones. In either case (though to different extents), we violate the principle of equality. Nevertheless, it means only that every time, in each specific case, a historian should again address the issue about using a hidden microphone. Otherwise, the ethical aspect of our practice will be neglected, and oral history will lose its deep relationship with equality, i.e., lose its own foundations – respect for human memory.

Technological advancement has eliminated a more “flexible” option toward using a hidden microphone – compact devices are no longer a hindrance to even the shiest narrator. Only a journalist from a tabloid newspaper can tell about stories recorded secretly, without informing a narrator; by doing so, a historian will lose the confidence of his colleagues; an author of a book, film or TV program acting as a historian and doing this will not gain the confidence of serious viewers or readers. However, the problem of equality has not become less acute – it emerges each time when an author decides what part of revelations entrusted to a kind partner in conversation can be shown on pages or a screen when preparing a publication or editing a film.

Oral History and Immortality

A number of recordings of Oistrakh, Gilels, and Rostropovich were erased at the Central Television Station in Moscow. There was no evil intent – tape to record new concerts was lacking. At that time, a historian in the USSR, who worked with a recorder, knew how difficult it was to decide which of the previous recordings to sacrifice when tape for the new one was required. Is it worth comparing the scale of the sacrifice: erasing a unique performance by a great musician and an oral narration by a common person when this narration can be the only form of existence for that “self” after death?

Lack of scale for such comparisons evidences uniqueness of the human “self” and importance of the immortality issue to us.

The deficit in audio or video tape disappeared long ago, and digital technology has made possible an unlimited volume of recordings. However, these infinite possibilities resulted in other collisions: people’s stories about their lives began to fill digital archives. Digitised memory placed on a website gets separated from a person whose story was recorded and from a historian who recorded the story and took on a responsibility for disposing of not just evidence but a part of the human “self” for how a person will appear before the world as well as when he will leave the world physically. Issues are emerging associated with the extent and timing of availability for such memory archives, and these challenges are not less serious for oral history

practice than previous questions “where to get the tape” and “what to erase”, while the question “what is worth recording” has always been and will remain.

Every historian has repeatedly exclaimed: “What a pity I did not have a tape recorder with me!” knowing that a narrator will not repeat his words equally vividly or will repeat them vividly but in a different way, or will pass away and deprive those remaining on earth of an opportunity to hear him. A person is potentially immortal – his spiritual life and spiritual experience flowing to his parties in conversation, people he loves, children and trainees, sometimes to the books written, more frequently to the things he created. A possibility to continue after physical death arouses hope for immortality in a person. History meets these expectations, giving a person his place and role in the overall movement of the world. History gives such a place not to every person, and it makes only selected people immortal. However, even the selected people are immortal as a means of history, as its characters; history does not preserve their human “self”, completeness and distinctiveness of their spiritual experience. Our present-day world can be preserved only with the understanding of the world of each person (as well as of each nation) as a value in itself, as a unique world. History depletes itself – the attitude towards a person as a means is fatal. History cannot take into account the uniqueness of a person, otherwise it will lose its subject matter. The role of history’s alternative was assumed by philosophy, preserving attention to human uniqueness and helping the human “self” reconcile with history. Thus in the 20th century, when selective attitudes toward people brought the world into an inextricable contradiction, philosophy tried to overcome history (“*Philosophy of Life*”, existentialism, hermeneutics, structuralism, ideas about the end of history, etc.). To our subject this means that “oral history” transforms into “oral philosophy”.

Recollections written on paper preserve the memory of a person, his judgments and the facts of his life. A person who writes, arranges words and forms opinions in line with laws of writing and the objectives he assigned himself, always limits himself and refuses preservation of his “self” as otherwise he cannot put himself on record.

Memoirs are always an author’s concept of his own life, this is the law of writing. A diary is not much different from them since it is also a monologue implying a listener or an imaginary party in conversation. What is different about oral history? Doesn’t it record a moment of the human “self”, mortifying it with a transcript on paper or tape editing? In oral history, a party in conversation is not imaginary but real, and this fact, as well as the absence of the laws of writing, radically changes the situation. Oral history is a dialog, and this implies coexistence of memories. A dialog is both a limitation (since there are limits of understanding), and a constant aspiration to overcome the limit, and extend the range. In such continuous overcoming of challenges pertaining to mutual understanding and identification of new limits, an oral

story can result in an image which, like a drop of water, will reflect the uniqueness of a personality, and the completeness of the human "self".

Such a level of oral history is implementation of the *world of worlds* (Mikhail Gefter), when people gaze into each other. It is memory of a party in conversation rather than paper that stirs up hope to continue one's life and leave memories about oneself. Such an intention by a party in a conversation does not really match the prevailing traditions in historiography. In traditional concepts of sources and criteria for scientific character, a successful interview is getting an exact answer to precise questions. In such an approach, a historian is like a journalist for whom all ambiguities and depths, "excessive" biographical details, are information noise to be eliminated when preparing a publication. However, if a historian is to think about preservation of the human "self" in its diversity and completeness, he is to reproduce not just recollections but the *World of Memory* in recollections. In this case, the dialog of a historian with his character should be a dialog of two "selves" rather than the processing of memory from the perspective of science and scientific precision. Priority is given to a different criterion – philosophic-artistic imagery, integrity. A person's perceptions of the past and the present, their relationship with people close to them and historic events, details of everyday life and judgments about the country's destiny – they all turn out to be faces of memory (holistic, since this is the memory of a particular person). Each memory face helps see another face, and another trait. Ambiguities and depths are natural, since the worlds and spiritual experiences of two people are irreducible to each other, and two human "selves" cannot match fully. And those ambiguities and depths preserve an opportunity for other contemporaries and descendants to have a dialog with the spiritual world of a person who was once interviewed by a historian with a microphone, i.e., they eliminate death from the human "self".

A historian aspires to gaze completely into a contemporary's world, and in this respect history becomes philosophy. This is a challenging task, but when fulfilling it we must say "thank you" to traditional historiography, which taught us that serving Truth means not to lose something valuable and essential. Understanding of what is valuable and essential simply has become somewhat broader than the concept of Truth.

Over twenty years, oral history has not caused revolutionary changes in historical studies in Russia. Scientific councils still treat interviews as a not really "scientific" sources, even if the work focuses on social history or history of everyday life. Interesting and outstanding books based on oral recollections emerge, new generations of historians come, but they have to reckon with corporate rules. However, oral history as work with human memory has gone beyond "departmental boundaries" of historians. It is especially important that oral history has become a part of the Adult Education system, helping a person overcome the challenges of the relationship with history, which is the focus of this article.

Kommuna Khamidova

The Destiny of a Member of the Kokand Intelligentsia

It is not so easy now to imagine life in our country in the first decades of the last century. According to the writer Abdullah Kadiri, these were *"the darkest, most horrible years of our history."* By the early 30s, when the flames of civil war had almost disappeared, the life of ordinary people did not become more peaceful. Fear for their lives was added to the struggle for their daily bread.

The Soviet Government was pursuing a policy of massive collectivization. The foundations of people's lives, which for centuries was hailed as successful survival, collapsed and repression by the government against the people intensified. The ruling regime arrested, imprisoned, and exiled the best people to far off lands under various pretexts, pronouncing them enemies of the people, saboteurs, kulaks and outlaws. Thousands of people were executed by shooting, disappeared in camps or had to flee abroad where they spent their lives homesick and longing for their relatives. In Kokand, the center of the national liberation movement, a cultural and educational oasis, the repressive policy of the Soviets left a special imprint. Political repression touched the most prominent people from all walks of life: economics, culture, and education. These were nationally prominent people: Akbar Islomov, Isroil Ortiqov, Qodir Turaqulov, Adalla Karimov, Uzorqboy Mamayusupov, Nuriddin Ulmasboyev, Jumaboy Khusanboyev, Nishonbek Mavlonvekov, poets and translators; Usmon Nosir and Mirzo Hukandi, journalists; Sobira Holdorova, a pedagogue and enlightener; Ashurali Zohiriy, the author of scientific articles and translator of poetry by Alisher Navoi and Babur.

If Abduvakhhov Ibodyev, Mukhtorkhon Mukhammadiy, Nabijon Zokhirov, Mukhammadjon Holikiy, Komiljon Kosimov had not become victims of the repression, they could have done very much for people.

One such person who fell into the millstone of political repression was Aziz Kayumov.

In the autobiography kept in the treasure of the Kokand Local History Museum, Aziz Kayumov writes: *"I was born in 1898 in Besharik mahalla of Kokand city to a family of a serviceman Addukayum, a son of Toshmukhamed. My father was a literate man*





Graduates from the 9th form, City of Kokand 1930

and could speak Russian well. He sent all seven of his sons to new method (*jadid*) schools.” (A biography was written in 1967).

Indeed, Aziz Kayumov was born to a family of the intelligentsia and became a progressive man of his time. In 1917, he enrolled in the technical school of pedagogy “*Dorul-muallimin*”, where his teachers and mentors were from among the best representatives of the local intelligentsia: Abdulla Mustakayev, Bulat Soliyev, and Khodi Fayzi. In 1919, Aziz Kayumov completed a six-month teacher training course in Tashkent and began to work as an educator for a school (boarding school)

“*Dorul-shafaka*” and simultaneously at Kokand School No. 3. In 1921, the school was divided into two because of the increased number of students and re-named Commune. Abduvakhob Ibodiyev, a well-known pedagogue in Kokand, was the director of Commune No.1, who also fell a victim to the repression, while Aziz Kayumov became the director of Commune No. 2.

In 1922, the Commune schools were transformed into boarding schools. There were five of these in Kokand. Boys and girls studied separately, Russians and Jews studied in groups, where education was in Russian. Uzbek children studied at boarding schools No. 1 and No. 4, Russians at boarding school No. 2, Jews at a boarding school No. 3, and girls at a boarding school No. 5.

Aziz Kayumov was in charge of boarding school No. 4 and left behind the best memories. In 1923, he was entrusted with an important mission: arranging for a boarding school for children from the poorest families. A so-called “*boarding school for hungry children*”, school No. 9 was set up and it was supervised by Aziz Kayumov, while Zufar Fayzi, Gulsun Obidova, Maftukho Kapkayeva, Said Esonboyev were caretakers and pedagogues.

In 1924, the boarding schools would be transformed into orphanages. Aziz Kayumov was appointed as a director of orphanage No.1, Ulug Tursun, Bekkuzin, Hadyakul Rizaev were caretakers, Boki Nazar, Sodik Zohid, Hasan Shodiyev were teachers, Kodir Toshmat – a pioneer organizer – worked with Kayumov.

In 1925, Aziz Kayumov was appointed as an officer of the city department of education, and from 1927 to 1930, he was an instructor for the District Department of Education of Fergana, where he conducted methodological activities in the schools of the province.

In 1928, a supporting school – a seven-year school, which was later transformed into a nine-year school – was opened up.

In 1930, Aziz Kayumov was assigned to be in charge of the supporting school. A former director of the school, Mukhtorkhon domla Mukhammadiy, was arrested in December

1929. Later, a former student of the school, Usman Nosir, a twenty-five-year-old poet who became famous for his noteworthy poems, was also arrested. The poet was exiled to Siberia where he died from tuberculosis in the village of Suslovo in Kemerovskaya Province. Mukhtorkhon Mukhammadi was also arrested twice.

In the beginning of the 1930s, public education actively promoted education in rural areas. Equipped with new methods, Aziz Kayumov, was commissioned to work in Kudash District, where he supervised the opening of new schools, and new school buildings were constructed with the help of the people. At that time, 21 schools functioned in Kudash District, including a school for young *dekhans* (peasants) and a school for workers of the Shorsuv sulphur mine. Teachers Begijon Gofur, Eshbotirov, Mamudov, Nasriddinov put life into their work.

In 1932, Aziz Kayumov came back to the city and worked as an inspector for the Urban Department of Public Education. In 1933, he was awarded a Certificate of Merit by an executive committee of Kokand city and a gift of money for his long and impeccable service in the field of education.

In 1935, Aziz Kayumov was commissioned to study and receive advanced training at Samarkand State University. In one year, during a vacation, he fulfilled duties of a chief of Kudash District.

He was not allowed to continue his studies at the university in addition to his new family status.

In 1937, short-term correspondence courses for district teachers were opened up at Kokand Technical School of Pedagogy. Aziz Kayumov was appointed as an inspector



A. Kayumov with his family in 1973

of a correspondence technical school of pedagogy where he devotedly passed on his rich experience and knowledge to rural teachers.

One day, Aziz Kayumov came back home tired after a long day of work, where his wife Malokhatkhon and children Erkinjon, Tulkinjon were waiting for him, and his youngest child Erkinjon was still in his crib. After everyone went to sleep, there was a loud knock at the door in the middle of the night. After having opened the door, Aziz understood everything at once: NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs) officials were in front of him.

- *"Are you teacher Kayumov?"* – asked an armed NKVD officer.
- *"Yes, this is me. What's happened?"*
- *"Search the house!"* – ordered the military man, while he responded rudely to Kayumov:
- *"Remember, you are not to ask questions here. We know what you teach young teachers. You have a trunk full of books – we know what kind of books these are. Arrest the enemy of the people!"* – the night-time guests led the tied-up teacher into the night.

From August 20 to November 11, 1937, Aziz Kayumov was in Kokand prison, he was sent to an exile to Novosibirsk. He spent ten years in the camp for political prisoners somewhere near Mariinks. He worked hard at the railroad construction site and sewed mittens and boots for soldiers during World War II. During all these years, he thought about his motherland, family, and children day and night.

In 1947, having served his sentence, Aziz Kayumov received permission to return home. However, he was not allowed to live in Kokand, so following the advice of his friends, he left for the neighboring Uzbekistan District, where he worked as a foreman of a sericulture brigade, a storekeeper of an industrial school, stooping to any labor to take care of his family and children.

The most joyful event in his life took place in 1954, when he was officially vindicated. The acquittal lent him wings and prolonged his life. Aziz Kayumov lived a long life and died on



Rehabilitation certificate of Aziz Kayumov

January 12, 1981, at the age of 83 surrounded by his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Klara-opa, a daughter-in-law reminisces.

"I have worked as a teacher at urban schools for many years. At the moment, I am retired. I joined this family as a daughter-in-law in 1964. Having the same profession as my father-in-law, I easily found a common language with him. He would often tell me about his past. The first wife of my father-in-law married him when she was fifteen, she died during childbirth and he was left alone with his daughter Dinora. Then, he married my mother-in-law Malokhathon. According to my mother-in-law, her father's family was dispossessed and her father gave her in marriage to Aziz Kayumov to save her.

I lived with my parents-in-law for many years until my father-in-law died in 1981 and my mother-in-law died in 1992. This was a good and united family. My father-in-law was a good father for his children. Wherever my father-in-law was employed – be it a city or district department of public education or schools – he demonstrated himself to be a principled worker. His fidelity to principles was apparently a source of dissatisfaction of some people who facilitated his arrest."



Erkinjon Kayumov

This is what Erkinjon, Aziz Kayumov's son, says about him:

"My father was arrested when I was a two-month old infant. I had two elder brothers. When my father returned from exile, I was a schoolboy. I remember how my father complained of chest pain and when I began to ask him why, he told me how during World War II, the exiled were truly starving. Emaciated and exhausted, my father saw fodder being prepared for pigs, so he took some to eat, but was given a violent thrashing. The chest pain remained with him for life.

What were you fed in exile? I asked my father. – A pea gruel where we would occasionally find a couple of peas, my father replied. While my father served his sentence in a camp, he worked in a prison kitchen. He peeled vegetables: carrots and potatoes. A woman, who would come to collect the peelings, felt sorry for the prisoner and secretly brought him some fresh milk to drink. He was thankful to this woman for life, since he survived in the prison thanks to this milk.

I remember how my father told me about his last days in the camp. On August 20, 1947, it was exactly ten years after my father had been arrested and exiled to the camp. Late at night he was told to get up from his prison plank-bed and sent to the camp warden who announced that his term had expired and so he was sent packing.



Teacher and children of orphanage no.8

A train to Mariinks ran once every twenty-four hours, and it was eight kilometers to the railway station. My father walked the eight kilometers and waited for the train eighteen hours.

This is what my father's daughters remember: "When the NKVD officials came and began searching the house, even pried the floors open, they only found Christmas tree decorations, which our father had prepared for the children."

After our father's return, our family moved to the village of Maida millat in the Uzbekistan region.

We, the children, walked three kilometers to school in a neighboring village. Our father kept a close check on our studies and behavior and never allowed us to waste time. We studied well and later went on to higher education.

I was invited to work for a state security committee. However, my father was totally against this. His resentment of "the authorities" stayed with him for life. "Son, he said, I cannot bear to see their uniform." I declined the position and worked as a manager in the field of culture until I retired.

I am 72 and have four children and eleven grandchildren. My children and daughters-in-law all have higher education. When a museum in memory of political repression was opened up in Tashkent, I was delighted, since the creation of such a museum is a tribute of respect to thousands of guiltless victims of political repression like my father."

In truth, the teacher A. Kayumov joined the Communist Party in 1919. Following the dictates of the party, he actively participated in collective farm construction. Despite this fact, he was a victim of repression and spent ten years of his life in the camps. Thousands and thousands of people fell victim to the repression, our compatriots whose dignity was tread upon and whose lives were ruined. The fate of Aziz Kayumov deserves special attention as the fate of a typical member of the intelligentsia who was sacrificed by the merciless regime. The memory of the victims of repression is sacred, everlasting, and unshakable.

Luiza Makhmudova

History and Identity in Uzbekistan¹

In 2009, a cycle of activities to commemorate the football team “*Pakhtakor 79*”, within the framework of Project Week “*History and Identity*”, was arranged in Uzbekistan. Matthias Klingenberg, Coordinator for Central Asia, Russia and South Caucasus, *dvv international* Bonn, gives an interview and explains why this topic was chosen.



