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**ЦЕНТЪР
ЗА РАЗВИТИЕ
НА ЧОВЕШКИТЕ
РЕСУРСИ**



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Lifelong Learning Programme



**VICHO GRANCHAROV SECONDARY SCHOOL
GORNA ORYAHOVITSA
BULGARIA**

LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME A COMENIUS PROJECT - MULTILATERAL PARTNERSHIPS



**TEACHING INNOVATIVELY
(WITH FOCUS ON ICT) AND ITS IMPACT ON
THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

Electronic Magazine

Issue12

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ROMANIA
COLEGIUL NATIONAL DE INFORMATICA
„TUDOR VIANU”
BUCHAREST

The fifth meeting in 2013 –

20 – 26 January 2013

Cieszyn, Poland

This is my fourth diary...



This is my fourth diary, and it will be just a fractured tale as the others. On the one hand, it has been a privilege – though earned through a bit of work- to participate in all these meetings. On the other hand, there is something a tad dull in re-telling anything in a proper chronology of events. Partly, I think, because the human mind doesn't naturally work that way, and we simply recreate the order of events whenever we need to. Partly because there's a very understandable impetus to jump straight to the interesting

bits of the story, or to reorganize a narrative in a way that makes emotional sense, in an attempt to take your potential reader on an internally consistent emotional ride. Regardless, I am very glad we live, at least culturally speaking, in a post-modern world, where none shall frown that I do not follow the golden rule of storytelling, as put forward in the Alice book of Wonderland fame, and I do not: "*Begin at the beginning, and go on till you come to the end: then stop*". An unintended consequence of this disjointed way of writing is that it tends to meander, and tangentially relate to the story at hand, so much so that I am already a paragraph into my diary, and I have yet to elucidate the "who" or the "where".

We – that is myself, Iulia, and 2 students, Vlad and Florin, arrived in Krakow on Saturday, 19th of January, after an uneventful journey, and found the city lovely, but frozen. Thanks to the weather, quite characteristic and normal for the region, but not something we are still accustomed to, we got quite a frosty reception. Now that I got the puny jokes about the weather out of the way, I shall skip ahead in my disorganized – sorry, post-modern- diary, and talk about our arrival, late in the evening, in Cieszyn. This is a city unlike others, although, at first, it seems just another quiet, unassuming provincial little place, with quaint architecture, nice, quiet people, and a settled, comfortable routine. We had heard before, prior

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to our visit, that the city was divided in two, with half belonging to the Czech neighbours, but, caught up in all the work for the project, and the general confusion before departure, the fact probably simply didn't register well. Perhaps it's unclear why I keep hammering on about what is, at heart, an administrative issue, when I could easily talk about how nice it was to meet again all the teachers from the project, and to spend a couple of minutes bonding over comments regarding the freezing weather. I could also mention how I still find it funny how even the Swedish teachers agreed that the weather was quite cold, and I think everyone would say that people living in places like Sweden are definitely authorities on cold weather.

Well, this city divided by the river, and yet nowadays so not out of the ordinary ties in with what might be a general theme for this visit: the hidden injuries, the buried wounds and secret hurts that still haunt us, and, like any old scar, still throb from time to time. What today might pass for an administrative curiosity is actually one of those injustices of history that people found their best way to cope with. As we found out later, during a lecture on the region's history given by the principal of the Polish host school, and as was repeated – with pictures and details – during a visit to the city's museum on our last day in the city, this division is a result of war and conflict. It is also a testament to the importance and usefulness of the European Union, and the ideals of unity, that definitely made it easier to do away with borders, so much so that you can stroll carelessly into the other half, and consequently, into another country altogether, without suffering any iniquity other than, perhaps, sore feet from all the walking around. This very incident happened to Iulia and me one evening, when, wandering the streets of Cieszyn in search of a lovely traditional restaurant, on a most important quest of sampling some traditional local cuisine, particularly some tasty soup served in bread, we found ourselves crossing the bridge into the Czech Republic without even noticing it. But the old wounds are still there, and many times during my visit I couldn't help but think of the Berlin wall and the decision makers who thought it would be a good and mature idea to divide a city into four parts, and separate families and relatives without a second thought to their trauma or suffering. Those last two items also weighed on my mind, since I spent most of my stay in Poland anticipating the visit to the concentration camps, and then thinking about having visited them.

