

We tend to substitute for knowledge which is unattainable, certain conventions, the chief of which is to assume, contrary to all likelihood, that the future will resemble the past⁴
Keynes, J.M., 1937

Yearning for Yesterday,

The Lack of Ability among History Professionals in Europe to Design Innovative History Curricula and Standards.

Historians base their interpretations of the past on hard evidence. However when they contemplate about the quality of the historical knowledge of past generations, their opinions are rarely based on any evidence at all, they are all based on assumptions. I would like to start with a personal memory. A Dutch gymnasium classroom in 1963 with a group of 13 year old pupils. The regular history teacher has fallen seriously ill, and a young teacher, still at University, takes his place. In the front of the class are two pupils listening attentively to his interesting stories: Klaasje and Joke, yes not incidentally my name. The rest of my fellow class mates are very active, but certainly not with listening or taking notes. In the end of the teaching hour all handbooks are in one corner, all book cases in another and all shoes in a third one. In the tests set by the teacher, Klaasje and Joke compete for the best results. As soon as we deliver our papers we compare the number of pages we have written. When the test papers are returned of course we are the best.

However the others also wrestled through as a few years later we find ourselves back in the examination class. My fellow classmates are now disciplined, they consider themselves already adult. We now all listen to a rather boring teacher, who in my eyes tells interesting stories and we make notes. When tests are ahead I place myself at my father's desk, next to the telephone (remember no mobiles at that time telephones are fixed things at fixed places) Once in a while the telephone rings connecting me with one of my fellow classmates asking for explanations. This is the way I study for my tests and again, the results are the highest examination marks. I have decided to study history; all others have chosen other respectable subjects. At reunions we remember our school years, but my fellow classmates remember very little of the actual (history) lessons

Why do I tell you this story? Because I think that a lot of talking about the supposed superior historical knowledge of past generations is filled with nostalgia, and can be considered as romanticizing a non existing educational past. There exists very little substantial knowledge how much better the historical knowledge really was. One (small and not very serious) piece of Dutch evidence at least demonstrated in 1996 that it was not good when Dutch leading politicians were asked about their historical knowledge. Among them were many educated in the traditional educational system.

Stop romanticizing

In order to have helpful and sound debates among ourselves and with others, I would like to suggest to bring this *yearning for yesterday*, this longing for these good old times to an

end and face the situation that the majority of school students in the past and present were and are not very much interested in history and forget most of what they learned in school during the history class. Just as they forget about mathematics, science, chemistry. In fact they forget about all subjects, as long as they are not regularly revisited after students have left school.

Only historians and a (small) percentage of society with a clear liking for history continue to read and to study the past and think historical knowledge is important. The overall majority does not care about what they studied in school about the past and forget the facts learned in history class.

Does it mean that the general public is not interested in ancient times? Not at all. The heritage tourist industry in Europe is booming, museums in Europe have been mushrooming since 1945 and the European Heritage Days have hundred thousands of visitors each yearⁱⁱ. In a market driven society this has to indicate that people are interested and that they visit historical sites and museums. However if they connect these visits to what they have learned in school history is another matter.

Little appreciation of subject and the relevance of historical knowledge

This introduction does not mean that I would like to down play the problems to be discussed in this seminar; on the contrary I am very much concerned as school history in Europe is in serious problemsⁱⁱⁱ. However I do not consider this a problem in the first place created by society, I see it foremost as our own problem. A problem of historians and history educators, who have not been able to convince past and present pupils, students and subsequently the general public that historical knowledge, understanding of the past, and historical competencies and dispositions are relevant and even vital for understanding the world we live in.

School history is not considered important. Not by politicians as there is a tendency to discuss with as soon as there is a curriculum reform ahead if it would not be reasonable to decrease the time allocated to history in favour of subjects such as ICT, modern languages or any other *useful* subject^{iv}. Not by many academics historians, who despise the simple and often out of date interpretive character of the school history textbooks and lessons and generally look down at the history teacher trainers and history teachers^v. In almost each European country history educators complain about the lack of interest of academic historians in their problems related to history teaching in school^{vi}.

But also many pupils and students are not able to recognize the relevance of the subject^{vii}. For example, before 1998, many students in the Netherlands decided that history was not significant and therefore made choices for more useful subjects^{viii}. Only if such subjects were considered too difficult, they would opt for history as a *vluchtvak* (a subject for fugitives)^{ix} By the way: interesting to guess who invented such name, certainly not the students! On top of this all, in many meetings in European history classes, pupils and students often stated that they considered History a boring subject, or even worse, as I heard several times in Germany: a *hass fach* (A subject they hate)^x. Of course thousands and thousands of history teachers in Europe are able to motivate students positively, however we cannot deny that many of the European pupils and students are not able to

understand the significance of the subject and consider history a boring subject with little importance for their future lives.

