



## History Curricula Analysis

*A part of the Bridging Histories in Bosnia-Herzegovina project*

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### **COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE POSITION OF HISTORY AS A SCIENCE AND AS A SCHOOL SUBJECT IN DIFFERENT EUROPEAN AND WORLD SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION**

Current Current situation of infrastructural institutions necessary for employment of graduate students of history and general level of development in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not allow adequate treatment of history as a science or a teaching subject, be it in the global education system of BiH entities, or be it in general social perception. Such a situation implies that history is generally treated as a science and/or a teaching subject for which there is less and less need for in the development directions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In order to prevent further such intentions, which are fundamentally unfounded, the Analytical team of the Association EUROCLIO-HIP BiH made a comparative analysis of the position of history as a science and/or a teaching subject in different European and world's education systems, within a global analysis of the position of history in Bosnia and Herzegovina today. Herein summarized results of this analysis will, no doubt, point to the objective position of history as a science / teaching subject, not only in education systems, but in European and world's societies globally, and contribute to the understanding that by way of basic comparing we can easily reach the conclusion that there are compatible solutions which, with certain modifications, can be successfully incorporated into the existing education systems in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Example of Germany is particularly illustrative to get the picture about history as a teaching subject in schools. Analysis of number and structure of all PhD dissertations in Germany showed that the number of dissertations in history tripled just in the period 1979 - 2003, which is primarily a reflection of more and more dispersed and developed infrastructure that efficiently connects history with other sciences, due to history's distinguished interdisciplinary potential, along with already existing infrastructure where history's fundamental characteristics are noticeable.<sup>1</sup> Presence of historians in crucial social debates in Germany is unavoidable. Widely accepted truth, that the country that constantly moves forward at every moment has to look back in the past - so that it can efficiently use the

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<sup>1</sup> Raphael, Lutz, *Geschichtswissenschaft im Zeitalter der Extreme. Theorien, Methoden, Tendenzen von 1900 bis zur Gegenwart*, München 2003; Eibach, Joachim/Lottes, Günther (Hg.): *Kompass der Geschichtswissenschaft. Ein Handbuch*, Göttingen 2002. Such a development, inter alia, understands creation of highly specialized institutes, which are, exactly, the reflection of new social needs, such as the Institute for economic history in Hamburg (founded in 1998), who almost exclusively deals with archive exploring of history of scientific patents for the needs of legal regulations for worlds' greatest corporations.

experiences to help determine the direction and dynamics of moving forward, has never been questioned.<sup>2</sup>

A specific of the system of Federal Republic of Germany is its federal system that gives large competencies to the federal provinces (there are 16 of them) to create their own education systems. Secondary education in Germany, whether it is a vocational school (Realschule, Hauptschule etc.), or a Gymnasium, practically starts after completed 4th grade of primary school. In any case, history, along with geography and sociology, forms the mandatory group of social subjects. Number of classes per week vary in different provinces, but for vocational schools it is usually one to two classes a week, in all grades from 5 to 10 (which corresponds to our system from 5 grade primary school to 1 grade of secondary school), and in Gymnasiums in average it is 3 classes a week. The exception is the most populated province Nordrhein-Westfalen where the average number of classes per week, for said grades, is 4 to 5.<sup>3</sup> In grade 11 history is mandatory in all schools with three classes per week, and in grades 12 and 13, the students chose among history, geography and sociology (and vast majority select history!), and they listen to the selected subject 5 classes a week.<sup>4</sup>

In the aim of improving the history teaching, the Federal Government developed a project titled *Databank for preparing classes (Datenbank zur Unterrichtsvorbereitung)*,<sup>5</sup> where history teachers in all levels of education have at the disposal, via internet, all relevant teaching materials. There are numerous portals especially designed to help students in history classes, that is, with additional historical sources and other contents that help them to better manage during individual work.<sup>6</sup> Computer games of historical context are more and more used in history teaching in Germany, particularly the games which develop in a student a sense of all aspects of development of various civilizations in the past such as: „Die Gilde“, „Civilization“, „Age of Empires“, „Anno 1602“, „Die Fugger“, „Cossacs“ etc.<sup>7</sup>