“The Danish philosopher and theologian Soren Kierkegaard once said: Life can only be understood backwards; though it must be lived forwards.”²

It should be noted that we had plans for a variety of subjects. In November 2008, we held a seminar and invited our partners to discuss ways to go forward. We had implemented various small-scale projects for “*History and Identity*” including events in a format of “*Tea House Talks*”, which resulted in publishing memoirs about the earthquake in 1966. The participants of the discussion (about new subjects) included people living in different parts of Uzbekistan, for instance, Nukus, Fergana Valley, Kokand city, who (previously) had taken part in the project “*History and Identity*”. They have proposed 4 directions. These are “*The Children of the Aral Sea*” – a project whose centrepiece was to remember how people used to live in the Aral Sea crisis area, how they live now and how they see the future of this region. Another small project was suggested by a Kokand city museum which houses an arrangement of exhibits dedicated to repression. The subject area could be entitled “*The Children of the Repressed*”.

Another idea is devoted to the flooding of the Fergana Valley in 1978 (1979). And, finally, an idea I have suggested, referred to the demise of the football team “*Pakhtakor*” in 1979. This was a momentous event for Uzbekistan, for the people who live in an Uzbek land. Moreover, it has been thirty years since that tragic event. All four proposals were discussed by experts and specialists of the “*History and Identity*” project.

When we were attending the “*Adult Education Festival*”, we familiarised ourselves with another idea, the fifth one. Mikhail Rozhansky, the Head of the Center for Social Research of Irkutsk city, facilitated one of the workshops. The Centre, based on project

1 This article is a reprint from the Uzbek Journal “*Noviy Vek*”, 11.6.2005.

2 Soren Kierkegaard: Diaries 1834-1855, Munich 1949.

outcomes, published two almanacs about local history – that is, historical facts of a certain place or residential area told by the residents. People recall what life was like in the past, describe what it is like today and share their plans for the future. For instance, a person's life is (was) related to construction or working for a large-scale plant built in the Soviet times. Working in these areas ensured a decent living for this person and his/her family. Then comes the collapse of the Soviet Union, production is put on hold and therewith changes ensue in the person's life. A source of income changes from working for a factory to a small scale retail trade. This could be, for example, selling sunflower seeds in the streets.

So, these are the changes that have been faced within the life of one generation. Such local histories are relevant for Uzbekistan as well, where a number of residential areas attached to industrial enterprises, for example, have taken shape. Respectively, new villages came into being thanks to irrigation construction and land development for cotton and other crops.

But time went by, and people's perception of reality keeps changing; today they live in sovereign Uzbekistan, a lot of circumstances have changed and the market economy has come into being. It is also exciting to see how these developments have changed people's lives. We invited Mikhail Rozhansky over here and gathered a group of people interested in this issue. This encompassed a variety of individuals. Among them, there are scientists (the Academy of Sciences, History Department of Tashkent State University), experts from Kokand specialising in the history of repression, as well as others. At first, I, personally, was sceptical about the chances of working with local history here. Mikhail Rozhansky facilitated a week-long seminar and it was one of those seminars where everybody stayed till the end, no one quit.

During the project week in May, he facilitated a second seminar to begin all the work. By the end of the year, the first almanac on local history is to be finalised by the Uzbek participants. In other words, a transition from a project in the area of "oral history" to a new concept of "local history" is now completed. All this has been done under the aegis of the "History and Identity" dimension.

Referring to the five ideas mentioned above, I would like to point out that we decided to



Stadium of Pakhtakor

work on the project dedicated to “*Pakhtakor*” while considering factors such as the magnitude of the event and partnership that will assist in accomplishment of this idea. Almost everyone, especially in Tashkent, over 30 years of age, remembers that tragedy. If they do not have a personal memory of it, then they have heard of it from their parents, for example. It is important to recall this event, since such things are not to be forgotten, they never fade in memory.



Pakhtakor Team of 1979

Moreover, people who

lived then in Tashkent felt as a community, they were united by common grief, tears and shock following the demise of the team. At that moment, history seemed to have stopped.

All the ideas proposed deserve attention. We are working on “*Pakhtakor*” and carrying on with the “*Local History*” project, while other subjects are within this work. And if there is no individual project regarding “*The Children of the Repressed*” in Kokand, this does not mean that no work will be done in this direction, since interested experts take part in the seminars to come up with “*local histories*”. All the developments will lay the basis for the almanac, which will absorb various minor projects and trends. I envisage this almanac to become a small reflection of Uzbekistan and of the perspectives by which people live in the country. In other words, people living here will describe their motherland.

The “*Pakhtakor*” project will include a memorial evening featuring a theatrical performance. We have done this in the past; in 2008 we successfully organised a memorial evening dedicated to the earthquake in 1966.

This year commemorates sharing experiences between Uzbekistan and Russia with regard to the “*History and Identity*” trend. Projects within this area are underway in Kyrgyzstan and the Caucasus. A significant project is being launched, with the support of *dvv international* Head Office in the Caucasus, between Turkey and Armenia, where a staple subject will be reconciliation. A Summer Academy to be attended by young people from Turkey and Armenia will be organised. Once taught an “*oral*



Memorial of the 79 team

history” method they will work to interview residents of their countries. Then we plan to get together again to collectively process the interviews. It will not be an easy task, since it is widely known that these two countries have grievous moments in their history. But time moves along, and today relations have improved, if compared to those they had ten years ago. It will be difficult language-wise, since English will be the language of communication. I would also like to point out that one expert from Istanbul, who is assisting in implementing the project, is a famous specialist in ethnology, Leyla Neyzi, who will join

us for the Summer Academy to be organised in Central Asia, in Kyrgyzstan. Another of our famous experts, Vanya Ivanova (Bulgaria), who will talk about using the *“oral history”* method in the Balkans, is invited as well. In general, the common subject of the Summer Academy is oral history.

The activities to create history told by eyewitnesses are in progress. I was delighted, for instance, to hear an idea voiced by Alisher Sobirov, the director of the Tashkent Museum to the Memory of Repression Victims, who thinks that development of this area is also important to set up an archive for the museum. It is an important step toward the development of *“oral history”*. As A. Sobirov pointed out during the May Conference *“History and Identity”*: *“We perceive oral history as something we need as additional information to fill gaps due to lack of documents and evidence on paper”*. There is an opportunity to use interviews and evidence collected using the *“oral history”* method as one of the ways to fill gaps in history.

The *“oral history”* method accompanies the official historical scientific research as one of the ways to reflect historical reality. It becomes more vivid and saturated, since it goes through people’s hearts, their memories and related emotions. Besides, this method shows people opportunities to start creative writing by reproducing history of their own lives through reminiscences, leaving behind personal evidence for generations to come and for history. This is crucial for the people of Uzbekistan, just like for

many people from other countries. "Oral history" is both an opportunity to establish a link between generations, and to pass on family traditions and knowledge about family tradition and genealogy and about their "minor" motherland. This is like the tradition of when information was passed on literally "by word of mouth" from father to son, from a grandfather to a grandson. Nowadays, the "oral history method is crucial in the search for a national identity."

- And where else, in your opinion, could this "oral history" method be used?
- A similar question was addressed to A. Sobirov during the conference: "How well will findings of the "oral history" method be reflected, say, in training courses?"

To our regret, they are not reflected wider than in special publications. Nevertheless, outcomes of this method are to be studied, since the findings of the method – profound and interesting materials – are able to enrich the learning process. Therefore, I believe that a commission dealing with an assessment of textbooks could investigate this method and its outcomes. If there is an interest in them and a closer connection of those engaged in "oral history" with education experts, I think the results will be interesting.

As for the materials already collected by the Museum to the Memory of Repression Victims, I assume a schoolchild will be able to learn thoroughly about this period in history by reading letters from the GULAG kept by the family of a repression victim or through recollections of his relatives living today. This provides a vivid perception of history, paints a real picture of the events. This boosts the identity of a person and immersion into history of one's homeland. It is important to sense history as part of oneself, with a vi-



Veterans of the Pakhtakor soccer team



Meeting of veterans

brant colloquial language intrinsic to evidence collected. In no small measure, using the “oral history” method is making a contribution to creating this sense of history. It is crucial that people understand where they have come from and where they are heading.

If we take Germany as an example, after World War II there was a time when the nation had to figure out what was going on and how to develop further. This constitutes the identity process, a search for answers to the questions: Where am I from? Where am I going? This is no small matter. Consequently, we support the initiative of developing the “oral history”

method, specific ways to apply it as in the case with the Museum to the Memory of Repression Victims. Initiatives of other institutions will find support, including scientific and research institutions that will want to use opportunities this method offers to enrich their activities. We are assisting in mastering the “oral history” method, while its content will depend on the interests of the Uzbek people.

Besides, projects that have been implemented using the “oral history” method in Tashkent – dedicated to the earthquake in 1966 and the tragedy of “Pakhtakor” team that passed away in a flight accident – demonstrated opportunities of enriching history through recollections of eyewitnesses, through the “oral history” method.

Irina Shakirova

There where it is Clean and Bright

Tashkent residents talk about the metropolitan subway

I learned about the project related to the creation of *"Uzbekistan's Almanac"* at the 4th Summer Academy of *dvv international*, devoted to oral history as a method of understanding the past, as suggested by Matthias Klingenberg, the Head of Representative Office in Uzbekistan.

The program of the academy included plenty of presentations, most of which were devoted to tragic events in human history relevant to various political developments, natural calamities and catastrophes.

It occurred to me then that overall, the oral history method may and should be applied to summarize and realize positive human experience, remember what unites us, describe those events, discoveries, objects that had a positive influence on people and manifested a creative spirit of humanity.

The knowledge obtained during the academy program led me to take part in the project *"History and Self-awareness"*, and so I signed up for a workshop where I learned the principles of writing a research article (although I am a professional journalist by education, there were some specific techniques here which were helpful); I worked through my idea, along with other participants, to write about the Tashkent subway.

The Tashkent subway is an everlasting meeting place for those who chose this city like people choose a destiny; a place filled with memories for those who have left this city but will never get it out of their minds. The idea of talking about the Tashkent subway and the attitudes of my friends, people of various trades and different generations, toward the subway, aroused great interest and even enthusiasm. I hope that you, the readers of the almanac, will also become fully involved in our dialogue. Read on, agree or argue, you are free to have your opinion about the subject matter ...

"It was an early spring and it was cold..." – I still remember the first line of the piece I wrote for a creative writing contest for my admission to the university. I wrote about the Tashkent subway, the seventh in the Soviet Union, and thirty-fifth in the world. By 1979 it was already in service, the first Chilanzar line had already been in operation for two years. We, the students, waited hopefully for the dotted line of subway stations still at the design stage, headed toward vuzgorodok (students' campus) on





Subway station in Tashkent

the map hanging in subway cars, to turn into the indication of the ones under construction and then the ones in operation. We saw this as the end of day-to-day fighting for a seat in a route taxi that ran from the center of the city to the university. However, we were out of luck since the second line was put into operation only two years after we graduated. Perhaps those who “received” the subway as granted would perceive my romantic attitude as amusing, but we are people who remember the life “before the subway” we can’t help ourselves thinking of it without a generous share of tenderness. This may be a tribute to nostalgia for youth, but one can’t

help wondering about this quick and convenient means of transportation that has such an irreplaceable countenance in Tashkent.

Alisher Alikulov, 45 years of age, an information technology entrepreneur: I can say that the emergence of a subway has changed my life – I am now proud for my city; it’s become convenient to commute. In the beginning, people would go to remote stations to take a look and show them off to guests, make appointments for meetings and just ride it for fun, back and forth, take escalator rides, exchange five-kopeck coins – there are all kinds of recollections. I remember a lot of stories tied to the Tashkent subway. I once came back to Tashkent from a long distance trip and arrived at *Sobir Rakhimov* station to wait for the subway to open. When I finally got on, I fell asleep and overslept my station “*Druzhba Narodov*” (People’s Friendship) and woke up at a terminal station “*Maksim Gorkiy*” – a duty officer woke me up. I crossed the station and took a train back. I woke up again at “*Sobir Rakhimov*” station – overslept again! I got to my destination only the third time – I didn’t sleep all night, apparently, that’s why I fell asleep so deeply.

Umida Maksumova, 54 years old, a social project manager: With the advent of the subway, it felt like Tashkent was turning into a megapolis, since not all big cities have subways.

Personally, Tashkent subway made me proud of my city, because it’s not only a means of transportation, it’s also a work of art. The Tashkent subway is unique since each of its stations has a reference to a point in history or significant event in the life of the state and the people; it symbolizes the international brotherhood of the peoples who live on

the territory of Central Asia. I remember well the opening of *Buyuk Ipak Yuli (the Great Silk Road)* (the former *Maksim Gorkiy*) station, since I lived in the vicinity of this station. This was a big celebration for all. The celebration began on the eve of the opening of the station. People came out in the streets, a brass band was playing, and there were a lot of flowers that people used to decorate the entrance to the subway. On the day of the opening, most adults and children missed work and school to witness the opening ceremony and become the first visitors.



Subway station

Over many years, when my friends or I had guests, our foreign partners would unequivocally admire and marvel at our subway.

Vladimir Pletinskiy, 49 years old, Yelena Pletinskaya, 47 years old (journalists, former Tashkent residents, now Israeli citizens):

Yelena: With the advent of the subway I finally felt proud of my home town.

Vladimir: I used to live a hundred meters away from the construction site of “*Pakhtakor*” (Cotton Picker) subway station. All construction work was done in front of my eyes. I happened to be among the first hundred passengers of this station. The main thing that the emergence of the subway brought about in my life was that there was now a place where telephones remained intact and operational; one could call without fear that some baddies would lock you up in a telephone booth.

Yelena: Of course, the subway has had a major impact on our lives. I was a Philology Department student at the Tashkent State University located in Khadra, and, even though it was a straight trolley-bus ride away from my house, I preferred to take a walk along Navoi street and enter the subway. The tidiness and reliability of the subway was pleasing.

Vladimir: It became more convenient to live there, and life got merrier. And the main thing was that you were never late anywhere.

Svetlana Yan, 47 years old, Development Director for a construction company: In contrast to ground transportation, the subway always runs! You feel confident and hopeful that you will be transported securely to different destinations in the city until midnight. I live next to “*Oybek*” subway station, which has recently become a junction station. Distances shorten, time is saved!

Some of the Rules of Using the Subway

The passengers are to:

- Ensure public order, sanitation and abide by these Rules;
- Pay the fare and for luggage or produce an open document at a checkpoint that permits free travel;
- When using the escalator, stand to the right, facing the direction of movement, hold the handrail, do not lean against the stationary parts, not to step over limiting lines marked on the stairs, walk on the left hand side and avoid lingering when getting off the escalator and hold young children by the hand or pick them up;
- On the platform, spread throughout its length avoiding stepping over the limiting line until the complete stop of the train. When a train stops, to ensure free exit of passengers, do not block the doors;
- On the train, offer seats to the disabled, the elderly, and passengers with children. Do not lean against car doors; do not block the entrance or exit of passengers.
- When approaching the station of destination, prepare to exit the car beforehand; leave cars at terminal stations.

Passengers have a right

- to bring along for free a child up to 7 years, as well as skis, bicycles, sleds, fishing rods, musical instruments, small garden tools in cases;
- to receive, when necessary, medical assistance from subway first-aid posts located at the stations.

On the subway, it is prohibited to

- smoke in cars, entrance halls, passages, and stations platforms;
- enter the station wearing garments and footwear and carrying luggage that can smear garments of passengers, cars, structures and devices of the subway or be in a state of insobriety (alcoholic, drug-induced) or with ice-cream;
- carry flammable, explosive, toxic or poisonous substances and items, household items and gas tanks, firearms or animals, as well as luggage with clearance limits exceeding those in item 3.2 or piercing, cutting or breakable objects or skis and skates without cases;
- damage parts of equipment and architectural and artistic finishing, glass fixing of entrance halls and service premises, parts of railway vehicles and other technical means of the subway;
- litter and soil entrance halls, passages, station platforms, car cabins, escalators, tracks;
- sit on escalator steps, lean on or place objects on handrails, run on the escalator and the platform, stand children and place luggage on seats in cars;
- descend to tracks or throw objects on tracks that may cause train traffic disturbance;
- film or shoot photos without the permission of the administration of the subway or use tape recorders, radio receivers and musical instruments;
- vend, stockpile and keep belongings in disallowed places.

Farrukh Shakirov, 22 years old, a financial expert. I was born ten years after the commissioning of the first subway line. The subway is a very convenient means of transportation. When I was a student, the subway helped me out a great deal. This is a speedy means of transportation and you always know exactly when it runs and whether it is running at all, while you can't say the same about some of the other means of public transportation. Tashkent subway is a symbol of modern Tashkent. If I were a tourist, instead of most museums, I would visit our subway stations since each of them is beautiful and unique.

They say that the former leader of Uzbekistan, Sharaf Rashidov, was "awarded" permission to build the subway from the leadership of the country as a reward for the "white gold", the cotton we grew for the entire country at the cost of all kinds of detriments in agriculture and use of natural resources. The decision to build the subway in an area of seismic activity triggers amazement by itself. And the fact that not every large city can boast this means of transportation generates a sort of a feeling of superiority among the residents of Tashkent. Is our subway better or worse when compared to other subways? The deeply ensconced Moscow subway, where people scurry quickly, so hot that they have to take off their over garments and move around lightly dressed, jostle, hustle, with huge dogs at the stations, a crowd of vendors selling anything, including diplomas from any Moscow university. The somber St. Petersburg subway. After seeing these others, Tashkent subway, in my opinion, seems welcoming and cozy.

Alisher Alikulov: Our subway is clean. We have a beautiful subway. It's not that deep, and on the whole very convenient. I can make comparisons: for example the Rome subway is inferior to our subway in beauty; the Moscow and St. Petersburg subways due to the depth – it takes long to descend. The Tashkent subway is different from Moscow and especially from the European subways because it is somewhat pompous (which isn't that bad after all), since in those other subways people can sit on the steps or even on the floor and no one admonishes them, musicians sing in passages, food and drink vending machines are installed.