If we, as historians and history educators, want to keep history in the school curriculum or even to give it an improved position in school time tables, it is the responsibility of historians and history educators to come forward with a more convincing story than what has been told so far. It seems in 2006 unfortunately that the best defenders for school history in Europe and beyond are still the traditionalists in favour of strong emphasis on national history^{xi}. Their arguments that 'the nation-state is the cultural glue that has traditionally held society together, and that social cohesion depends on creating and inculcating a common national culture in the schools, are used in the position paper for this seminar^{xii}' If these traditionalists with the above quoted arguments are the most reliable and solid supporters for history in school, is this, to my opinion, a symbol for the failure of us, historians and history educators, to convince present society with urgent and contemporary arguments about the relevance of school history.

Mix up debate on content selection/lack of memorised knowledge

However there is a second grave problem hindering the debates. In the disputes about curriculum design and content selection there seems to be a serious confusion between the selection of content matter and improving learning strategies. It is true, these two elements are very much related; however they are two different elements and should be addressed independently. The selection of curriculum content is mainly about what societies think is relevant historical knowledge for future generations of citizens, dependent on a number of additional issues. I will later return to this. The improvement of learning strategies focus on making the pupils and students more engaged in their learning process and helping them to behold these lessons learned for the future. The mix-up of these two elements is hindering the debates about possible programmes of study for history already for decades and give ground to arguments of conservative educational theorists and policy-makers that modern approaches to history education over-emphasis on historical skills and thinking and that therefore students and subsequently general public lack factual historical knowledge.

Unavoidable selection

The European tradition in history education has two very different conventions. The first, more or less generally applied in North Western Europe, offered open history curricula, where textbook authors, schools and teachers were rather free to design their own programmes^{xiii}. Other countries, among them France and all (Post) Communist countries, have more to very strict prescribed programmes of study, with regularly even for each lesson exactly given what to teach. In the last 5 to 10 years this general picture has been under discussion, resulting in stricter curricula in the first region and more open in the latter^{xiv}. However there are signs that despite all debates about obligatory or even canonized historical knowledge, history curricula move back to the picture before 1990^{xv}. A symptom of the fact that each curriculum is perishable, how well it is designed.

The reinforced European curriculum debates and in several countries also the introduction of national examinations made the challenge of content selection more prominent and lead to a hard confrontation of theory and practice. It became clear that writing a curriculum, which included all what was considered important, relevant and useful, was totally impossible. The time allocated to history in the national or school time tables was of course limited and not all historical topics are suitable for pupils and students of all ages and levels. As Sue Bennett, former EUROCLIO President and former School History Curriculum Expert in QCA, London used to say ‘the problem with curriculum selection is not what to put in, but what to leave out’. The habit of fantasising about what pupils were learning in school history classes was flooded, it was clear that official selection was inevitable. And with this insight the concern about the lack of (survey) knowledge grew^{xvi}.

In the present curriculum debates survey chronological knowledge is artificially positioned against the practice to offer a selection of historical themes^{xvii}. However, what is considered, the traditional chronological survey of historical knowledge is nothing more than the traditionalist’s selection of historical topics: a monoperspective narrative with many important men, few women, no minority communities, much politics, lack of ordinary people, some elite culture, not too much emphasis on colonial history and in fact excluding most parts of the world^{xviii}. Even the newly published experimental French/German school textbook *Histoire/Geschichte, Europa und die welt seit 1945* , which has been designed for common use in upper secondary education in both countries has not been able to avoid this traditional outlook on the past^{xix}. Only two women feature in the biographies of important persons since 1945: Angela Merkel and Margaret Thatcher, the French authors were not able to come forward with one female compatriot from that period.

Failing memory

Politicians, historians and media all over Europe and beyond repeatedly complain that the general public has a lack of historical knowledge. Traditionally memorisation was considered a good educational skill, and history education was a subject where pupils had ample time to exercise that skill. However memorisation went out of pedagogical fashion. Many in the present generation of educators doubts if memorizing lots of facts is still useful for students in the 21th century, indeed (historical) information and knowledge is everywhere available. However it seems that it is very hard to come with alternative solutions to have sustainable learning outcomes for school history. The Dutch Curriculum Committee in 2001, lead by the historian Piet de Rooy, suggested to repeat and intensify the historical content course three times during the school career of a student in order to make them better remember what has been taught ^{xx}. This solution consequently leads to either an undesirable even further limited choice of content or an unacceptable superficial teaching, especially bearing in mind the fact that the Netherlands, together with Britain, is the country in Europe with the least time allocated to history in the curriculum^{xxi}. In order to achieve more sustainable learning outcomes, it must be possible for educationalists in 2006 to find more creative solutions, applying modern educational tools.

