

"TRAVELLING WITH DASAR HAND IN HAND WITH EUROPE"

Group storiesfor living together



Comenius Project

"We Europeans: knowing each other for living together"
2009 – 2011



Education and Culture
Lifelong learning programme
COMENIUS



We Europeans: knowing each other for living together
2009-2011

It is a group tale or , better , a cooperative tale: the students of a nation started the narration (in English); then by e-mail every school was called in turns to continue the tale till its ending.

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Chapter 1

Young Dasar and his arrival to Italy

Once upon a time there was family who lived in a small village in Albania.

They were Daddy Besnik, Mummy Gaiusha and their only and loved child Dasar. They lived in a poor way but with lots of loving friends. Samir was the best friend of Daddy Besnik, he lived in poverty so he emigrated to Italy where he thought he could live more comfortably.

One day, while the family was at home the phone rang, it was Samir. He said that he was in Italy where he lived in a luxurious Italian house working as servant.

He persuaded Daddy Besnik to emigrate to Italy. At first Mummy Gaiusha did not want to leave Albania but in the end she convinced herself that it was a good idea, so a summer day the family left.



The departure was painful because Dasar left his loved friends. During the journey he thought about his new life. When they finally were in Italy they settled down at Samir's house for a few days. Life was not easy even in Italy. Daddy Besnik worked as farmer, he worked, he worked twelve hours a day and earned little, Mummy Gaiusha worked too and Dasar worked as washer at the traffic lights renouncing to his youth.



When the summer ended Dasar attended the school. He was happy, his school was new colored with a big and green lawn around it, his teachers and his classmates were kind to him, everyone asked him lots of questions about Albania, his life and his family.

After a short time everything changed, he

felt himself like a ghost, nobody wanted to teach him to speak Italian or simply to play with him after school. He spent hours and hours by the river Arno, or watching the buildings and the streets from above the Giotto bell tower: the town was beautiful, but he felt it as an enemy and a stranger. He suffered a lot and he did not want to go to school any longer. Mummy Gaiusha was patient with him and she said that things would change.....

(edited by Mazzarino School – Italy)

Chapter 2

A bad experience and a quick escape

.....Finally one day some older boys came to Dasar. He was happy to make friends with them and didn't feel any longer like a ghost. During the break, the three boys told him to take a knife and puncture the teacher's car tyres, this way he would become a friend of them. Dasar wasn't so sure that it would have been a good idea but, in the end he did it, hoping he would have been accepted by the group.

During the lesson, the Headmaster called the three bully-boys and Dasar, accusing them of being responsible for the bad act. Dasar's new 'friends' denied everything and accused him. The boy realized that they had not behaved like friends and lost heart again. Thus he decided to see Samir, his father's friend, he who could always find a solution to any problem.

After having listened to Dasar's problems and given him some advice Samir told the boy that he had changed his job: from the following day he wouldn't be any longer a man-servant in the residence, but he would start to be a lorry driver . It was a good job, because it was well paid and it would let him see the whole Europe.

Dasar stood still, he didn't know what to say because Samir was like a father for him and he was sorry for his departure. Then he had an extraordinary idea: he would leave with him! At Dasar's proposal Samir was astonished,

then he said.: “Sure, this might be a way to leave those bad companies! But will your parents agree?”.

Dasar, convinced that his parents would have never given him the permission to leave, packed up secretly that night and left a note on the table of the kitchen: “Dear Mum and Dad, when you read this letter I’ll already be travelling with Samir. I still don’t know the destination: maybe Poland, or Portugal, or who knows? We’ll be back in a few weeks. You won’t get angry, will you? Don’t worry because I’ll be in good hands! Love, Dasar”.....

(edited by Recanati School – Italy)



Chapter 3

Adventures in Poland

Samir and Dasar hit the road and it turned out that the place of their destination was Poland.

They travelled by the lorry: it was carrying household appliances they had to deliver in Cracow. The journey was supposed to be long and tiresome. The weather seemed to be unpredictable- it was stormy and rainy all the time. Dasar thought that it was a kind of punishment, because he left the house without his parents' permission.