Perhaps it would be better if I got the nicer parts of this Comenius meeting out of the way first. Among the highlights: first of all, the hosts were excellent, as was the organization, and our fellow participants. The film festival, held on Tuesday, was quite lovely. I already knew my colleague and project coordinator Iulia had been using films as a teaching method successfully with many of her classes for quite some time, so there was no doubt in my mind that the films created by the students from other countries were going to be quite good. In spite of any initial difficulties, most students rise quite nicely to whatever challenges set for them – the key is to provide them with said challenge. I absolutely loved the films done by the Italian team – not only were they technically well-made, they were funny and informative too, and the bloopers at the end made it quite clear everyone had an absolute blast putting them together, and managed to learn some science stuff in the process, as well.

Second of all, the visit to the Salt Mines at Wieliczka, which was a stop on our way to getting a proper chance at visiting Krakow, was another lovely experience, in spite of the extreme cold. By this time, it had been snowing on and off for most of our days there, so, although everything was snowy white, and glittering, and fairytale-like, it was also very cold. In fact, anyone reading this brief account may safely assume that it was very cold for the

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duration of our entire stay, because it was, and I'd rather not write yet another sentence about the weather. Our gracious host, Grazyna, tried to encourage us, and told us how lucky we were, since, just the week before our arrival, the temperatures had plummeted to minus 25 degrees Celsius. I, for one, did not feel lucky, just very cold. Fortunately, the mines proved to be a very warm place, especially compared to the iciness outside. When I first read that the tour was to last roughly 3 hours, I thought there sure must be some mistake, but, as it turned out, we did spend 3 hours underground, exploring only about 1% of the galleries of one of the oldest salt mines in Europe, only recently closed. The exploration got off to a very good start, with our entire group having to descend what felt like an infinity of stairs – well, actually, just 378 steps- , and which had me alternate between trying not to trip and thinking about Dante's Inferno.



(Photo of the view from the ground towards all the stairs we had just descended, taken by yours truly while blocking the way for everyone trying to get past me)

We learned a great deal about life in the underground, and I was particularly impressed by the plight of the animals working there – mostly horses. I found it quite impressive that, since the descent was so stressful for the poor animals, so much so some would die of a heart attack brought on by panic, they would make the journey only once, and spend the rest of their lives underground. It might seem like a particularly grueling fate, but miners treated their work animals exceedingly well. All in all, the Salt mines proved a testament to human ingenuity and creativity.

Most of the beautiful sculptures and exquisitely preserved rooms, including a very impressive Chapel, were done by the miners themselves, who still had creative energy, even after all the hours spent toiling away in the mines.

By the time we left the Salt mines and arrived in Krakow, it was getting rather late, so we only had time to visit some sites, such as Wawel Castle. I am beginning to think we did get the best of this trade off with the weather, since the city, and its medieval heritage, in particular, looked its best, and most enchanted, in a winter setting.

On Thursday afternoon we were preparing to bring our visit to an end, with the award ceremony for the film festival and the closing ceremony for the whole project visit taking place today. A special mention must go not just for the organizers, but for the two lovely, and, in my non-musically inclined opinion, talented students who played a series of lovely melodies on their trumpets (or some other elaborated form of similar instruments).

Friday was mostly dedicated to visiting the local museum, and spending some more time in the lovely town of Cieszyn before our departure. I must confess we didn't get far on the Czech side, mostly through lack of time and – dare I say it again? - freezing temperatures. We did manage to take a photo on the bridge linking the two banks, together with the Italian teachers, as a memento of our being there.

Normally, one would say, when reaching the high point of their story, that they have saved the best for last. The words “best” and Auschwitz don't really work together in a sentence, unless someone is, rather cynically, commenting on the efficiency of the death camps. Perhaps one might say I have saved the most important part for last. I can't say I really

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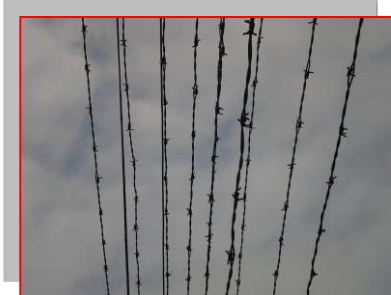