Lack of knowledge about sustainable learning and remembering strategies

We need far more understanding how memory works, and I agree whole heartedly with the first additional thesis of the PHD study of Jannet van Drie ‘ that history education would be helped with more research how pupils learn history’ and would like to add also how they remember^{xxii}. Dr Jannet van Drie researched in her study how new technologies fostered historical reasoning. Carrying out a long term follow up study could give information if such learning also could support better remembering and therefore lead to better residue knowledge of school history lessons^{xxiii}. Such research is necessary for traditional as well as innovative history learning approaches, and would be a great support increasing sustainable results for a subject like school history

The position of EUROCLIO the European Standing Conference of History Teachers Associations

EUROCLIO, the European standing conference of History Teachers Associations, the organisation I represent, has been engaged in similar debates like the one here in Utrecht since it was founded in 1993. EUROCLIO in 2006 represents more than 60 organisations from over 40, mainly European, countries^{xxiv}. It aims to support the development of an innovative and inclusive approach to History and History and Citizenship Education. It promotes collaborative values, critical awareness and mutual respect, peace, stability and democracy in society through history teaching and it wants to contribute to prevention and reconciliation of inter- and intrastate conflicts. It therefore focus on improving the quality of history and history education and the quality of the professional group, on enhancing history teachers’ organizations and civil society and on national and international communication, networking and cooperation.

EUROCLIO supports a history teaching that addresses a balanced variety of political, cultural, economic and social issues and of geographical dimensions, offering school history from local to global level. In order to make history relevant for young people history teaching should be highly related to current knowledge, experiences, challenges and problems. Working with history is therefore an open process and pupils should be made aware that historical knowledge and interpretation are (to a certain extend) provisional.

The organisation has also defined a general subject methodology where the methods applied to historical themes have to be transparent and consistent. They include a clear historical question, critical use of empirical evidence, historical perspective of interpretation, keeping in mind the knowledge, mentalities and values of the respective period and a discussion about the relevance and impact for the present. History teaching should focus on the development of curiosity and spirit of inquiry, ability to think independently and resistance to being manipulated. EUROCLIO adheres to a pedagogy that follows those approaches to learning that foster independent and creative learners.

It is clear that this ideal picture of school history is far from the every day reality of school history practice. In order to acquire (some) understanding of the differentiated reality of learning and teaching of history in Europe, EUROCLIO has, since 1997, organised each year an inquiry into the trends in history education in Europe. The topics of the study are always related to the theme of the large international training conference EUROCLIO is organising each year. The inquiries of past years looked therefore into topics such as aims and objectives for school history, inclusion of minorities in school history, the place and role of heritage education, holocaust education and the impact of the growing Europe on the history curricula. Without pretending that the figures acquired follow the academic standards for such researches, we may say that the results of the questionnaires offer a good overview about the whereabouts of school history in Europe in the last decade.

The 2003 questionnaire was related to the commemoration of 10 years EUROCLIO. The questionnaire aimed to give the state of history education in Europe in 2003 and to sketch and visualise the process of change since 1989. The results of this questionnaire are a useful resource for the trends, problems and debates in school history^{xxv}. The outcomes showed that questions about the organisation of the curriculum, the aims and objectives of the (national) history curricula, the discussions on emphasis on knowledge or competencies and on chronological order or thematic approach, engaged history educators throughout Europe^{xxvi}. It became also clear that skills and thematic approach since 1989 had been winning ground^{xxvii}. However as high-speed change also was a feature of European history curriculum development in the period 1989-2003, the present picture is different again^{xxviii}. The mere fact of during this seminar the same topics are again on the table, shows that all these issues are unsolved. And to my opinion will never be solved, as each curriculum is imperfect and outdated as soon as it is written.

Concentration on the nation state

The innovations in the methodology of school history have been focal point for the way EUROCLIO has worked on the learning and teaching of history in Europe since 1993. However it does not mean that the members were not interested in historical content. On the contrary, the search for the European dimension, as future direction for school history is stated in the foundation statutes. After all, as soon as EUROCLIO started working, members became aware of the fact that history curricula in Europe in general were not supporting European awareness let alone European identity. In 1993 history education in most (large) European countries had still a national centric approach. Even with topics such as the Potsdam Conference of 1945, the national focus was overwhelming^{xxix}. It was generally felt that history education needed to widen its perspective and needed Europe wide discussions and activities in order to create new ways to look into Europe's and the nations past^{xxx}. Unfortunately it has always been very difficult to convince donors that history education in Europe needed such content related projects. Only in the case of the Balkan, clearly due to political agendas, donors were interested in multilateral projects addressing the history of the region. The European Union only has occasionally supported multilateral activities on history education, however the focus should be on concepts such as citizenship, human rights and democratic practice, and should not directly be linked to

the hard core historical content^{xxx}. As a result of these donor attitudes, EUROCLIO activities have had less focus on reinforcing the European dimension in the history curriculum than the organisation would have liked.

European and global dimension in school history?