Like in an old silent motion picture ...

(Is that possible?)

I am in the subway in unfamiliar Tashkent,
It's a pleasant atmosphere and restless.

Not caring about the rites and customs of
Bukhara, Samarkand, Tashkent,

Neglecting tribal differences,

Hugging students are in bliss.

The instant I treaded on the first step,

I scented something in the distance.

The echo of first subways,

The echo of first love thundered.

**Oleg Anufriyev, a theater and
movie actor (Russia)**



Subway train

Umida Maksumova: In other cities throughout the world, for example, in Paris, the subway is just a means of transportation that carries no informative elements. At best there may be advertising. The Tashkent subway is very cozy and convenient. At present I'm not a constant Tashkent subway user, but I am always warmed by the thought that if I have to use public transportation, I can use the subway to get to any remote part of the city with comfort.

Vladimir Pletinskiy: The subway is a very convenient means of transportation that every megapolis ought to have. Today I can compare, since I took the subway not only in Moscow and St. Petersburg, but also in London, Paris, Rome, New York, Barcelona... The Tashkent subway, as I remember it, is no worse or better than other subways.

I don't know whether you agree with me, but for me the subway is a different reality, another world; you enter the subway and this means you are going on a journey. Although your itinerary is always determined, there is always a feeling of mystery, unpredictability and anticipation of discovery.

Olesya Bondar, 24 years old, an interpreter. I have an infinite number of hopes, expectations, fantasies in relation to the subway... I remember how, hiding behind a pillar, I was searching for a person I only met with here on the subway. We never talked to each other and during all four years of study only our glances met, while a semi-dark arc of the subway was like a casing for these bizarre meetings of two strangers. I associate MY subway with these impressions. What happened here never occurred again anywhere else.

The subway is a different world, there is no hypocrisy or falsehood, competitions or contests. It makes everyone equal: professors and students, an old man and a child.

The subway is a story of love, memory, and fluster. I would enter the subway with one thought and leave it with another one. I got on a subway car with one person and got off with another one. And so this endless change of generations, mirages, stories make the subway a sphere that is different from ordinary life, an underground realm with its own rules and routine.

I was happy during different periods of my life where the subway made its presence, when all I wanted was to hold hands and ride for one stretch in a little subway car with stars scattered on the floor – this is what I called the sparkles on the floor coating

of some subway cars. I remember I would say: “Look down – these sparkles look like shattered stars!” The outer world tries to penetrate here to introduce its priorities, but it hasn’t succeeded so far.

Yelena Pletinskaya: I perceive the subway as a symbolic venue: at “Lenin Square” station I caught a glimpse of a certain shaggy person standing by a telephone booth who turned out to be a great guy. Several months later we got married.

Vladimir Pletinskiy: I remember that the subway not so much reflected the life in Tashkent above the ground, but was more of an antipode. There was no hustle and bustle there, nor heat nor, let’s say, benevolence, but no bad conduct. I like the station “Revolution Square”, since it’s there I would ask girls for a date and from there I went to the seminars of young writers.

Svetlana Yan: Tashkent subway is a special place, an embodiment of discipline and order, tidiness and beauty. One speaks softer in the subway and becomes more obliging and attentive. This place educates and improves you.

I have a lot of memories related with places in the subway. “Uzbekistanskaya” station is where my friend and I would let our preschoolers go and they would get off and walk to their kindergartens behind the Cinema Center, it was this safe! Then, we would take the subway to “Chilanzar” station – ornate with ceramic ornaments depicting peculiar flowers and forms – to go to work. On the way back home we rode to “People’s Friendship” station, picked up our children, everything was so predictable, deliberate and tranquil in life. A special place is “Cosmonauts’ Avenue” – the most mysterious and romantic station.

Bernara Saitbayeva, 25 years old, a psychologist: I began to use the subway at the age of sixteen practically every day. I like that it’s always beautiful, clean, and safe in our subway (I can compare this from my experience using the Moscow subway). Tashkent subway is not only a convenient means of transportation, but it’s also a sightseeing attraction. When my acquaintances from other cities and



Subway train

countries ask me to tell them about Tashkent, I usually mention the subway first and even tell them that they must see the subway (at least the old lines). On each station, the architects factored in its own “zest”, a distinctive style that’s not replicated anywhere, but by no means was everybody able to appreciate this. I hope that thanks to our stories the residents and guests of the capital will perceive the subway not only as one of the means of transportation.

Our subway was built in different times; we see and feel the difference. The first line was built by the entire country with regard to world experience and our seismically dangerous reality. It still looks the most reliable and “efficient”. The lines built later apparently do not match up to it. This feeling stays with you when you transfer from Chilanzar line to Uzbekistan line and becomes more pronounced when you change to Yunusabad line. One doesn’t notice at once that the sleepers are wood treated with creosote rather than concrete reinforced, hence the strong specific smell which never fades away.

Changes occurred in architecture and décor and the names. Now, it’s difficult to explain to my children that on “Bunyodkor” (formerly “Halqlar Dustligi”, and “Druzhba Narodov”), you once could see emblems of all republics of the Soviet Union. The emblems were taken down and some of the “circles” were decorated with majolica, while others remain as they are – “blind” concrete slabs. “Maksim Gorkiy” station was renamed “Buyuk Ipak Yuli” (“The Great Silk Road”), but the interior still resembles the fable of Danko, who takes his heart out of his chest. It still reminds one of the “history” of this station. So these are numerous examples of changes that have occurred in the life of our country.

Alisher Alikulov: An Englishman who visited our city on business once said that he likes two things here – Tashkent subway and the Alisher Navoi Opera and Ballet Theater. Both are in good condition and affordable. He categorized these as positive legacies of communism. There is room for improvement. For example, we don’t have the best subway cars; they could be replaced with more modern ones. The construction of the third line is taking too long. Turn gates and tokens are also an anachronism – it’s high time to change these. We need to restore a system of passage tickets and offer several types – one-day, one-week, for a fixed number of trips with a reasonable discount to avoid excluding the subway from the overall system of transportation lanes instead of commercializing it.

Farrukh Shakirov, 22 years old: Any way you look at it, the subway is an example of the Soviet Union’s positive contribution to the history and appearance of the city, since Soviet engineers built most of the first subway lines. If Tashkent weren’t the capital of

Uzbekistan (at least prior to 1991), we wouldn't have the subway. I was born in 1987, so the subway for me is something Soviet, a memory.

I also identify the subway as an embodiment of the city's living spirit, since one can see and guess so much about daily lives, problems, hopes and peculiarities. It seems to me that one of these peculiarities is a vast number of young people in the subway; they convey a spirit of juvenility, reckless youth, and zeal. Recently, I saw a group of girls wearing funny New Year masks who kept changing subway cars and when I asked them why they were doing this, they replied: *"To cheer people up! They look at us and begin smiling!"*



Subway station "Place of Independence"

Svetlana Yan: The spirit of our city comes from our multi-nationality and tolerance. Look at all the variegated and diverse folk traveling from station to station. Some are taking their family to a park, while others are going on a visit (always with a bowl covered with a towel concealing a treat), some are carrying large shopping bags, and others are heading to a theater or concert. Sportsmen, suntanned tourists, students wearing white shirts, children with toys... All different and motley, but united by one thing – our Tashkent cordiality that warms our hearts and prevents callousness and wryness, the light that illuminates our faces and souls!

Our subway is like home – everyone is kind and calm; I've never heard someone shout or complain. You will always be helped and shown the way.

Bernara Sayitbaeva: For some reason, *"the spirit of our city"* drew out a memory of *"Alisher Navoi"* station. During my student days, I happened to be there every day. While waiting for the train, I examined copies of works by Alisher Navoi, and every time they never failed to amaze me and even made me be proud of the rich legacy our ancestors left us.

Alisher Alikulov: The subway does reflect the city's spirit. Because many people use it, because it's quite extended and branched out; it's difficult to imagine life in Tashkent without it. The subway is a very democratic means of transportation; it's used by

various population strata. On the whole I am happy with our subway. It's a great advantage for our city! Let it work neatly and develop!

**Thank you for sharing your thoughts and feelings.
See you on the subway!**

Dates and Facts about Tashkent Subway

The construction of the Tashkent subway (the only subway system in Central Asia to date, built in a seismically active area) started in 1970, and the first 12.2 km long line with 9 stations was opened in 1977. The opening was timed for a celebration of the anniversary of the October Revolution. Tashkent subway was built with technical assistance from Moscow Metrostroï.

Currently, the length of the three subway lines, with 29 stations, is 37.5 kilometers. Tashkent occupies an area of 260 square kilometers and is home to more than two and a half million residents, so the subway is the capital's strategically important system of transportation.

The first stretch of the first – Chilanzar – line (from “*Sabir Rakhimov*” station to “*Amir Temur Square*” formerly “*Oktyabrskaya Revolutsiya*” station) with nine stations, a depot and communications center, was put into commission on November 6, 1977. The line was 12.2 kilometers long.

The second section of the Chilanzar line (from “*Amir Temur Square*” formerly “*Oktyabrskaya Revolutsiya*” station to “*Buyuk Ipak Yuli*” formerly “*Maksim Gorkiy*” station) with three stations, came into commission on August 18, 1980. The length of this section of the line is 4.6 kilometers. By August 1980, the number of stations in both sections of the Chilanzar subway line reached 12, while the length was 16.8 kilometers.

The construction of the first stretch of the second – Uzbekistan – subway line began in 1980, from “*Navoi*” to “*Tashkent*” stations, with five stations in total. In December 1984, the first section of the Uzbekistan line came into service. The length of this section is 5.6 kilometers.



Plan of the Metro

The second section of the Uzbekistan subway line, with the stations “*Tchkalovskaya*” and “*Mashinasozlar*” (formerly “*Tashselmash*”), was commissioned in November 1987. It is 3.2 kilometers long, while the total length of the line is 8.8 kilometers. The third 2.2 kilometer long section of the Uzbekistan line, with two stations – “*Gafur Gulyam*” and “*Chorsu*” – was commissioned in November 1989. And, finally, on April 30, 1990, the construction of the Uzbekistan line was completed – the fourth 3.2 kilometer long section with stations “*Tinchlik*” and “*Beruni*” was opened. In total, the lines are 31 kilometers long and have 23 stations.

The construction of the third – Yunusabad – subway station began in September 1988. On September 1, 2001 there was an official opening of the 7.61 kilometer long Yunusabad line, which has six stations and a roofed subway bridge between the stations “*Badamzar*” and “*Khabiba Abdullayeva*” in the vicinity of the Tashkent TV Tower across the Boz-Su river. The section was commissioned on October 26, 2001. On a daily basis, the subway branch that connects the center of Tashkent with one of densely populated urban districts of the capital – Yunusabad – transports up to 60,000 passengers.

Dates and Facts about Tashkent Subway

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and proclamation of independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Tashkent subway stations were renamed:

Along the Chilanzar line:

- 1) In November 1991, station “*Ploshad imeni V.I. Lenina*” became “*Mustakillik Maydoni*”,
- 2) In May 1992, station “*50 let SSSR*” became “*Mirzo Ulugbek*”
- 3) In May 1992, station “*Komsomolskaya*” became “*Yoshlik*”
- 4) in May 1992, station “*Oktyabrskaya Revolutsiya*” became “*Markaziy Khiyoboni*”
- 5) In August 1993, the station “*Markaziy Khiyoboni*” became “*Amir Temur Khiyoboni*”
- 6) in 1997, station “*Maksim Gorkiy*” became “*Buyuk Ipak Yuli*”
- 7) on October 10, 2005 station “*Yoshlik*” became “*Milly Bog*”, in 2008 “*Bunyodkor*”.

Along the Uzbekistan line:

- 8) In May 1992, station “*Prospekt Kosmonavtov*” became “*Kosmonavtlar*”
- 9) in May 1992, station “*Tashselmash*” became “*Mashinasozlar*”.

Several more stations lost their Russian names that were changed to Uzbek ones:
along the Chilanzar line:

station “*Sabira Rakhimova*” became “*Sabir Rakhimov*”,
station “*Druzhba Narodov*” became “*Halqlar Dustligi*”,

station "Hamida Alimjana" became "Hamid Olimjon"
station "Pushkinskaya" became "Pushkin",

along the Uzbekistan line:

station "Gafura Gulyama" became "Gafur Gulom",

station "Uzbekistanskaya" became "Uzbekiston".

(source – Internet Site [www. mymetro.ru](http://www.mymetro.ru))

Railway Vehicles of Tashkent Subway

Subway cars of types Ezh3 and Em-508T that arrived in Tashkent at the opening of the subway in 1980 were transferred to Tbilisi and Baku following the receipt of new cars.

Now, there are ten different types of cars in the Tashkent Subway:

- Type 81-717, produced by Mytishinskiy Machine Building Plant in 1984-1987.
- Type 81-714, Type 81-714.5 produced by the Leningrad Train Car Factory named after I.E. Yegorov in 1980-1991.
- Type 81-714.5., Type 81-717, produced by Mytishinskiy Machine Building Plant in 1979-1987.
- Type 81-717, Type 81-717.5., produced by the Leningrad Train Car Factory named after I.E. Yegorov in 1984-1992.
- Type 81-717.5., Type 81-718.0., produced by Mytishinskiy Engineering Plant (JSC "Metrowagonmash ") in 1993 – 2001.

(source – Internet Site [www. mymetro.ru](http://www.mymetro.ru))



Subway train

Askarhodji Obidov

When Grief Overtakes Someone

An Eyewitness

When grief overtakes someone, no one is able to stand by indifferently and just observe. There used to be earthquakes in Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, their waves reaching us. However, they were of no great force.

On the 26th of April 1966, in the morning, a fearsome quake in the center of our city caught everyone off guard. Because this disaster occurred early in the morning it seemed like a wild dream to everyone. People who woke up in horror looked around and at their family in fear. After calming down, they ran to see their neighbors.

When dawn broke, rumor said that the epicenter of the disaster was in Urda. Everyone rushed there to find out about the fate of their relatives.

My father ordered me to visit my aunt who lived in Rabochiy Gorodok, while he went to see uncle Mirakbar who lived next to a textile plant.

To the right of the "Izvestiya" bus stop along the "Usmon Yusupov" central street there was "Pisatelskaya" street now called "Bakhor". After having walked about 50-60 meters along the street, I entered the tenth house to the left. At the sight of me, my aunt darted to meet me halfway and showered me with questions: "How are you? Is everything fine? Are your parents safe and sound? Your house is old. It hasn't fallen apart, has it? What about neighbors?"... "I was just about to go to your place" – she said.

I told her we were fine. "Everybody in our family is worried about you. Most people went to see about their relatives living in Urda". I explained the reason for my visit. Having listened to me, my aunt calmed down a bit: "Good, as long as there are no casualties".

Looking around, I noticed that several deep cracks had formed on the walls of my aunt's house. When I came up closer, I could see the inside of a room through the hole. "Oh, auntie, is the wall going to fall down?" I asked anxiously. "No, nephew, it is still standing. Our house is relatively new, that's why there are few cracks. But we hear old houses on the other side of the Ankhor river have crumbled. We are thankful that we are all safe. The summer is ahead, we'll fix it; it's a celebration for





Destruction

However, 5-6 rooms in the building of GAI (State Automobile Inspection) were in a semi-destroyed state. One side of the wall had fallen apart, wooden crossbeams and tin flashings on the roof fell inside the rooms. I continued walking along the street. Most old houses built using a *“sinch”* technique had survived. Although the plaster had fallen down from the walls and some walls were totally *“bare”*, still the walls had maintained the roofs. Houses built from air-dried brick were half destroyed.

I went into the yard of the house where my friends lived. They were having breakfast. Having caught a glimpse of a big bump on Bakhodyr’s head, I asked: *“What happened?”* He said that a teapot with cold tea fell on him from a shelf. I began to examine the neighbors’ houses: the streets were in a fog of dust, somebody’s wall had collapsed, someone spread a *kurpachi* (mat) on a *tapchan* (trestle-bed) in the yard and was going to put children who missed out on their sleep to bed.

everyone,” my aunt replied. I was a twenty-year-old young man who could never realize what *“a celebration for everyone”* had to do with anything. I thought if this was a celebration, then what would a misfortune be like.

Having parted, I remembered my aunt’s words about *“old houses on the other side of Ankhor have all collapsed”*. I thought about my classmates from Altiarik who were renting a house in that area and decided to go there. Earlier, I visited them twice to get ready for classes.

Having walked to Urda, I made a turn near the *“Ankhor”* café. Neither the *“Ankhor”* café nor the ancient bathhouse next to the café had suffered.



Destruction

It was past eight in the morning and all of us went to an institute near the stadium “Pakhtakor”. We were second-year students at the Tashkent Polytechnical Institute.

No one knew for sure whether we would have classes. Everyone was busy asking questions about each other’s well-being.

Classes at higher educational facilities were canceled from April 28. Students were mobilized to a labor front and distributed among construction companies. Over a thousand young men with strength bubbling and bustling in their muscles resembled a well-organized army. Exams were passed and audits were registered automatically, so we set to work as third-year students.

Everyone skilled in construction began to help as an independent foreman. Those who had no construction skills were assigned to help workers or to be loaders. After work and on weekends, most people participated in *hashars* (friendly assistance in joint work) at their relatives’, acquaintances’ and neighbors’ places.

Buy a Neighbor rather than a House

According to the construction plan of GUM (Main Department Store) all the houses to the left of Chorsu toward Beshagach were to be torn down. My school friend Mahamadzhon Ilyosov lived there. Their house was also to be torn down, so they were allotted a plot of land to build a house within the Oktyabr community. No sooner had their house been demolished, then their 46-year-old father suddenly passed away. My friend was the eldest child in the family. Four sisters and two brothers were left without a father.

