



## 12th INEPS Congress-Stockholm - Workshop 7

### **USING OUR COMMON HERITAGE FROM GREEK ANTIQUITY TO FALAFEL, HAMBURGERS, RAP AND TECHNO**

How can we use our network for young people to compare traditions, lifestyles and environment among our local communities? People immigrate and Europe keeps an eye on the USA. How can we start networking and look for exchange programs with these themes?

The Europeans share a common past through their history and are going to share a common future "through internet". It is very important for us educators to prepare-as far as it is possible- the students' entrance in the new common European world with lots of contradictions and similarities by taking in consideration the individual development, the maintenance of national characteristics as well as the habits and traditions which keep a nation's memory, autonomy and continuation.

Globalization is the new term which has entered our life and new principles, philosophies, ideologies and values have been introduced in our lifestyles. High speed in information and information in high speed have influenced our lives creating a big confusion to our thoughts, pedagogic approaches, practical implementations.

The future is drawing "all our brain" and energy making us like racing horses to struggle for a place in their future. The vicious circle "I learn more to become efficient and I have to be efficient to learn more" absorbs our emotions, memories and remotes us very abruptly from our roots. One of the Greek philosophers Iraklitos was saying that "everything is floating", which means that movement makes things not to be the same for ever, and any situation is different from any similar one but is always based on another situation. He wanted to stress the sequence of situations which have past, present and future and that changes wouldn't exist if there wasn't something old to be changed.

I refer to Iraklitos in order to stress the significance of a nation's history and the citizens' memory of this history which diminishes nowadays. The invading present and future absorb us and weaken our ability to use the experience of history. Immigrants have some more reasons to be separated from their history for many obvious causes.

The development of a nation as an original nation has very much to do on how well it keeps its identity by using the experience of its history, by transmitting traditions to new generations, by creating new culture based on the authenticity of the old one.

The pluralism of nations compose a more interesting world and develop a dynamic process of a human's existence in the globe.



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The ancient Greek civilization was so much developed because it was based on democracy. And democracy was based on pluralism, variety, respect of the different.

Nowadays there is a great confusion on concepts like democracy freedom, choices. The superpowers (such as Mass Media) have their own way to impose their ideology with very tricky, clever means, methods and strategies, threatening the autonomy, the culture and self disposal of nations.

I would like to refer to an example taken from the Greek reality of 90's. "Beverly Hills" the oldest serial in American T.V became especially in Europe a cultural phenomenon. According to American analyzers the serial "90210" played an important reforming role at the beginning of 90's since- due to this serial- the teenagers stopped having as models "the dangerous" marginal dirty long hair guys such as Nirvana or Alice in Chains.

Brandon, the model of decent American boy and the "damned" Dylan, both with short hair and casual clothes without having even tasted smoking cigarettes, expressed the optimistic, clean face of new America after its definite victory in the "cold war".

It was the first time that in an American serial the teenagers were not treated as naive hooligans who just wanted to have fun. On the contrary even in their 16 years the kids of Beverly Hills, were already mature young adults without any intention to doubt the other adults lifestyles. The characters according to N.Y. Times were much more sophisticated, complicated and sexy than the adolescents of previous American serials. Eventhough the critics as it was natural didn't take the serial seriously, nobody can doubt the influence, impact and significance it had.

Teenagers are mainly the kids of the 20th Century. Since 20's the young people below 20 years old had their own individual culture and were going very abruptly from the world of childhood to the world of adults. The school years were finished between 12 and 16 and the adolescent had to find a job. Even though the children's wages were smaller than the adults', the society treated the teenagers as grown ups. The definition of teenagers as an age group with its own characteristics is a result of prolonged school age but also a result of spectacular improvement of the incomes in the middle class. As it has been observed by sociologists all this so called pop culture from music and fashion to food and hobbies has been developed due to the increase of pocket money the youngsters take from their parents.

Maybe we could give a lot of examples and reasons about attitudes, behaviors and backgrounds of young people. I arose this issue to challenge you to think and describe your country's adolescent and immigrant adolescent. I hope that the results of this workshop will be useful to the youth congresses INEPS is carrying on but also to any kind of intercultural exchanges of young people we plan to have in the future.



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### Results of the workshop

1. We realized that there are a lot of similarities among the young people of our countries concerning the music they listen, the food they eat (although the Swedish remarked that their young people eat more fruit and vegetable than the other countries), the clothes they wear, their hobbies and interests. We also realized that this lifestyle has a certain reference to the American teenagers lifestyle.
2. We realized that the young people don't know much about their history and universal history.
3. Xenophobia and racism are now increasing in the southern countries while the northern are in a better situation dealing with these problems.
4. Drugs, violence and unemployment are the major problems of young people and although they are very sensitive, money making is one of their major dreams.
5. All the participants enjoyed the workshop and they remarked that it was a good chance to talk about the young people of our countries and they believe that this kind of conversation should continue. Due to limited time we didn't go deeper in our discussion although we had much to say about how these issues are different to immigrants.

The general feeling was that the conversation helped us to think about issues concerning INEPS youth congresses and youth exchanges in the future.

The workshop was coordinated by Angela Passa-Greece and facilitated by Annita Petersson-Sweden.

Angela Passa  
Movement PROTASI (A volunteer organization working in  
Primary Drug Prevention in local society of Patras, Greece)  
[protasi@pat.forthnet.gr](mailto:protasi@pat.forthnet.gr)