In German schools history is put up front due to its key role in creation of critical thinking among children and creation of different aspects of identity, which is particularly highlighted at structuring the plan and program for teaching in Gymnasiums, grades 7 to 10 (age 13 to 17). History teaching is so oriented that it explores the occurrence of basics of the actual existence of mankind, society and state, science and culture in the past, to explore their development over the time, and to point to their significance today. In that context, history practically has the key role in political education.<sup>8</sup>

The topics that are being studied are approached thoroughly and fully, so, for example, in the program for 5<sup>th</sup> grade of vocational schools (equivalent to our 1<sup>st</sup> grade of secondary school other than Gymnasium) 14 classes are dedicated to the exploration of the prehistoric life (*Leben in vorgeschichtlicher Zeit*), while in our system it is usually one class. Also, for exploring ancient Egyptian civilization (*Eine frühe Hochkultur – Beispiel Ägypten*) in grade 6 of vocational

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<sup>2</sup> The famous historian conflict (Historikerstreit) from mid 1980s, involving some of the most distinguished names of the overall science in the world, such as Ernst Nolte and Jürgen Habermas, still today is one of the key social topics in the context of perception of German past. Rudolf Augstein in (Hg.), *Historikerstreit. Die Dokumentation der Kontroverse um die Einzigartigkeit der nationalsozialistischen Judenvernichtung*, München/Zürich 1987. For latest comments to the mentioned problems and their position in contemporary German society see

<http://www.nielsheinemann.de/geschichte/historikerstreit/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.holocaust-education.de/resmedia/document/document/DSCHOOL1.PDF>.

<sup>4</sup> Georg-Eckert-Institut für Internationale Schulbuchforschung (Hrsg.), *Informationen zum Bildungssystem in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Braunschweig 1998.

<sup>5</sup> Available at <http://www.zum.de/psm/index1.php>

<sup>6</sup> One of the most important is <http://www.schule-studium.de/Geschichte/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.schule-studium.de/Geschichte/Computerspiele/Computerspiele1.html>

<sup>8</sup> [http://db2.nibis.de/1db/cuvo/datei/gym\\_7-10\\_geschichte.pdf](http://db2.nibis.de/1db/cuvo/datei/gym_7-10_geschichte.pdf), an example relates to the province of Niedersachsen

school (equivalent to our 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of secondary school other than Gymnasium) 14 classes are dedicated, while in our systems not more than two. For students of this age, there is a possibility to select special themes, so they can, for instance, choose topics like *Everyday life of children in different time periods (Kinderalltag in verschiedenen Zeiten)* or *An animal in history (Das Tier in der Geschichte)*, where every selected topic is worked through 24 school classes.<sup>9</sup> Considering mentioned competencies of federal provinces in the context of creating the teaching plan and program, there are significant differences in positioning history in different grades. In Bavarian gymnasiums history is taught from grade 6 to grade 12 (equivalent to our age period from year 11 to 18), where in the first 5 years from grade 6 to grade 10, the teaching goes on in 'classic' chronological system, while in grades 11 and 12, particular selected topics are processed in an original way, with a very detailed approach.<sup>10</sup>

Production of special manuals for performing history classes, and specialized textbooks, is more and more intense. Special manuals have been produced for teachers, describing in detail the work with photographic and textual sources<sup>11</sup>, along with methods of work in teaching<sup>12</sup> and accompanying books with a pedagogic-didactical apparatus for a complete practical approach to modern history teaching.<sup>13</sup> Production of 'classic' historical readers, who bring content on topics less available in basic textbooks, has been strengthened and modernized. Particularly successful showed to be a collection of sources for the history of pre-colonial and colonial times of American history, prepared for the highest grades (11 to 13 grade, that is, three last years of Gymnasium).<sup>14</sup>