Finally, they reached the place and Samir delivered the goods; this operation took more than it was supposed to, because it never not stopped raining. Soon, it turned out that the nearest river had been swollen by heavy rain. It burst its banks and the water spilled onto the area. A major road had been closed and they had to look for a new one. Finally, they stopped and stayed for a night in a hotel. At the midnight, however, they were woken up by a strange noise. It was the police and fire brigade. Because the river breached a dyke, the nearest town was in great danger. Samir and Dasar decided to help the inhabitants. Their lorry was big enough to evacuate people and animals from the area. They were in great haste since the water level was increasing. In one of the houses they found twin brothers and their blind sister. They managed to save their lives, but

they did not know that inside the building there was still someone who needed their help. It was a guide dog. When Dasar found out about it- he went back. The dog, however, was in great shock and could not swim. Furthermore, he did not know Dasar and was afraid of him. Dasar did his best to



save this beautiful dog. Happily, they both reached the bank. The two brothers and their sister were very thankful to the

brave strangers, especially the blind girl named Ania. She said that they would never forget their courage and when they came to Poland next time, they should visit them.

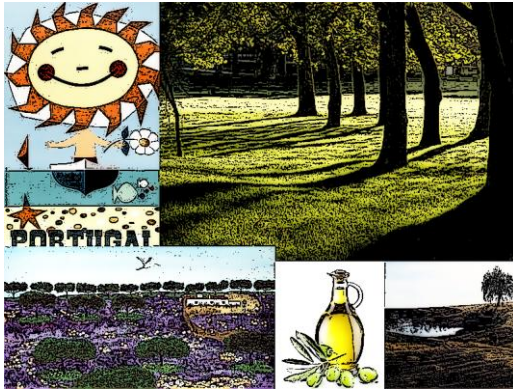
Dasar thought that Ania was a beautiful charming girl..... They did not want to leave their new friends, but they had to continue their journey. Yes, but towards where? Finally, after a phone call by the Italian firm Samir was working with, they knew their following destination: Samir should go to Dresden, in Germany, to load a big amount of machineries and equipments for a solar power plant and carry them to Portugal.

(edited by Przygodzice School- Poland)

Chapter 4

Music and sun in Portugal

Samir and Dasar went back to their lorry and Samir told his friend that they should go to Portugal to pick up some olive oil bottles to deliver to a gourmet restaurant in Slovakia.



As they passed through Germany the weather began to improve. Samir decided to ask Dasar about what really happened that day at school. Dasar told Samir that he was feeling

very lonely and that was why he did what he did. And he was very much ashamed of what he did. As they progressed with Dasar's lament, the day went by and they soon were glimpsing the lights of Dresden reflecting on the waters of the river. They decided to sleep in the lorry.

In the middle of the night they heard someone knocking at the lorry's door. "Who's there?!" - Samir asked while putting on his t-shirt. "Can you help me? My roadies left without me!" - Dasar said "I think I recognize that voice...". He rushed to the door and when he opened it, it was...

MILEY CYRUS!!!!!! “Miley who?” screamed Samir rubbing his eyes.

“It’s her indeed! She’s the protagonist of Hannah Montana. Don’t you recognize her? Wake up, Samir”

The girl told them she should reach her crew, she had been quarreling with, because in three days she was to have a concert in Rock in Rio Lisbon.

“Rock what?” asked Samir.

It is the biggest rock music festival.....Samir, wake up!”

Thus they immediately agreed on taking her with them since they were heading in the same direction, they were heading to the south of Portugal through a local village called Elvas and they were charmed by its natural beauty.



Along the way through secondary roads they captured the river Tagus which grew as they got closer to Lisbon. The sun was shining and the weather was wonderful, and crossing the wonderful 17 km long Vasco da Gama

bridge and what a sight of Lisbon coast line which the Expo 98 gave life to. Crossing Lisbon viewing its traditional old buildings and magnificent gardens, they finally reached ‘Parque da Bela Vista’ in Lisbon, everyone was looking for Miley. Samir and Dasar were invited to watch Miley’s

concert in the V.I.P. area. Dasar took lots of pictures of her. It was a memorable night for them. They sadly said goodbye and they went on their way to the Alentejo. Now they crossed the 25th April bridge, a replica of the San Francisco bridge, and headed south and the landscape changed as they saw endless land, some planted other not, green and brown and now and then small rivers surely caught up by the drought years.



