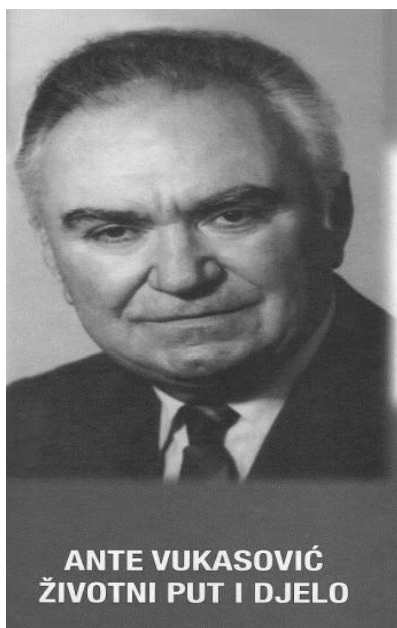


BOOK REVIEW
ANTE VUKASOVIĆ LIFE AND WORK

**Professor Vladimir Strugar
and Ivica Đaković, MS**

2020, p. 293



On the occasion of the 90th anniversary of his life and the 70th anniversary of his fruitful pedagogical work, the Croatian Pedagogical-Literary Society published a commemorative monograph *Ante Vukasović, Life and Work*. The author duo, Professor Vladimir Strugar and Ivica Đaković, MS, state in the Prologue that this is the second supplemented edition (the first edition was published on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of his life and the 60th anniversary of his fruitful work in 2009).

The monograph was edited by Professor Vlatko Previšić, and positive reviews were signed by Professor Damir Boras and Professor Neven Hrvatić. Proofreading was performed by Ilija Pejić. In addition to Croatian, abstracts were written in English (Ana Vukasović), German (Christian Kersch), Russian (Tetyane Fuderer) and Slovak (Martin

Machata). The monograph has 293 pages, with 30 photographs and 5 unnumbered tables. At the beginning of the monograph is the Prologue, and at the end of the book is the Word of Gratitude and the Index of Names. When it comes to the content and theme, the Monograph consists of three parts: Curriculum Vitae, Relevant testimonies and Bibliography.

The authors presented the Curriculum Vitae through seven chapters: Curriculum Vitae, Scientist and Researcher, Pedagogical Author, Educator of Educators, Builder of Friendship Bridges, Publicist Activity, And Finally.

He was connected with Slavonia (Osijek) by several events. He was born in Osijek in 1929. As a young man in 1944, in Široko Polje, he worked on a threshing machine to help his family survive. He finished Teacher Training school in Osijek in 1950. After graduating in pedagogy in Zagreb in 1956, he returned to Osijek and worked at the Teacher Training School. In his native Osijek, he founded the Pedagogical Centre in 1957, of which he was the director until 1960. During his stay and work in Osijek, he edited *Life and School* between 1957 and 1960.

Professor Vukasović was originally from Dalmatia, from Kučići near Omiš. In his native Kučići, he spent his early childhood, primary school and worked for a short time as a teacher and school principal. The longest and most fruitful work of Professor Vukasović is connected with Zagreb and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, where he worked between 1960 and 1993, for a full 33 years. He started as an assistant. Thanks to his persistent and systematic work, he made rapid and regular scientific progress: in 1956 he received his doctorate, in 1966 he was elected assistant professor, in 1973 associate professor and in 1978 full professor. In addition to his teaching work, he also performed a number of managerial and responsible functions as: Director of the Centre for Pedagogical Education and Research, Head of the Department of Pedagogy. It should be emphasized that he performed these functions in unfavourable so-

cio-political circumstances for him after the breakup of the Croatian Spring.

For his extremely successful and fruitful pedagogical and social work, he received a number of significant awards, medals and recognitions. From the large number mentioned by the authors for this review, the following have been single out: „Ivan Filipović State Award for the Advancement of Scientific Research“ (1971), „Ivan Filipović State Award for Lifetime Achievement“ (2002), Omiš City Award for Lifetime Achievement (2007), Order of the Third Order (1959), Order of Work with Golden Wreaths (1971), Order of Danica Hrvatska with the figure of Antun Radić (1996), Homeland War Memorial (1996) and the Order of the White Double Cross of the Slovak Republic (2005). After the general biography, the authors analyse the work of Professor Vukasović within certain areas.

In the second chapter, the authors research and describe the scientific-research work of Professor Vukasović. Scientific-research work is evaluated according to the criteria of leaders or associates, domestic or international projects. Professor Vukasović independently led thirteen scientific-research projects and participated in six more, which means that he worked on a total of nineteen scientific-research projects.