After consulting with each other, we decided to help our friend. Together, we laid the foundation of a new house, neatly separated building materials from the old house and took them to a new site, sorted them out and prepared them for use. Fortunately, their neighbor next door was a mason and roofer. Having witnessed our care and help he rejoiced and said: *“Now your work is done. I am a mason, the days are now long, my son and I will work here and build your house. When you grow up and start to earn money, I will accept whatever you wish to pay.*



Reconstruction work after the earthquake



The epicenter today

If you cannot repay, I will not be offended. They say: neighbors share."

A Skill will Feed you, Buy you a House and Garment

My childhood friend Ilyos had a country house in the vicinity of Chupan-ata. Large-scale construction commenced in their neighborhood, a town for builders from Leningrad was under construction. The construction workers built houses and themselves lived nearby in tents. Ilyos' family was allotted a plot of land in the Birlík residential area. His relatives helped lay the foundation and prepared clay bricks.

There was a high demand for craftsmen who made clay bricks. So we had a hard time finding a craftsman named Turgun from a village. He was afraid to start working alone since his workmates were busy at another construction site. When I said that there were five sons in this family, four sons-in-law and about thirty grandsons and that I would lay bricks next to him and he would only have to align corners and supervise me, he agreed: *"Good. We'll start tomorrow."*

The work was humming. Four rooms and an eighteen-meter long pillared *ayvan* (veranda) were ready in twenty-five days. A roofer set to work on the roof.

At weekends, when there were plenty of helpers, my father and I went to the *hashar* at his nephew's, uncle Adyl's place who lived next to the "Pakhtakor" stadium. At his place, my father examined a craftsman's *sinch* work and was satisfied. He told me to prepare clay and told his nephew: *"We'll start from the street"*.

I began to lay bricks on my own. By evening, a street-side wall was finished. Thanks to this *hashar*, I learned to lay bricks from my father. I had known how to make straw based plaster since childhood, since roofs of almost all houses in our *makhalla* were made from clay. During *chillya* (the hottest days, between June 25 and August 5) of each summer, neighbors took turns to organize *hashars* to repair clay roofs.

September came before we knew it. All university students were mobilized to pick cotton. Cotton was picked for only two days. In two days, all the students from the Mechanics Department were brought back to the city. This was arranged to replenish the lack of workers in the "Tashselmash" and "Uzbekselmash" plants, which produced fewer cotton-picking combines than planned. Since we majored in mechanics and

machine tool building, we worked on machine tools, produced agricultural machinery and thus made our contribution to fulfilling the plan for collecting white gold – the pride of our Uzbekistan.

They say that a youngster is not satisfied even with forty skills. During the year of the earthquake we mastered several skills.

The construction skill and knowledge obtained at the institute helped me greatly in my life. So now at the age of sixty-two, I never sit without anything to do. My experience and knowledge help me design houses in Oriental and Occidental styles. Several construction crews build houses, mosques and mausoleums using my designs.

A natural calamity, which overtook our townsfolk, united people and taught them to be charitable, responsive, empathetic and helpful toward one another. It also proved the value of such gifts as peace, health and serenity in one's home country.

A River of Life Flows Incessantly ...

It's been forty-two years since then. The famous "Ankhor" café building is still the same, it has not changed. The bridge over Ankhor is the same, so are the fences. Only trees along the river have grown older. Benches under the trees still remain at the same spots. Only, there are no more loving couples exchanging amorous glances.

I remember, when I was a child we used to jump from this bridge into the river, take a short swim and enviously looked at loving Leilys and Medjnuns who were sitting on benches holding one another. We dreamt about growing up fast so we could sit with our beloved just like them. Now we are grown-ups, and some have managed to sit there, while others haven't.

I wiped a bench with a handkerchief, sat down and got lost in thought about this and many other things. Watching the even flow of the water, I reminisced about the years of my youth that flew past like a dream and began to think about the life I've lived.



Strong together

At this time, a group of young people – frolicsome girls and young men with slightly noticeable mustaches – greeted me and passed by. I saw my older granddaughter, Shakhlo, among them – a lyceum student. Maybe my future grandson-in-law is among them.

Life flies quickly. Before you know it, black curly hair turns gray; the straight-backed posture stoops and rests upon a cane.

But life goes on. Young saplings take over mighty trees. Everyone understands that one can't step into the same river twice, it inevitably flows forward, never stops half-way.

The river of life flows incessantly. ...



Presentation by A. Obidov

Biographical Learning

Olga Agapova / Tatyana Kononygina

Biographical Educational Work with Older Generations in Russia

Over ten years ago, the Board of the “Znanie” (“Knowledge”) Society initiated active educational work with the elderly in different cities in Russia. Having started almost simultaneously in a number of the country’s regions, in practice it developed differently and resulted in the most diverse forms – depending on the needs of the specific target audience, capacity and preferences of local organizations. First of all, there were the topic areas associated with health issues, interest in culture and religion, handicraft and applied arts, horticulture and psychology – that is, the courses and programs which enable an elderly person to improve the quality of his or her life.

A strong impetus to development of educational work with the elderly was the international project “Empowering the Elderly to Participate in Social and Political Processes of Russia’s Democratic Development” supported by the Delegation of the European Union in 1998.

The goals of the educational activity set by the project are still topical: actualization and use of life experience and the energy of the elderly to develop civil society, self-support, activity, and the responsibility of the elderly in search of issues pertaining to improvement of their own living conditions and enhancing a dialog with other generations.

Each of the five partners in the project directly or indirectly touched upon topics associated with understanding the lives of the participants. For example, in Yaroslavl, through cooperation with the “Memorial” society and various active work methods (World Café, Written and Historical Workshops), an environment was created for a history dialog to tell younger generations about the crimes of Stalinism in a more comprehensive and objective way. In Chelyabinsk, through development of a dialog strategy with the generations of the young and middle-aged, by involvement in creative work, efforts were made to overcome the isolation of the elderly. The apprehension of their own social experience helped the elderly in Akademgorodok (Novosibirsk) become engaged in democratic social processes. Colleagues from Orlov tried to link biographical work to the development of a dialog with mass media. As a result, not





Participants in the oral history workshop

only the life stories of the elderly became available to the public, but they also tried, with their own resources, to establish their own newspaper – a meeting place for various generations, which published real people's stories.

All these diverse educational programs for the elderly – looking at their own life, professional and life experience – became the focus of the educational process, thus bringing to the foreground the biographical training issues.

Having realized the capacity of addressing the life stories of specific individuals, following completion of the European project, educational organi-

zations continued to work with the memories of the elderly. Over the following five years, 20 activities at regional, interregional and international level were carried out which tried to master biographical work techniques even at the level of training multipliers. As a result, new contacts were made, new project ideas were developed, and, most importantly, multipliers gained invaluable training experience during the events. In the country's regions, over 250 specialists were trained; they can work with the older generation in a professional and up-to-date manner, and use innovative, active work methods. At the same time, in Russia, literature appeared which presented best experience, discussed methodological, organizational issues pertaining to education for the elderly.

Over time, the biographical work shifted to a different, completely new level.

To date, several areas of work can be tentatively distinguished.

The "World Café" form, borrowed from our German colleagues, became traditional. Regardless of the topic, it implied confidence and the sincere tone of participants, in a non-formal and comfortable environment. Tables in such a "café" are arranged in a circle, like in a real café, so that everyone can hear and see well. The "Café" may have nice subdued light and candles on tables, which also help create a pleasant atmosphere, and participants are offered tea. Any "World Café" must have three actors: a narrator, an audience, and a facilitator. A narrator covers a period of his/her life (or an event). The key prerequisite for a successful "Café" is the principle of voluntariness. A narrator assumes this role at his/her own wish only: he/she is entitled to speak about what he/she considers necessary. A story is always specific.

The narrator's task is to communicate to others his/her personal story, memories, and impressions of an event experienced. He/she may speak about what a certain group of people shared (women, camp prisoners, veterans, etc.). The audience may have a different perception of how events could develop, but for the actor the experience is how he/she perceives (and feels) it. That's the position of the "Café" organizers and facilitators. During the story, a narrator can use photographs, memory aids, records: as a rule, this adds a special emotional quality to the content of the narration. Each of dozens of "Cafés" organized by our partners was unique – not only owing to the unique stories told: it is impossible to replicate the unique atmosphere of each meeting as well.

Over time, a certain trend became visible: elderly participants are more and more active in the selection of topics, arrangement, preparation and facilitation. In part, this activity results in self-organized historical groups of interest. Young people and representatives of middle generations, as well as students of higher educational institutions (prospective sociologists, social workers and those working in the area of culture) are taking a more active part in this activity: they recognized that participation in activities with the elderly is not only professional practice for them but the meetings are also interesting and the conversations memorable, as well as an amazing experience which "cannot be gained anywhere else" (feedback from student D., Novosibirsk).

The second area of activity which developed from "World Cafés" was creative workshops, where participants try to transform their memories into "memoirs," i.e., processed records of stories united by one topic selected by participants. That work resulted in several collections of memories ("The Book of Memories", "The Missing Emerged", "Eye-Witnesses of Time. War Childhood Stories", "Finding the Self. The Book of Family Destinies", "True Stories", "Strength of a Tree Lies in Its Roots. Family Stories"). Interactive sessions make it possible not only to dip into memories and try to properly express them in writing, but also to develop the "soft skills" essential in old age – the ability to listen, criticize constructively, and have a dialog. The participants acknowledge that this activity develops responsibility and boosts self-esteem. A side effect was also observed – in parallel with the workshops, more and more elderly persons start mastering the computer: this is a pressing need for them. This area of activity becomes a unique and essential "field" for the elderly to communicate with grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Another area of work can be tentatively named "Children of War". Today, these people are pensioners. They did not accomplish feats on the front line, they were just children, however, war became a part of their life and destiny forever. Seminars and meetings with German peers generated the concept of the project "Future Needs Memories". Its idea is to draw public attention to that group of citizens, facilitate rehabilitation of war and national socialism victims with social-psychological support,

education and guidance for the elderly. The project framework creates an environment for communication between the elderly and the young, and thus builds a live “bridge” between generations. At the same time, the project makes possible a meeting of German and Russian “witnesses of time”; it turned out to be important to them as well – to meet with peers from the country of the former enemy. Collection and preservation of the stories of witnesses contributes to the prevention of pro-fascist ideas in a society. The project serves to build young people’s responsibility and social participation on the one hand, and on the other to develop willingness for a dialog and transfer of life experience by representatives of older generations. Support from young people to the elderly, combined with guidance and historical work in Russia, is a new platform for an honest dialog with the war generation. This combination of social and educational components represents the novelty of the project. On the part of Germany, the project participants are “Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future” Foundation, “Work and Life” (“Arbeit und Leben”) and the Pensioners’ Union of the Chemical Industry Region (“Verein Vorruhestand der Chemieregion”). The key executor in Russia is the Social Adaptation and Personnel Retraining Center in Akademgorodok.

The elderly and the young were split into pairs; they keep meeting and talking; young people help the elderly and put down their stories using narrative approaches and practices. If we consider education in a broad sense as development, a chance to self-actualize, then an opportunity for communication and dialog with peers and young people definitely becomes a field for transformation, dynamics, and positive changes for the elderly. Internal transformations in project participants are the essence of education in old age.

Participation in educational biographical work demonstrates to young people that the elderly are different (at first, this was not quite evident!). Although they are almost of the same age, of seemingly one generation, in a similar material situation, they might think and feel, behave and express themselves and assess events in different ways in a training situation. People perceive participation in historical events (even in childhood!) differently. Former child prisoners of fascist concentration camps and those forcibly sent to compulsory work gangs; children born in the context of forced labor and the siege of Leningrad; those in occupied areas – in the eyes of young people, they all become personalities, and each of them has a unique destiny. Thus, biographical work produces a visible pedagogical effect, exerting positive emotional influence on young people and broadening their outlook.

For the elderly, this educational work is an opportunity to apprehend their own life experience, a search for internal resources, and a change in negative attitudes.

In 2009, a similar project, “Children of War to Future Generations,” funded by the German Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future” was launched in Orel. Project activities aimed to establish a congenial psychological and social

climate, moral support, and elimination of negative emotional memories of war. Work with memories and contacts with representatives of young and older generations from Germany help alleviate psychological tension between representatives of the countries and helps them understand each other. An environment is created to overcome loneliness, inclusion of the elderly in dynamic activities within the framework of inter-generation self-help groups *"Solidarity of Generations"*. Various working methods are used to collect, analyze and transfer memories of the children of war. These are inter-generation meetings, dialog platforms,



Intergenerational dialogue

work in inter-generation pairs, *"World Café"*, *"Suitcase of Life"*, remembrance campaigns, visits to museums, work in archives, processing memories in printed and digital versions, and establishment of inter-generation theater of memories. To collect memories of the *"children of war"*, the partner inter-generation network *"There is No Future Without a Past"* was established; it includes 5 working platforms in various districts of Orel city and Orel region. During the project implementation period, 58 stories – memories of the *"witnesses of time"* – were collected. 229 persons participated in the project: elderly people, the *"witnesses of time"*, student-volunteers from higher educational institutions in Orel, and schoolchildren. An inter-generation theater of memories was established; it will stage a performance based on the collected life stories of the children of war. The performance will be presented in late 2010. Video-bridges are being built between *"witnesses of time"* in Russia and Germany. The exhibition *"War and Peace in the Eyes of Children"* was opened in late 2009.

One should mention that educational-biographical work with the elderly, like no other activity, contributes to setting the framework for cooperation with local organizations. In a number of regions in Russia, project activity made it possible to involve local authorities and administration (Department for Public Relations of the Mayor's Office; social service centers, state universities and other higher and secondary educational institutions). Involving social organizations (such as the *"Union of Former Minor Prisoners of Fascist Concentration Camps"*, *"Siege Victims"*, etc.) gives them a completely new *"space"* for activity, and opens up new prospects. As a rule, all project activities are covered in the mass media (local newspapers, radio, and television). In Orel



Eye witness

city, a unique journal “*Zolotaya Osen*” (“*Golden Autumn*”) was established. A group of computer course trainees decided to apply their knowledge in practice and began to issue the journal for the elderly, about the elderly and with their own resources. It has been published for ten years already. In the journal, they highlight their lives and training at courses, share advice and cover project activities. This journal is distributed free among the elderly. At the same time, the Journalism Chair of the Philological Department of Orel State University places information on activities of the Adult Education Center

and ongoing events and projects on its website and in its journal “*GolosOK*”. This enables young people to better understand the elderly, adopt their wisdom and experience, mitigate misunderstanding, and establish inter-generation communication.

“*War*” stories, which became known thanks to biographical work, are always amazing with their spontaneity and impartiality: moreover, today’s pensioners were children at that time, and thus their perception remained childlike despite their respectable age today, which adds something touching and sincere to the events kept by memory; their innocence and honesty are captivating. It is impossible to forget a story when a landlady felt sympathetic and protected a Russian girl teased and bullied by her children (this is about forced labor in Germany); or a story about how children helped give clothes to prisoners of war for them to organize an escape. Getting back mentally to that hard time, the elderly gratefully remembered people – both German and Russian! – and some bright moments and children’s joys during that non-childish life. All that should not be lost and become non-existent when those people pass away.

As for the results, or “*output*” as we call it, of educational-biographical activity, here we would like to note the following. Recently, when discussing the results of a meeting, we seem to have found an exact statement of the main result: “*Memory is a form of liberation*”. In fact, in the course of detailed interviews, essay and poetry writing, people seem to get free of the heavy load of memories. They become more liberated when they get rid of stereotypes and destroy traditional clichés (“*enemy image*” in the past, indifference and cynicism of young people at present, and lack of prospects in the future). They become different people.

Educational work with the elderly gives much attention to *"tangible products"*. Recently, videos have been produced about the participants' biographies and trips to Germany, to the places where they were forced to live. Two photo exhibitions, *"Faces of Destiny"* and *"Traces of the Past"*, were organized. A number of television programs from the *"Siberian Encyclopedia"* series about the project actors have been prepared.

Recently, an event has been organized in a completely new format, the exhibition *"Space of Time"*. In the exhibition hall, instead of conventional exhibits on the stands, visitors could see old worn-out suitcases which have long stood on the shelves. Those suitcases contained family heirlooms, maps, photos, documents and things somehow of value to their owners, the project participants. These suitcases are mini-presentations of their own history, their own values and experience.

The very idea – to collect suitcases for the exhibition – turned out to be unique and valuable. This is also a detailed (or materialized?) metaphor – roads, life progress, Life Path in the most precise meaning, a trip before which a person packs the most valuable things in a traveling case. It is evident that this exhibition is a result of all previous *educational work* with the elderly. It would hardly be possible without workshops and meetings.

Experience and practice have shown that the most receptive atmosphere and harmonious relations among people of different generations are established at joint celebrations and cultural events. As a result of the biographical work, Orel Golden Age Adult Education Center developed a new tradition – Christmas and New Year celebrated by both elderly and young people. The elderly got old decorations from their chests and brought them to the celebration. It turned out that those things, seemingly neutral to history, reflected the era; by examining them one can make judgments about the era and culture, let alone the fact that each of those fragile things is associated with some family story, and thus they are endlessly valuable to their owners. Young people familiarized themselves with old traditions of New Year and Christmas celebrations, the elderly were pleased to share their *"New Year"* memories and family traditions. That was how the idea was generated to establish the Museum of New Year Tree Decorations in Orel. Currently, the Museum has some 2,000 exhibits. Students like to visit it and familiarize themselves with celebratory *"things"* of the old time, *"witnesses"* of their parents and elder relatives' childhood. The exhibition opening was attended by junior school students from Orel Orthodox High School. It was amusing to see how present-day children, the *"products"* of the 21st century took their cell phones and began to take pictures of whatever they liked. This year, the Museum of New Year Tree Decorations received a collection of New Year Cards brought by elderly people. The cards are with warm and cordial greetings, which make them *"live"*. A collection of New Year greeting cards from all over the world began to accumulate.



