

Expert Seminar on History Education in the Eastern Mediterranean: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Co-operation on History Teaching in Post-Conflict Settings

Introduction

The Eastern Mediterranean region, with its rich and complex history, presents unique challenges. History teaching in this geographical area of the world has often been identified as one of the obstacles for such regional co-operation.

This expert seminar will bring together educators, researchers, and policy makers in a time of increasing conflict but also potential for regional co-operation in this area to discuss the state of history teaching in the region and its role in conflict transformation.

This will be done by focusing on the use of educational materials, narratives and teaching practices in this area with a mixed audience to be invited to attend (history didactics experts, historians, policy makers, social psychologists and conflict resolution experts).

Objective

The overarching objective of the seminar that is planned to take place on the 13th and 14th of December 2023 is to promote quality education in order to enhance students and teachers to shape quality education for democratic culture. The seminar aims to foster a dialogue on the current state of history teaching in the region exploring possibilities (prospects of bi- and multilateral cooperation between educators in Israel, Palestine, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey and Lebanon. It will explore how an interdisciplinary approach (into research and practice) of history teaching can contribute to conflict transformation while maintaining academic rigor and integrity. The conference is organized by GEI-EFREC in collaboration with MAKINGHISTORIES and AHDR. The secretariat and members of the Scientific Advisory Board of OHTE of CoE will be invited to take part and contribute.

PROGRAMME

First Day 13th December 2023

Opening of the conference at the Home for Co-operation: 2.00-2.30

Chair Organizing Committee welcoming speech: C. Psaltis

AHDR welcoming speech: K. Pachoullides

OHTE welcoming speech: A. Ailincăi (Online)

GEI welcoming speech: E. Fuchs

MAKINGHISTORIES welcoming speech: M. Carretero (Online)

Panel Discussion 1: Moderation by L. Loukaides

1. State of History Teaching in the Eastern Mediterranean

This round table will provide a platform for OHTE and educators from the region to share their experiences, challenges, and best practices. It will also allow for a comparative analysis of history teaching across different countries and communities.

State of the Art of History Teaching in the Eastern Mediterranean

2.30-2.50: Cyprus- L. Perikleous, M. Samani

2.50-3.00: Lebanon- B.Akar

3.00-3.20: Israel/Palestine- N.Tal, S. Adwan (Online)

3.20-3.30: Greece-A. Palikidis

3.30-3.40: Turkey-E. Dinç

Q & A, Plenary: 3.40-4.00

Coffee Break: 4.00-4.20

4.20-4.30: **The OHTE and its aims: Relevance for its work for the Eastern Mediterranean**-A. Ailincăi (Online)

4.30-4.40: **Reflections on panel by EUROCLIO**- S. Stegers

4.40-4.50: **Reflections on panel by the Youth & History Project**- T. Dragonas

4.50-5.00: **Reflections on panel by the Shared Society Index network**- - R. Kuttner.

5.00-5.10: **Reflections on panel by the MAKINGHISTORIES network**- - E. Manjarez.

Q & A, Plenary: 5.10-5.30

Second Day 14th December 2023 (Morning) 9.00am-1.00 pm

Panel Discussion 2: Moderation by M. Zembylas

2. History Teaching and Conflict Transformation

This round table will delve into the role of history teaching in conflict transformation. It will explore how a nuanced understanding of social psychological theories can enhance the history teaching of conflicts and history teaching more generally in post-conflict or post-settlement contexts. The discussion will be informed by social psychological approaches to history teaching and conflict transformation, as outlined in the book "History Education and Conflict Transformation" with panel participants requested to reflect on the possible application of the social psychological toolkit to history education in their own context.

Social Psychological Contributions on History Teaching and Conflict Transformation in the Eastern Mediterranean

9.00-9.20: Cyprus: C. Psaltis, S. Husnu

9.20-9.30: Turkey: G. Baysu

9.30-9.40: Greece: T. Dragonas,

9.40-10.00: Israel/Palestine: N. Rosler

10.00-10.10: Lebanon: T.S. Dickey

10.10-10.20: **Reflections by EFREC on ways of taking on board in their work the suggestions-S. Sammler**

10.20-10.30: **Reflections for the MAKINGSTORIES WP2 work-B. Wagoner**

10.30-10.45: Q & A, Plenary

10.45-11.00 Coffee Break

Panel Discussion 3: Moderation by B. Wagoner

11.00-11.30: **Reflections on the role of track two diplomacy in the Eastern Mediterranean and History Teaching reforms- A. Sozen, M. Akgun, P. Lampsas, E. Kaymak**

11.30-12.00: Q & A, Plenary Discussion

12.00-1.00 **Lunch at H4C**

Panel Discussion 4 (afternoon): Moderation by S. Katsikas

4. Perspectives of bi- and multilateral cooperation in history education

The first OHTE regular Report and its findings about history teaching in the Eastern Mediterranean countries

2.00-2.10: Y. Kochneva-Relevant findings from the OHTE report for the region (Online)

2.10-2.30: C. Makriyianni-D. Latif - Relevance for Cyprus

2.30-2.40: M. Georgiou-Relevance for post-conflict settings

2.40-2.50: E. Dinç- Relevance for the Region in the Eastern Mediterranean

2.50-3.10 Q & A, Plenary

3.10-3.30 Coffee Break

Panel Discussion 5: Moderation by C. Makriyianni

5. Bi- and multilateral cooperation in curriculum development and best practice teaching aids in post-conflict settings.

Curricula and teaching aides

3.30-3.40: E. Fuchs-The work of GEI

3.40-3.50: D. Bentrovato-Curriculum and Textbooks reform: Lessons Learned

3.50-4.00: The work of CDRSEE and new plans for the future- A. Palikides

4.00-4.10: The Out of Eden Learn project at the Harvard Graduate School-E. Manjarrez