The authors provide basic information on all projects, and in this review some more significant ones are listed. Professor Vukasović was the leader and director of the international scientific project „Attitudes and programme of professional education and training of teachers for work in the field of family planning“ which was funded by the United Nations Population Fund. The same fund financed and was the holder of the project „Education and Values“.

Scientific-research projects were realized in various scientific institutions, among which the authors state: Department of Pedagogy, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Institute for Pedagogical Research, b, International Center for Family Studies in Bratislava, Faculty of Philosophy in Olmóc (Czech republic), administration of the Ministry of

Defense of the Republic of Croatia, Croatian Pedagogical-Literary Society, Školske novine and others. All scientific-research projects resulted in: books, papers, reports, which is the subject of the analysis of the third chapter Pedagogical Author.

27 books were published from nineteen scientific-research projects. The authors list them all, and in this review some of them are listed, such as: *Obrazovanje-kvalifikacija-produktivnost (Education-Qualification-Productivity)*, Zagreb 1971, *Radni i tehnički odgoj (Labour and Technical Education)*, Zagreb 1972, *Moralni odgoj (Moral Education)*, Zagreb 1974, *Intelektualni odgoj (Intellectual Education)*, Zagreb 1976, *Fenomen odgoja (The Phenomenon of Education)*, Zagreb 1979, *Moralne kvalitete naših učenika (Moral Qualities of Our Students)*, Zagreb 1974, *Osposobljavanje nastavnika za odgojni rad u području humanizacije odnosa među spolovima (Training of Teachers for Educational Work in the Field of Humanization of Gender Relations)*, Zagreb 1982 and *Domovinski odgoj, priručnik za hrvatske vojnike časnike i dočasnike (Homeland Education, Handbook for Croatian Soldiers, Officers and NCOs)*, Zagreb 1995.

The authors state that Professor Vukasović started writing during his student days and by the time this monograph was published, he had published a total of 2124 bibliographic items. All his works are classified as: books, articles and discussions, radio and TV shows.

The authors also state that Professor Vukasović published 779 professional-scientific papers and discussions in the field of education. According to them, he published all his papers in 83 journals, of which 47 were Croatian, 17 in the former Yugoslavia and 19 in foreign journals.

According to the topics and content, the authors classified all his scientific and professional papers into 10 areas: Scientific and technical progress and its impact on education; The phenomenon of education, basic educational areas and methodology of educational activities; Neglect of the educational function of the school and the family, the urgent need to improve the educational

activity and revitalization of the educational function; The phenomenon of morality, the ethical system of values, the moral crisis, the urgent need for spiritual renewal, moral transformation and the reaffirmation of universal values; Pedagogical training and in-service training of teacher as a precondition for improving educational activities; Children, youth, students as participants in the educational process and problems of their development; Higher education needs of its improvement and pedagogical training of university teachers; Family as the foundation of life: History of Croatian education and pedagogy; The system of pedagogical science and Building bridges of Croatian-Slovak friendship. The authors supported all these areas with the titles of published books.

The authors confirm his broad range of interests, scientific foundations and topicality with the information that his 93 papers have been translated into: Slovak (35), English (14), Czech (13), Russian (7), Macedonian (7), Polish (6), Albanian (5), Hungarian (3) and one each into German, Italian and Slovenian.

The fourth chapter is rightly titled The Educators' Educator (possibly according to the association Ivan Filipović –teachers' teacher). Professor Vukasović has been involved in education of pupils, students, teachers, parents and all those involved in education in any way throughout his professional life.

At the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb he taught a number of courses in the field of education: Introduction to Pedagogy, Pedagogy as a Subject, Systematic Pedagogy, General Pedagogy, Selected Chapters in Pedagogy, System of Pedagogical Science, Educational Areas, Intellectual Education and Moral Upbringing. He has given a large number of public lectures, presentations; he has participated in many congresses, conferences, round tables and colloquia. The authors point out that Professor Vukasović could be found everywhere where education is discussed.

A wide range of movements and a large number of acquaintances of Professor

Vukasović used it to build scientific and other forms of cooperation, which is why the authors called the next chapter the Creator of Friendship Bridges. He established extremely intense cooperation with colleagues from Slovakia, especially after the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the birth of Jan Amos Komensky in 1992. A year later in 1993, the Croatian-Slovak Friendship Society was founded, to which Professor Vukasović presided for a full twelve years. As a result of this cooperation and friendship, several monographs were published: *Graditelji mostova hrvatsko-slovačkog prijateljstva (Creators of Croatian-Slovak Friendship Bridges)* (2000), *Naših prvih 12 godina-Naših prvých 12 rokov (Our First 12 Years)* (2005), *Prinosi građenju mostova hrvatsko-slovačkog prijateljstva (Contributions to the Construction of Croatian-Slovak Friendship Bridges)* (2008) and *Jan Ámos Komenský i Hrvati (Jan Ámos Komenský and the Croats)* (2007).