The trend to strengthen the European dimension in the early Nineteen Nineties did not result in a strong growth in the European dimension in the learning and teaching of history in Europe. Recurrent questions in the EUROCLIO questionnaires seem to indicate that since 2000 the focus on national history in Europe is even increasing and that the interest to enhance a European dimension is subsequently decreasing. When EUROCLIO asked its Member Associations in 2003 which dimension has been increased since the late Eighties, national history came out as most increased^{xxxii}. However this could at that time be generally attributed to the developments in the new and newly democratic countries in central and Eastern Europe. In 2004 the members were asked to reflect in how far they were satisfied with the proportion of geographical dimensions- local, regional, national, European and world history- in their curricula^{xxxiii}. Most satisfaction was ushered on the proportion of national history (average *yes* for all age-groups 68%), whereas the proportion of local (*no* average 51 %) and regional history (*no* 52 %) was met with some dissatisfaction. The amount of European history received a *yes* average of 55 % satisfaction and 32 % dissatisfaction. In 2005 the results on the question if more teaching about European issues was necessary, show that there is a general interest for some increase, but not too much. However promoting European and global citizenship through history education was generally acknowledged seen as desirable ^{xxxiv}.

In 2005 the inquiry also looked into the question what *Europe* means when European history educators teach about *Europe*^{xxxv}. The answers show that Europe means in the first place teaching about Western Europe, with a *good coverage* from 42% for 10-12, via 63% for 12-15 to more than 80% for age group 15-18/19. Second comes Central Europe (11%, 32% and 53% *good coverage*) and Eastern Europe 10, 28 and 48 *good coverage*). However Northern Europe is very little represented in European history classrooms. (Only 12%, 20% and 31% *good coverage*).

However it is questionable what *good coverage* actually means.^{xxxvi} Asking more detailed questions in how far for example a country like Latvia was represented in history textbooks, it came out that it only featured, or, perhaps better to say, was mentioned, in the aftermath of World War I, related to the Molotov von Ribbentrop Pact and in connection with the end of Soviet Union and new independent states. The present European dimension differs only marginally from the curriculum choices before 1989: teaching about Central and Eastern Europe means still predominantly teaching about Russia and the Soviet Union. The same inquiry showed that a global dimension for school history in Europe is virtually absent^{xxxvii}. And is, except for a few attempts, also hardly been discussed in Europe.

A curriculum from a truly global perspective is as far as I know hardly implemented in Europe^{xxxviii}. Many argue that in order to make students to understand the world they live in it is better to start near by, and start with local and national history^{xxxix} These are

arguments though, not based on any specific evidence, but based on a practical and traditional point of view. I think that there are other approaches possible, however accept that for many history curricula from a national/ regional perspective are the most logical approach.

The recent Dutch history curriculum debates have instead of using the term curriculum or programme of study introduced the word *canon* for describing compulsory knowledge of Dutch history and culture^{xl}. I cannot accept that the traditional perspective is presented as the (national) canon of historical knowledge, as this concept would imply that this it is canonised knowledge, more important than or even superior to other knowledge. Such thinking is highly improper or even objectionable. A curriculum is not more than a practical choice, given the realities to what the present society/history professionals thinks relevant at a certain moment. Those involved in history curriculum and textbook studies know how regional and temporal the choice of some topics are and how provisional interpretations of certain events have been. In Spanish history education World War II has as little prominence as Balkan history in England. Topics like Korea and Vietnam, popular in the Seventies and Eighties, hardly feature anymore. However the Islamic world, colonialism and slavery are gaining ground, while gender still struggles for recognition. I agree with Robert Phillips that each (history) curriculum is tied to the present, to the people and society it stems from but should not receive any higher significance^{xli}. Different people and new times will come forward with fresh ideas, new concerns and other requirements.

Most topics through show in school history a long tenability and feature therefore already for a long time in history curricula. Their interpretation and focus has been subordinate to ideological change as it comes to the way they are presented in schools, however many elements in the history curricula, introduced in the 19th century, are still present in history curricula, irrespective (big) ideological changes^{xlii}. Myths and good stories have a long life in school history^{xliii}

The situation described above shows that despite the intense debates on the content of history curricula, and their methodological approaches, the basis for the curriculum and textbook approach does not show so much change 1989, despite the fact that we and our pupils and students live in a globalising society. Instead of trying to come to terms with the needs of this globalising society for young people, many influential local politicians and intellectuals in Europe are scared about losing control and propagate to increase the national approach with the arguments earlier used^{xliv}.. However the worst scenario for school history is to escape to a secure past and to present a history curriculum which was taught in schools already decades ago^{xlv}. Such approach reveals a poverty of thinking, a lack of courage and a deficit in imagination.

If historians and history educators want future recognition that their subject is relevant and significant for the coming generations, future history curricula shall have to start come forward with new creative questions and not looking backwards. Historians and history educators have to try to reflect on curriculum choices which could be important for a student living in the 21st Century. Going back to the nation state as nucleus for the

history lesson is simply not longer an option; even the European dimension is already too narrow, historians and history educators have to figure out how to work with a global perspective.

