

EUSTORY History Competition in Serbia

“From Traditional to Modern Society: WOMEN’S SIDE OF HISTORY”

Competition Report

After a year of break, the third round of the EUSTORY competition in Serbia was successfully organized during the school year 2006/2007. During that year of break the Association for Social History-EUROCLIO managed to strengthen its own position as competition organizer. In order to achieve that goal, we have been approaching to various governmental institutions and some nongovernmental organizations asking for logistical and organizational support and finally we have signed a contract with Young Researchers of Serbia. YRS is a well known organization in our country that deals with youth, ecology and environment and is very experienced in organizing all kinds of voluntary services, in Serbia and abroad. All information about our new partner and its activities could be found at www.mis.org.yu

Therefore, the third round of EUSTORY History Competition in Serbia was organized by Association for Social History-EUROCLIO and Young Researchers of Serbia. It was officially announced at the beginning of November under the title *MEETING THE PAST 2006/2007*. The topic for this year’s competition was **“From Traditional to Modern Society: Women’s Side of History”**. High school students, aged from 15 to 19, were invited to research the change that occurred in Serbian society during the twentieth century, but seen through the eyes of women. They should show that the changes in the role of women have influenced the whole society and were, at the same time, the consequence of some major social changes of those times. Therefore, they were expected to include the whole society in their research. The organizers prepared a special

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methodological guideline for tutors and students that explained general requirements and rules of the competition and also offered a detailed description of the topic and historical research methods. This guideline was published and sent to each high school in Serbia.

We received 93 contributions by April 16th, the deadline for submitting the papers. As no group work was allowed, we had 93 participants as well: 80 of them were girls and only 13 were boys. They all came from 42 different high schools placed all over Serbia and they were supervised by 44 tutors. In comparison to previous years' statistics, we can observe a little decrease in number of participants.

All jury members agreed that the papers we received this year were extremely good. There were only few essays and biographies of some famous women – all other entries were research papers dealing with very serious issues of social and gender history. Some of them were even completely original and new: they tackled and covered some issues that are not covered by domestic scientist. Therefore, the authors of those papers are offered to publish their works in some scientific magazines. Nevertheless, there were a significant number of papers with extremely good ideas, excellent hypothesis and various sources, but with essential lack of analysis and with no serious conclusion at all. Those “never-ended” researches show, according to our jury, that students were in fact, left to their own and that tutors were not supervising them at all.

Some of the most frequent and also very successfully covered subtopics were:

- Fashion
- Education
- Family life.

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The award ceremony took place in Belgrade, in one of the city's museums called Konak Kneginje Lubice, on July 11th 2007. The Konak is a typical civilian house from 19th century, built up for a wife of a Serbian ruler, Milos Obrenovic, where she used to live and raise their children. Participants and guests were greeted by the representative of Körber Foundation, Tina Gotthard, and the expert from the museum, who gave a guided tour through the permanent exhibition and explained the role and the way of living of Serbian women in 19th century.

For the first time students had a chance to show their papers and to talk about the results of their researches. Each student had to prepare a poster presenting her or his paper, so there was a small exhibition of posters opened to all guests of our ceremony, who could then talk to the authors and find out more about certain topics. This turned out to be not only very interesting, but also a very good opportunity to get to know students and to activate them during the award ceremony.

As same as earlier, this year we awarded 6 students:

No	Award	Name (age)	Title
1.	First award	Ljubica Arsic (1990)	Female child – someone else's house
2.	Second award	Jelena Jezdimirovic (1991)	Visnja Prljevic – a pioneer of emancipation in Uzice
3.	Second award	Nikola Blagojevic (1990)	Za tri dana cumba-lumba, a ja posle trmba-rmba
4.	Third award	Natalija Odanovic (1990)	From the other side of fashion magazines
5.	Third award	Jelena Sucevic (1989)	Woman during the period of colonization
6.	Third award	Aleksandra Samardzijeva (1990)	Marriageable girls preparing their dowry

Apart from these six, we commended nine students more and invited all 15 of them to apply for the EUSTORY academies. We received 13 applications and passed them to

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EUSTORY team in Hamburg. After interviewing all candidates, EUSTORY team invited five students from Serbia to participate in academies in Berlin, Tromsø and St. Petersburg.

We also managed to draw more media attention than in 2005. This year we had two TV teams present at our ceremony (national TV *B92* and local Belgrade TV *Studio B*). They both prepared nice reports and broadcasted them the day after the ceremony. We were also invited to talk about the competition at the local Belgrade TV show.

After this year's experience we must admit that we are very content with both, the results of the competition and, moreover, with our new partner. Our cooperation with YRS was excellent and both sides (ASH-EUROCLIO and YRS) are willing to continue with it in the future. YRS gave stability to ASH-EUROCLIO that was needed and made us more confident. The competition also became more visible and opened to the public. With YRS as a partner, we are sure we'll be able to take over more serious challenges within the framework of EUSTORY History Network.

For Organizers:

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