He was especially active as a publicist during significant social events and changes such as the Croatian Spring and the democratic changes of the 1990s. He was especially active in crucial social events: he writes, interprets, polemizes, but always from a firm position of religious patriotism.

As part of his publicist work, he published a total of 944 articles in 55 newspapers, of which 42 in Croatia, 9 in the former Yugoslavia and 4 abroad. The authors point out that in addition to activities in the print media, he has also been strongly present in the electronic media.

In the 1990s, he became actively involved in the political life of Croatia. He started as a member of the Croatian Democratic Party. After a short time, he joined the Croatian Democratic Union. He is the author of the „Declaration on Moral Transformation“. He writes in *HDZ Gazette* and *Državnost (Citizenship)*. He is particularly active within the Croatian Catholic Choir and its newspaper *List mladih Mi*.

Finally, the authors ask the question: Is this all possible in one working and private life? The answer has been confirmed by this Monograph itself, in which all his biblio-

graphic units are precisely and systematically listed, and there is an impressive number of 2142 of them.

In the second part of the Monograph, entitled Authoritative Testimonies on Professor Vukasović, his associates and friends write about him. All the associates can be listed within: his former students and later associates, professional and research associates, and international associates.

Professor Previšić, PhD, his graduate and doctoral student, assistant and associate, wrote the article Professor Vukasović, a diligent employee of our Department and the Croatian Pedagogical Society, of which he was the founder. Along with the stated information in the Curriculum Vitae (which does not need to be repeated), Professor Previšić especially dwells on his human qualities and mentions some of them: diligence, persistence, consistency, systematics. All Professor Vukasović's students, including Professor Previšić, remember his hard and consistent position on writing cards of elaborate literature, without which it was not possible to take the exam. Professor Previšić points out perhaps a lesser-known thing about the attitude of Professor Vukasović towards history and his good knowledge of the history of pedagogy. His maxim was *only the one who knows the old well, can create the new faster and easier*.

Another of his students and MS, Ivica Đaković, wrote the article My Professor, role model and friend, and published an interview entitled On the Line of Defense of Faith and Homeland – for God and dear Croatia. Ivica Đaković, MS, also states numerous human and moral qualities of Professor Vukasović, such as: consistency, responsibility, integrity, justice and persistence. Above all, he valued work and order. At the same time, he emphasizes that he was the most demanding and strict towards himself. He also remembers „popular cards“. Although he was already in a way in a friendly relationship with the professor as a student, there was no backdown in either graduate or postgraduate studies.

MS Đaković, in a published interview, presents lesser-known details from the life of Professor Vukasović. His father Špiro had already lost his civil service due to his anti-regime activities in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and returned to his native Kučići for hard work. It is also a lesser known fact that Professor Vukasović, as a sixteen-year-old young man, was mobilized into the partisans and that he witnessed the Bleiberg victims of the Way of the Cross.

After the collapse of the Croatian Spring, the authorities tried to use him as a crown witness in the court proceedings against Marko Veselica. He also had personal problems due to non-cooperation with the police, and his passport was confiscated for ten years. Despite all of life's problems and adversities, he never lost faith in upbringing and education. *To give up education means to give up Humans, to give up the present and the future*. He supports the view... *whoever advances in science, and lags behind in morality, lags behind more than he advances*.

The third student of Professor Vukasović, Professor Vladmir Strugar, submits a contribution on 45 years of cooperation between the professor and his student. Professor Strugar met Professor Vukasović as a part-time student of pedagogy. From these days, their collaboration begins, which has lasted for a full 45 years. A particularly fruitful cooperation between the two was within PKZ, Bjelovar branch. Professor Vukasović was, for many years, a reviewer of the *Bjelovarski učitelj (Bjelovar Teacher)*, in which he also published. Professor Strugar especially focused on the works of Professor Vukasović which were published in Bjelovar: *Etika-moral-osobnost (Ethics-Morality-Personality)*, *Domovinski odgoj, priručnik za hrvatske vojnike, časnike i dočasnike (Homeland Education, Handbook for Croatian Soldiers, Officers and NCOs)*, *Odgojna funkcija hrvatskih učitelja (Educational Function of Croatian teachers)*, *Jan Ámos Komenský i Hrvati (Jan Ámos Komenský and the Croats)*. He states that for the monograph *Likovi hrvatskih pedagoga (Characters of Croatian Pedagogues)* it is „Signifi-

cant because it is the first book on the national history of pedagogy in independent Croatia". This claim should be further substantiated with regard to the editions: Čehok 1979, Munjiza 2007, Lukaš and Munjiza 2020 and others.

