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Intermediate report internal meeting 1

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1. Introduction: General Set-up of the Meeting

The first internal meeting of Work Package 2 was convened on 13 and 14 December at the Leibniz Institute for European History in Mainz. In accordance with the different tasks set out for this work package, the goal was to offer a first evaluation of the work conducted in regard to the historical peace treaties. Logically, all members of WP2 were present: Henning P. Jürgens, Christophe Schellekens, Bram De Ridder, John Wolffe, Naum Trajanovski, and Lidija Georgieva. As required for deliverable 1.9, their progress will form the point of focus for this report.

Importantly however, at the online steering committee meeting of 30/10/2018 it was decided to have some members from the other Work Packages participate in this meeting, given the intertwined nature of the Work Packages and the fact that the results will eventually have to be integrated into an appealing and coherent platform. Therefore, Patrick Pasture participated as project coordinator, whilst WP3 was represented by Madis Maasing, Arpad Welker, Stefanie Sinclair, John Maiden, Merve Reyhan Kayikci, and Laura Galian. WP4 was represented by Ilenia Laudito. Karel Van Nieuwenhuyse and Martin Liepach participated as educational advisors (the latter also representing the advisory board). Michal Choptiany presented on the part of WP7. And finally, the already mentioned John Wolffe, Stefanie Sinclair, and John Maiden also contributed with insights gathered as a part of WP5.

N.B.: More extensive meeting notes were kept and circulated; they have however not been included in this document to retain clarity and to stay within the framework set out by the deliverables.

2. Presentations and report on WP 2

The internal reflection with Work Package two relied on the presentations of three postdoctoral researchers, Christophe Schellekens, Naum Trajanovski, and Bram De Ridder, who clarified their progress and communicated any potential issues they faced.

In regard to the treaties analyzed by the IEG, much progress has been made in contextualizing the treaties and, as a result, in identifying potential cross-linkages between the different cases. This led our partners at the IEG to propose using ‘contextual clippings’, a term that would refer to clippings that draft a wider context instead of containing some primary source material and thus would set a general scene for some of the more concrete source clippings. It was decided that this option will be further explored in the next few weeks and months.

At the IEG, much progress has also been made with regards to the iconography of (mainly early modern) toleration – examples of potential visual clippings were provided. Here it was indicated that a clear contextualization that appeals to teenagers is perhaps even more difficult, but again not impossible to overcome. Another point was raised regarding the (re-)translation of legal discourse in the treaty texts, which could make the clippings difficult to understand. In both cases the preferred solution is to ensure that the clipping contains both some more difficult source material and an added brief explanation on the part of the researcher. This might help to retain an understandable level of language and topics.

The treaties analyzed by UKIM similarly require a lot of contextualization, which has likewise been done in an overarching manner. Options were weighed and tested with regard to 'staying close' to the treaty texts or to 'move away' from the hard texts to include more concrete cases. The question was posed if and how the clippings can be related to local contexts: can such specific local cases be used for clippings, or do we have to stick with the general frame of the treaties we were assigned? After the other members of the meeting weighed in, it was clarified that broadening the cases is welcomed, as long as there is some general relation with the treaties. In this sense, local cases are even extremely welcome because they are more concrete, but they should serve to illustrate some general points about toleration.

In the presentation of the KU Leuven, much attention went to some concrete examples of potential textual and visual clippings, whereby it was pointed out that history can create its own controversies in the present. The point of departure here were the Islamic Treaties and some related cases, including the Congress of Vienna. As pointed out during the earlier discussion of the material collected by the IEG, a focus on the agency of common people – deemed of great interest to the students – would also expose that that agency was often violently expressed. Additionally, governments also implemented toleration through the discrimination of a particular group, or even through violence.

3. General discussion on WP2

In the general discussion it was stressed that two or more clippings could present a conflicting image of a particular treaty. By presenting such conflicting views, we will get the students to think, and it would solve the mentioned difficulties with regard to the examples of violence and discrimination that formed the background to historical toleration. Where the sources are sensitive for their violent or discriminatory nature, a direct link should be provided to a clipping (or other piece of information) containing an opposite or alternative view. Additionally, the meeting mentioned that some clippings could contain, in addition to a source quotation, a question for the students to ponder upon.

A general case was also made for achieving contextualization by linking different elements within and without the website. This first and foremost applies to the clippings, which can be grouped in so-called

'item sets' and can be further linked through tags. This also means that, at some point, some clippings will need to be identified that can serve as 'entry points' for the students to start exploring the material.

Several topical focus points were selected (see point 5 of this document).

4. Report and discussion of WPs 3, 4, 5 and 7

The subsequent parts of the meeting reported on and discussed the progress in other Work Packages, picking up some of the themes and issues mentioned in the extensive reporting on WP2.

