

Spring session 2019

Minutes of the working group meeting *Heritage and Creation, Shaping Europe*

Date: Thursday 11th April 2019 from 16.30 to 18.30

Lieu: Palais de l'Europe, room 2

Co-coordinators :

- Hugo CASTELLI EYRE, European Network Church on the Move EN-RE
- Noël ORSAT, International Confederation of Professional and Intellectual Workers (CITI)

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I. Opening of the working group

Claude VIVIER LE GOT opens the meeting alongside the two co-coordinators of the working group, Hugo CASTELLI EYRE and Noël ORSAT. She told participants that former French MEP and former Minister Alain LAMASSOURE should arrive during the meeting. In view of his very busy agenda at the end of his European term of office, he will be given priority so that he can present his views on the project for a European observatory for History teaching.

At the meeting, the following people were present:

- **Mr Pierre BEDOUELLE**, the European Federation of Artists' Colonies (euroArt) – **SPEAKER**
- Lilia BENSEDRINE THABET, Robert Schuman Institute for Europe (IRSE)
- Michel BERTET, International Office for Catholic Education (OIEC)
- François BOUTELOUP, Rotary International
- Jean-Louis BURBAN, International Confederation of Professional & Intellectual Workers (CITI)
- Anne-Marie CHAVANON, International Federation for Housing, Urban Planning and Territorial Planning (FIMUAT)
- Hedi CONDROYER, European Social Action Network (ESAN)
- Jean-Louis DURAND-DROUHIN, ESAN
- Léon DUJARDIN, ESAN

- Pierre DUSSERE, OIEC
- Guillaume FROGER, Confederation of European Companions (CCEG)
- Stephen GATT, European Union of Former Students of Catholic Education (UNAEC-Europe)
- Claude-Laurent GENTY, CITI
- François GOETTELMMANN, Rotary International
- Philippe GROLLEAU, Pax Romana
- Marie-Hélène HALLIGON, Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation (RENATE)
- Beata HILDEBRAND, International Association of Urban Planners (ISOCARP/AIU)
- Alkistis KALANTZI, ESAN
- Geneviève LALOY, European Network of Teacher Training Institutes (Comenius)
- **Mr Alain LAMASSOURE**, Member of the European Parliament – **SPEAKER**
- René LEDERMANN, ESAN
- Brigitte LE GOUIS, European Centre of the International Council of Women (CECIF)
- Salomon LEVY, International Council B'NAI B'RITH (ICBB)
- Rémi LOISON, Federation for Education in Europe (FEDE)
- Patrick LONG, ESAN
- Annie LOTTMANN-LIETAR, European Federation of Psychoanalysis and Strasbourg Psychoanalytical School (FEDEPSY)
- Elisabeth MARIE, Caritas Europa
- Sophie MARINO, National School of Fine Arts in Paris (ENSBA)
- Luminata PETRESCU, International Federation for Mediation Therapy and Support Assistance (FITRAM)
- Maritchu RALL, CECIF
- Rinaldo ROSSO, FEDE
- Hélène ROZET, International Movement ATD Fourth World (ATD)
- Bertrand SHOENTGEN, CITI
- Peter SCHWARZBICH, CCEG
- Xavier SOURON, Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the Council of Europe
- Marie-Françoise THULL, ESAN
- Gaël VIALA, CCEG
- Claude VIVIER LE GOT, Chairwoman of the Education and Culture Committee, FEDE
- Caterina ZADRA, CITI

II. The European observatory on History teaching by the MEP Alain LAMASSOURE

1) General speech

Claude Vivier LE GOT briefly presents the political career of *Alain LAMASSOURE*, former Minister Delegate for European Affairs and Member of the European Parliament (MEP) for twenty years, who will not run for another term in the European elections of May 2019.

In January 2019, French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe commissioned Mr LAMASSOURE to carry out a feasibility study on the creation of a European observatory for History teaching in Council of Europe's Member States.

Mr LAMASSOURE conducted his mission in conjunction with a network of recognised institutions in this field, including the Euroclio network, the Georg Eckert Institute, the Franco-German Institute in Cergy-Pontoise, the House of European History (Maison de l'histoire européenne) and in March 2019, the Steering Committee for Educational Policies and Practices (CDPPE) of the Council of Europe (CoE). This mission also covered the idea of organising, during the French Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers (from May to November 2019), a meeting of the CoE's national academies (gathered in the '**All European Academies**' network) on the theme of History teaching.