Suitcase with memories

Of endless value is the fact that biographical work with the elderly is based on a **dialog** in the broadest sense: between the elderly, peers, different generations, different countries – former enemies – the Past and the Present. An opportunity for such a broad dialog lets us hope that the horrible past experienced by our old people will never repeat itself, and dignified old age will live in harmony with youth. Biographical work methods result in paradoxical findings and impressive, touching and profound insights. *“Enemies Are Not Born”* is the title of a Russian-German workshop, and it reflects one of the key principles of that new approach, when it is important to hear, learn, grasp and

understand what are the common and close things, and try to put yourself in another person’s place and thus enrich yourself as well.

Biographical work with elderly people and for their benefit is one of the most noticeable successes in Russian Adult Education over the past few years.

History and Trauma

Peter Junge-Wentrup

History Workshop in Minsk¹

Remembering the Minsk Ghetto and the Maly Trastsianiets Extermination Camp

The history of the Minsk ghetto and the Maly Trastsianiets extermination camp remained unknown to Western European countries until the 1980s and was never a focus of historical studies. Before that time, only a few people knew that from 1941-1942, Jews from the German Reich had been deported to Minsk: they were either settled in the Minsk ghetto or killed in the Maly Trastsianiets extermination camp nearby.



The Belarusian government made no effort to preserve the memory of the Minsk ghetto. In the early 1990s, very few houses from that time remained, and only several reminders of them. Currently, there is only an obelisk in memory of the Maly Trastsianiets extermination camp. The monument stands at the "Yama" pit in the Blagovshina gorge, where the people who were killed were buried.

Prior to the establishment of the History Workshop in 2003, there had only been isolated initiatives trying to reconstruct the history of the Minsk ghetto and prevent the Maly Trastsianiets extermination camp from sinking into oblivion. Thus, the Association of Jewish Communities and Organisations, the International Centre for Education (IBB) Dortmund and its partner institution IBB "Johannes Rau" in Minsk were facing a difficult task to protect history of the Minsk ghetto and the Maly Trastsianiets extermination camp from oblivion with the help of joint initiatives.

The partners involved found an unused house in the immediate vicinity of the former cemetery in the Minsk ghetto. Therefore, they discussed possible use of the house with the city administration.

In May 2002, IBB Dortmund organised a symposium for Belarusian and German historians on "Places of Extermination in Belarus". Scientists were able to visit workshops in North Rhine-Westphalia to familiarise themselves with the activities of history workshops. In October 2002, there was a workshop in Minsk which was supposed to start with renovating the building and documenting biographies of eye-witnesses

¹ The history workshop in Minsk is a joint project of the International Centre for Education (IBB) Dortmund, IBB "Johannes Rau" in Minsk and the Association of Jewish Communities and Organisations. It is located in one of the last houses still preserved in the Minsk ghetto of 1941-1943, next to the former Jewish cemetery.

of that time. However, the city administration had not yet agreed to give the building to the history workshop. The project *"History Workshop"* did not comply with the concept of Belarusian historians; it matched neither the official historiography, nor the criticisms of historians in the Belarusian opposition at writing national history. A reproach was made: *"Why are you only concerned about Jews again?"* Anti-Semitism has existed on both sides and still does. Thus, the project was exposed to the risk of failure due to the lack of a rental contract and adequate support. Quite unexpectedly, in late 2002, we managed to conclude the rental contract. Over a short three-month period we renovated the building, assisted by Belarusian firms, and equipped it for use as the history workshop. We managed to get Dr. Kazma Kozak involved as the workshop leader.

Concept of the History Workshop

The content concept was developed in the course of a dialog and practical activity of the workshop founders: IBB Dortmund, IBB *"Johannes Rau"* in Minsk and the Association of Jewish Communities and Organisations. The activity was to focus on the three areas:

- Remember in a dialog with the survivors
- Study in a historical place; and
- Research tracing *"history gaps"*

The history workshop was established thanks to regular support from Ambassadors of the Federal Republic of Germany and prominent politicians. For example, during his presidency of Germany, Johannes Rau wrote, in April 2004:

"A project of special importance is the 'History Workshop in Minsk' which was set up in the former ghetto in Minsk, where IBB Dortmund, IBB Minsk and the Association of Jewish Communities and Organisations are working jointly to create a better future through memories of the past."

Politicians from North Rhine-Westphalia and the Federal Republic regularly attend the workshop during their visits to Minsk; this support is the main reason why this project still exists.

Remember in a Dialog with the Survivors

The trip to Germany, even prior to the workshop, established relations with several eye-witnesses of that time. Leonid Levin generalised our aspirations in one simple phrase: *"Don't forget Sarah"*. That is, remember the women whose youth was claimed

by forced labour and who were considered collaborationists upon returning to the Soviet Union. Only in the early 1990s, could they admit that they had been forced labourers at concentration camps in Germany. Among other things, the History Workshop aims to be a meeting place for eye-witnesses, where they can feel good. They are willing to tell the young generation about their experiences so that *“such a war can never repeat itself”*. The following steps will be taken to *“Learn lessons from history”*:

- Conversations with eye-witnesses of that time together with youth groups and schoolchildren – one of the essential components of the workshop program; international visitors readily participate in these events as well.
- Excursions within the Minsk ghetto are offered by representatives of the History Workshop on the following topics:
 - *“Minsk during German occupation in 1941-1944”*
 - *“Minsk ghetto: Territory of death”*
 - *“The Maly Trastsianiets extermination camp”*
 - *“Memorial places of deportation from Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic”*

Annually, some 120 conversations with eye-witnesses are carried out, and about 200 groups express interest in excursions. These offers are first of all aimed at young people aged 13 to 20.

Today, all eye-witnesses are very old or in the final stage of their lives. Therefore, the partners developed the project *“Dignified Old Age”*, which covers the following areas:

- The history workshop is the meeting place of eye-witnesses, where they celebrate birthdays and arrange joint journeys to the country. In addition, groups of interest have been formed on various topics.
- Eye-witnesses who no longer can attend the workshop are visited at home and helped with the daily chores. For this purpose, a group of volunteers composed of 40 young people has been formed. Young people also document the stories of eye-witnesses. One of the volunteers describes his impressions as follows: *“This*



Eye-witness in conversation with young people
Source: IBB Internationales Bildungs- und Begegnungswerk, Dortmund, Germany

gives us a lot of useful things; communication with those people, since from them we hear staggering stories about life. From them we learn how to overcome hardships and keep hoping”.

- Some eye-witnesses use care service offered by the Orthodox community “Joy of All Mourners” and the Jewish self-help organisation “Chessed Rachamim”.

Some 500 eye-witnesses are involved in various programs, and about 7,000 young people annually participate in conversations and excursions to historical places.

Study in a Historical Place

A number of clubs have been organised at the history workshop and they exchange opinions on predetermined topics 4 to 6 times a year. To date, the following clubs are operational:

- Club of Young Historians
- Club of Historians on War Issues
- Club of Historians on German Studies
- Club of History Teachers

Central topics are those directly associated with the German occupation:

- Killings of Jews in the Minsk ghetto, the Maly Trastsianiets extermination camp and other regions of Belarus;
- Jewish resistance in Belarus; collaborationism during occupation; war against Belarusian villages;
- Deportation of Belarusians to compulsory work areas;
- History of Belarusians in the “Oswiecim” concentration camp and other concentration camps; and
- Comparison of memory cultures in Germany and Belarus.

Topics associated with relations between Belarus and Germany both before the Nazi regime and after 1945 are considered as well.

Historians see the history workshop as a place where they are those who raise and research the issues.

In some clubs, the participants are not only students, but also Belarusian graduate students and professors of historical studies.

In addition to club work, some 3 events are held annually which Western European historians participate or express interest in. These are some of them:

- On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the beginning of World War II in September 2009, there was a discussion about the Soviet troops entering Eastern Poland. In Poland, this event is considered as the annexation of Polish areas, and in Belarus, it is regarded as unification of Western and Eastern Belarus.
- On the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the Minsk ghetto liquidation in October 2008, a group of Germans participated in events to commemorate the victims.
- On the occasion of the 65th anniversary of Oswiecim liberation, on 27 January 2010, Leonid Levin's memorial places were presented at the Representation of the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia in Berlin.
- In March 2010, materials on the Minsk ghetto and Trascianec, which could be effectively used in class, are planned to be presented and discussed.



*Remember for the future
Source: IBB Internationales Bildungs- und
Begegnungswerk, Dortmund, Germany*

About 300 historians participate in various clubs and key activities. These activities are broadly covered in special press and public mass media.

Research tracing “history gaps”

In cooperation with research institutions, the history workshop managed to develop research projects and win grants to fund them.

Currently, the research project on the Minsk ghetto and the Maly Trastsianiets extermination camp is under development jointly with the Institute on Anti-Semitism Studies in Berlin. Another research project is related to “*Murder of Sick People in Belarus in 1941-1944*”; this project is being implemented at the History Department of Saar University.

The work done at the history workshop focuses on documenting biographies of eyewitnesses of that time. Meanwhile, numerous biographies have been published in German as well.

In addition, the history workshop makes it possible to work on topics pertaining to the history of Belarus and Germany.

Training processes at the History Workshop

The history workshop does not hold examinations; participation in the proposed activities is also not obligatory. Nevertheless, we see that young people come there along with historians and eye-witnesses. Groups of visitors from Germany are interested in work and arrangement of historical research.

What makes the history workshop interesting to various target groups? Detailed consideration identifies the following distinctive features:

- Studies at the history workshop are based on tracing history. First of all, this refers to the building of the history workshop where Jewish families had to live in overcrowded conditions; where one can find a small “*Hangout*”, a shelter where Jews sought protection during Nazi attacks. Tracing refers to the ghetto as well, primarily to the former Jewish cemetery and the execution area, “*Yama*”. Visitors are encouraged to do some research in their places of residence – what happened there during the Nazi regime.
- Of primary importance to the history workshop is the existence of eye-witnesses; thanks to their stories, young people learn the meaning of violence, hunger, torture and diseases. Eye-witnesses also remind them that they owe their survival to good luck or other people’s help. These conversations explain to young people that they can always choose, namely, to participate in a violent crime, overlook violence and injustice around them or to help the victims and participate in resistance themselves. Conversations with eye-witnesses are one of the ways to find out what civil responsibility means.²
- The history workshop is aimed at exchange and cooperation with international partners, especially with organisations doing historical studies. The history workshop documents sources which are the reference point for work. As time permits, these sources are translated and thus they are presented in German and Russian. Therefore, the history workshop tries to cover history via sources and dialogs with foreign historians rather than writing for the “*government*” or the “*opposition*”.

In the end, a distinctive feature of the history workshop is the principle of voluntariness; no examinations are held and no works are evaluated. Therefore, the workshop focuses on a professional dialog and participants’ questions. It leaves room for self-organised training processes. The participants are people interested in narrators and topics.

Thus, the history workshop in Minsk can be compared with similar institutions in Germany; in Belarus, this is the only institution of that type.

2 Civil responsibility involves the responsibilities a citizen must possess, including that of meeting the obligations of being part of the citizenry and upholding justice and opposing injustice. It can also include other matters such as voting, not littering, making sure one does not waste energy, etc.

Political context

At the initial stage, establishment of the “History Workshop” was considered skeptically, if not negatively. However, as complete rejection of the “Request from the German side” was not desired, a way was selected to offer only a one-year rental contract. Thus, an option was created to close the history workshop project through administrative measures at any time.

Nevertheless, close cooperation with partners and support from the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany made it possible to establish the History Workshop. Undoubtedly, having involved Mr. Levin in the project, the workshop got a person who attracted much attention in Belarus and was widely recognised abroad.

To date, the history workshop has carried out a number of interesting events and invited people with various political views. These events have been broadly covered by local mass media. Thus, the government does not need to worry that the history workshop has become a place for opposition.

In this niche, the history workshop is recognised, and moreover, consideration of topics controversial for Belarus is tolerated. The event to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Soviet troops entering Eastern Poland can serve as an example.

Today, one can state that a position signalling a long-term interest is evident at the initial point of divergence. The history workshop remains a project on the outskirts of Belarusian society, which, however, is not isolated. It generates interest among historians and is very much appreciated by the younger generation.



Intergenerational dialogue

Remember



Learning



Research



*IBB Internationales Bildungs- und Begegnungswerk,
Dortmund, Germany*

Marina Batschilo

Communicate, Learn, Remember ...

In the center of the city of Minsk, there is a unique place: the History Workshop, a Belarusian-German project by the Minsk International Center for Education named after Johannes Rau. This place in the center of the Belarusian capital is unique in terms of its history and mission. This small house is over 100 years old; it witnessed a number of historic events that took place in Minsk. During World War II, it was located in the Minsk ghetto, and its history is closely related to those tragic years.



For seven years, the History Workshop has been open to visitors and for various activities. Former inmates of the ghetto and concentration camps, forced laborers, the righteous among nations of the world, historians, students, and schoolchildren have found their second home, the *“Warm Home”*. Thanks to intensive activities by the History Workshop, those groups of victims of national socialism and Stalinism can meet with each other, share their memories with young people and get public attention. The activity of the History Workshop aims to preserve personal life stories and the unique experience of eye-witnesses of those distant events to the maximum extent possible and make active use of the accumulated materials to form the all-European culture of memory.

It has already been 65 years since the end of war, and the witnesses who survived those horrible events are far from being young. For us, the generation of old people who survived the war, grief, hardships, and change in priorities, is the one with morality, prudence and mercy. These people have a great capacity of wisdom, strength and optimism. However, in addition to all the advantages, old age is known to bring a lot of negative things in our lives. First of all, these are diseases and lack of energy, loneliness and lack of communication, poor living standards and poverty.

Thus, on 1 April 2007, the History Workshop started implementing the first social German-Belarusian project *“Let’s Provide a Dignified Old Age to Witnesses of the War”*. The project aims to improve old people’s quality of life, and provide better conditions of life for them. Since the primary group of old people are victims who suffered from the two regimes – fascism and Stalinism – the project gives special attention to their mental traumas and personal feelings.

The project performs another very important mission: the reconciliation of different groups of prisoners. Why did confrontation emerge between people who somehow suffered from the two terrible regimes during World War II, and why does it still exist in times of peace as well? There are a number of reasons for that, both objective and subjective. I can say with confidence that one of the reasons is the long term veil of silence over life stories and the tragedy of a big group of the so-called “unheroic” people. Now they have an opportunity to tell the truth about those distant events, without restraint and fear, and speak about themselves, their families, and how everything happened. Those people did not say anything for a very long time, and now they can talk and state that their sufferings and those of their relatives are worth the greatest public attention, sympathy and respect.

In our work under the project, we try to take this fact into account and therefore we build our communication and activity in such a way that no one lacks attention or is misunderstood. Our project participants, irrespective of their status and age, are equal before us, and we treat each and every one of them with equal understanding and respect. With certainty, I can say that we have not solved this challenging problem within the three years since the project has been implemented. However, I can say with confidence that witnesses of the war who are active in the project activities have become more tolerant and humane to each other, learnt to listen to each other, have dialogs and pay due respect to the sufferings of other groups of witnesses.

The project includes three major areas:

1. Arranging interest clubs and meetings with each other, young people, various social groups and international partners;
2. Voluntary home care for those witnesses who cannot attend the History Workshop and have difficulty with household chores due to their age and health status;
3. Outpatient home care for seriously ill people who are confined to bed, often single and need competent daily care.

Such a structure and content of the project components is a good model for work with the elderly. Each project area focuses on a certain group, depending on their health status, well-being, interest, etc. Thus all interested people can find their niche under the project and receive the assistance they need.

To give a better understanding of how all project areas are arranged, I will briefly try to describe them.

The first project area is based on the global experience in work with the elderly – arrangement of training groups and interest clubs. Over three years of project activity various interest clubs have been organized, some of them did not progress, and some still exist and develop intensively. They are:

“Handicrafts Club”, “German Language Club”, “Club of National Belarusian Traditions”, “Movies of Our Youth”, “Health”, etc.

These clubs are very popular, since they give the elderly people an opportunity to get acquainted with each other, meet, communicate and learn something new and interesting. In addition, this is an opportunity to actualize and sometimes to discover one’s educational and creative capacity. In fact, the view that personal development of an elderly person stops, and he or she loses an ability to self-actualize and acquire new knowledge and experience, still exists. The main principle is essential to us – voluntariness and initiatives of the participants, and the work itself is based on experience and knowledge of its members.

Our clubs unite small groups of people who get together on a regular basis (as per their work schedule) to carry out classes, discussions or joint activities on certain topics and problems. For example, on how to properly communicate with children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren; traditional Belarusian recipes; proper diet in old age, etc.

Each club has an atmosphere of good feeling and psychological comfort, and has established its rules and traditions, joint celebrations of birthdays and family events.

Moreover, these clubs act as self-help groups where participants receive social and moral-psychological support from each other.

What is most important is that meetings at interest clubs and educational groups fill the deficit of communication essential for elderly people.

In addition to groups and interest clubs, the project participants can get together once a month at the *“Cafe of Meetings and Memories”*, where over a hot and delicious lunch they can remember the past, discuss major events in our country and in the world, meet interesting people, and express their wishes.

The start of the *“Let’s Provide a Dignified Old Age to Witnesses of the War”* project implementation at the History Workshop, offered the witnesses a number of other opportunities to diversify their lives, enrich their outlook and remain active members of society.



*House of the History Workshop in Minsk
Source: IBB Internationales Bildungs- und
Begegnungswerk, Dortmund, Germany*

The “*Jubilee Celebration Day*” has already become a tradition at the History Workshop. It is no secret that the elderly are often single at the age of 70, 80 or 90, and then this loneliness feels especially sad and tragic on their birthday. That is why joint celebration at a table with fruit, tea, sweets, a musical performance, and, most importantly, in a warm and friendly environment, is a real present for the elderly.

Old age is a good opportunity to travel. Under the project, regular excursions are arranged to cultural and historical memorial places in Belarus. The excursions meet the intellectual, cultural, esthetic, and spiritual needs of these people. Elderly people living in Belarus often lack funds and energy to arrange such trips for themselves. Thus, they are willing to participate in such activities.