Let me end with some suggestions for this road map:

Basic aims

In my work with history educators I always start with the basic question about the purpose of teaching history. I have noticed, to my great surprise that this question was not so simple, as many colleagues have never learned to think about this question and have quite unclear ideas about it and what is written in the history curricula they were working with^{xlvi}. Strange, as it will be clear that designing a history curriculum means to start with a basis principle and clear aims and objectives. The German history education philosophers have with their *geschichts bewusstsein* theories (what unfortunately translates into the total empty English concept *historical consciousness*) laid out the basis principle for history education. Although these educational philosophers have not been able to develop a concrete and truly common understanding of this concept, they agree on the three vital elements shaping this concept: interpretation of the past, understanding of the present and perspective for the future^{xlvi}. If we talk about a possible role for school history in creating social cohesion it is clear that it will not always be able to show a common past to all students, however it can help pupils understand the common reality of the present and at it best to prepare them for a common/shared destiny.

This does not mean that I am advocating teaching only modern history. On the other hand I certainly believe that the emphasis of the content selection, certainly for the age group of 15 years and older, should be focused on a rather recent past. I do not agree which many curriculum developers in Greece, Italy or Portugal, who like to emphasize those periods in the national past, such as antiquity, renaissance and the discoveries, which place their cultures in a much better daylight than the teaching about the recent past. Many Post Communist countries after 1989 have also the attitude to avoid teaching about the recent national pasts, and looked for those topics in the national past which emphasized the nation's glory and victim hood^{xlvi}.

In 2003 the EUROCLIO inquiry listed the main aims for teaching history in Europe. Supporting citizenship and democratic education, helping pupils to understand the world they live in and enhancing critical learning skills are the most important, mentioned in almost all history curricula. But in fact all aims mentioned, except strengthening national identity and patriotism, are worth while to strive for and should be the underlying fabric for the standards to be set by new history curricula^{xlvi}.

Local to global

Teaching the history of 44 different European countries is impossible, even more so teaching the history of the 192 countries and many more nations which inhabit this globe. Professionals in the Nineties were interested to discuss ways to open up national history curricula, creating a European dimension without necessarily designing a compulsory

catalogues of European topics. At that time, it was a missed opportunity that EUROCLIO was not able to convince donors of the importance to explore this content matter on a Europe wide scale. EUROCLIO bi- and multi-lateral projects are experimenting how to teach a (shared) past from the perspective of a village, a country, a region, Europe and beyond, but it has never had the opportunity to develop a Europe wide concept.

The Council of Europe project Teaching about European Twentieth Century History, commissioned Dr Robert Stradling to publish a handbook about this topic.¹ For this publication he used experience he had acquired in his work as senior consultant for history for the Council of Europe and impute from the expertise networks of the Council of Europe and EUROCLIO. Together they listed the traditional (European) canon on the history of the Twentieth Century and compiled also an alternative listⁱⁱ.

Traditional Themes 20th Century history	Innovative Themes 20 th Century history
Origins of the First World War	Technological and scientific developments
World War I	Social change in the lives of ordinary people
Russian Revolution	Changing roles of women in society
The re-structuring of Europe in 1918	The emergence of mass culture and youth culture
The rise of Totalitarianism: Communism, Nationalism Socialism and Fascism	The distinctive cultural and artistic movements
Economic Depression	Industrialisation and the emergence of post-industrial societies
The collapse of International Peace	Urbanisation
World War II: the People's War	Transport and communications
Re-structuring Europe in 1945	Population movements
The Cold War era: NATO and the Warsaw Pact	The changing situation of national and other minorities in Europe
De-colonisation	Conflict and cooperation
Post-1945 political and economic co-operation	Nationalist movements
The European Community	Totalitarianism and Liberal Democracy
Glasnost and Perestroika	Human Rights
The break-up of the Soviet Union	
The emerging independent democracies of central and eastern Europe	

In the new list of themes, there is space for all traditional topics; however these topics are placed in a broader perspective. And this list shows that it is already (out) dated. In 2006 themes as environmentalism and energy dependency and the rise in communication and globalisation could be easily inserted.

It is obvious that a global perspective will replace the more or less strict chronological order by a thematic approach embedded in a chronological time frame. The suggestions for themes such as democracy and human rights, common European experiences, European cultural heritage and multicultural Europe by European history educators put forward in the EUROCLIO questionnaires of 2004 and 2005 fit in the above mentioned alternative list of Stradlingⁱⁱⁱ. It looks that there is wide support among history educators for such approach, at least for history about the twentieth century.

A global perspective does not mean throwing away the national perspective, but it means not using it as starting point. Talking about the highly fashionable topic enlightenment, we can begin with the concept, where, how and why it started, how it spread, where not, what it meant for certain societies, social strata and men and women, comparing a national and international example, and to assess what it meant for the local environment. Such model can be applied from Romans to slavery to the emancipation movement of women.