Mr LAMASSOURE is therefore invited to describe the context in which this feasibility study is being carried out for the Education and Culture Committee and the working group **Heritage and Creation, Shaping Europe**. His intervention can be summarized as follows.

When he began his mission entrusted by Edouard Philippe, Mr. LAMASSOURE realized that there were two categories of European countries with regard to History teaching:

- Countries in which History is taught in exemplary conditions with a national desire for reconciliation between peoples, after 1945, then after 1989;
- Countries in which History is poorly taught, which leads to misunderstandings. The quality of History teaching is poor and historical inaccuracies are widespread.

In most European countries, young people have little or no knowledge of History. However, if we no longer know anything about the past, how to anticipate the future and how to respond to someone who would say anything?

For example, recently, the former French politician Philippe De Villiers published a book entitled '*I pulled the thread of lies and everything came*' in which he explained that the European construction initiated after the Second World War was in fact a project organised by the American CIA with the support of former Nazi dignitaries infiltrated into the European institutions, notably the Commission. Given these particularly folkloric remarks, it would have been logical for this book to receive limited media coverage. But this was not the case and this author was able to present his vision on many television sets without intellectual contradiction. Journalists' lack of knowledge of History is a worrying phenomenon.

Faced with this worrying situation, it is necessary to react quickly, considering everyone's responsibility. History must be a subject taught in all European states, but an international organisation such as the Council of Europe does not have to decide how a particular State intends to teach History on its own territory.

On the other hand, the Council of Europe ensures respect for common European values and has already produced recommendations to Member States in the past on History teaching of neighbouring countries and on the need to teach the languages of neighbouring countries. You can find through the following link, this Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)6 of the Committee of Ministers to Member states on intercultural dialogue and the image of the other in History teaching:

https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805cc8e1

The 47 CoE Member States have 47 national storytelling, but it seems possible to identify common denominators. It would be interesting to benchmark these stories in order to better understand their compatibility but also to limit their possible antagonism.

It is in this spirit that the observatory will aim to make available to the public CoE information and documentation on the types of History teachings, mainly at the secondary school level (college and high schools). To sum up, the main question to be answered by this observatory project would be to know which History programme should be known by each European high school student?

With this in mind, a questionnaire will be sent to each Member State and questions of this kind will have to be answered:

1) In your country, what is the place of History in the bachelor's degree?

2) In your country, is History a compulsory or optional subject?

In many European countries, History is a simple option, as for example in Poland where only 8% of high school students choose this subject.

3) In your country, what is the hourly volume of History teaching: one hour per month, five hours per week, etc.?

4) In your country, the professors who teach History are specialists and historians or generalists?

For instance, in France, the educators teach History and Geography, while in Italy, it is the teachers of Literature or Philosophy who teach History. In many countries, History teachers do not have specific skills to teach this subject. Moreover, in the teaching of History, what is the place of civic education, which enables every citizen to understand democratic principles and the rule of law?

5) In your country, what is the content of History programmes?

The term History has different meanings depending on the country. For example, in some States, History is related to peoples' or nations' history, while in others, History is linked to great historical or famous figures.

6) Who elaborates and decides on the content of History programmes? In other words, should the last word be left to policy makers, teachers-researchers or should there be joint and balanced decision-making?

This question still remains a problem in France, and the French people tend to give lessons to their neighbours on this subject while other peoples are doing much better.

7) Is the teaching of European construction and the European Union's history provided in the EU and CoE Member States?

Initial observations suggest that half of the EU Member States do not provide this education. In France, this teaching is more or less provided but not as a priority, often at the end of programmes that teachers briefly discuss.

8) Should manuals be labelled or not, and if so by whom, or should they be developed at the sole discretion of publishers?

9) What should be the training of History teachers?

The European observatory should make it possible to answer these questions. It will probably be in contact with other international organisations (OSCE, UNESCO, European Commission, etc.).

The medium-term objective would be to open a major public debate to reflect in a balanced way on the limits and even anomalies relating to History teaching in many countries. The long-term goal will be to make compatible the 47 different national storytelling of the CoE Member States.

Another aim of the project would be to improve the European networking of national History academies by allowing them to give their opinion on the updates of country programmes collected by the future observatory. The goal would be to bring together the network of these academies every two or three years in order to understand the programmes' evolution and propose relevant recommendations to the States.