Professor Hrvoje Vrgoč knew Professor Vukasović since his student days. They attended Teacher Training School in Osijek together. He wrote a contribution for this monograph under the title Seven decades of cooperation. Professor Vrgoč writes about the beginnings of cultural and public activities of Professor Vukasović during his school days in the teacher training school through the literary section. Professor Vrgoč writes extensively about their cooperation within the HPKZ. Professor Vukasović was the Secretary General and a member of the Management Board at HPKZ. In addition, he was a writer of texts, editor of certain editions and books. He published 83 papers only in *Napredak*. Organized by HPKZ, he participated in congresses of pedagogues, schools for pedagogues. Professor Vrgoč also lists Professor Vukasović moral qualities, such as: conscientiousness, persistence, consistency, diligence, expertise, patience, accuracy to pedantry.

Professor Zvonimir Šeparović wrote the article Ante Vukasović-pedagogue, ethicis and victimologist. about the contribution of Professor Vukasović in the field of victimology. According to Preofessor Šeparović, Professor Vukasović was a victimologist for at least three reasons: he wrote about the suffering of people, he had empathy for the victims, especially war victims, and he was a political victim himself. He actively participated in victimology congresses with his contributions.

Two articles were written in the field of Christian-religious orientation by Professor Vukasović. The first article was written by Vladimir Lončarević, PhD, For God and Croatia dear, and the otherby duo Mate Krajina and Don Anđelko Kačunko, Living manual and witness. The authors of the mentioned articles deal with the activity of Professor Vukasović within the association of the Croatian Catholic Choir *Mi*, whose

secretary he was for a full ten years. In addition, he was the editor of the Catholic *List mladih Mi (Youth Newspaper Mi)*. He was an active member of the Club of Catholic Intellectuals and participated in the adoption of the National programme of Demographic Development. Dr Lončarević also states the moral qualities of Professor Vukasović: professional, open, patient, punctual, conscientious, persistent, diligent, calm, optimistic.

Contributions on international cooperation for this Monograph were written by: dr. sc. Agneza Szabo, PhD, A Letter of respect to the Bridge Creator of Croatian-Slovak Friendship; Professor Ján Janković Our Professor Vukasović and Professor Jozef Pšenák Ante Vukasović and Slovak Pedagogy.

All three mentioned authors mainly deal with the activity of Professor Vukasović within the Croatian-Slovak friendship. As forms of international cooperation they state: joint activities in international scientific projects; celebrating anniversaries; cooperation between cultural, public, educational and scientific institutions; literary evenings, public lectures; book presentations; professional and recreational excursions and publishing. Many book have been written in the field of Croatian-Slovak cooperation, among which the authors state: *Graditelji mostova hrvatsko slovačkog prijateljstva (Creators of Croatian-Slovak Friendship Bridges)* (history of friendly relations presented), *Naših prvih 12 godina (Our first 12 years)* (modern presentation of friendship after 1992), *Prinosi građenju mostova hrvatsko-slovačkog prijateljstva (Contributions to building Croatian-Slovak friendship bridges)* and *Jan Ámos Komenský i Hrvati (Jan Ámos Komenský and the Croats)*.

It is hard to imagine when a dozen authors write about the character and work of the same man that they do not even repeat themselves. In this review, repetition was sought to be avoided to the extent that it ensures a complete and objective presentation.

In the third and last part of this Monograph, the authors wrote the Bibliography. This part is the most extensive, it

was written on 133 pages and occupies almost half of the Monograph in terms of volume. According to the authors, this Bibliography can be considered complete until 2018. The entire Bibliography is composed of two parts: the works of Professor Vuaksović and works on Professor Vukasović. Within the list of works by Professor Vukasović, there is a separate list of books, articles and discussions as well as a list of radio and TV shows. Three (unnumbered) tables are an integral part of this Bibliography. In the table on page 219, papers are clearly listed, by type and number. The list of journals in which Professor Vukasović published his articles is shown in the table on pages 220/221, and the list of articles published in the newspapers is shown on pages 222/223.

In general, the works on Ante Vukasović are classified as: biographical-biblio-

graphic works, other works on Ante Vukasović and reviews of the works of Ante Vukasović.

The bibliography of Professor Vukasović is impressive and consists of 2124 bibliographic units of the papers of Professor Vukasović and 656 bibliographic units about Professor Vukasović. The bibliography is multifaceted; as a complete bibliography of Professor Vukasović, thematic bibliography of the educational area and bibliographic data on the then pedagogical journals and papers. This valuable anniversary and its jubilee deserved the jubilee-representative Monograph. Considering the number of schools in the Republic of Croatia, it is a pity that it was printed only in 300 copies because every school should have it.

Emerik Munjiza, PhD
Associate Professor Emeritus
Velika Kopanica