Cultural heritage

Modern global curricula should not forget cultural heritage. Among the aims for school history in Europe the aim raising awareness for cultural heritage came 4th in 2003^{liii}. EUROCLIO has since the 1990ties followed an active policy to foster heritage education. This year we even tendered to obtain the organisation of the European Heritage Days as an opportunity to further the relation between European heritage and educational institutions. It was a failed attempt bringing together cultural establishments and education with the aim to reflect on the present approach to heritage with focuses on the national heritage of the dominant community in order to widen it to a broader inclusive and European/international concept. In the vision of EUROCLIO heritage in school education could create interest for the richness of world cultural inheritance, foster responsibility towards preservation and enhance awareness for misuse of heritage for nationalist purposes.

Concepts

School history and the academic study of history both use a set of (historical) concepts. Developing modern history curricula means of course including this basic set of tools for presenting the past among them the most important such as mutual inclusive, interpretation, evidence and sources, multiperspectivity, multiple narratives, complexity, perspectival, objectivity, controversy, sensitivity and civic responsibility plus the concepts change and continuity; similarity and difference; cause and consequence; time/chronology and fact and opinion.

Skills

From above it is clear that from my point of view the (historical) skills and competencies are an indispensable part of the history curriculum. TS Eliot posed the question: 'Where is the knowledge we lost in information, where is the wisdom we lost in knowledge?'^{liv} In order to move from information and knowledge to wisdom, students must be able to formulate questions, gather and process, to structure and explain historical phenomena, processes and changes and to argue and give an opinion.

Attitudes, values and dispositions

History in school and the academic study of history differ on one very crucial point: the pedagogical assignment of school. Nicolas Tate writes in 2004: the purpose of education include both the transmission of what one generation values sufficiently to want to pass it on to the next and the promotion of attitudes necessary for the maintenance and

strengthening of a liberal society within a particular state. There is no place here for moral relativism^{lv}. I agree with him, although I would have preferred him to use the concept democracy more than liberal. It means that learning about the past means addressing topics which have to do with basic attitudes, values and dispositions towards society. A delicate matter, as so often history education in past and present has been misused as the messenger of political, religious or other ideological stands. The recent disposition debate in the USA about the social justice paragraph shows again what dangerous waters these issues are for (history) education. How can history educators teach without preaching and still contribute to developing basic human attitudes, values and dispositions among the youth. Teaching history means fostering issues like democracy, tolerance, respect for human rights, mutual understanding, solidarity, freedom, courage, equal opportunities, responsibility but also love and friendship. It also means trying to combat stereotyping, prejudice, bias, xenophobia, racism, violence and hate. And learning about the past means encouraging curiosity, spirit of inquiry, critical and independent thinking. School history wants also contribute to students which operate in an open, respectful, responsive, collaborative and active manner.

And finally, I would like to paraphrase the 6th additional thesis in memory of one of the promoters of Jannet van Drie, professor Jos van der Linden that curriculum development should not only be lead by concepts such as useful, relevant, or feasible but also by those things which reach the hart and make enthusiastic^{lvi}.

All these elements should be addressed when we write curricula for the future. Unfortunately will the time allocated to history in the curriculum be restricted as ever before, and the difference in levels between students and pupils will probably continue to exist. The global curricula of the future will be therefore as imperfect as the curricula of the past and the present. However if those involved can make clear how they have wrestled and why certain choices have been made, these curricula will be acceptable. But only if they have taken into account the above mentioned requirements and are presented as a provisional outcome based on intellectual exercises and practical constraints. But they are not acceptable if they are presented as canons implying eternal values and as results of yearning for yesterday.

So many desires have to be combined in history curricula, that reality and theory are often separated by a wide fissure. Therefore some relativism, humour and acceptance of reality is needed, and also a spirit which continue to strive for improvement without getting disillusioned by the many disappointments. How beautiful the curriculum is designed, the practicalities of reality interfere on many levels. The resources always are less abundant as the curriculum developers wanted to anticipate, implementation strategies are barely sufficient, training programmes for teachers are scanty, the amount of time allocated to history is rarely enough to cover all curriculum requirements.

As so often in my paper, the problem of learning and remembering strategies is mostly ignored. This history educator has unfortunately little competency in this respect. But I

am convinced that if we want in the future to maximalise the sustainable learning outcomes of history lessons, the impact of this special expertise in curriculum and standards commission should be increased.

I do believe that we should not be carried away by over optimistic expectations; our students are just like us, human beings. An average memory can possibly only behold a certain amount of active facts. The present information society provides people with so many imputes that our memory becomes overexposed. Eril Lipsic, writes in one of his additional PHD theses even that 'Nowadays, more important than obtaining the information is the ability to forget it'^{lvii}.

And when you, we or others, plan to organise again inquiries about what children and adults know about what they learned about history in school, the organisers should offer interesting prizes like lap tops, mobile telephones, I-pots or other desirable modern gadgets for the winner. I bet that the memory and therefore the amount of historical knowledge of those questioned will increase!