Dasar started to reminisce about the people he met along his way and how fortunate he was to have met them. While he was absorbed in his thoughts he didn't notice the smoke that was getting nearer and nearer. Suddenly, FIRE!!! Fire trucks and fire engines were piling

along the way. Forrest was being devastated because of people's carelessness. Samir stopped the lorry and asked the firemen if he could be of some use. «You sure can...We need to evacuate an old house and to find somewhere to put this lady's furniture». When Samir entered the house he found a woman lying on the floor he swept her from the floor and rushed to the door. The furniture had to wait...

The firemen thanked them and again they were on their way. Driving through the immense plains of the Alentejo, crossing now and then some parts of the river Guadiana,

which comes from Spain and crosses the Alentejo until Vila Real in the Algarve, a small town on the Mediterranean coast. Finally he is in Beja, the capital of the Alentejo district, one of the largest in Europe but the least populated due to its harsh climate and working conditions.



They went to Santa Maria school to visit their friends there and had a festive time with good food, like sardines, olives, salad, cod fish and good homemade desserts and plenty of laughter and good companionship. But as time flies, they had to go, and so Dasar

was again immerse in his thoughts, he had been through so much, so many adventures so far, such different and diverse people he had met... They stopped near the olive oil press...

(edited by Beja School– Portugal)

Chapter 5

Destination: Slovakia

« To Slovakia and then to Turkey? Are we crazy? Shall we go back to Eastern Europe where we were twenty days ago? »



But orders were orders and Samir had to leave, even if against his own will. Six days later their lorry broke down and there was no way to let it restart. Luckily they found a house by the road

Samir's and Dasar's next destination was Slovakia. They were carrying olive oil from Portugal. But, unfortunately, their lorry broke down and they found a house by the road. There lived an old woman who was very hospitable and helpful. She lent them her two bikes to go to the town to ask for help. The weather was great – it was sunny and there was no cloud in the sky. In front of them there were some nice and little wooden buildings that looked like churches and in the background they could see the mountains. It was a landscape inducing to have a rest on the grass...

They reached the place and were happy. They went to the shop to buy some sweets for an old lady and ask for help. Samir and Dasar relied their bikes on the tree. But when they returned, the bikes were not there! Their happiness has changed to sadness.

They went to the police but police did not have any time (they looked for murderer). So Samir and Dasar took it to their own hands. They made a phone call to their new friends from Poland. Their names were Agata, Aša and Mateusz. They promised they would arrive and help them find a thief.



Next day, Polish friends really arrived. Together they looked for stops. And near the tree they found an ID card! It has belonged to a man with long hair, beard and a tattoo. There was written the man's name that was Arnold and was 35 years old. And there was address, too... So they took their rollerblades and went to his house.

Arnold lived in a small house with garden and a big dog. They decided that Agata, Aša and Mateusz would catch the dog and Samir with Dasar would go into the house. Mateusz said MEOW and the dog started to run after him. Dasar caught a stone and threw it to the window. They went into the house and found out nobody was at home. They saw that their bikes were closed. They tried to find a key but it was not there.

Ten minutes later, the thief returned home with jewellery. Agata saw it and made a phone call to police. She said to the police thief's name and address. Samir and Dasar hid under big table and hoped Arnold would not find them in his house before the police comes. And they had good luck! Arnold walked near the table and key of their bikes fell down of his hand. So they took it. But Arnold saw it and asked: „Who's there?” They started to run over room and were frightened.

Luckily, the police with Polish friends entered the room at that moment. Aša jumped on Arnold and police arrested him. They thanked them for „well done work”.

They were happy that they became heroes. In the end, they said: „ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL!”

They celebrated their victory at the old lady's. She cooked typical Slovak cookies with poppy seeds. She asked them everything about their dangerous adventure. Samir, Dasar, Agata, Aša and Mateusz laughed and clapped their hands together.

«Dasar! Wake up! You fell asleep here in front of the church and the mountains » « But how come? Then it was all a dream! Are the bikes still here?»

« Don't worry – told Samir – nobody has taken them. Now let's hurry up and call someone to repair the lorry, otherwise who wants to hear my boss?»