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wanted to end a diary about my participation in a Comenius project meeting with talking about the visit to the concentration camps, but I don't think I can cheerfully jump back into the narrative and continue chatting on about our work there. The experience was overwhelming and underwhelming at the same time. It all definitely ties in with what I was mentioning earlier about the hidden wounds of the past, still there, still hurting sometimes. The divided city, the unassuming buildings of the camps – traces of past horrors, the consequences of which we must still live with. I think the thing that most gets under your skin, the thing that shakes your confidence in humanity's ability to do good, not evil, is the banality, the ordinariness of it all. In fiction, evil is usually – and quite usefully – clearly marked. The villains are villainous in appearance, their evil lairs and places of imprisonment are dark, isolated, guarded and staffed by all sorts of supernatural and, naturally, evil creatures, like trolls or goblins. Reality is much more cruel than that. In the reality of Auschwitz, and Birkenau, and all the other concentration camps, evil is ordinary, organized, bureaucratic, mundane to the point of being boring, and unspeakably efficient in its extermination purpose. You'll never think of efficiency as a bad thing until you find yourself standing in the middle of a room, with huge display cases on both sides, floor to ceiling high, filled with mountains of shoes, or pieces of luggage, or, most chilling of all, human hair cut from those entering the gas chambers. People did all this to other people, and were wonderfully efficient about it, and that is the most heart-breaking thing of all.

(The sky at Auschwitz)



I started my visit to the concentration camp complex with some pretty good knowledge about the historical realities of WWII, and those of the camps. Most of the information related to us by our competent guide came as no surprise, but that did little to diminish the impact of it all. People were deported from all over occupied Europe, and arrived in over-crowded cattle wagons, via the railway, which is one of the reasons the particular camps were chosen, thanks to their vicinity to the railway. I remembered

a passage from a book I had read while still in my teens, written by Olga Lengyel, a Hungarian-Romanian survivor of Auschwitz, about the relief experienced by those finally getting out of the cattle wagons, and thinking that, surely, things couldn't get worse, that surviving the journey had been a first step in the right direction toward salvation. I also remembered reading how the woman, mother of two sons and desperate to protect them from hard labour – the gates to Auschwitz do state “Works sets you free” after all – didn't attempt to lie about their ages, and saw them being sent to the left, together with all the other young children, and old people, to the “hospital”. She learnt soon after that left – true to its Latin origin of “sinister” – meant death, and right meant a temporary reprieve from the gassing chambers.

In fiction, castles inhabited by villains have dark, twisted towers. In reality, the towers are chimneys, not too tall, rather narrow, completely unimposing, and completely deadly. Her sons, like roughly one million and a half other human beings, had gone up in smoke, through those very chimneys. In fictional accounts of adventures and exploration, where good always triumphs, the entrance to evil lairs is always also clearly marked, usually with huge iron gates,

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many soldiers and the occasional dragon guarding them. In reality, the entrance to Auschwitz and its cynical promise of freedom through work lulled the innocents into a false sense of security. The entrance to Birkenau, with its red bricked building, and the railway tracks leading through it, is downright friendly looking.



There are those who only pay lip service to the whole European Union phenomenon, and the idea of a future borderless world. For a variety of reasons, sometimes mistaken nationalism, sometimes short-sightedness, the undeniable benefits of all being people with equal rights, and citizens of the world, not just of one tiny spot on the map, are not evident to them. In a way, atrocities like the ones that forever stain the grounds of Auschwitz or Birkenau were a direct catalyst to drive the people of the world together, not apart. After all, evil does bring people together, against the common enemy. Yet not even the advent of real-life utopia, devoid of poverty, and criminality, and injustice or inequality, could ever compensate for the genocide perpetrated in these factories of death. The old wounds are still there, and they still throb, and Birkenau shall never again mean just Birch Forest. But it is much better that it should be so, for "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" , quotation well chosen to serve as any visitor's welcome to the Museum of Auschwitz.

Ever since those horrible days of mass murder, nations and countries have been taking steps in the right direction, away from that ever repeating again, and towards a shared, prosperous future. This project is just another of those millions and millions of minute steps. One day, our descendants will look back and will find themselves much closer to a general state of harmony and well-being than we are in now. One can at least hope.

Never forget: Memorial and Museum - Auschwitz-Birkenau

Andreea Dumitru, English teacher

Impression from Poland

Sunday

This was the day we left Romania. For me it was the first time I had ever left the country, and travelled by plane, on top of that. I was a bit panicked but, happily, the plane didn't crash: D. When we got to Krakow we went sightseeing (the city was lovely, but the weather absolutely terrible...very cold) as we had some time to spare until the other students arrived from their countries.

At the end of the day we went to Cieszyn where we met our hosts, who were really nice and warm people (quite unlike the weather).

