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MODERNISATION, IDEOLOGY AND TRANSFORMATION OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE – FORMER YUGOSLAVIA CASE (1918-1990)¹

Abstract: *Development of educational science in Former Yugoslavia was marked both by huge discontinuity due to changes in political and ideological regimes that had effects on “mainstream” pedagogy, and hidden continuity between civil and socialist pedagogy. Our analysis of the writings of Yugoslav pedagogues shows the presence of strategy known as “nationalisation of pedagogical knowledge”. This strategy presents the attempt of gaining social, as well as academic legitimacy of educational science.*

Nationalisation of pedagogical knowledge was present in all dominant pedagogical schools: experimental pedagogy, spiritual-scientific pedagogy (Geisteswissenschaftliche Pädagogik), as well as in New school movements. Paradoxically, nationalisation of pedagogical knowledge presented the main feature of Yugoslav Marxist pedagogy in the period after the World War II. This strategy was successful in transformation of the leading theoretical schools (“paradigm change”): herbartianismus into experimental pedagogy, experimental pedagogy into spiritual-scientific pedagogy and at the end spiritual-scientific pedagogy into Marxist pedagogy, but the success of this strategy was significantly limited by the level of modernisation of educational system and the ideological control over this system.

Keywords: *educational modernisation, ideological control of education, nationalisation of pedagogical knowledge.*

Introduction

The main research question in this paper is the influence of modernisation and dominant ideology in former Yugoslavia on transformation of educational science, its

¹ Članak predstavlja rezultat rada na projektu »Promene u osnovnoškolskom obrazovanju – ciljevi i strategije«, br. 149055 (2006-2010) i projekta »Obrazovanje za društvo znanja«, br. 149001 (2006-2010), čiju realizaciju finansira Ministarstvo za nauku i tehnološki razvoj Republike Srbije.

major theoretical approaches, research programmes and the development of institutions for pedagogical education and research. Another research question raised is the way in which social, as well as academic legitimacy of educational science was gained under the conditions of radical changes in the political, ideological, social and economic context in the country.

So far, there have been no studies of educational science development that would encompass both periods in which Yugoslav state existed, the periods 1918-1941 and 1945-1991. Similarly, there are no studies dealing with the development of educational science in the subject period on the territories of new national states established upon the disintegration of former Yugoslavia (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia). However, just before World War II, there appeared a collective monograph *Pedagogical Yugoslavia 1918-1938* (1939) with an account of the development of pedagogy and supporting sciences (psychology, ethno-psychology, philosophy and educational sociology) among Serbs, Croats and Slovenians. Immediately after the disintegration of former socialist Yugoslavia, the study entitled *Development of conceptualisation of constitutive components of educational science in Yugoslavia, 1944/45 – 1991/92* (1994) written by one of the leading educationalist, Nikola Potkonjak, was published (Potkonjak, 1994a). There are also bibliographies of a number of educational journals (Vujisić-Živković, 2006), as well as monographs on certain educationalists² or the selected works of the more eminent educationalists in the period upon World War II.

All these works provide the grounds for the analysis of the prevailing pedagogical discourse, i.e. its transformation during the changes of the major social and ideological system in former Yugoslavia. The analysis of the pedagogical discourse indicates a constant presence of the rhetorical strategy called “the nationalisation of pedagogical knowledge”. This strategy makes it possible to preserve the continuity in the development of educational science under the circumstances of political discontinuity, or, on the other hand, to provide the social legitimacy of a new scientific movement during the replacement of *herbartianismus* with experimental pedagogy under the conditions of educational science discontinuity.

A comprehensive consideration of the two, in many ways a specific periods in the development of educational science in former Yugoslavia, is a research task that has yet to be realised and requests to undertake comparative analysis of the institutional framework of educational research, understanding the role of professional educational associations, as well as the analysis of educational journals, libraries and editions published in various national centres (Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana).