Two days later the two friends , after having repaired the lorry, had unloaded the olive oil and were ready to face up to the last stop, Turkey.

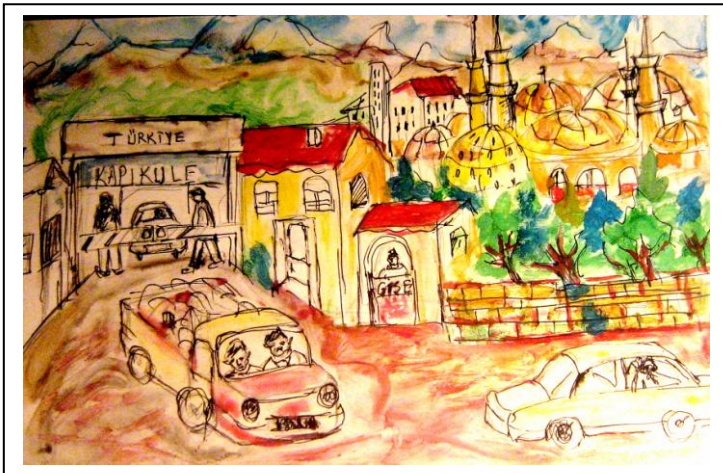
(edited by Nove Zamky school – Slovakia)

Chapter 6

A warm embrace of Istanbul

We were really excited to learn that Turkey is a country that connects Asia and Europe, which has been home to many Mesopotamian civilizations from Phrygians to Sumerians, from Troy to the Byzantines, and the Ottomans from Hittites to the Commagene and Lydia. We were fascinated by the glamour of Selimiye Mosque, one of the works of well-known Turkish architect Mimar Sinan, which we saw shortly after we passed the Edirne Kapıkule border crossing in our truck, back of which was loaded with olive oil containers.

While we kept driving in a snowy and foggy weather, we



were excited with the expectation of seeing Istanbul. After two and a half-hour journey, we finally arrived at Istanbul.

We greedily watched this city imbued in sea and history as we travelled along the Bosphorus Bridge.

At the same time, we were going with a flood of cars before and after us. We had to be careful as there was too much traffic.

As we came to Eminönü, Samir parked our truck. Then, we sent ourselves to the open embrace of Istanbul.

There was a certain odour in the air, pulling us to itself as people were frying fish aboard boats that lined up along the coast and selling it with onion and tomato and bread, making it all the more irresistible.

Having eaten our fill, we were watching around.

Thousands of pigeons were leaping to and fro in order to get their share from the pieces of simit and wheats thrown to them by onlookers in front of the New Mosque just behind us.

People were watching a sunny, yet cold day and catching fish on the Galata Bridge that was just in front of us.

Everywhere Turkish, African, Chinese street vendors were noisily and garrulously selling a myriad of objects ranging from perfumes to watches on the covers on the ground or over the stalls.

The Galata Tower, standing just ahead of us, was one of the most beautiful historic buildings in Istanbul.

At once, we bought a brochure and got aboard the first ferry.



Our tour on the Bosphorus was quite cheerful.

There was a small ensemble playing Turkish music and everyone, including us, were dancing and singing.

Hagia Sophia, Süleymaniye and Ortaköy mosques as well as the Maiden Tower, Castles of Anatolia and Rumelia, the Dolmabahçe Palace and the Bosphorus Bridge were more impressive as seen from the sea.

Like me, Samir had been to many places and seen lots of cities, and we both believed that Istanbul was one of the world's most beautiful cities.

As we were watching these beauties, it went dark and the lights came, giving Istanbul an image borrowed from a fairy tale.

There were two days before the fair would be held, and we were happy that we would have two days to tour around, but we realized that we did not plan where we would stay.

We asked a university student where we could stay, and he said that he could take us to a family boarding house within

walking distance and we all entered a crowded street. Ads and posters of concerts, exhibitions and movies were everywhere. We passed through a big and historic door to enter the Grand Bazaar, which was a centuries old shopping center.

There were shops selling colourful fabrics, jewellery, souvenirs, carpets, leather, spices, and Turkish coffees.

The boarding house was being run by a husband and wife who were both retired teachers, and immediately we set on a friendly chat over tea.