History, as an independent subject, is studied at 61(!) universities in Germany, mainly at faculties of philosophy, and faculties of humanistic sciences (Fakultät für Geisteswissenschaften, for instance in Hambourg), or special faculties for history (Fakultät für Geschichtswissenschaft, for instance in Bohum).<sup>15</sup> In some universities, at basic studies there is no one 'universal' study of history, but separate studies of Ancient times, Middle Ages, early New Age, etc. (for instance in Mainz).<sup>16</sup>

System of education in Austria is similar to the system in Germany, both in view of structure and competencies of provinces in shaping the plan and program (truth, though, is that federal provinces of Germany have a bit larger competencies, due to the more sophisticated German federal system). In Austria, history as a school subject is combined with other subjects. Thus, in grades 5 and 6 of gymnasium (our grades 1 and 2 of gymnasium), history is combined with sociology, and in grades 7 and 8 with political education.<sup>17</sup> Basically, in the first year Ancient times and Middle Ages are studied, in the second year period from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the WW1, in the third year political history in general in the past 100 years, and in the final year

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<sup>9</sup> [http://www.nibis.de/nli1/gohrgs/rrl/rs5\\_6/cvrs-geschichte.pdf](http://www.nibis.de/nli1/gohrgs/rrl/rs5_6/cvrs-geschichte.pdf), an example relates to the same province.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.isb-gym8-lehrplan.de/contentserv/3.1/g8.de/index.php>

<sup>11</sup> Hans-Jürgen Pandel, *Die Bildinterpretation: Die Bildquelle im Geschichtsunterricht*, Bildinterpretation Band 1 (mit CD), Wochenschau-Verlag 2008; Hans-Jürgen Pandel, *Methoden historischen Lernens. Quelleinterpretation. Schriftliche Quelle im Geschichtsunterricht*, Wochenschau-Verlag 2003.

<sup>12</sup> Ulrich Mayer, *Handbuch: Methoden im Geschichtsunterricht*, Auflage: 2, Wochenschau-Verlag 2007.

<sup>13</sup> Michael Sauer, *Geschichte unterrichten: Eine Einführung in die Didaktik und Methodik*, Kallmeyer; Auflage:7, 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Hans-Joachim König-Michael Rikenberg-Stefan Rinke, *Die Eroberung einer neuen Welt. Präkolumbianische Kulturen, europäische Eroberung, Kolonialherrschaft in Amerika. Fundus, Quellen für den Geschichtsunterricht*, Wochenschau-Verlag 2005.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.daad.de/deutschland/hochschulen/hochschulranking>

<sup>16</sup> Egon Boshof - Kurt Düwell - Hans Kloft, *Grundlagen des Studiums der Geschichte. Eine Einführung*. 5. Aufl. Köln/Weimar/Wien 1997, 5.

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/7445/AHS-Lehrplan\\_Geschichte\\_Sozia.pdf](http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/7445/AHS-Lehrplan_Geschichte_Sozia.pdf)

history of Austria in the modern times, with emphasis on its position in international contexts and organizations.<sup>18</sup> Due to specifics of Austrian past, particularly during the Hapsburg dynasty times, history as a science and as a subject in Austrian system of education and the overall society enjoys a special status. There are seven university centers in Austria (Vienna, Graz, Salzburg, Linz, Innsbruck, Klagenfurt and Leoben), while history as a separate study is found on six of them (all except Leoben).<sup>19</sup>

Great Britain has a very specific and diverse system of education. Within that system it is easy to identify regional and structural differences, so it happens in practice parallel existence of mutually quite different systems, even on a small geographic area. British education system (not including high education) mainly understands three stages of education – from 6 to 16 years of age (Key stages 1, 2 and 3), and possibly education from 16 to 18 years of age, as the fourth stage (Key stage 4). Approach to history is very intensive. According to the plan and program, students of about 14 years of age listen to the topic '*France 1789-1794. Why did the revolution happen?*' through 11 classes!<sup>20</sup>