History of Yugoslavia as a specific context for the research of educational science transformation

Former Yugoslavia was in many ways a very specific European country: multicultural (central Europe, Balkans, Mediterranean), multireligious (Orthodox, Catholic and Islamic, and also Judaic before World War II (particularly in the cities of Belgrade and Sarajevo) and a multinational country, as well. The attitude towards the

² Iskruljev, J. (1971): *Dr Paja Rodosavljević – život i rad* [Paul Radosavljevich – life and career], Belgrade: ZUNS.

national issue was much different in the state before World War II and in post-war socialist Yugoslavia. In the former, the stance was that of a unique people of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians with specific local differences. The latter had a federal system of government which was supposed to ensure equality among the six South-Slavic nations and the non-Slavic minorities (Albanians and Hungarians). In the period between two world wars, Yugoslavia was mainly agrarian, undeveloped country, while the period after the Second World War is marked by growing industrialisation and urbanisation. Yugoslavia then gains the status of a middle-developed country in economic sense.

Historians evaluate in different ways scopes of social and educational modernisation in two periods of time: time between the wars is marked by period of unsuccessful modernisation, while the period of socialism is marked by many authors (including Eric Hobsbawm) as the example of successful social transformation.

There were two “regimes of truth” in the country: nationalism was dominant before World War II, and after the war special type of communism (independent from Soviet model) became dominant and provided former Yugoslavia special place in bipolar world. This is why the history of former Yugoslavia provides the opportunity for applying theoretical framework that explains the influence of the process of pedagogisation on the research of evolution of educational science, and that was developed in current educational historiography. (Bridges, 2008; Depaepe, 2002a; 2002b; Hofstetter & Schneuwly, 2001)

“Our school and our national culture values”– modern educational movements and nationalism in Yugoslavia between two world wars

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia (from 1918 till 1929 the official name of the state was the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians) inherited various school systems. Parts of the country had an educational system established within the framework of Austro-Hungarian monarchy (Slovenia, Croatia, Vojvodina and Bosnia and Herzegovina), in other parts (Serbia and Montenegro) the school system of previously independent states was inherited, and the parts of the country that belonged to Turkey until 1912 recorded poorly developed school network. On the territories that formerly belonged to Austria-Hungary and Turkey, apart from state schools, there were also confession schools that had certain autonomy. The level of population literacy and socio-economic status indicated the division of the country into the developed North and undeveloped South. That is why the creation of a unique educational system or “our authentic school”, as they used to say upon the end of the First World War, was the priority in the official cultural and educational policy. It is interesting that this goal could not be achieved in the first, relatively democratic period of the country's development with the parliamentary system between 1918 and 1928. It was only with the establishment of king's personal reign in 1929 that the conditions were created for introducing unique legislation for all levels of education and the whole country. (Spasenović, Hebib i Petrović, 2007)

Before the First World War, the pedagogical scene was relatively developed around primary and grammar schools teachers associations in centres like Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana and Novi Sad. It is important to emphasize that pedagogy was taught at teachers colleges and due to that the first educational societies were actually

teachers' associations. At the end of XIX century, primary teachers were associated with the secondary school teachers. Also, there were some traces of educational studies and seminars for teacher education at universities in Belgrade and Zagreb. Two leading figures in that period were Vojislav Bakic (1847-1929) in Serbia and Stjepan Basaricek (1848-1918) in Croatia. Both, dr V. Bakic and S. Basaricek, developed predominantly Herbartian pedagogy, adapted German models to national circumstances, and gradually introduced into national pedagogy elements of new psychology, which had already been developed as an exact, empirical science.