In this context, a high-level conference on History teaching in Europe will be organised by the French Presidency of the CoE Committee of Ministers on **Tuesday 19 November 2019 in Paris**.

The participants thank *Mr LAMASSOURE* for his intervention.

2) Exchanges with INGOs

After this speech, the following participants wished to express their viewpoint and/or question *Mr LAMASSOURE* on certain points. These exchanges can be summarized as follows.

Pierre DUSSERE of the International Office for Catholic Education (OIEC) would like to know what the links will be between the Education Sector of the Council of Europe (headed by *Mr Sjur BERGAN*) and the future observatory? In addition, will there be a particular place given to Art history in the general approach of the observatory?

Noël ORSAT of the International Confederation of Professional and Intellectual Workers (CITI) and Secretary General of the Cultural Route of the CoE '*Via Charlemagne*' points out that his recent meetings with young people have shown him the obvious lack of historical knowledge of youth (e.g. confusion between Charles Martel and Charlemagne). According to him, these cultural limits have very negative consequences because the people in charge of allocating European funds in Brussels do not have the skills and culture needed to carry out their tasks properly.

Rinaldo ROSSO of the Federation for Education in Europe (FEDE) considers that writers taking certain liberties on proven historical facts are harmful political charlatans. On the other hand, he believes that freedom of education has the consequence of making the historical narrative too subjective because each teacher has always an angle, a vision when he transmits his knowledge.

Sophie MARINO, sociologist and teacher at the National School of Fine Arts in Paris (ENSBA) observed a significant drop in the level of students. As historian and as the writer of a thesis on the forgotten people in the historical narrative, *Mrs MARINO* considers it necessary to insert History into other disciplines so that young people find it more interesting. In addition, there is a dichotomy between the very high level of History researchers and the relatively low level of History teaching on the ground. The real experts should be much more involved in all the issues that will be raised by the

future observatory. Finally, she said it is crucial to approach each national narrative with mistrust and caution.

Alain LAMASSOURE's answers

The main goal of History teaching is to train good citizens, capable of critical thinking. The observatory aims to take stock of the situation in Europe by possibly proposing a History test for all the countries covered. The decline in the level of knowledge is explained by the fact that History programmes have become too different.

On the other hand, with regard to the introduction of the arts or sciences in History teaching envisaged by *Mrs MARINO*, this will not take place within the framework of the observatory (even if *Mr LAMASSOURE* is personally in favour of it) because this subject is too sensitive at European Union level and even more so at CoE level. That being said, it would be wise to supplement the general teaching (science, literature) with a history of the subjects covered.

Furthermore, it is necessary to have a national narrative based on the opinions of researchers, but not based on the national storytelling. We need to know what our predecessors did and how to look to the future. For newly independent States, some countries are States but not nations, and vice versa. In addition, we need to be proud of our national narrative.

On the question of *Mr. ROSSO* regarding the freedom of Education, indeed, this freedom is such that History textbooks can be written by anyone. Ultimately, History is taught by teachers, but the problem is that these people are not always neutral and intellectually honest. Who elaborates the programmes and what does the teacher really say in the classroom? These issues are important and have not really been resolved, particularly in France. Once the observatory is founded, surveys will have to be carried out and the European Association of History Educators (Euroclio) will be very useful to this end: <https://www.euroclio.eu/what-we-do/>

Concerning the cooperation between European historians, *Mr LAMASSOURE* addressed the question of transnational historical objectivity.

On 9 November 1989, *Mr LAMASSOURE* was in Berlin and wondered how the Eastern Germans would be able to relate their Nazi and then communist History, which was not very glorious during the 20th century.

For the Franco-German handbook for high school students, it took several years for the editors to produce this book, particularly to relate the story of the armistice of 11th November 1918, considered as the day of the Great War's victory for the French, but the start of the Diktat ('dictated peace') by the Germans. On the French side, this historic day marks the last time that France really won a war, while on the German side, this day is a disaster that marks the beginning of the emergence of a humiliated nationalism. A compatible presentation of the events was possible between French and German historians, but this book remained a pedagogical failure because each teacher in Germany is free to choose his textbook, History teaching being a competence delegated to the Lander (regions).