There were framed paintings and pictures on every wall and there were knitted curtains with lacework; there was a piano to the left and, at the opposite, there was a window from up to down, giving a good view of the city.



After the chat, we had slept for while, and when we went down for dinner, the elegant landlady was sitting at the piano while

her husband was in charge of the food service.

We got along well with their seven-year-old granddaughter Damla. After a while, Damla vanished with other children.

Actually, no one had realized their absence until we smelled the heavy smoke and fumes.

Suddenly the waitress ran toward the stairs, shouting, "Fire!" and everyone rushed toward the stairs. But no one could go up because of the flames and the children were shouting from upstairs.

Everyone was in panic; the fire department had been summoned; and neighbours had come to help us.

Naci Bey could not resist the calling of his granddaughter and entered the flames and was out of sight.

Samir had soaked a blanket in water and wrapped it around himself before entering the flames. Several minutes passed, but no one was coming out.



The flames had engulfed the upper floor completely. The fire brigade hardly passed through the narrow street and started to spray water. At that moment, Naci Bey, followed by Samir and three children, appeared.

Everyone was shouting words of joy; on the other hand, they were sadly watching the burning building. I had watched the incident fearfully. When the fire was extinguished, Naci Bey and Samir were my new heroes.

Altogether we cleaned the lower floor and we were guests of this cozy building with a burnt roof for two days.

We had become friends. In the meantime, the fair was quite good as we sold our olive oils, and learned that Turkey was a major country in terms of oil and olive oil production. We had eaten much Turkish delight, döner, kebab and fish and seen many places.

(edited by Isparta – TurKei)

Chapter 7

The return to Italy

As he was staring at the ceiling laying on his bed, on the morning of his return to Italy, Dasar did not realize how much his experiences had been real or the fruits of his imagination.



His thoughts went back to the past days, when he was still travelling through Europe. However, his dreams came quickly to a stop, as soon as he realized he had come home.

He remembered perfectly the day they had left to come back to Italy... Two days after the fire, he was taking a walk, looking at the market stalls which were about to be removed. All of a sudden, Samir had told him: “They have just called from the company I work for and they have informed me that for the time being they do not have any more jobs for me. If we wish, we can leave Turkey, take a short holiday and then go back to Italy... What do you think about it?”.

Dasar felt ill at ease, since so far he had never thought about his return to Italy, as if his life had always consisted in travelling throughout Europe on a lorry. He asked Samir to

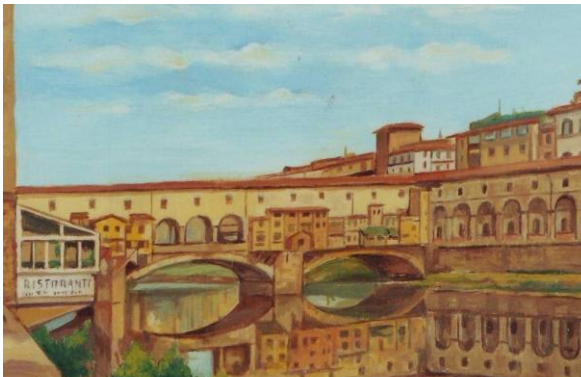
give him some time to think about it, then he went to the boarding-house where they had stayed since their arrival in Turkey. He went upstairs and entered his room. He sat on his bed and, dangling his legs, he started thinking about his life, when he had arrived in Italy. He thought about the bad adventure which had pushed him to leave the country, but at the same time he had love feelings for his father and his mother, so he decided to accept going back to Italy. Dasar and Samir left Istanbul before dawn: a long journey home awaited them! Home. Dasar was no longer sure that Italy really was his home. He was also anxious at the idea of meeting his parents, whom he had not seen in a long time and he did not know what reaction to expect from them. Would they be angry?

They travelled for three long days and they crossed the Italian border on March 17th. They did not know that day was a very important one for the Italian citizens: 150 years since the Unification of Italy! The roads had been closed to vehicles, since they were full of music bands and people celebrating in the streets. Yet, Dasar and Samir had to return home, so they tried to make their way through the crowd and the traffic with their large lorry. On the fourth day, around 9:30 AM, Dasar felt a hand which was shaking him and waking him up and a voice was calling him. He got up, he rubbed his eyes and he looked around him: he was still in the lorry, but it had stopped.