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Monday

The first day spent at the high school in Cieszyn was so interesting. We met the Polish students who took us on a tour of the school, which was amazing, especially the items all over the walls: pictures of previous generations of students and trophy displays. After that we saw live demonstrations of different types of software which should help students learn more easily at school and develop competitive skills as well. I found of particular interest the software about job-related vocabulary, since I thought it was a very interactive way of learning about something quite useful for someone about to graduate from high school. The day ended with a meal at a traditional restaurant...unfortunately, I am a bit of a particular eater so the local delicacies, among them dumplings, were a bit wasted on me, through no fault of the local cuisine.

Tuesday

On this day we voted for the best Science Film. In this category there were some interesting science movies as well as funny science clips. The movie which won was called "The Geometry Of Nature" developed by the Romanian team. In a way, I was a bit disappointed since the film I voted for, put together by the Italian team, only came in second place. However, the point was all films found an audience, and winners, or not, they can be successfully used in class to teach students about a variety of things, from chemical reactions to the mathematical principles found in nature.

After the voting we visited the Town Hall which remarkable interior architecture, while the walls were decorated with impressive, stern-looking paintings of past rulers, all seemingly staring down on us. Under their watchful gaze we listened to the speech of the school's principal, who, being a History teacher, kindly took us on a short, but interesting virtual tour of the history of the town and region.

Later on in the day we went back to the hosts so we could prepare for a party which was very pleasant.

Wednesday

On Wednesday we went to Krakow again as a part of the students had not seen it. On our way to the city we stopped to visit the Salt Mines at Wieliczka. Little did I know, while crossing a very harmless looking entrance that the tour itself would take 3 hours to complete. Don't get me wrong: the whole experience was enormous fun, and interesting to boot, I just was not physically prepared to spend the next 3 hours climbing stairs (and boy, where there a LOT of stairs) and walking. I slept like a baby after this day.

Thursday

This was maybe the most interesting day. We visited the Nazi Camp at Auschwitz. It was both shocking and interesting. The guide took us round the buildings in which the healthy and fit for work prisoners were kept. The conditions they had to endure were awful. They had

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to sleep on the ground or on bricks, they had no heat, rats would bite them and so on. We entered even the gassing chamber in which prisoners were killed using a deadly gas called Zyklon B, after which their bodies would be taken to the incinerator and the ashes would be dumped in the river. Sad, truly sad that around 2 million people died this way. I know I should write more about this part of the visit, but there are some things, such as this atrocity, where words simply fail you. You simply have to learn about it, visit it for yourself, if you can, and make sure you do everything in your power that such things never happen again.

After that we went back to school for the feedback and evaluation of the meeting. Once the final ceremony and certificate awarding were over, we went for a cup of coffee with the other students to chat a little bit, although the mood was rather gloomy for the rest of the day, since, I guess, the visit to Auschwitz still weighed on everyone's mind.

Friday

Sadly, the trip to the mountain was canceled due to the bad weather (can't say I was terribly surprised), but we had the unique occasion to attend different classes of the Polish students. Then we visited a museum in Cieszyn and after we went to another traditional restaurant.

The bad part was this was our last day as we had to leave at 3AM for the airport. We all hugged for a long time and said goodbye and promised to see each other again at the meeting in Romania in May.

Saturday

We had to leave at 3AM for the airport...it was a bit painful because we were all tired and sleepy, but luckily we took a nap on the mini-bus (a 3 hour trip to the airport in Krakow).

Eventually we got back in Bucharest where I met up with my friends and family and told them the story of my trip.

Overall, the trip to Poland was awesome and I hope to have the chance to do this again as soon as possible.

Florin

Impression from Poland

Day 1

We arrived in Krakow at 2am after two flights: one from Bucharest to Munich and another one from Munich to Krakow (and on this one we travelled together with the Turkish team). Once we arrived there, one student took us to his campus, where we left our luggage. After that we went to visit the old part of the city. I was impressed by the market square. It was also my first time when I got the chance to understand how cold it was going to be. At 7PM we went back to the airport where we met with the Italian and the Swedish team. After a 2 hour trip, we arrived in Cieszyn. At that moment, everybody left with their guides. My host was Robert Matuszek. Because I was really tired, I didn't have the chance to talk to him too much that night.

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Day 2 and day 3

During these 2 days we stayed in Cieszyn and saw the software and attended the Science Film Festival where my country, Romania, took first place. I thought the film festival was enormous fun, and I really enjoyed the films presented there, especially the ones done by the Italian team. Some things never change, however, since not even the funny films about chemical reactions managed to get me interested in Chemistry, but that was not a fault of the films themselves, obviously. On the first day we had the chance to visit the town while on the second day we went on a sleigh ride. It was really cold but it was also really cool.