The infrastructure for employment of graduate students of history in Great Britain is highly developed, and it is difficult to find a country that would offer so many possibilities to potential historians. At the start of history studies the students are clearly explained that they are being educated so they could work in the following fields and institutions: accounting, administration, archeology, architecture, archives, army, business management, public services, conservatoriums, industry based on historical heritage, tourism, human resources, information technologies, journalism, law, libraries, local administration, media, museums and galleries, police, politics, teaching and university research.<sup>21</sup>

National curriculum is constructed in such a way that it put up front the possibility for students to explore how the past shaped identities, cultures, values and attitudes.<sup>22</sup> In some cases, history as a subject is connected to other teaching subjects, and thus certain social-scientific units are formed. In Bristol, and generally at the southwest of England, it is the most common case (but not exclusive) that history as a subject is combined with religious classes and sociology, and that unity is then determined as a separate subject – Humanities.<sup>23</sup> Students have that subject three times a week in block classes, which means six classes a week. A specific of history teaching in Great Britain is that it has very little connection with chronological principles. After students in Key stage 1 get the basic knowledge about functioning of chronology, fundamentals of chronological distribution of key events,<sup>24</sup> students and teachers have at their disposal many portals with additional teaching material and games designed to incite the interest for history.<sup>25</sup>

Regardless to all the possibilities and wealth of aspects, the key role of history is in GB still seen as the development and perception of identity. On the line of that was the great school project *Who do we think we are?*, which was finally realized in 2008. It was a sort of a national competition, whose results in sense of feedback information about the perception of British

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<sup>18</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.bmbwk.gv.at/universitaeten/recht/gesetze/ug02/Universitaetsgesetz\\_20027725.xml#6](http://www.bmbwk.gv.at/universitaeten/recht/gesetze/ug02/Universitaetsgesetz_20027725.xml#6)

<sup>20</sup> [http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes2/secondary\\_history/his10](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes2/secondary_history/his10)

<sup>21</sup> [http://www.qca.org.uk/history/innovating/history\\_matters/index.htm](http://www.qca.org.uk/history/innovating/history_matters/index.htm)

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.qca.org.uk/curriculum>

<sup>23</sup> That is the case in currently the most elite school in Bristol, Redland Green School – [www.redlandgreen.bristol.sch.uk](http://www.redlandgreen.bristol.sch.uk).

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes2/history>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/resources>

identity and values tied to it were directly incorporated into the new construction of national plan and program for the teaching of humanistic sciences.<sup>26</sup>

European institutions have lately realized the significance of history as a subject in schools,<sup>27</sup> which resulted in initiating a number of actions, such as the program *Teaching against forgetting* that the European Council started in 2001. The goal was to develop the multi-perspectives in history teaching, and to review in an innovative and constructive way the aspects of the past that are burdening the coexistence of European nations, and to insist on contents of the common European prefix.<sup>28</sup> In that sense it is particularly important to develop the skills among children and the young to fight the ideological-mythical prejudices, which are a product of certain archaic policies that were incorporated into the society through implementation of history in the society, be it as a science, or be it as a school subject. Key aspects of restructuring the history teaching in Europe today are being executed along those lines.<sup>29</sup>

Besides European, some experiences outside Europe are significant to grasp the position of history as a science and as a school subject in education systems. Special attention should be paid to the position of history in schools and universities in the USA. Production of scientific works and teaching materials, especially multimedia ones, grows each year to reach its absolute peak in school year 2007/08.<sup>30</sup> Special significance in 2008 was given to to-date absolutely the most massive organization of the manifestation titled *The National History Day*,<sup>31</sup> which central theme that year was *Conflict and compromise in history*. The USA Federal Government, through *American Association for State and Local History* and *National Association of Secondary School Principals*, turned this manifestation into a key event of American secondary education throughout the school year, and its grand finale was organized in June at the University of Maryland.<sup>32</sup>