He saw Samir with a very happy face, who said to him: "Guess!" He understood immediately and he rushed out. They were near "Piazza della Signoria", the heart of Florence. Around them was "Palazzo Vecchio", one of the most famous monuments in that city which, for the first time, he was looking at as if it was unknown to him. He also managed to catch sight of the "Galleria degli Uffizi", one of the most famous art museums in the world. He inhaled

deeply the air which he had been missing for a long time and he was inundated with a strong odour of bread just taken out of the oven, crunchy on the outside and soft inside, typical of Florence, and with the typical odour of cooked meat, which he loved so much: grilled T-bone steak.

As they were looking for a place where to eat, the two friends crossed "Ponte Vecchio". Now, while walking in front of each one of those wonders, Dasar wanted to fill his



eyes with their beauty and he did not manage to stop staring until he had explored all the details. After lunch, Samir left

immediately, since he knew that Dasar's parents were waiting impatiently for their son.

As soon as he was home Dasar was welcomed by his mother and father, who gave him a hug and showed him all their love... Later on, he found himself in his bedroom, laying on the bed, staring at the ceiling, and thinking over the experience he had just lived... and the immediate future... going back to school.

On the morning of the following day, he arrived on time in front of his school. He hesitated a while before going in, since the events which had pushed him to leave were coming to his mind, but he felt that something had changed: he felt older, grown-up, more thoughtful and sure of himself.

He went in. Everything looked the same. He opened the door of his class and he was overwhelmed by cheers: "Welcome

back, Dasar!”. Everybody was smiling and he also smiled for the first time since he had come back to Italy.

Chapter 8

The small traveller who was bringing Europe with him

The following days, Dasar realized that something in him had changed: he had the feeling that he was able to have a better understanding of his friends' world, he was able to understand the strong and weak points of their thoughts. He realized he was able to say the right words: not the words that other people were expecting to hear, but those that surprised them and made them think. He was feeling at ease and he understood that his friends' respect for him was growing. Weeks went by, until one day he was approached by the boys who, months before, had pushed him to puncture the tyres of the professor's car, and had promised him to



become friends. “Hallo. I see you have come back. I really liked you a few months ago” grinned to Dasar one of them. “Be ready! We are going to have another job for you soon

and if you do it well you'll be one of us”.

Dasar, who by then had understood the bullies' intentions, answered: “I know that you are just using me to have fun behind my back. I do not need any false friends, so I am going to refuse any of your proposals”.

"Dont' you dare talk like that!" - they answered. "Or you will regret it!"

A few days later, just before the bell rang for the lesson's beginning, the bullies approached Dasar and pushed him on the ground. " "Look at our hero. How do you think you can manage against the four of us?" "He is not alone!" - a great number of voices shouted. Dasar turned around and he saw his school mates who were slowly coming forward towards the bullies. The bullies run away and never annoied Dasar again, the small traveller who was bringing Europe with him.

(edited by Recanati School – Italy)

Questionnaire

1. In which European country does Arno river flow?
2. What is the name of the mountain chain Dasar had to cross to pass from France to Spain
3. In which Italian city you can find the Giotto bell tower?
4. Who was Giotto? Where and when did he live?
5. Which river crosses Cracow?
6. During his trip Dasar stops in a plain to the south of Lisbon and of river Tago. Which is its name?
7. Which river crosses Dresden?
8. Near Cracow, there is a sanctuary where is kept the Byzantine icon of the Black Holy Mary. In which town can you find it?
9. In one of his trips Dasar can visit a very old “trade centre”: what is its name and where is it?
10. Which river flows through Lisbon?
11. Tell us the name of at least three famous monuments in Istanbul Dasar talks about in his diary.
12. Dasar and Samir don't know that in Slovakia they could admire some buildings which have been

proclaimed world heritage by UNESCO in 2008.

What are those buildings?

13. The Bosphorus Straits joins two seas: which ones?
14. What is the name of the mountain chain Dasar and Samir made out in the distance in Slovakia before falling asleep?
15. Which festivity is celebrated in Italy on Dasar and Samir's way back?

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