On the other hand, the book entitled '*Mediterranean Sea*' that was drafted by historians from all the countries surrounding this sea (with the exception of Algeria and Turkey), covers all the sensitive subjects, which clearly shows that it is possible to elaborate manuals based on diverse cultural viewpoints.

About the involvement of international organisations in the work of the future observatory, Mr Lamassoure wishes that UNESCO will be consulted. History must no longer be an element of destruction but of consolidation of inter-European relations. History teaching must contribute to peacekeeping on the mainland.

Without a historical process of reconciliation and a relevant understanding of the past, antagonisms between two countries or nations at war can persist. In April 1998, Ireland and the United Kingdom signed the Good Friday Agreement, marking the end of the Irish civil war. Nevertheless, no reconciliation process has been initiated and Protestants and Catholics still do not mix in Northern Ireland. The peace was signed in 1998 but has not been digested for twenty-one years. In the current context of Brexit, tensions between Ireland and Northern Ireland are likely to increase sharply.

III. European cultural identity from an artistic and pictorial viewpoint: 'The example of the Routes of Impressionisms', a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe' par Pierre BEDOUELLE

Pierre BEDOUELLE is the Secretary General of euroArt, the European Federation of Artists' Colonies. At the beginning of the 1980's, the concept of colony of European artists underwent a revival, which resulted in the publication of books and the organisation of exhibitions on this theme. In many former artists' colonies, museums and art galleries have been created, and former workshops have been renovated and sometimes made available to young artists for a period of time.

When the Iron Curtain fell in November 1989, it became clear that many artists' colonies were spread throughout Europe and that a structured European organisation could be useful to help them protecting their roots and envisage a common artistic future. EuroArt was founded in 1994 in Brussels to reach this main objective.

EuroArt currently consists of 80 member organisations, associated organisations and individual members in 14 European countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland. Members organise joint exhibitions, stimulate debates with citizens, exchange views and knowledge, and keep each other informed of the evolution of their different colonies, in a context of European cultural cooperation. For more information on euroArt's activities, please click on this link: <https://www.euroart.eu/en/about-us/>

In May 2018, the project supported by euroArt entitled '*The Routes of Impressionisms*' obtained the official certification of 'Cultural Route of the Council of Europe'.

Launched by the CoE in 1987, European cultural routes demonstrate, through travel in time and space, that the heritage of the different European countries contributes to the common heritage. Routes are local networks that implement the core values of the CoE: human rights, cultural democracy, diversity and cultural identity, exchanges and mutual enrichment across borders and centuries. Their objective is to act as bridges for intercultural dialogue and the promotion of a better knowledge and understanding of European history.

As of 1st January 2019, there are 33 Cultural Routes of the CoE. The first of these are the Santiago de Compostela Pilgrims Routes, certified in 1987 and the last two are the '*Routes of Impressionisms*' and the '*Via Charlemagne*', certified in 2018. For more information, please click on the CoE link:

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes>

The award of this label of excellence is the result of several years of work aimed at building an operational network linking a number of significant sites with Impressionist paintings of 19th and 20th centuries in Europe. The '*Routes of Impressionisms*' are now recognised as a credible and valid European project, containing several thematic entries that can be used in the spirit of the CoE's values: the environment and its protection, heritage and its safeguarding, the history of the territories and its knowledge by young people, tourism and its sustainable development.

Through the example of the '*Routes of Impressionisms*', Mr BEDOUELLE is invited to present to the assembly his thoughts on European cultural identity from an artistic and pictorial point of view.

In the 19th century, the impressionist movement materialised in several European countries: Germany, Denmark, France, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, etc. At that time, in France, the cities of Barbizon, Giverny near Rouen or Pont-Aven played a major role in the development of this artistic movement. These forms of impressionisms are different from each other but transversal in substance, and the emergence of this pictorial movement took place all over Europe at almost the same time. Impressionism - taken here in its broad acceptance, i. e. from pre-impressionism to artists opening the movement to modern art, thus covering the period 1830-1930 - is therefore a fundamentally European movement.