The situation regarding history is also very similar in Canada and Australia. The Australian Minister of Education, Julia Gillard, in the making of national plan and program in April 2008, for all levels of education, from kindergarten to the end of grade 12 (students of 18-19 years of age) for the period 2008-2010 she determined Mathematics, English language, Science and History as the four subjects that are mandatory in each school year.<sup>33</sup> The plan is made after a thorough analysis of Canadian national system of education, which served as an efficient model for Australia, as the two countries have similar parameters in terms of large spaces and relatively modest demographic potential globally, and, at the same time, not so long 'independent' history.

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<sup>26</sup> [www.whodowethinkweare.org.uk](http://www.whodowethinkweare.org.uk)

<sup>27</sup> Within the financial program FP7 of the European Union, 610 million Euro is envisaged for financing projects in the field of humanities in the period 2007 – 2013. [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/cooperation/home\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/cooperation/home_en.html)

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural\\_Co-operation/education/History\\_Teaching/](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/education/History_Teaching/)

<sup>29</sup> Outstanding theoretical and practical achievements in that field were realized by the University of Trondheim, in northern Norway. <http://www.coe.int/T/d/Com/Dossiers/Events/2003-07-Geschichte/>

<sup>30</sup> Summarized, but very relevant and convincing review of the edition can be found at [www.history.com/education](http://www.history.com/education), where, as particularly impressive, stands out the multimedial project *Multimedia Classroom Series*, with the emphasis on interactive approach to the perception of history, developed in cooperation with *The History Channel*.

<sup>31</sup> [www.nhd.org](http://www.nhd.org)

<sup>32</sup> The project is led by the Director of American National Curriculum, prof. dr Ann Claunch, [www.nhd.org/themebooknhd08.pdf](http://www.nhd.org/themebooknhd08.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.htansw.asn.au>

The mentioned analysis, titled 'A comparative study of history teaching in Australia and Canada' – by Dr Anna Clark, clearly pointed to the need of presence of history in all school grades. Justification was primarily the essential connection between knowing the history and current, but also future perception of one own land, which then motivates for further qualitative and quantitative contribution to its development. In a review of history teaching analysis, this was mentioned by the Canadian and Australian Prime-ministers, Jean Cretien and John Howard.<sup>34</sup> The then Australian PM clearly pointed: *"In the end, young people risk to be completely separated from the heritage of their community, if that community has no courage and no self-confidence to teach them its history"*.<sup>35</sup>

In these countries there is a clear emphasis between public perception of national history, which is, almost without exception, characterized as very interesting, especially due to the vivid debates that were conducted in the last years about various aspects of history in Australia and Canada – on the one hand, and perception of history (i.e. national history) as a teaching subject by the students on the other hand, where that perception was mainly summarized to the characteristics such as "boring" and "oldfashion". Carefully analyzing such starting bases, the author of this study concluded that the problem is in the classroom itself, that is, it is necessary to perform radical modernization of the teachers' presentation. In essence, Anna Clark focused on five areas:

- problem of repeating identical contents (also present in our system, as starting with 'Nature and society' in lower grades of primary school, history in higher grades of primary school and secondary school / gymnasium, until graduation of studies of history, a graduate history student goes four times through almost identical content!) - eliminating such an approach, a lot is gained in efficiency, since participants don't have the feeling they are repeating the same things,

- The need for use of adequate source material and permanent education of teachers in the context of modernization – modernization of teaching means is a necessary evolution chain-ring in raising the teaching to a higher level. Without it, it would be impossible to raise the science and teaching to a higher level even in Australia and Canada; the situation in BiH is just the same,

- the issue of a national approach to history teaching (which, regretfully, often evolve to the issue of a nationalistic approach) - in Australia and Canada, as relatively new and not very highly populated communities, there is a problem in the context of strict focus to own national history, so the students' demands are more and more directed to increasing the content of general history, which is unavoidable consequence of general globalization; a separate problem in Canada is the province of Quebec, where there is a permanent need to apostrophe own national and cultural specifics within Canada; in that sense the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is even more complex, but globalizing trends cannot be stopped in this area as well,