A questionnaire survey among the project participants suggests that the organization of trips and excursions was the greatest demand among other wishes.

I can say with confidence that the project would not be successful in so many ways if it were not for the help from young people who volunteer for the project. Students, schoolchildren, volunteers from Germany and other countries visit elderly people, meet their requests, render assistance in cleaning, washing, purchasing food, etc. Volunteers make home deliveries of foodstuffs. Those in greatest need have been regularly offered such assistance for three years.

The project “*Let’s Provide a Dignified Old Age to Witnesses of the War*” performs two important functions. The first one is social, thanks to which elderly people can engage in their own activities, and also get help and attention from young people. The second one is historical-political, since young people participating in the project can communicate with eye-witnesses of the war and post-war events. The life experience of those people, their memories of those tragic events, form the real historical picture in young people’s minds. The project volunteers record stories of witnesses’ lives.

Project volunteer Yulia Vorobey, a student at the Belarusian State University describes her impressions from communication with witnesses: “*For me personally, communication with witnesses of war events and their stories about the war have changed my attitude towards history and life. The key conclusion I have drawn for myself is that a person should always remain humane towards other people in any context and situation, despite all life problems.*”

To improve the status of a volunteer in the society and establish the volunteer network, Belarus annually holds the International Volunteer Forum. The Volunteer Forum’s motto is “*Remember the Past – Care for the Future*”; it unites efforts of young people from Belarus, Ukraine, Germany and other countries to preserve peace in the world, improve links between generations, and develop ideas of humanism. The forum participants are youth volunteer organizations and initiatives, which care for the lives of the elderly, disabled people and other socially vulnerable population groups.

An essential component in work with volunteers is their psychological guidance. Fred Dorn, a German specialist in psychodrama, regularly visits Minsk to meet with volunteers. At the psychodrama classes, volunteers have an opportunity to share their experience in communicating with older people, their feelings and ideas.

The third project area is implemented in cooperation with two organizations, the Jewish charity organization "*Chessed Rachamim*" and the Belarusian Orthodox Community. Specialists of those organizations, having received relevant professional training, render outpatient home care services to seriously ill elderly people in need of continuous care.

This area is the most challenging under the project. However, it is essential since a great many of the elderly need such care and support. Unfortunately, Belarus has not yet established a system for medical social support for the elderly people who are confined to bed due to their health, and their life quality fully depends on availability and quality of special care services.

Instead of a conclusion, I would like to quote some of the project participants:

Active participation in the project makes me energetic and cheerful.

My character and attitude towards life and people have changed.

My range of acquaintances has expanded, and life has become more interesting and full of events.

I am feeling better, and my life has become happier.

We have become closer and more attentive to each other.

Also, 66% of project participants noted positive changes in their lives.

Witnesses of the events of World War II and the staff of the project "*Let's Provide a Dignified Old Age to Witnesses of the War*" express their deepest gratitude to the German Federal Foundation "*Remembrance, Responsibility, and Future*", International Center for Education Dortmund, Evangelical Church of North Rhine-Westphalia and Hessen-Nassau for financial support, attention and care.



*International Center for Education
Johannes Rau*



Interview with an eye-witness

Source: IBB Internationales Bildungs- und Begegnungswerk, Dortmund, Germany

Astrid Sahn

The Chernobyl Disaster in the Context of the European Culture of Memory¹

2011 marks the 25th anniversary of the reactor explosion at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant. Thus, an entire generation was born without memories associated directly with the events that happened on 26 April 1986. In this regard, a danger emerges that the 25th anniversary might be the last occasion when the mass media turn to the Chernobyl disaster and its effects, along with a flow of publications, films, exhibitions, etc., before Chernobyl is finally buried in oblivion.



At the same time, the reactor explosion at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant on 26 April 1986 affected almost all the people in Europe and beyond. In many people, the Chernobyl accident caused sort of “*anthropological shock*”,² which made evident to them the omnipresent threat to human life posed by advanced technology. Thus, most people in Europe who consciously survived the reactor explosion can still remember what they were doing when the disaster was reported. In the years to follow, almost all European countries established initiative groups which still help people in Belarus, Ukraine and – though to a lesser extent – in Russia, to mitigate the effects of the disaster. That is why, at first, this disaster seems to simply be destined to become an essential part of the European culture of memory.

To determine whether this is the case, and if it is, then how can the Chernobyl disaster contribute to the formation of the European culture of memory? To get the correct answer, we should answer the two fundamental questions:

1. What is the European culture of memory?
2. How was the Chernobyl disaster perceived, and what are the memories of it and its effects?

1 Updated version of the report presented on 15 December 2009 at the University of Giessen (Federal Republic of Germany).

2 Vgl. Ulrich Beck: “*Der anthropologische Schock. Tschernobyl und die Konturen der Risikogesellschaft*”, in: “*Merkur, Deutsche Zeitschrift für europäisches Denken*”, 1986, 8: 653-663. (Ulrich Beck: “*Anthropological Shock. Chernobyl and Contours of Risk Society*”, in: German Magazine for European Thinking “*Merkur*”, 1986, 8: 653-663.)

To answer these questions, first of all, public mass media as carriers of memories were analysed, as well as the policy of memories by political and social actors. Unfortunately, this article cannot address the transfer of memories in the private environment, i.e. in the family, etc. These forms of memories require special research.

What is the European Culture of Memory?

In recent years, a number of European politicians and social actors have discussed the development of the European culture of memory. This is associated with expectations that shared memories of the past events will underpin the foundation of the European Union as a political project.

From the perspective of content, attempts to develop the European culture of memory focus on events in World War II, especially on the extermination of European Jews. Thus, the Holocaust is often denoted as a fundamental negative myth of Europe.³ Even this is the manifest of the principal complexity of the European culture of memory, which is not only aimed at the establishment of a transnational view on history, but also requires a certain paradigm shift in reflection on historical events and contexts. Traditionally, national identity before and partly after 1945 was based on the perception of national acts of heroism and heroic events in national history. By contrast, common memory in Europe goes beyond national boundaries, primarily in memories of the great European disasters of the 20th century and their victims.⁴ On the one hand, this first of all makes possible the further coexistence of various national historical narratives. However, on the other hand, the question arises as to whether memories of the Holocaust are enough to develop a strong sense of interrelationship and common historical meaning in Europeans. Definitely, the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the iron curtain expanded the base for the European culture of memory in a positive dimension. Moreover, there are also other events important to the whole European continent that may be integrated in the European culture of memory and partly make it possible to positively refer to the heritage of the spirit of freedom and emancipation. This refers to the French Revolution of 1789, the Democratic Revolution of 1848, World War I in 1914 and the student unrest of 1968. Actually, these events

3 Vgl. Ulrike Ackermann: *„Das gesplittene Gedenken. Hier Holocaust, da Gulag“*; *„Eine gesamteuropäische Erinnerungskultur ist nicht in Sicht“*, in: *Internationale Politik*, 2006, 5, zit. nach <http://www.ulrike-ackermann.de/GespalteneErinnerungEuropa.pdf>. (Ulrike Ackermann: *„Split Idea. Holocaust Here, GULAG There: Pan-European Culture of Memory is not in: Prospect, from Internationale Politik“*, 2006, 5 <http://www.ulrike-ackermann.de/GespalteneErinnerungEuropa.pdf>)

4 Claus Leggewie, *„Schlachtfeld Europa. Transnationale Erinnerung und europäische Identität“*, in: *„Blätter für deutsche und Internationale Politik“*, 2009, 2, zit. nach <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2009-02-04-leggewie-de.html>. (Claus Leggewie, *Battlefield of Europe. Transnational Memory European Identity*, from *„Blätter für deutsche und Internationale Politik“*, 2009, 2, zit. <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2009-02-04-leggewie-de.html>.)

are broadly celebrated in public, as a rule only the big anniversaries, while memory of the Holocaust is always present.

Common transnational memory still bears conflict potential. Moreover, ceremonies and public debates devoted to the 60th anniversary of World War II and the 20th anniversary of the velvet revolutions in former Soviet bloc countries in 2009, showed to what extent memories of those events were heterogeneous and conflicting in European countries. Thus, dividing lines between East and West still manifest themselves – which is not surprising due to the various political and social contexts which have influenced or influence formation of people's memories in the East and West. At the same time, further differentiation is possible, as Stefan Troebst tries to do by defining Western, Central-Western, Central-Eastern, and Eastern Europe as four zones with specific cultures of memory. In addition, he singles out the dictatorial experience of Southern Europe up to the 1970s.⁵

Key lines of conflict include assessment of the Stalinist repression and the issue of its relation to the national-socialist mass killings.

On the one hand, dividing lines are drawn between old and new members of the EU. In Western countries, due to the dominating statement about the singularity of the Holocaust, critical conceptualisation of the Stalinist repression, as a rule, was either forced out or used to minimise the scale of national-socialist policy of extermination and even its justification. However, in contrast to people in Western Europe who – including the Federal Republic of Germany since 1985 – consider the year 1945 as the year of liberation, to people in Central European countries, it means a transition from one dictatorship to another.⁶ For example, those differences became evident in 2007, when, due to the relocation of a Soviet monument in Tallinn, relations between Estonia and Russia resulted in a real interstate conflict, and the European Union in general took a demonstrative neutral position. Nevertheless, there are significant differences between Russia and the EU states. While in the EU countries the culture of memory is primarily based on victims, Russia and Belarus first of all emphasise the heroic aspects of victory. The conflict potential manifested itself especially clearly in the discussion of the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

5 Stefan Troebst: *"Jalta versus Stalingrad, Gulag versus Holocaust. Konfligierende Erinnerungskulturen im größeren Europa"*, in: Bernd Faulenbach / Franz-Josef Jelic (Hg.): *"Transformationen der Erinnerungskulturen in Europa nach 1989 (Geschichte und Erwachsenenbildung, Bd. 21)"*, Essen 2006, 23-49, hier: 30. (Stefan Troebst: *Jalta – Stalingrad, GULAG – Holocauste. Contradictory Culture of Memory in Bigger Europe, from "Transformation of Culture of Memory in Europe after 1989"* (History and Adult Education, volume 21) Bernd Faulenbach / Franz-Josef Jelic, Essen 2006, 23-49, here 30).

6 Ackermann, *"Hier Holocaust, da Gulag"* (Fn. 2); Leggewie, *"Schlachtfeld Europa"* (Fn. 3); Troebst (Fn. 4): *"Jalta versus Stalingrad."* (Ackermann, *Holocaust Here, GULAG There*; Leggewie, *Battlefield of Europe* (Fn. 3); Troebst FN. 4): *Jalta – Stalingrad*).

The fact that this anniversary attracted much more public attention in the West than the Munich Agreement of 1938, which was signed a year prior to it and was considered by Russia as an affront, and which, for example, was pointed out by Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in his open letter in September 2009. These comparisons show that in historical discourse there are still moments of recrimination associated with historical responsibility.⁷

Perception of the year 1989 as the year of freedom, which resulted in the final overcoming of the system of bloc-driven confrontation and the break-up of the socialist camp.

Likewise, in this case one can trace back the asymmetry in historical experience and memories. For Russia, Belarus, and other CIS countries, the decisive caesura was the year 1991. Disintegration of the Soviet Union was perceived by many people in the newly established CIS as a catastrophe associated with the lost status of a world power and economic downturn. This made the positive experience of expanded freedom recede into the background.

Considering the existence of such conflicting cultures of memory, many skeptics assume that a common European culture of memory is still impossible in the long run, and memories will in the future be associated with the national context to a considerable extent as well. This is evidenced by debates about the preamble to the Constitutional Treaty of the European Union. The final draft of the Constitutional Treaty does not mention explicitly such historical turning points as world wars, the Holocaust or the Gulag, and has only a vague note about the *“now united Europe after such a painful experience.”* The Lisbon Treaty enacted in early 2010 does not even mention this.⁸

However, skeptics failed to take into account the fact that national events within the national context are also interpreted in very different and contradicting ways. First of all, they omit the fact that the concept of a common culture of memory is generally aimed at the culture of joint handling of various memories rather than at common memories. As defined by historian Hans-Günther Hokerts, the *“culture of memory”* is a *“broad general concept denoting all the forms of not purely scientific use of historic events by the*

7 Karl Schlögel: *“Auf verlorenem Posten? Russland und seine Freunde 20 Jahre nach der Wende”*, in: Osteuropa, 2009, 11: 15-36, hier 35. *“München war der Sündenfall. Nicht erst der Hitler-Stalin-Pakt ebnete den Weg zum Krieg. Aus dem Brief des russischen Ministerpräsidenten Wladimir Putin an die Polen”*, in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung, 6.9.2009. [Karl Schlögel: *At the lost post? Russia and its Friends. 20 years after change.* from Osteuropa, 2009, 11: 15-36, here 35. *“Munich was the Fall. The pact between Hitler and Stalin was not the only cause for the war”*. Letter of Vladimir Putin, Russia's Prime Minister, to the Poles from newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung, 6.9.2009]

8 See Christian Joerges / Matthias Mahlmann / Ulrich K. Preuß (Hg.): *“Schmerzliche Erfahrungen der Vergangenheit und der Prozess der Konstitutionalisierung Europas”*, Wiesbaden 2008. [Joerges / Matthias Mahlmann / Ulrich K. Preuß: *“Painful Memories of the Past and the Process of Constitutionalism in Europe”*, Wiesbaden 2008].

public".⁹ To ensure that this way of "use" does not result in severe conflicts, the culture of memory should include an ability to learn to understand various perspectives when considering historical events from the viewpoints of various participants' different contexts, not to contrast those perspectives. Thus, instead of a black and white picture there is a picture with various grey hues, which, on the one hand reveals the objective influence of political systems, and on the other hand makes evident challenges and opportunities of individual selection in extraordinary historical situations. One could observe relevant processes of a more differentiated perception of history at the national level in most Western European countries after 1990. In fact, that was the



The reactor of Chernobyl

time of a critical rethinking of history, thanks to which cases of collaborationist activity and participation in the national-socialist policy of deportation and extermination of Jews were admitted. Therefore, that "black and white hue", which created a "picture of a nation united in the rebellion against enemies from within and from without was 'broken'".¹⁰ This fact makes compatibility of national and European cultures of memory easier, i.e. the development of "European-style open national cultures."¹¹

In this case, the culture of memory primarily means learning lessons from history to avoid crimes against humanity now and in the future rather than condemnation of historical actors of that time. In this regard, the culture of memory concept is closely related to the political culture concept. The common culture of memory can exist only if the participants share democratic values, which allow pluralism of memories and make it possible to associate those memories with relevant contexts. Thus, such a culture of memory is closely linked with the existence of operational democratic gov-

9 Cit. Christoph Corneließen: "Erinnern in Europa, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung", in: Volker Knigge / Norbert Frei (Hg.): "Verbrechen erinnern. Die Auseinandersetzung mit Holocaust und Völkermord", Bonn 2005, zit. nach www.bpb.de/themen/8JVYJ2.html. [cit. Christoph Corneließen: "Memories of Europe", Center for Political Education, from Volker Knigge / Norbert Frei: "Remember the Crime. Discussion of Holocaust and Genocide", Bonn 2005 at www.bpb.de/themen/8JVYJ2.html].

10 Harald Welzer / Claudia Lenz: "Opa in Europa. Erste Befunde einer vergleichenden Tradierungsforschung", in: Harald Welzer (Hg.): "Der Krieg der Erinnerung. Holocaust, Kollaboration und Widerstand im europäischen Gedächtnis", Frankfurt a.M. 2007: 7-40, hier 26. (Harald Welzer / Claudia Lenz: "Grandfather in Europe. First Results of the Comparative Study of Transfer from Harald Welzer. War of Memories." Holocaust, Collaboration, and Confrontation in European Memory, Frankfurt am Main 2007: 7-40, here 26).

11 Matthias Kumm: "Geschichte als Argument? Republikanisches Geschichtsverständnis im Transnationalen Europa", in: Christian Joerges / Matthias Mahlmann / Ulrich K. Preuß (Hg.): "Schmerzliche Erfahrungen der Vergangenheit und der Prozess der Konstitutionalisierung Europas", Wiesbaden 2008: 43-47. (Matthias Kumm: "History as an Argument? Republican Understanding of History and Transnational History from Christian Joerges / Matthias Mahlmann / Ulrich K. Preuß: Painful Memories of the Past and the Process of Constitutionalism in Europe", Wiesbaden 2008, 43-47).

ernance structures. According to Konrad Jarusch, a common culture of memory can be formed only out of a variety of decentralised initiatives, understanding of the past as a commitment to learn to preserve peace and human rights within the framework of civilisation rather than progress.¹² Given the fact that Europe is home to various authoritarian and hybrid political systems, the crucial issue in this case is whether a common European culture of memory envisages common political culture as something in place or, at the same time, development of the common culture of memory to a certain extent contributes to formation of the common political culture. I believe that the latter, which is more like dialectical understanding of the interrelationship between political culture and the culture of memory, is more appropriate.

Due to the conflict potential associated with World War II and the Holocaust, the question arises as to what historical events apart from those can contribute to the formation of the European culture of memory. To check to what extent the topic of the Chernobyl accident is relevant to that, we need to ask a question as to how this disaster is a part of memories in different countries, and what various conditions and prerequisites for memories exist in countries and among them. This will enable us to identify conflict potential, which might complicate or make it impossible to include the Chernobyl accident in the European culture of memory.