Day 4

On the fourth day we went to Krakow, the old capital town of Poland. But before we went in the town we visited the biggest salt mine in Europe. It was one of the most interesting things I had seen my life. The Chapel was really impressive because it was one of the biggest rooms built underground in the mine. I remember talking to Florin, the other Romanian student, and some of the other students from various countries, while we were busy making our way through the intricate web of corridors, passages and airing shafts, and everyone was complaining about the length of the tour, and, in the same breath, saying how cool everything was. One of my favourite parts was taking the elevators back to the surface, as several people had to squeeze in together inside a small, almost unlit metal cage, in which a person of my height barely fit, and then this metal cage rattled all the way to the surface. It was a bit like being on an underground, vertical roller coaster, and it was definitely an appropriate way to end the visit to the Salt Mines. We took a group photo and after that we went to the city where we visited the castle and the market square. By 8 o'clock we left for Cieszyn again.

Day 5

In my opinion the fifth day was the best, and the worst day, at the same time, because I visited one of the most impressive history museums of the world: we went to the Auschwitz museum. At first I didn't think that it would be so shocking but when I entered I started to understand what really happened there.

The first sign of that was the sentence from the gate which said "*Work sets you free*", an obvious lie, but even more cruel to all the people crossing those gates, and being given false hope and false assurance.

However, the most shocking part of the museum was the belongings room where I had the chance to see tonnes of human hair, a lot of shoes and luggage from the Jews killed in Auschwitz. These were just a small fraction of all the items belonging to the people who had come to the camps, never to leave, and apart from the realization that the owners of those items had probably all met with a horrible death, there was another thing.

I was truly horrified by the efficiency of it all, by the planning and organizing that must have gone into sorting through people's possessions, and categorizing them, and shipping them back to Germany, to be used by happy, healthy people, who didn't know, or



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didn't care that their suitcase, or their pair of shoes, or – most chilling thought of all – their baby clothes came from others, just like them, who had probably been turned into ashes.

Another shocking part was the dictation cells which were too small for people to lie down. Another important piece of history for me was when we visited the Auschwitz camp 2, and saw all the memorials, in the languages of all the countries which had lost citizens to the atrocities, including one in Romanian.

The rest of the day passed in a bit of a haze. I found it a bit hard to concentrate on the there and then, so I guess, in a way, it was better to have activities lined up for later that afternoon. We went back to Cieszyn where we had a closing ceremony: for the Science Film Festival, where Romania won, and for each country's delegation member. Then we went to pizzeria with students from all countries. This was the last day we saw the Bulgarian and Spanish teams. It started out as a bit of a sad day, with the visit to the camps, and it ended on a similar bittersweet note, since we had to say goodbye to the Spanish and Bulgarian teams, who were the first of all the groups to leave.

Last day in Cieszyn

After attending lessons by the Polish teachers, I, together with the remaining group of students, went to movie called *Django Unchained*. After that we went back to my host house where I packed my luggage and went to sleep really early because the next day I had to wake up at 4 AM.

Final word

I really enjoyed the experience I had in Poland and I hope I will be able to go again there.

Vlad Stoika

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TURKEY

HASAN HUSEYIN AKDEDE ANADOLU OGRETMEN

Gudul, ANKARA

The fifth meeting in 2013 –

20 – 26 January 2013

Cieszyn, Poland

Feedback For The Poland Meeting



To start with, I must confess that It was more fruitful and interesting trip than I expected before. While thinking that we were strangers in an unknown city or country, we came across a loyal friend ‘Przemyslaw’. He showed us the Poland hospitality and despite the cold weather a warm atmosphere welcomed us there in a foreign country. It was marvellous to be aware of that there were many people to welcome you and give a hand to you. When we encounter Grazyna and hosting families it was night and so cold. But the next day everyone woke up to a white morning. The students of us came near us and told that they were enjoying too much. We understood once again that there were no borders for friendship and warm feelings which all melt the frozen weather outside.

We were also lucky to see one of the world’s most beautiful inheritance ‘ The salt mine’ and so impressed to breathe the bloody and pathetic atmosphere of The Nazi Camp ‘Auschwitz-Birkenau’. We couldn’t help our tears in front of the windows which made us feel as if an invisible hand would pull us just into the windows through a trip from 2012 to 1941. We have once understood that it cant be expressed but just lived and this journey lead us to grasp the significiance of the PEACE among the residence of this huge planet.