The aim of the CoE's recognition is to create and maintain a link within the continent between the sites that inspired European impressionist and pleinairist painters from 1830 to 1930, the places where they lived, the places where they founded artists' colonies and the cities that, in their museums or cultural spaces, now present their works. Pleinairism refers to the general principle of painting outdoor scenes, plays of sunlight during the second half of the 19th century. This group of sites constitutes a real '*open-air museum*' of the represented landscapes and allows visitors to make direct contact with the various impressionist trends in Europe. The CoE '*Routes of Impressionisms*' is therefore structured by painter representative of these trends:

- The Routes of French Impressionism with Monet, Pissaro, Sisley, etc. ;
- The Schwaan Painters' Route in Germany with Franz Bunke ;
- The Route of Slovenian Impressionism with Ivan Grohar ;
- The Route of Galician painters' Impressionism in Spain with Francisco Llorenz Diaz.

Impressionism marks the end of a world and the beginning of another and expresses the multiple transformations of societies, just as in the scientific, political and economic fields at that time. This artistic movement did not only concern painters but also the intelligentsia of the time: musicians, writers, journalists, scientists. Impressionism was conceived in France and underwent its main developments there, but it developed widely in Europe despite the difficult political context at the time, as shown in the book published under the aegis of the Water & Light Association ('*Eau & Lumière*' in French) in September 2016: '*Impressionisms Routes - Les Routes des Impressionnismes en Europe*'. Many artists participated in the important movement of ideas that crossed the continent after 1848, challenging political boundaries, intellectual data and established powers. The cultural challenge of the '*Routes of Impressionisms*' project is to make these multiple aspects of Impressionism known as well. The many encounters between these artists during workshops, stays or exhibitions or provoked by collectors and art dealers, eased the diffusion of new methods created at the beginning of the 19th century by the English painters Turner and Constable. They had modified the pictorial style before trends that broke with official art appeared among Italian Macchiaioli or within the Barbizon school. Impressionism reflects a passionate attachment to light, to water in its various

forms, to everyday life. He expresses the joy of life exalted by his perfect harmony with nature and is at the origin of several subsequent pictorial revolutions.

At a time when Europe has widened its borders and a search for its deep identity is more necessary than ever, Impressionism is an important element of the collective memory of Europeans: scenes of life and meeting places, many of which still exist, social practices such as countryside games by the water, dancing, swimming or water sports. All these activities are part of our common European cultural heritage.

The Impressionists also largely accompanied the innovative evolutions of the world in which they lived, glorifying the new industrial achievements, the train stations, the bridges, the wide Haussmann avenues in Paris or the work of the humblest. The '*Routes of Impressionisms*' aim to highlight these symbolic and fruitful encounters of art and industry, which constitute another important aspect of European collective memory. Indeed, the Impressionists were able to express both in their behaviour and in their works the common European values: the spirit of freedom, justice, tolerance and solidarity.

The claimed independence in which they have always worked outside religious, political or academic constraints opened up new artistic horizons for them, largely taken up and developed by subsequent generations. This project of '*Routes of Impressionism*' was born from the partnership forged by the Water & Light Association (Eau & Lumière) with euroArt to enhance the European heritage built over decades and to put it at the service of youth training, smart and responsible tourism and all forms of meetings aimed at deepening and magnifying the European idea.

In this perspective, exhibitions for the youngest are organised, as it was the case in the Estaque district, which has enabled the inhabitants of this now difficult Provençal district to remember that this place has an exceptional history (notably through Paul Cézanne's paintings) of which they can be proud. Finally, this project aims to make European citizens aware of the current presence of a European unifying past whose prestigious notoriety has long since crossed the continent's borders. Art is a cement of our common European history and these Cultural Routes are tools of memory: euroArt, like '*The Routes of Impressionism*', has the ambition to make us aware of our common history and values, thus strengthening our feeling of belonging to a common European area.

To conclude, Jean-Louis DURAND-DROUHIN (ESAN) believes that this presentation is the perfect continuation of Mr LAMASSOURE's speech, certainly focusing on the history of Art, but above all on the history of European culture. These questions transcend our histories and only Culture allows men and women to recover their universal humanity.

The participants thank Mr BEDOUELLE for his PowerPoint presentation (only available in French) which will be sent to them at the same time as the minutes of the meeting.

Claude VIVIER LE GOT and the two co-coordinators of the working group inform the participants that the next meeting of the working group **Heritage and Creation, Shaping Europe** will take place between 28th and 31st October 2019 during the next session of the INGOs Conference. The main purpose of this meeting will be to review the definitions of words, expressions and concepts to be included in the forthcoming *White Paper on European Cultural Identity*, which is due to be published in April-June 2020.

End of the document – 01/08/2019