- critic perception of history teaching – a general place for all students in history teaching in the area of Australia and Canada is the desire for increased interactivity, possibility to develop own critic attitude towards particular events and personalities, rather than classic system ex cathedra, as is the case in BiH, while overcoming the situation in which the old system is still dominating (which is definitely the case in Bosnia) is possible only with aforementioned need for modernization of teaching means and education of teachers

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<sup>34</sup> The complete report of April 2008 is available at [http://www.htansw.asn.au/home/nationalcurriculum/Anna Clark - Comparative Study of History Teaching in Australia and Canada.pdf](http://www.htansw.asn.au/home/nationalcurriculum/Anna%20Clark%20-%20Comparative%20Study%20of%20History%20Teaching%20in%20Australia%20and%20Canada.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> „In the end, young people are at risk of being disinherited from their community if that community lacks the courage and confidence to teach its history.”

-Engagement, motivation of students in classroom - is a sublimation of all aforementioned and is tied to global approach of the teacher, that is, teacher's readiness to constantly modernize and improve his work; of course, there are factors a single teacher at any level of education cannot influence to (general trends in the development that imply the primacy of certain interests, burdening of students with other subjects and obligations, infrastructural opportunities for professional advance and employment, etc.), but the maximum personal professionalization of a teacher is of primary importance.

The listed conclusions and recommendations were instantly adopted, so in Australia and Canada there is a great ongoing restructuring of history teaching in the aim of mentioned modernization. In Australia a group was founded to form the new national curriculum, with a special emphasis on history as one of mandatory subjects. This new plan and program will enter into force at the beginning of 2011.<sup>36</sup>

It is quite clear that global changes brought by the globalization, especially during the two last decades, would imply redefining of all scientific and education systems worldwide. Position of history was exposed to significant transformations in many systems, in terms of organization, structure, relative denomination, etc. However, there has not been a single case worldwide lately that history was taken out of education systems. Moreover, it is absolutely obvious that history, due to its numerous and efficient transformations, established itself as one of the most stabile and in essence very prosperous science, which, as such, guaranties stability of presence of history as a teaching subject in all education systems. Even in systems where history was denominated as a subject after the WW2 and moved to optional subjects, there is a full return of history into the program, as a mandatory subject. In that context, very illustrative is the Swedish example, as in 2007 they definitely brought the decision that history should be returned its status of a mandatory subject. Minister of Education, Jan Björklund, started the initiative that will be realized in schools in Sweden in 2010.<sup>37</sup>

History just firmed itself as a key subject for forming critic thinking of children in primary and secondary schools, that is, as one of the most important instruments for creation and constant improvement of practically all European and worlds' societies. It is worth mentioning that regardless to the stated initiatives of the Council of Europe with regard to common contents, many countries, at least in the context of school plans and programs, keep on insisting on total supremacy of national history over the general. Particularly noticeable example for that is Great Britain, where over 90 percent of contents being taught in school plans are connected to national history. In France and Germany, the ratio between general and national history is a lot more balanced.

In any case, position of history in all herein mentioned countries is rising, and it receives more space in school systems. There are more and more investments to informatics-technical improvement of history, which makes history more attractive and available, while full wide-band internet connection becomes absolutely necessary chain-ring in that context. The field to which history orients itself more and more in many countries, is tourism and its different aspects, thus history structure itself as a modern science / teaching subject. The so-called Heritage Industry becomes more and more profitable activity, not only in Great Britain, so it opens new perspectives before history as a science and as a teaching, school, subject.

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<sup>36</sup> <http://www.htansw.asn.au/home/nationalcurriculum>

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.thelocal.se/tag/Jan\\_Björklund](http://www.thelocal.se/tag/Jan_Björklund)

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