Having experienced this marvelous trip to Poland our team has inferred:

We should not only apply new educational systems through computers but also encourage them not to behave just like computers”

Ebru Eroglu

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Secondary School

Gorna Oryahovitsa

The fifth meeting in 2013 –

20 – 26 January 2013

Cieszyn, Poland

My Impressions from Poland



The visit to Poland was nothing less than unforgettable. I was impressed by the hospitality of everyone and the way they treat each other. Everything about those 5 days left memories which will never be erased. All the different cultures I met, all those different people have left me with the impression that they're not too different from us .

The trip to Poland may have taken a long time but it was worth it. After the long flight, waiting and driving to Cieszyn we were accommodated by our hosts. When we got to my host the most delicious stew was waiting for us with a cup of warm tea. That's at 2:30 AM. After that we went to bed which had the most comfortable pillows I had ever rested my head on.

The next day we went to the school which was in the project. Some important (and not so important) things were said and a small concert took place. After that we received some town maps and guides of Cieszyn. Later we ate some more fantastic food and went home.



Tuesday was pretty interesting. I got to meet most of the people from all the countries in the project and watched everyone's games and quizzes considering the English grammar and speech.

The fun part was later that day. We attended a surprisingly awesome party. When we got to the place where it was, we were welcomed by a two giant horse-drawn sleds with 3 smaller sleds attached to it. We got to ride of course and it was unforgettable. After the ride we got to cook sausages over the fire. I felt very cosy in the company of everyone around the fire. After that the party moved inside where there was more food and, of course, tea. There was lots of singing and dancing. When the party was over we went back to our host, played a round of cards and went to bed.

On Wednesday we went sightseeing. First we went to the Wieliczka Salt Mines near Krakow. There were lots of interesting things there like statues from rock salt, giant caverns and huge wooden structures dating back to the 13-th century. I made sure to document

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everything in photos. The mines are huge and we only toured 2 percent of them. We visited an underground cathedral there with various carvings of famous art and giant chandeliers with salt ornaments on them. Next up was Krakow. We visited the Vavel Castle and the city centre. The centre was crammed with shops and restaurants. There was even a club which had proof that the famous Italian football player Mario Ballotelli had visited it. Krakow was also full of Catholic churches and cathedrals. Also there were many statues. We bought some souvenirs, ate some pizza and went back to Cieszyn.

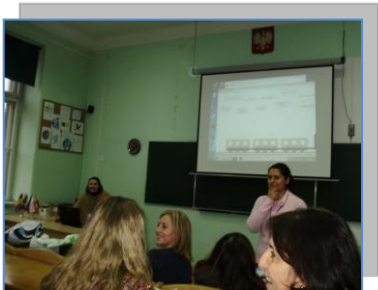


Thursday was the day we visited the Auschwitz concentration camp and learnt a lot about the European history and the hateful Nazi party. There is not much I can say because I was left speechless by the cruelty of the Germans back in World War II. So when the tour was over we returned to Cieszyn and received our certificates of attendance together with a delicious gift of mini wafers.

After that was over, the fun continued as we went to the skating rink in the town which was enormous. I fell a few times but I was unharmed. Then everyone went in a restaurant where we had our goodbye “feast”. We didn’t sleep at all as we had to be up very early. We had one last soup before we left and then we were off back to good old Bulgaria.

by Dean Terziev from 10-th “a” grade in SOU “VichoGrancharov “, GornaOryahovitsa, Bulgaria

Thoughts on the Visit to Poland



For a man such as me, who had never traveled abroad, it was a brand new experience. Never before had I been on a plane and never before had I felt the luxury of the first class. The feeling of taking off the ground is amazing. Further more I saw the clean sky above the sea of clouds. Finally we were over Poland. There under us was the capital Warsaw which was really enormous and the end of it couldn’t be seen. So many different people at the airport, many nationalities, cultures, religions. After 7 hours of doing nothing other than looking around the shops and solving crosswords, you start to get really tired but you can’t sleep, you just can’t. This strange side effect of prolonged exposure to boredom should be registered somewhere. We boarded the plane and we were over Katowice very shortly. There waiting was the crazy bus driver. He can drive without his hands while changing his clothes. As we arrived in Cieszyn we got transferred to our honorable hosts. My host’s name was Polina , shewas very nice from the start. After some time, late in the evening we arrived at her house. The only thought on my mind was to brush my teeth and get to sleep. On the other day we visited the “Nikolay Kopernik” school.