During these conversations, three important conclusions were made:

- It was stressed that the so-called 'clipping holders' (a term specified in the data management plan) are responsible for solving the puzzles with regard to translation and contextualization of the clippings, yet that they can count on the assistance of their PI's and the other project members. In order to do so, especially the coordination between WP2 and WP3 will be increased in the next few months.
- It was also agreed that WP2 and WP3 will jointly develop a frame of 'topics of interest' for selecting concrete clippings. The clippings so far created and tested will help to determine the outline of this frame, yet more concrete instructions are needed. A proposal for a first selection of topics of interest was made (see point 5 of this document).
- Finally, it was reiterated that the primary vantage point from which to work with the historical and contemporary material are the minds and interests of the teenagers. So far this seems to have been the case, but depending on the results of the pilot groups some changes to our current approach might be required.

5. Conclusions

A final and general session was held regarding the results of the presentations and discussions. Christophe Schellekens and Bram De Ridder presented a summary of tentative conclusions reached during these earlier debates. These were the following:

- With regard to the docutubes:
    - It is planned to draft an overview for the teachers: a sort of information package on RETOPA, and on how to implement it.
    - It is requested to provide the focus groups with some test clippings.

- With regard to the clippings:
    - It is repeated that a clipping is a basic piece of information that will be presented to the students.
    - The text clippings should be short: the absolute maximum is 500 words, best between 150 and 200 words.
    - There apply two primary selection criteria for clippings in WP2: a clipping should create a connection with youngsters through recognizable topics, and it should de-politicize reflection by creating distance to the present.
    - There apply two primary selection criteria for clippings in WP3: a clipping should help map the landscape of contemporary discourse, and it should (as much as possible) link history to contemporary debates.
    - ! All clippings need to be clear enough. If there are doubts about its appeal to youngsters, it should be replaced with an alternative or not be selected at all.
    - The number of clippings is kept open. If you need many to make a good point for the youngsters, you need that many.
    - The Dublin Core Scheme will be used for selecting the metadata associated to the clippings.
    - Regarding the question if the clippings must target the lowest age group (ca. 12 years) or if will we differentiate by making some clippings more difficult, it was observed that a certain variety is unavoidable. We will have to consider if we can develop indicators. It was decided that we will return to this issue once we have better view on the actual clippings.
- With regard to practicalities:
    - Language reviewers (see the data management plan) keep an eye on the complexity of the clippings (both in terms of language and content).
    - Seafile (a cloud platform offered and secured by the German Federal State Rhineland-Palatine) will be used to gather clippings and check translations, thus securing a steady workflow.
    - The general guideline for copyright is to avoid the use of copyright protected clippings as much as possible. We will work on a protocol with the most important issues, and create a guideline for students. These documents will contain basic statements about the

use of copyrighted material (and why this cannot be placed on our website, even if part of a docutube).

  - It is argued that there needs to be more methodological structure in WP3. For this, internal communication tools (mailing lists etc.) are requested to facilitate coordination.

- With regard to context and critical thinking
  - It is reiterated that this is a key scientific challenge each researcher needs to solve for each clipping.
  - Context can be built through cross references and contextual clippings.
  - Brief elements of context can be engrained in a particular clipping (a question, a clarification, some background, …) but no monolithic or extensive context should be attached to the clippings.
  - The suggestion to add context via Wikidata is not taken up.
- With regard to topical focus
  - Clippings can diverge from the original tasks: primarily this means that there are no geographical or temporal limitations. Any case can be relevant, it is up to the researchers to determine which information falls within the boundaries and criteria of the project.
  - With regard to sensitive matters it is agreed that there will be no covering up of harsh truths or 'dirty' histories, but that we nevertheless should avoid reconfirming the dark-age premises many youngsters have. This will be another nut to crack for the individual researchers in WP2 (with the aid of their colleagues and PI's).
  - The required rephrasing/dumbing down of source material is likewise up to the individual researchers, but researchers in WP3 should be more reluctant to do so than those in WP2.
  - All clippings should aim to offer complexity, comparison, and conflicting images as standard premises.
  - We will aim to group the clippings in so-called 'item sets' on the Omeka platform, but this needs to be further discussed (primarily between members of WP2 and WP3). The same goes for the creation of so-called 'entry points' – meaning specific clippings that offer access to the wider groups and contrast of clippings.
  - The overall topical focus is ideally the same for WP2 and WP3. The following focus points are put forward:



- Focus on the agency of common people
- Focus on marriage
- Focus on space
- Focus on practical issues/lived experiences
- Focus on propaganda and stereotyping
- Focus on migration

- *With regard to coordination and guidance: It is stressed that PI's should offer concrete guidance to the collaborators, and collaborators should consult regularly with the PIs. In addition, it is emphasized that collaborators working on similar topics, should communicate regularly and intensively, and ensure that their work is compatible with that of the other collaborators.*