4.10-4.30: Q& A

4.30-5.00 Coffee Break

Panel Discussion 6: Moderation by D. Latif

6. Teaching and Teacher training

5.00-5.10: History teaching and educational anxieties from the far-right” -E. Christodoulou

5.10-5.20: Teaching for reconciliation since 2003 – The work of AHDR in History and Peace Education, by Loizos Loukaidis and Asliye Dagman

5.20-5.30: Peace Education and History Teaching-M. Zembylas

5.30-5.40: History Teaching and Critical Thinking-A. Bermudez

5.40-6.00 Coffee Break

6.00-7.00: **Concluding Plenary Discussion: Moderation by C. Psaltis**

Organizers

1. Georg Eckert Institute (EFREC): Together with their partners, EFREC organize exchange of ideas and facilitate cooperation between bi- and multilateral initiatives in the field of curricula and textbook revision in History and Social Science Education. EFREC aim is to develop methods, standards and products that promote historical and political education geared toward understanding and cooperation. EFREC will offer their expertise on history textbooks in post-conflict settings. EFREC's research on curriculum development and educational media will inform the seminar's discussions on effective strategies for history teaching.

2. MAKINGHISTORIES- Funded under Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA): MAKINGHISTORIES is a project to promote an interdisciplinary and dialogical conception of the production of knowledge on historical culture and education, in a growing context of globalization. The central aim of this project is the creation of an international and interdisciplinary network of institutions to produce new knowledge in order to enhance the role of historical representations in today's democratic and reflective societies. A total of 18 institutions from Europe, Australia, Canada, Korea, Israel and Latin America will participate in MAKINGHISTORIES. Special attention will be paid to the presence of gender and the importance of the challenges of globalization. This project will produce research articles, books, and a digital professional development course, generating a dialogical vision in history teaching.

As an interdisciplinary project that explores how we think, make, and recreate history, MAKINGHISTORIES will bring a unique perspective to the seminar. The work the seminar is of direct relevance to the WP4 of MAKINGHISTORIES: Troubled pasts: The representation of troubled pasts in present-day societies: can history "bite"?

3. Association for Historical Dialogue and Research- Cyprus (AHDR):

The Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR) is a unique multi-communal, non-for-profit, non-governmental organization established in Nicosia in 2003. Since its foundation, the AHDR has enlisted members from various ethnic, linguistic, and professional backgrounds working at various educational levels in Cyprus, making the first steps towards a greater effort to maintain a continuous, open dialogue about enhanced pedagogic practices that could encourage the values of the discipline of history. The AHDR recognizes the values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, the UNESCO aims on education, and the Council of Europe's recommendations relevant to history teaching. AHDR will bring its history teaching experts from the two communities of Cyprus to attend the seminar and will be responsible for the logistics at the H4C. AHDR's expertise in developing educational materials that promote historical understanding and critical thinking will be invaluable in shaping the seminar's content and discussions.

Invited to participate:

Experts of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTE) - CoE: The Observatory on History Teaching in Europe is an Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe, whose mission is to promote quality education in order to enhance the understanding of democratic culture. The Observatory provides a clear picture of the state of history teaching in its member states, based on reliable data and facts on how history is taught, through regular and thematic reports. OHTE will bring the Chair of the Governing Board, the Executive Director of the Council of Europe Observatory on History Teaching in Europe & Head of the History Education and Schools of Political Studies Division, the members of the Scientific Advisory Council to the seminar and present their findings from the Regular Report about history teaching in its member states. Also to present the work of HISTOLAB, a part of OHTE, that seeks to reinvigorate the field of history education by bringing together innovative ideas and projects about how to improve the teaching of history with a view to strengthening democratic culture in Europe and beyond.

Venue

The seminar will be held at the Home for Cooperation (H4C), a unique community center located in the middle of the dividing lines in Cyprus, in the Ledra Palace area, UN Buffer Zone, Nicosia. The H4C, with its symbolic value and unique location, offers an ideal space for dialogue and collaboration. Its mission of acting as a bridge-builder between separated communities aligns perfectly with the seminar's objectives.

Format and Audience

The event will be a two-day seminar. In the afternoon of the first day the first panel will take place setting the scene of history teaching in the eastern Mediterranean (curriculum aims, teaching practices, textbook use and challenges in history teaching practice).

In the morning of the second day panel 2 and 3 will take place and in the afternoon of the second day panel 4, 5 and 6. The target audience will be educators, history teachers, historians, social psychologists and conflict resolution experts from the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean. The coordinators of two Track two initiatives (Greek Turkish Forum <http://greeturkishforum.com/> and Diplomeds <https://diplomeds.org/>) and an academic network working for co-operation in the eastern Mediterranean (Shared Society Index <https://www.givathaviva.org/Roadmap-for-a-Shared-Society-Public-Engagement>) will also be invited to attend and contribute with their experience.

Outcomes

One of the key outcomes of the seminar will be a **published report**. The seminar will also generate specific suggestions for history teaching in the Eastern Mediterranean, in the form of a **Policy Paper** contributing to the advancement of history education in the region to be applied in curriculum recommendations and best practice teaching aids which will be developed together with OHTE members, AHDR and EFREC.

Conclusion

By bringing together diverse perspectives and expertise, this seminar will contribute to the advancement of history teaching in the Eastern Mediterranean region and promote the co-operation of countries in this geographical area. It will provide a platform for dialogue, learning, and collaboration, with the ultimate goal of promoting peace and understanding through education in this troubled area of the world that shows great potential for future co-operation.