What got our group’s attention was the fact that there was a printer on every floor and it was free of charge. We attended the movie presentation and In the end the Romanians won , the runner ups were the Italians and second runner ups were again the Romanians. The next day we visited Krakow. The city has a legend about a dragon that destroyed most of the city,

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but a hero rose against him. The way of his demise was by putting acid into the body of a dead sheep. The beast got thirsty and drank half the river. And then he burst from all the water in him. There are many cathedrals in the city almost at every corner. After sightseeing in the streets we stopped to restaurant and had lunch . There were bets on whether I would finish all the dishes I had ordered , but in the end all was well and the dishes were empty.

The next day we were on our way to Auschwitz, the German concentration camp.

Our group was terrified by the atrocities done there. The whole place was kind of spooky. Not a sound could be heard inside. The place was dead. You can actually feel the Cyclon 5 gas in the air.



The inhumanity that was there. This place stands now as nothing but a monument to the monstrous actions that humanity is capable of. I hope there will never be more camps like this. In general the Polish are very kind and hospital people. They are different from us Bulgarians in many ways. Cheerful and polite you can quickly make friends with some of them if not all of them. The Turkish people and mainly Oguz Ozkan were very interesting people to talk to. Very polite and always ready to talk on all kinds of

subjects. The final day was here and nobody wanted to go home. Yeah if only we could stay there, but when it's time to go it's time to go. The last party was very dramatical and funny. Some day maybe we will come back and see the Polish students again.

by Ivaylo Parnetsov, Vicho Grancharov Secondary School, Gorna Oryahovitsa, Bulgaria

The visit to Poland



Our meeting in Poland was exciting. I spent a great week there. We met great people that I hope to remain good friends with. We learned many interesting things during our visit to Krakow, to Auschwitz and to the salt mines in Wieliczka. There was organized sleigh riding. The sleighs were pulled by horses. Our Polish friends took us to a skating rink. This experience was great because I skated for the first time in my life. I'm glad I had the opportunity to meet such wonderful and cheerful people from 6 different countries! I will never forget this

experience. I hope to see you all again in Bulgaria!

by Denitsa Marinova, Vicho Grancharov Secondary School, Gorna Oryahovitsa, Bulgaria

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SWEDEN

Hässelbygårdsskolan

Stockholm

The fifth meeting in 2013 –

20 – 26 January 2013

Cieszyn, Poland

Impressions:



One of the things that the Swedish participants appreciated during the Polish meeting was the organized trip to the saltmine. It was a different and interesting experience, quite out of the ordinary. They also found the trip to Auschwitz important and memorable. The food served during the meeting in Poland was something that they praise. A lot of interesting lesson activities were presented during the meeting. Two that they remember especially was the activities teaching English presented by Bulgaria and

Poland. Elham, being a maths teacher, also appreciated the film on geometry presented by the Romanian school.



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SPAIN
IES NEWTON-SALAS
VILLANUEVA DE LA TORRE

The fifth meeting in 2013 –

20 – 26 January 2013

Cieszyn, Poland



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POLAND
**II LICEUM OGOLNOKSZTALCACE IM. MIKOLAJA
KOPERNIKA**

CIESZYN

The fifth meeting in 2013 –

20 – 26 January 2013

Cieszyn, Poland

Impression

Saturday, January 19th.



We got up at 7:00 am and everything was white, we went to have breakfast. Next we decided to go to visit the downtown Prague. First, we went up to the Prague Tower and we could look at everything Prague. Secondly, we came in a park and started to throw us snowballs: teacher against students, we won of course. Thirdly, we went up to the castle and we bought a bun, we were so hungry. Finally we crossed the Charles Bridge, it was very nice. After making a good route we decided to have lunch. Iñaki, one of the teachers, took us to a horrible restaurant: waitresses didn't hear anything and the food was not very good. To compensate the students we went to Starbucks while teachers went to the station to reserve train tickets. Then, at 4:00 pm, students and teachers went to the hostel to rest. Later, we went to the Black Theater to see a show. The first minutes of the play were so boring but next were very funny. To next the show we were very hungry therefore we went to have dinner at a Mexican Restaurant. I didn't like so much because it had a horrible sauce. After dinner we went to the hostel to sleep. It was an amazing day.

Carlos

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Impression

Sunday, January 20th.



We started the day at 8 o'clock in the morning. Some of us had a shower and we went to had breakfast: cereals, sandwich and Nacho's mother's cookies! They were awesome!