ⁱ Keynes, J.M., 1937, Some Economic Consequences of a Declining Population, *Eugenics Review*, 29: 13-17,(13)

ⁱⁱ Kees Ribbens, *Een eigentijds verleden. Alledaagse historische cultuur in Nederland 1945-2000* (Hilversum 2002) about the increase in Chapter 2, Musea. See for European Heritage Days <http://www.ehd.coe.int/sdx/jep/index.xsp>

ⁱⁱⁱ Leeuw-Roord, Joke van der (ed), History Changes. Facts and Figures about History Education in Europe since 1989 (2004) 12-15

^{iv} ibidem, page 12-15.

^v Justine Ferrari, Crusades equal to 9/11: textbook in The Australian 8 March 2006 is just a recent example.

^{vi} This seminar, and also the NWO project Paradoxes of De-Canonization. New Forms of Cultural Transmission in History <http://www.fhk.eur.nl/onderzoek/paradoxes/> demonstrate that this reproach is not always valid, as these events are signs of growing interest of academic historians in the Netherlands and beyond for the challenges of school history.

^{vii} Magne Anvik and Bodo von Borries edited, *Youth and History, the Comparative European Survey on Historical and Political Attitudes among Adolescents*, Hamburg, Germany, 1997. Youth and History. page A 66

^{viii} About the developments in Dutch school history see Kees Ribbens and Loek Janssens, *Syllabus change: a Dutch perspective* in Martin Roberts(ed). After the introduction of the so called Mammoetwet in the Netherlands in 1968 history became an optional subject for upper secondary education in the Netherlands. In 1998 a new educational law for upper secondary education created four profiles, in two of them, thanks to heavy lobby work, included history.

^{ix} Kees Ribbens, page 63. A examination profile containing of four of modern languages, history and geography was often referred to as pretpakket (amusement or party choice)

^x Conny Schellings, *leertaken in de mens-en maatschappijvakken* in de Tweede fase van het Voortgezet onderwijs: nieuwe onderwijsmethodes in de praktijk, in VELON tijdschrift voor leerarenopleiders jrg 27(3) 2006 pg 23-34 writes that students identify history as a subject for memorizing not for understanding

^{xi} *The Future of Britishness*: Speech by Gordon Brown to the Fabian Society: January 14 2006. Fabian Society Press Release. Latvian school history came in 2004 under heavy political pressure as the right-wing politicians scandalised the lack of attention paid in the curriculum to national history, and advocated changing the existing history curriculum into a Latvian (language/ethnic population) centred curriculum. Ten year commemoration in Croatia of operation Storm in 2005 reinforced nationalist political pressure on history education and forced the Minister of Education to abandon his more inclusive approach as it did not serve the national Croatian interests. Similar stories can be told in 2005-2006 for Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Russia. But also in the Netherlands school history is supported by those who favour (much) more emphasis on Dutch history.

^{xii} Quote from the position paper for this seminar. Dutch historian Piet de Rooy, responsible for the new history curriculum, Volkskrant [September](#)

^{xiii} History changes, 21-22.

^{xiv} Examples for this development are history curricula developed since 1989 in England, Finland, The Netherlands and Denmark

^{xv} Some of the most recent history curricula developed in England, Finland, the Netherlands and Northern Ireland give only very general indications about what is expected from students. Web pages?

^{xvi} The example of England is very instructive for the course of the debates. The first National curriculum in 1989 had many compulsory components. Since the history curriculum is revised several times with as argument that the compulsory content was overloaded. In 2006 very few content suggestions are still compulsory. Over this period we see the debate about in depth and overview knowledge emerging with players as Christine Councill, Michel Riley. It is clear that English students and pupils have little survey knowledge of English, let alone British or European history.

^{xvii} History changes, 28

^{xviii} Jan Bank en Piet de Rooy, 'Een canon van het Nederlandse verleden. Wat iedereen móet weten van de vaderlandse geschiedenis', *NRC Handelsblad* 30 oktober 2004 gave a clear example of this approach, but also the Dutch curriculum designed in 2001 shows similar tendencies.

^{xix} Ludwig Bernlochner and others, *Histoire/Geschichte, Europa und die welt seit 1945*, Leipzig, 2006. www.histoiregeschichte.com

^{xx} De Rooy ea, Verleden, heden en toekomst, Advies van de commissie historische en maatschappelijke vorming, 16-19

^{xxi} History changes, 8-13

^{xxii} Jannet van Drie, *Learning about the past with new technologies. Fostering historical reasoning in computer-supported collaborative learning*, 2005. Additional thesis PHD study,

^{xxiii} Christine Counsell, 'Historical knowledge and historical skills: a distracting

dichotomy', in J. Arthur and R. Phillips eds., *Issues in history teaching* (London/New York 2000) 54-71.

xxiv <http://www.euroclio.eu/mambo/index.php>

xxv History Changes, Chapter 3

xxvi History Changes, 28

xxvii Ibidem, 29

xxviii The results of the EUROCLIO Questionnaire of 2006 showed that enhancing national identity has in 2006 become the most important aim of school education in Europe, make pupils understanding the world they live in comes now third. On the question what was the most important skill stipulated in present European history curricula the answer was , developing a sense of chronological awareness and being able to place events in chronological order.