Perception of the Chernobyl Disaster in the East and West

When the reactor exploded at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, the system of international relations was still split into the Western and Eastern blocs. In the USSR, the policy of openness and restructuring had just been proclaimed by Mikhail Gorbachev, Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and the accident clearly identified its limits. The Soviet leaders admitted the fact of the Chernobyl accident only when increased background radiation had been ascertained in Scandinavian countries. In the following weeks, people in Western Europe learnt that in fact the reactor had exploded, and the worst ever design-related accident had occurred. In the Soviet Union, some three years passed before people learnt about the actual scale of the disaster and newspapers published maps of the affected areas.¹³

Accordingly, different countries reacted in different ways. The Federal Republic of Germany, with its strong antinuclear movement, perceived the disaster as confirmation of long-standing concerns. Canned food was sold out, crops were eradicated, sandpits

12 Konrad H. Jarusch: "Konfligierende Erinnerungen. Nationale Prägungen. Verständigungsversuche und europäische Geschichtsbilder", in: Joerges / Mahlmann / Preuß: 15-25, hier 25. (Konrad H. Jarusch: "Conflict Memories. National Forms. Attempts to Understand and European Pictures of History from Joerges / Mahlmann / Preuß": 15-25, here 25.)

13 See Astrid Sahm: "Transformation im Schatten von Tschernobyl", Münster 1999. (Astrid Sahm: "Transformation in the Shade of Chernobyl", Münster 1999)

were turned over, and children were forbidden to walk on the streets to minimise exposure. In that very year, 1986, sociologist Ulrich Beck published his book on the risk society. Chernobyl for him denoted the “end of all our highly precise opportunities to distance ourselves: On the one hand, there were fences, camps, military blocs, and on the other – our own four walls – real and symbolic borders, beyond which those who seemed not to be affected could remain neutral. All this still exists, but after Chernobyl it ceases to exist.”¹⁴



After the catastrophe

Although the public reaction in Germany was probably the strongest, and radioactive fallout seemed to have stopped on the border with France, Chernobyl caused public concern in other Western European countries as well and necessitated national security measures. Thus, in Sweden hundreds of tons of reindeer meat were destroyed; in England, Wales and Scotland several hundreds of farms continued to ban sheep slaughtering for 15 years after Chernobyl.¹⁵ However, overall, Chernobyl caused insignificant and short-term damage to everyday life in Western Europe.

By contrast, in the Soviet Union, people did not develop a perception of the risks of using the “atom for peace”. Some hundred thousand people, who were evacuated in the first days and weeks after the disaster, had no idea that they had to leave their houses for ever and that other several hundreds of people in the years to come would have to share that fate. They thought that evacuation would only last a few days and, as per the order, left all their property, including domestic animals. These evacuations, mainly organised by the military at short notice, were associated with the escape after Germany’s attack on the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941. Comparisons with the war prevailed later on as well: both in the “heroic” struggle of the “liquidators”, the name given to the rescue teams which went in to prevent the long-term effects of the disaster, and in assessing the accident scale: as during World War II, the disaster affected every fourth citizen of Belarus. Even abandoned villages with wooden houses burning down were reminiscent of World War II. Because the only things that remained

14 Ulrich Beck: *“Risikogesellschaft. Auf dem Weg in eine andere Moderne”*, Frankfurt a.M. 1986, S. 7. [Ulrich Beck: *“Risk Society. Towards a New Modernity”*, Frankfurt am Main 1986 C.7]

15 Mycle Schneider: *“15 Jahre nach Tschernobyl. Atomkraft und Treibhauseffekt?”* Hrsg. von Die Grünen/“Freie Europäische Allianz im Europäischen Parlament”, April 2001, http://www.greens-efa.org/cms/topics/dokbin/102/102927.15_jahre_nach_tschernobyl_atomkraft_und@en.pdf [Mycle Schneider: *“15 years after Chernobyl”*. Atomic Power and Greenhouse Effect? Published by the Greens/Free European Alliance in the European Parliament, April 2001, http://www.greens-efa.org/cms/topics/dokbin/102/102927.15_jahre_nach_tschernobyl_atomkraft_und@en.pdf]

afterwards were stone chimneys, as reflected in the well-known Khatyn memorial complex built in memory of villages destroyed during World War II.¹⁶

While in Western Europe the Chernobyl accident was perceived as a disaster of a new type, which relates to future global risks of contemporary technological society, in the Soviet Union of that time it was realised primarily retrospectively and perceived as a local accident with easy-to-overcome effects. Svetlana Aleksievich clearly showed it in her book *“Chernobyl Pray. Chronicles of the Future”*, in which the eye-witnesses she had interviewed still grasped something unusual in that disaster, but they failed to find fitting words and described reality the way they could, using comparisons with war.¹⁷ When in 1988 and 1989, within the framework of the so-called *“public diplomacy”*, there were the first open meetings between Germans and Belarusians, the latter often failed to understand why Germany had taken much more visible precautionary measures as compared to their own country, which had been much more severely affected by high radioactive contamination. Moreover, people in Germany and in Western European countries had much more opportunities to act at their own discretion, as opposed to the Soviet Union, for example, they could easily buy radiation dosimeters, and there were independent institutes, such as the environmental institute in Darmstadt.

Despite noticeable differences in perception of the Chernobyl accident, during their meetings, however, people found out that the disaster aroused in them similar fears and concerns over their children’s health, etc. In addition, of relevance here is the fact that the Chernobyl disaster aroused specific feelings in both countries, primarily, in women and mothers, as if it urged them to act. For that reason, various countries formed initiative groups willing to contribute hands-on assistance to mitigation of the effects of the disaster in Belarus and the Ukraine. That movement was especially manifested in Germany where assistance was often motivated by an aspiration to expiate in practice German guilt for crimes committed during World War II. Widespread comparisons in Belarus of the accident with the war contributed to that.¹⁸

Initiatives invited children to rehabilitation, organised transfer of aid and medical care, supported resettlements, offered opportunities for rehabilitation in affected countries and did many more things. In 1995, humanitarian aid rendered to Belarus was estimated at 700 million dollars, however, in 2005 it was worth some 75 million dollars. The aid came from 101 countries. Also, after that, some 50 thousand children

16 Astrid Sahn: *“Und der dritte Weltkrieg heißt Tschernobyl ...”* [A tre’tja mirovaja vojna – ernobyl’], in: F. Dorn/L. Jekel/V. Ignatowitsch, *“Erinnerungen gegen den Krieg”* [Ne ubit’ eloveka], zweisprachige Ausgabe, Minsk 1995: 202-227.

17 Svetlana Alexijewitsch: *“Tschernobyl. Chronik der Zukunft”*, Berlin 1997. (Svetlana Aleksievich: *Chernobyl. “Chronicle of the Future”*, Berlin 1997.)

18 It should be asked what the role of comparison with the war in Spain is as the air attack by Germany against Guernica in 1937 also took place on April 26.

were annually invited for rehabilitation abroad: about 10 thousand of them to Germany, and over 20 thousand children to Italy.¹⁹

That large-scale aid movement was not one without the conflicts that are associated with the classical “donor-recipient” scheme. Even the question of whether recreation abroad is in fact rehabilitation with a beneficial health effect or is more associated with burdensome cultural shock, was a cause for argument among the sponsors of the initiatives. In this context, some initiatives deliberately selected the path which focused on offering rehabilitation opportunities, as well as on other structural projects in the affected countries. Since the 1990s, many initiatives have managed to become real partner initiatives, which developed and implemented projects on equal terms with both the German and Belarusian partners. However, what remains to be explored is to what extent the disaster impact assessment is still the central focus of the dialog between various initiatives, or whether Chernobyl has turned out to be a rather formal starting point for joint projects.

In addition to the categories of the past and the present, of special importance in the perception of the Chernobyl disaster is to determine whether it is a disaster due to the Soviet system or should it be seen as a global disaster, which could happen at any nuclear power station irrespective of the political structure. Since Soviet management of the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster, with its three-year understatement policy severely shattered the confidence of Soviet citizens in their political system, new alternative political forces emerging in Soviet Union used the disaster to discredit the dominant Soviet system. In Belarus and the Ukraine, national forces even initiated something like the “Nuremberg Trial” by organising “public tribunals” in Minsk and Kiev in April 1991.²⁰ At the same time, they remained in the framework of the dominant public discourse which explained the Chernobyl disaster with World War II imagery, or they tried to use it to attain their goals.

In contrast, in Western Europe it was clear to most of the public officials that in the case of a catastrophic design accident, the disaster management system in their own countries would be desperately overloaded and they would have to rely on a similar understatement policy to avoid panic. For that reason, the disaster, in public debates



Firemen visit the memorial for Chernobyl

19 Astrid Sahn: “Auf dem Weg in die transnationale Gesellschaft? Belarus und die internationale Tschernobyl-Hilfe”, in: Osteuropa 2006, 4: 105-116. (Astrid Sahn: “On the Way to Transnational Society? Belarus and International Humanitarian Aid to Chernobyl Victims”, from Osteuropa 2006, 4: 105-116).

20 Sahn, “Transformation im Schatten von Tschernobyl”, 217ff. (Astrid Sahn, “Transformation in the Shade of Chernobyl” 217ff).

in a number of countries, served as an argument to reject use of nuclear power for public purposes, as was decided in a referendum in November 1987 in Italy. In Germany, in response to the Chernobyl disaster, the CDU-FDP coalition established the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety. Although at that time public consensus was reached that considered nuclear power as transitional, the official decision to reject nuclear power was reached only by the SPD-Green government elected in 1998. In other countries, like France, use of nuclear power for public purposes was not questioned, while in others, like Sweden or Switzerland, Chernobyl became just another argument in the already heated discussion of nuclear power use. In public debates in all countries, opponents of nuclear power, as a rule, brought to the forefront the fundamental problems of using nuclear power for public purposes throughout the world. On the contrary, representatives of the nuclear lobby emphasised that the Chernobyl disaster was primarily caused by the Soviet management system and happened only due to deficiencies of the Chernobyl-type reactors, which had been designed for military purposes as well. In that argument, they agreed with the position of the political opposition in the Soviet Union. In that sense, conflict lines in disaster perception are global and not linked to specific political systems. In fact, the whole range of political conflict lines is reflected in the public discourse of any country.²¹

After the Chernobyl accident, antinuclear movements were gradually formed both in the Soviet Union of that time and in other Eastern European countries that used nuclear power stations and which were part of the socialist camp. Beyond the borders of the USSR, those processes were to some extent even faster, since, as a rule, there were more intense direct contacts with Western Europe. That was also the case in the GDR (German Democratic Republic), where people had wider access to information as compared to people in the Soviet Union, owing to Western German television broadcasting, etc. There, back in June 1986, members of independent initiatives for peace and environmental protection disseminated the message headed "*Chernobyl Acts Everywhere*."²² Against those growing protests, governments of several Soviet republics and Eastern European countries in the second half of the 1980s rejected or changed their ambitious plans for development of nuclear power use.²³ Thanks to the development of the antinuclear movement in Eastern Europe, the above contrast with perception in the categories

21 See Schneider, "15 Jahre nach Tschernobyl" (Fn. 14). (Schneider, "15 Years After Chernobyl" (Fn. 14))

22 Danuta Kneipp: "Tschernobyl wirkt überall Die Reaktorkatastrophe und die Umwelt- und Friedensbewegung in der DDR", in: Zeitgeschichte-online, Thema: "Die Reaktorkatastrophe von Tschernobyl", ed. by Sabine Schön, April 2006, cit. zeitgeschichte-online.de/zol/portals/_rainbow/documents/pdf/kneipp_umbwg.pdf (Danuta Kneipp: "Chernobyl is Ubiquitous ...". Reactor Accident and Movement to Protect Environment and Peace in GDR, from Zeitgeschichte-online, Topic: Chernobyl Reactor Accident, Sabine Schön, April 2006 at zeitgeschichte-online.de/zol/portals/_rainbow/documents/pdf/kneipp_umbwg.pdf)

23 "Chernobyl and Eastern Europe: One year after the accident", RFE/RL RAD Background Report, 67, 24.4.1987.

of the future and past was somewhat mitigated. In fact, the environmental protection movement again lost its significance in 1990s in post-Soviet countries, especially due to the dramatic economic crisis. However, in the new millennium debates about climate change gave all Europe new arguments about the further development of nuclear power use and thus virtually in all European countries public conflicts associated with the operation of nuclear power plants have again become topical.

How Do They Remember?

Perception of the disaster was not the only difference. A marked difference can also be traced in the forms of memories established over the past 20 years. Ukraine is home to key memorial places – the suspended nuclear power station and the abandoned ghost city of Pripjat. Thus, here the Chernobyl disaster is primarily perceived as technical. The restricted area as well as the suspended nuclear power plant with the concrete cover called “*sarcophagus*” over the destroyed third unit of the reactor is used for commercial purposes as a tourist site. Not least of all owing to the initiatives united under the “*Chernobyl Union*” and other organisations of the liquidators, the Chernobyl Museum was opened in Kiev. It reconstructed the course of the disaster, rescue activities, as well as destinies of abandoned villages and people.²⁴ Russia also has a Chernobyl Museum initiated by representatives of civil defence, carrying out large scope decontamination projects around the destroyed reactor and in polluted areas. Thus, the memory of Chernobyl as a technological disaster is dominant there as well.

On the contrary, Belarus does not have significant central memorial places comparable to the Ukraine. The capital has only a small church located in Drujba Square in the distant centre of the city, as well as monuments in selected contaminated areas, which formally are hardly different from World War II memorials. Chernobyl is recalled there primarily as an everyday life disaster, which first of all destroyed the centuries-old culture of people in Polesye. During expeditions to abandoned farms (*khutors*), ethnologists collected items and exhibited them at a half-open museum at the Academy of Sciences. Also, the museum of icons in Vetka, located at the end of the restricted zone, became a special memorial place. Folk musicians collected folk songs of that region and presented them for the first time at the festival “*Kvetka Polyn*” in Minsk on 3 May 2009. A number of musicians from the Ukraine working on the same topic were invited to that festival. To date, authentic places abandoned after

24 Martin Pavlik: “*Das schlummernde Ungeheuer und seine toten Helden*”. Das Ukrainische Nationale Čornobyl'-Museum Kyiv, “*Kurzanalysen und Informationen des Osteuropa-Instituts München, 2006*”, Nr. 25. (Martin Pavlik: “*Hidden Monster and its Dead Heroes. Ukrainian National Chernobyl Museum, Kyiv, Brief Analyses and Information of the Institute for Eastern Europe*”, Munich 2006, №25).

the accident have almost disappeared. They have been either razed to the ground or settled again. Abandoned villages have been transformed into reserves in the proper sense of the word. That is why it is difficult to convey the invisible disaster with feelings. The fact that this problem was at least partly visible became evident in terms of support to projects on *"Culture and Upbringing, Transfer of Memories"* under the CORE program, which was finally closed in 2009. In addition, by the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident, the disaster memory church in Drujba Park should become a more significant memorial place.²⁵

The common thing about memory discourse in Belarus and Ukraine is that Chernobyl is assigned to the multifaceted national history of suffering. In Belarus, this primarily refers to the war experience, although back in 1990 Belarusian writer Ales' Adamovich in his article *"Kuropaty, Khatyn', Chernobyl"* included the exterminations during the Stalinist repression in this historical chain.²⁶ On the contrary, the Ukraine in particular clearly emphasises Moscow's responsibility for the Chernobyl disaster, which becomes another justification of the country's national independence. There, Chernobyl is equal to The Holodomor, i.e., the huge famine deliberately organised by Stalin in the Ukraine, which claimed several million people in the early 1930s. It is evident that compared to that disaster, Chernobyl will fade in the public mind.²⁷

In other European countries, the memory of Chernobyl is mainly focused on anniversaries and is maintained primarily by initiatives to support Chernobyl, and organisations such as Greenpeace which are against nuclear power stations. On the one hand, they use the Chernobyl disaster anniversaries to carry out protest campaigns against nuclear power use in their country or all over the world. On the other hand, they organise exhibitions on Chernobyl at local, partly national and international levels, where they exhibit primarily children's drawings and photos. However, my data suggests that there is lack of permanent memorial places. For example, this could be achieved by integrating Chernobyl in regular exhibitions of the history of technology, etc. To date, French philosopher Paul Virilio was the only one to publicly voice the idea of setting up a museum of man-made disasters and made an attempt to partly undertake that during the Paris Exhibition in 2002-2003.²⁸ Before that, the most ambitious exhibition from the perspective of European culture of memory took place to commemorate the 20th

25 Cp. www.core-chnobyl.org/eng/projects/topicalprojects/culture/radikulture/

26 Ales' Adamovič: *"Kuropaty, Chatyn, Cernobyl"*, in: Literaturnaja gazeta, Nr. 33, 15.8.1990.

27 Melanie Arndt: *"Von der Todeszone zum Strahlen-Mekka? Die Erinnerung an die Katastrophe von Tschernobyl in Belarus, Russland und der Ukraine"*, in: *Zeitgeschichte-online*, Thema: *Die Reaktorkatastrophe von Tschernobyl*, ed. by Sabine Schön, April 2006, zit. nach zeitgeschichte-online.de/zol/portals/_rainbow/documents/pdf/arndt_tschernobyl.pdf (Melanie Arndt: *"From the Fatal Zone to Radiation Mecca? Memories of the Chernobyl Disaster in Belarus, Russia, Ukraine from Zeitgeschichte-online, Topic": Chernobyl Reactor Disaster*, Sabine Schön, April 2006 at zeitgeschichte-online.de/zol/portals/_rainbow/documents/pdf/arndt_tschernobyl.pdf)

28 *"Kunst der Katastrophe. Paul Virilio über den Unfall – eine verunglückte Ausstellung in Paris"*, in: *Die Zeit*, 51/2002. (*"Art of Disaster. Paul Virilio about the Accident – Exhibition in Paris"*, from *Die Zeit*, 51/2002.)

anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster at the Centre of Contemporary Culture in Barcelona. Along with the progress of the accident and the rescue work described as the “*Chernobyl Battle*”, that exhibition, organised in the framework of Basque-French cooperation, also presented the destinies of the liquidators as forgotten heroic saviours of Europe, the living conditions of people in contaminated areas, relocated people, etc. The aim was first of all to reflect on understanding human existence in a technological society with its imminent risks. The idea of “*extreme anthropology*” to preserve the “*Ukrainian Atlantis*” in the form of village culture in Polesye was presented as well. In so doing, the exhibition used the central element of the perception of Chernobyl as characteristic of the post-Soviet space. In contrast, the point of view of the European solidarity movement remained untouched.²⁹