Later, all the group, went to the Jewish Quarter and we try to enter to the cemenetry but we couldn't because we should to pay for the churchs too much and we didn't want to see them. After that, we went to the Prague Eiffel Tower, in an special train; and another time, we couldn't enter because people were working in that. When we were going down, we caught some broken sleds and we had a greatful time, specially when Iñaki hit a girl with one. At 2pm we had lunch in a nice place and later we run to the Hostel to catch our bags and run to the train station. This train was very good because it had WI-FI and tables for playing cards. After 4 hours, we appeared in our Polish town and we met our families. It was a nice and cold day.

Rubén.

Impression

Monday, January 21st

At the morning we went to the polish high school, there, we were in a welcome event. In the event was some musical performances, a Headmaster's speech etc. Before we started to present the ICT projects in another different room and we employed the rest of the morning in this. But we had a coffee-break in the middle with a lot of food and some drinks.

Then the polish students guided us in a tour around the city of Cieszyn, we visited the main square, the church and other interesting points.

After the visit, at sixteen o'clock, we went to an italian restaurant which make the biggest pizzas in Cieszyn, it was good!

Later we went to "Classic" and spent some time together. Last, we separated, and either one went to his host's house with his family to have diner and spend the night.

*Marcos
Rubén.*

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Impression

Tuesday, January 22nd

We got up at 6:00 and arrived at 8:00 to school. In high school we saw the videos that each country made to the draft Comenius, the Spanish had so embarrassed. We were the 5th. When school ended the Polish students took us to a restaurant, the food was very good! The food was typically Polish. After the meal they prepared a visit to the town hall, the mayor, told us the story of Cieszyn. Visit we liked a lot! Besides teaching us things we did not know the people. And finally led us to ride horse-drawn sleighs, many people fell and we all laughed. We loved it! It was the best day we had a great ride and at the end of dinner we went to all students Comenius. Then all the students went to our homes to sleep, because the next day we had a long day.

Nacho

Impression

Wednesday, January 23th



On that day, we had to get up very early because we had to take the bus to go to the salt mines. The bus left at 6 am in front of the school, it is too early for us but we wanted to visit it and at 5 am we were up. The bus ride was of 3 hours and we slept all the time. Then, we arrived in the salt mines and we started the visit. We could see how the people worked there and the different galleries of the mine and different chambers. Later, we took the bus and we went to Krakow. In Krakow we saw the monuments and interesting things of the city, the castle and the dragon statue. Later, we ate, we took de bus and we went at home. It was a nice day.

Víctor Ortega

Impression

January 24th

On Thursday, we got up at 6:30 in the morning. We had to took the bus at 7:30 so we were 5 minutes earlier waiting with all the people. That day we had to go to the concentration camp of Auschwitz. It took half an hour to arrive. First, we visited Auschwitz 1. We got a headset and a guide took us to the camp. She guided us through the buildings and explaining it all. After two hours we took the bus again to go to Auschwitz 2, the extermination camp. It was a hard experience and we learned a lot. We visited this place and then we come back to the school. When we arrived at school the polish teachers gave us some certificates. After that, we went with our polish hosts to ice skating and to have dinner together with almost all the people of the Comenius.

When we finished having dinner we went to our respective homes to pack the suitcase because it was our last day in Poland.

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Istituto di Istruzione Superiore I.P.S.S."M. LENTINI"-

L.S. "A. EINSTEIN "

MOTTOLA, ITALY

The fifth meeting in 2013 –

20 – 26 January 2013

Cieszyn, Poland

MEMORIES OF POLAND.

With this report, I don't want to describe day by day the amazing meeting in Poland, but I just want to make you aware about how fantastic it was. I have ever been interested in Poland, actually I don't know why, maybe because I usually associate Poland with snow and since I've seen the snow only twice I was amazed by the idea of walking on such a snow. When we arrived there a great atmosphere was waiting for us, a lot of snow together with a lot of wonderful guys who were impatient to meet us. As soon as I got down from the bus I recognised the guy who had to host me, I hugged him because he was a participant of the meeting in Italy and so I already met him. All the Polish friends were very polite with us, they understood in Italy we have different habits and so they did their best in order to allow us to be at ease. I tried some fantastic new things such as the sleight (I fall down three times, ouch), some typical foods, I walked on the snow (good riddance!) I drank Vodka and a lot of beer and I learnt how to grow fond of someone who is several miles far from you. This is the power of Comenius, those seven days were not only a moment of exchange, it was a moment of love, of happiness and friendship. When I said them goodbye from the coach I realized what I wrote here, that even if I felt cold at the same time I was the happiest person in the world because of new friends I met with whom I never be far not even with 1000 miles of distance! Comenius taught me how to love, how to open my mind, how to be a part of the world.

With fondest love...Pippo Carbotti (Italy)



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