xxix Joke van der Leeuw, Altered States and Consciousness, examining Potsdam, TES, April 7, 1995 V-VI

xxx The EUROCLIO Questionnaires in 2004, 2005 and also 2006 contained questions related to teaching European history and European citizenship .

xxxi The financing of EUROCLIO always has been a problematic story. Although a manifold of donors have contributed to its work, most of them were standalone contributions, targeted on a single event or project. Only the Dutch ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs have generously contributed on a long term basis. Unfortunately in 2005, certainly related to the changed political climate, Dutch support is seriously decreased.

xxxii History changes, 20

xxxiii EUROCLIO questionnaire 2004: Belonging to Europe - Small Nation, Big Issues, artikel Bulletin.

xxxiv Quest 2005

xxxv Title onderzoek, artikel Bulletin. Rest bij ons te krijgen

xxxvi In the same inquiry the question was asked about the representation of the rest of the world. The outcome was clear; apart from North America with an average for all age-groups of less than 25% *good coverage*, all other continents were hardly featuring at all.

xxxvii 2005 questionnaire

xxxviii The most vocal advocate for world history in Europe is Luigi Cajani, from Università di Roma 'La Sapienza' (Italy). He has been involved in experiments to implement such approach in school history in Italy.

xxxix Wijnand W. Mijnhardt De zinloosheid van een nationale canon in leerbaar in Arie Wilschut, Haalbaar. Over geschiedenisonderwijs en de rol van een canon daarin (17)

xl Maria Grever, TVG in discribes the difference between curriculum and canon: the first is a proposals what to teach, the second is mandatory

xli Robert Phillips in Reflections on history, nationhood and schooling in Martin Roberts (ed) *After the Wall. History Teaching in Europe, 1989-2003*, Vol. 4, EUSTORY Series 'Shaping European History' Koerber Foundation (2004) 39-48 (43)

xlii To give two examples: in the EUROCLIO Balkan project *Understanding a Shared Past, Learning for the Future*, it came out that many topics in the history curricula of Albania,

Bulgaria and Macedonia, introduced in the 19th century were still present in the communist and post communist curricula. And also in a recent meeting with the head of the Turkish Curriculum Committee Prof. Dr Mustafa Safran, it came out that the only international topics in the Turkish upper secondary history curriculum, Discoveries, Renaissance, Enlightenment, France Revolution and Industrial Revolution, had entered the curriculum in the late 19th century, when under French influence the Ottoman leadership started to build an educational system.

^{xliii} Recent example in the NRC, September 2006, Only with the beginning of this school year the famous 19th century story about secret Greek Orthodox classes during the Ottoman period is abolished, despite the fact that academic historians in Greece long ago proved that the Ottoman had generally allowed education. And also the story of the Danish king wearing a yellow (David) star during the war, survived against negative evidence. Pupils and students like such stories.

^{xliv} Geert Mak, *Gedoemd tot Kwetsbaarheid*, (2005) danger for society, Geert mak Mak' grip etc does politicians and media reign

^{xlv} Joke van der Leeuw-Roord, *De commissie De Rooy maakt vrouwen weer onzichtbaar in het geschiedenisonderwijs of oude wijn in nieuwe zakken (167-179) in Sekse en de City*, *Jaarboek voor Vrouwengeschiedenis* 22 (2002)

^{xlvi} In 2002 ? asking the Dean of the History Faculty in the University of Moldova and in this function head of the history curriculum committee what was the aim of teaching history he almost threw me out as it was the most stupid question ever asked to him. In September 2006, talking with Slovenian history educators about the same problem, they came after long hesitation with the aim to acquire information or knowledge about the past.

^{xlvii} Macdonald, S. (ed.) (2000) *Approaches to European Historical Consciousness. Reflections and Provocations*. Hamburg contains a variety of articles about the understanding of this concept. Kees Ribbens, 18-

^{xlviii} The new nationhood urged historians to find examples of earlier nationhood. However for some countries this was very difficult or even impossible. Slovaks had to go back to the short lived Moravian Empire in 10th century, vague Middleleaval empires in Balkan received great prominence and the Cozaks became the nucleus of the Ukrainian people. Unfortunately for Estonia such early nationhood was even not possible, however it build its national narrative on surpression by Crusader knights, German nobility, Russians and Soviets.

^{xlix} History changes, 23

¹ Stradling, R. (2001) *Teaching 20th-century European History*, Strasbourg

^{li} Bobs boek page.... http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/education/History_Teaching/

^{lii} EUROCLIO Questionnaires 2004 and 2005.

^{liii} History changes, 23

^{liv} <http://wwwFOUNDATIONSmag.com/wisdom.html>

^{lv} Nicolas Tate, *History and Identity in Martin Roberts*(ed), 28-38/29

^{lvi} Jannet van Drie, *Learning about the past with new technologies. Fostering historical reasoning in computer-supported collaborative learning*. additional thesis PHD study, 2005

^{lvii} Quote in