The deserted town of Prypiat

Starting with the 20th anniversary of Chernobyl, one can trace back enhanced focus on the topic of Chernobyl in university courses. Thus, in 2006 the Free University of Berlin offered an interdisciplinary set of lectures on the effects of Chernobyl. The European Humanitarian University, in cooperation with the Cohen University and Kiev University (named after Shevchenko), from 28 August to 3 September 2006 carried out a Summer School on Chernobyl in the Russian and French languages, considering the phenomenon from philosophical, social-anthropological and political science perspectives.³⁰ In part, the Chernobyl topic is also covered, irrespective of anniversaries, at events dedicated to common issues of memory. Thus, from October 2006 to July 2007, the University of Munich delivered a course for students on “*Memory Carriers*” within the discipline “*Eastern Europe*”. Within the framework of that course, the uprising in Hungary in 1956 and other events were analysed and presented in a brochure along with Chernobyl.³¹ The Institute for German Studies at Ruhr University in Bochum organised lectures on “*European Memorial Places of the 20th Century*” in the winter semester 2008-2009, where one lecture was delivered on Chernobyl along with Oswiecim, Danzig, Sarajevo and other places.³²

For all European countries it is characteristic that Chernobyl has become a metaphor to denote other terrible or emergency events. Thus, the Belarusian opposition, during

29 Detailed description is available at website http://www.cccb.org/en/exposicio-once_upon_a_time_chernobyl-12974

30 Program and abstracts are available at www.unicaen.fr/colloques/tchernobyl/programme.php

31 See www.oesteuropastudien.uni-muenchen.de/aktivitaeten/projekturse/medien_erinnerung/index.html#top

32 See http://www.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/deutschlandforschung/Programm_Ring_VL_WS_0809.pdf

the controversial referendum on amending the Constitution in 1996, discussed the “legal Chernobyl”. Sometimes, the whole regime established by President Lukashenko was described as “political Chernobyl”. In France, this term is used with regards to successful elections of Le Pen. Famous French stage director Ariane Mnouchkine and other French intellectuals used the notion of “cultural Chernobyl” to describe the negative impact of “Eurodisney” on French culture.³³ The concept of the Chernobyl syndrome is used in France even in cases when the country allegedly remains unaffected by global crises, as opposed to its neighbouring countries, as was the case during the global economic crisis in 2008.³⁴ One can refer to a similar diversity of metaphorical expressions used in other countries.³⁵

Chernobyl was highlighted almost in all mass media. For example, the above-mentioned exhibition in Barcelona also presented modern works of art – films were demonstrated, and music was performed, including a requiem for Chernobyl victims by Roman Gurko. In April 2006, in Berlin, students of the Weissensee School of Art, and the State Academy of Design and Arts of Kharkov City exhibited their joint works. During the project semester, posters, animations and advertising spots were created, and campaigns were conducted in the city. An exhibition entitled “Visual Energy. After Chernobyl: Resources, Energy, and We” supported by the Federal Ministry for the Environment of FRG was illustrative of discussions of Chernobyl held in Germany, and it brought to the forefront the issue of handling energy.³⁶

In addition, Chernobyl is reflected in novels, comics and computer games. Back in 2001, Enki Bilal published a satire in the comic format entitled “*The Sarcophagus. Exchange of Letters*”. In 2009, during the swine flu outbreak, the novel “*Chernobyl Virus*” by Torsten Guhn appeared. Also, at the Amazon Internet store, the computer horror game “*Stalker: Shadow of Chernobyl*” developed in Kiev is available for sale and enjoys high popularity. According to the game scenario, another reactor explosion takes place and mutants appear, etc. Overall, the keyword search for “Chernobyl” at Amazon results in 320 matches in German, at Amazon.com, 18,072 in English, and certainly several names are mentioned several times. Anyway, after 1996, the 10th anniversary of Chernobyl, one can state that there was a considerable decline

33 See France: “*Ein politisches Tschernobyl*”, www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13527452.html; Richard J. Golsan: “*From French Anti-Americanism and Americanization to the American Enemy?*” In: Alexander Stephan (ed.): “*The Americanization of Europe. Culture, Diplomacy, and Anti-Americanism after 1945*”, 2006, S. 42-68, here p. 59. (France: Political Chernobyl at www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13527452.html)

34 France in denial or bucking the trend? BBC News, 14.11.2008, newsvote.bbc.co.uk

35 “*See f.x. Germany*” Georg Stötzel/Martin Wengeler (Hg.): “*Kontroverse Begriffe. Geschichte des öffentlichen Sprachgebrauchs in der Bundesrepublik*”, Berlin 1995, 655ff. [E.g. For Germany Georg Stötzel/Martin Wengeler (ed.): “*Controversial Concepts. History of Common Word Use in the Federal Republic*”, Berlin 1995, 655ff.]

36 cm.berlin-charkiw.de/content/index.php

in publications, and novels released after 2006, the 20th anniversary of Chernobyl, could be virtually counted on one hand.

That is just one indicator of the fact that the Chernobyl disaster has recently been overlapped by other disasters and the protracted transformation process in Belarus and the Ukraine, which relegated it to the background. The relegation process takes place at different levels. This also relates to Belarus, which is the country most contaminated with radioactive fallout. While in the mid 1990s president Lukashenko was active in promoting himself as a politician who in fact addresses overcoming the disaster effects, in recent years those effects have been thematic to a noticeably lesser extent. In addition, for the political opposition, Chernobyl has long become an ostensible topic, since annual Chernobyl marches are based on other relevant political issues such as relations with Russia rather than on Chernobyl-specific issues. However, it is the people's wish to relegate the invisible but omnipresent threat to the background, and when coupled to their unwillingness to constantly live in the "world of restrictions", these are then the important causes of gradual oblivion.³⁷

Why Should Chernobyl Become Integral to the European Culture of Memory?

Like many other events, the Chernobyl disaster is not an uncontroversial topic, and it is perceived differently in various countries. At the same time, the threat of political instrumentalization of that topic further contributes to its inclusion in the European culture of memory. However, it seems impossible to find a historical phenomenon about which a conflict-free memory could be constructed at the European level. Use of Chernobyl as a metaphor and its rethinking in various media demonstrate that Chernobyl has become a solid part of memory. And this is so despite the fact that specific events and effects are more frequently relegated to the background, thus complicating the self-reflecting understanding of Chernobyl by a society. On the one hand, active involvement of the Chernobyl disaster in the developing European culture of memory, which owes something to the "Cosmopolitan Europe" project,³⁸ is evidenced by the fact that this case is about the disaster with the capacity of global threat, which is an equal concern for people in Europe and all over the world. On the other hand, there is the fact that a number of European countries, as well as some others, for example,

37 Alfredo Pena-Vega: "Leben in einer Welt der Verbote. Eine Vergangenheit, die nicht vergeht", in: Osteuropa, 2006, 4: 71-80. (Alfredo Pena-Vega: "Life in the World of Restrictions. Past That Does Not Go Away", from Osteuropa, 2006, 4: 71-80).

38 Vgl. hierzu Ulrich Beck / Edgar Grande: "Das kosmopolitische Europa, Frankfurt a.M." 2004. (Ulrich Beck / Edgar Grande: "Cosmopolitan Europe", Frankfurt am Main, 2004).



A kindergarden in Paypjat

Japan's Hiroshima and Nagasaki, both affected by atomic bombing, formed solidarity initiatives which have been operating for a long time.

Indeed, one can only conditionally speak about the European solidarity movement after Chernobyl, since most initiatives exist at a national level and are not interrelated at the European level. One of the most important German-Belarusian Chernobyl projects, the Children's Rehabilitation and Recreational Centre "Nadejda" ("Hope"), implemented over 20 international rehabilitation projects in cooperation with initiatives from six European countries and Japan in 2009. Unfortunately, those initiatives hardly maintain direct contacts with each other now. Nevertheless, initiatives

established in response to Chernobyl can potentially make a significant contribution to the formation of European civil society. Special achievements of those initiatives are that they developed from assistance initiatives into partner projects, and despite intercultural differences they managed to achieve mutual understanding and pursue common goals. Thus, the 25th anniversary of Chernobyl should be used by politicians, scientists and civil society actors to analyse and document both the destinies of people directly affected by Chernobyl and the history of European solidarity initiatives, to contribute not only to the formation of a European culture of memory uniting East and West but also to support the establishment of strong European civil society integral to the political culture of Europe.

The project pursuing these goals is planned to be implemented in 2010 by the Dortmund International Educational Centre and the Mercator Foundation in cooperation with the Minsk International Educational Centre named after Johannes Rau and the European Association EUSTORY. Under this project, young people from different countries will be offered an opportunity to jointly study various aspects of the Chernobyl accident and, first of all, to examine the destinies of the Chernobyl-affected settlements. In addition, thanks to meetings and publications, the European solidarity movement in response to Chernobyl may entrench itself in the public mind. Through visits to authentic places, conversations with eye-witnesses and an exhibition on Chernobyl, the specific destinies of the liquidators as forgotten saviours of Europe and other Chernobyl-affected people from Belarus and Ukraine will finally be presented to German schoolchildren, students and citizens.³⁹

³⁹ Detailed information is available at www.ibb.d-de

Georgia: Stalinism

Lika Katsitadze

Understanding the Soviet History of Georgia¹

Background

The gloomy years of the Stalin era left a painful trace in Georgian society. Thousands of families, directly or partly affected by repressions in the 1930s, witnessed the crimes of that time. Although most Georgian people assess the era of Stalinism as the time of great terror and injustice, people perceive themselves as victims only, and no one discusses their own civil responsibility and society's participation in those crimes.



Stalinism, the totalitarian regime, repressions and terror are still burning topics in Georgia. Society has not yet overcome its fear of the communist dictatorship. People still have vivid memories of the so-called "Troika" meetings, shootings of the nobility in 1942, the "Great Purge" in 1937-1938, the shooting of the demonstrators in March 1956, and a number of other events.

In the era when everyday life was made a top secret by the 70-year communist regime and strictly controlled by the KGB, to identify the truth was a formidable challenge. Being interested in specific facts and details or statistical data on purge and terror victims, places of conviction and execution could have been fatal. Even in the era of perestroika (restructuring) and glasnost (openness) archives of the 20th century remained closed and inaccessible to researchers.

For the above reasons, the history of Georgia in the 20th century remains one of the least explored. The scale of terror and the poignancy of the repressions raging for decades all over the Soviet Union (including Georgia where the number of victims of the Stalin regime was tens of thousands), are still not fully realised by the society. Its attitude towards Stalinism, repressions and terror and the interpretation of facts are mixed. Meanwhile, objective analysis of historical facts, apprehension and assessment of previous mistakes are the essential prerequisites to the development of democratic values and the establishment of an open society in Georgia.

1 (Stalinism, Totalitarianism, Repressions) Joint Project of the German Adult Education Association (*dvv international*) and the Heinrich-Böll Foundation (*Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung*).

Of special concern is the fact that a part of our society perceives Stalin as an honour to our country, justifying his actions with the historical needs of that ambiguous and challenging era. This all clearly signals the need to further study and thoroughly revise the historical facts of the Stalin era and provide reliable information on the scale of the repressions and the impact of mass terror on the whole country. To overcome the phantoms of the past, an open dialog with the population at large should be started.

Of special importance is the formation of a proper perception of and attitude towards the totalitarian regime of the Stalin era for the young generation so that they can fully realise the criminality of this regime and that a repetition of past errors is inadmissible.

Our Contribution...

Realising the importance of studies and analysis of the country's recent history toward the development of a democratic society where citizens feel responsibility for the country's destiny and everything happening there, in 2009, the German Adult Education Association (*dvv international*) jointly with the Heinrich-Böll Foundation (HBS) started a new project on the interpretation of the recent history of Georgia (Soviet period). As a first stage, public discussion of this controversial and complex issue is planned to be initiated. The focus in the discussion should be on the role and responsibility of society tolerating crime against humanity. Such an approach will contribute to critical reevaluation of historical events and identification of the whole range of opinions on this issue.

The overall project goal is to promote development of democratic values and democratic thinking in Georgia and raise public awareness through multifaceted studies of Stalinism, terror and repressions. The project strategy also envisages development of a topography of the red terror and repressions.

The project will last several years. 2009 was the orientation stage, to specify topics and plan activities. One of the major project results is the development of a historical route in Tbilisi associated with Stalinism, the so-called "*Topography of the Red Terror*" route. Excursions along this route are designed for all those interested in Stalinism, for schoolchildren and students. Also, the route could also be of interest to foreigners and tourists, especially from the countries of the former Soviet Union. Special training programs for students and manuals for schoolteachers are being developed. The project also envisages the preparation of a publication and development of a web page. For all the events in the country, open debates will be held to involve the public at large in the discussion of civil responsibility.

At the initial stage, in November 2009, *dvv international* and the Heinrich-Böll Foundation (HBS) organised an international workshop with the participation of local and international experts in Tbilisi. The event aimed to inform the persons concerned about projects on the analysis of recent history and methods for its development.

The workshop aimed to identify people experienced in research of the history of totalitarianism in the international context or those interested in this work. International experts invited to this workshop from Germany (the



International Workshop on Stalinism 2009

University of Bochum), Latvia (Museum of the Occupation of Latvia), Lithuania (The International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania and The Genocide Research Centre of Lithuania) and Russia (International Memorial) shared their experience in research and the establishment of educational projects on totalitarianism (practical activity to understand the past) with Georgian participants. The workshop set the goals, objectives and identified the risks and developed specific recommendations for project implementation.

At the first stage, the workshop participants decided to limit themselves to the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi, since all major events primarily occurred there. Moreover, at this stage the project scale does not make it possible to cover the whole country. A decision was taken to select twenty of the most important sites in the old city district associated with terror and repressions (buildings of NKVD, VChK and KGB, prisons, courts and tribunals, places of mass shootings, prisoner camps, safe houses, apartment buildings from which the greatest number of people were taken away during the repression), develop a route and set up relevant accompanying educational programs for different target groups.

The research covers the historical period from 1918 to 1956.

In late 2009, an interdisciplinary working group composed of six Georgian experts and three independent consultants was established and later set up the social organisation "*Soviet Past Research Laboratory*". Subsequently, a staff member from the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia serving her internship at the Georgian National Museum joined the working group as a volunteer.

In early 2010, the group started active research work to identify the most important historical sites associated with the Stalin terror, to search and systematise archive

documentation and examine printed publications and the press, determine maps of that period, etc. Group members collect information and materials from the archive of the central committee of the Communist Party of Georgia, the KGB archive, the library of the Georgian Parliament, the Museum of Tbilisi History, the Museum of Occupation of Georgia, and the Stalin Museum. In addition, members of the organisation interview eye-witnesses of the Stalin era, obtain extensive information from various Internet forums and the social network Facebook, where a special page, "*Stalinism Research Laboratory*", was created.

As a result of processing the collected materials, the working group has selected about eleven specific sites of the Stalin terror. For each of them, a brief summary will be prepared – informational text based on documentary data which will outline the relationship of a given place with Stalinism, terror and repressions. On the basis of those sites, the route of the Stalinist terror and repressions will be developed, and its preliminary outline will be ready this summer.

Further Plans ...

The next step will be production of a printed version of the Tbilisi map, where the route of the topography of the red terror and repressions will be plotted, indicating specific sites with brief information about them. The route map and related educational programs will be presented at travel agencies, libraries, research institutions, schools and universities, and will be advertised in the mass media. In this regard, active cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, the Department of Tourism of Georgia, as well as with the Georgian Association of History Teachers is envisaged. Special manuals will be developed for history teachers to help them carry out excursions along the route of terror for high school children. The first pilot excursions will start this November.

Based on the collected materials, the web page "*Soviet Past Research Laboratory*", which should enable all the persons concerned to look through documentary materials and obtain reliable information on the scale of the Soviet totalitarian regime and the Stalinist repressions, will be developed. The web page will have a configurable dynamic map of terror with short descriptions of the sites plotted on it. A separate column will provide extensive information collected by the working groups in the course of the research. The website will also have a photo and video gallery, forum, terror calendar, database of the repressed persons, sections "*Chronicles of the Soviet Press*", "*The ABC of Terror*", "*Lost & Found*". The website will be regularly updated, which will enable the group to continue research on this topic. The webpage is planned to be presented to the public at large.

Starting in May, and until the end of 2010, open discussions of the role and responsibility of society in the Stalinist era will be held. The debates aim to draw public attention to the threat of repeating mistakes of the past, enhance the identity of the members of society and their responsibility for formation of an open and free society and the protection of democratic values.

The second international workshop planned to be conducted this July will enable the working group to once again analyse the achieved results jointly with their colleagues and international experts,

obtain relevant recommendations and outline future prospects. Upon completion of the workshop, *dvv international* will carry out training for the project participants on “*Oral History as an Information Collection Method*”.



International Workshop on Stalinism 2009

Supporters...

In addition to financial assistance, *dvv international* and the Heinrich-Böll Foundation (HBS) provide methodological, consulting and organisational support, as well as necessary literature, for the working group.

One should emphasise the role of and support from the Archive Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, the Library of the Parliament of Georgia, the Georgian National Museum, the Centre for Cultural Relations “*Caucasian House*”, the Institute for Free Information Development, the Tbilisi Guild and other organisations.

Partners from Latvia, Lithuania, and Russia also play an important role in project implementation. Recently, the Embassy of Estonia in Georgia has expressed its interest in cooperation and rendering assistance. The Embassy of Switzerland in Georgia provides financial support for research of materials on the shooting of demonstrators in Tbilisi in 1956 and publication of archive records.

Later on, close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and the Department of Tourism of Georgia is envisaged.

List of Authors

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the support of civil society in Belarus. The central project is also the Historical Workshop Minsk, which is aimed at the reconciliation processes with eyewitnesses."

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