Educational publications of the first decade of XX century are already marked with a strong inflow of experimental pedagogy and the "new education" movement, especially the working school. Influence of reform-oriented educational movements came primarily through teachers who continued their education at European universities. It is difficult to assess if the reform ideas were applied in practice, but with some certainty we can argue that the educational theory was changed – the principle of activities of the child, the individualization of teaching, respect for the developmental abilities of children, became well-known and accepted requirements. A maxim used by the leading representative of experimental pedagogy, PhD student of Ernst Moyman and professor of New York University (USA), Paja Radosavljevic to promote the new pedagogical movement was: "We do not educate German children, we educate Serbo-Croatian children, so we need to get to know them". The breakthrough of experimental, and then pragmatic (followers of John Dewey) and spiritual-scientific pedagogy (*Geisteswissenschaftliche Pädagogik*), as well as of various new school movements, was further continued after the establishment of the new state. Paradoxically, however, *herbartianismus* temporarily strengthens its position in educational publications, literature, associations and institutions. The chronicler of the time, Dusan Jovanovic³, explains the mentioned paradox with the following reasons: 1) the immediate practical needs of the state, such as forming "the new school" were better met by normative educational science than by theoretical and research-oriented experimental pedagogies; and 2) Serbian and Croatian representatives of *herbartianismus* were "formal brothers", which enabled a strainless inclusion of educational science in the educational system of the new state and the school for teacher education. However, the following period (1930-1941) is marked by a full integration of the reform-oriented educational movements and the state nationalist educational policy. "Inclusion in the national community" is determined to be the main goal of education. A grammar school curriculum even stipulates that "the school will introduce students to the life of our people, the characteristics of our country and the values of our national culture". The only group who stay aside and persist in their internationalism are the educationalist oriented towards socialdemocracy and communism, i.e. mainly primary school teachers. Developing a single Yugoslav school system and Yugoslav pedagogy were the tasks in which they continued to work in the period after the Second World War.

³ Jovanović, D. (ed.) (1939): *Pedagoška Jugoslavija 1918-1938*. [Pedagogical Yugoslavia 1918-1938]. Belgrade: Yugoslav Teachers Association.

“Our beloved pedagogy” – Yugoslav Marxist pedagogy between a myth of authenticity and a myth of backwardness

The end of World War II brought about a new political order in Yugoslavia marked by the domination of the Communist party. In this period, the country develops as a copy of the Soviet social model, whereas after the split of Yugoslav communists with Moscow in 1948, the country draws closer to the West and looks for an “authentic form of socialism in Yugoslavia”. Regardless of certain departure of the social model from the Soviet Union, an ideological monopoly over the educational sphere was kept throughout the existence of socialist Yugoslavia. According to Leninist tradition, education is regarded as an essential element in establishing a socialist community and represents one of the pillars of the “working class government”. That is why the development of the whole education system and educational science is subject to the ideological control of the ruling party.

Simultaneously, there is an ongoing process of social modernisation, in the first place industrialisation, urbanisation and mass education. Certain historians point out that apart from technical, economic and medical sciences, the new government forced the development of educational science as well. In 1946, the educational journal “Contemporary school” was started. Till mid-fifties, the republics and provinces spread a network of scientific associations that had their own periodicals published, and in 1952, the first Congress of Yugoslav Educationalist was held. Educational journals developed rapidly in less than ten years, in 1954 we had 5 journals at the federal level (“Modern School“, “Preschool child“, “Special school“, “Our vocational school“, “Our children“), 8 in Serbia (“Teaching and Education“, “Teachers Review“, “University Gazette“, “Physical Culture“, “Literature and language in school“, “Teaching of mathematics and physics“, “Parent“ and “Nepoktatas“), 9 in Croatia, 3 in Slovenia, 2 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2 in Macedonia and one in Montenegro. The number of educational journals was even greater in 1958: 27 in Serbia, 25 in Croatia, Macedonia, 7 in, 6 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 3 in Slovenia and 2 in Montenegro. Until the beginning of the sixties, in the organisational and institutional sense educational science had a certain advantage over psychology and sociology, which were considered “bourgeois sciences”, or sciences insufficiently relying on dialectical materialism (“diamat“) of the official Marxist philosophy.

The first period until 1950 is marked with the complete domination of Soviet educational literature, which is translated or read in the original form. The pre-war communists in the ranks of primary school teachers and other educationalists get instructed that the movement of pedology and working school was condemned by the decision of Soviet Bolshevik party during the thirties, though many of them propagated these “progressive movements” immediately before World War II. The judgment that “Makarenko is the Pestalozzi of the Soviet Union” (Potkonjak, 1994a: 32) and that the working school, John Dewey and the pedology of P. P. Blonsky are reactionist movements in educational science is unanimously accepted. Another thing rejected is the heritage of the “bourgeois pedagogy”, including the works of earlier educationalists from different Yugoslav nations except those which were socialist in their orientation.

The ideological domination ensured homogeneity of educational thought on the territory of the whole of Yugoslavia, so that the researchers of educational science history in former Yugoslavia use the words “Yugoslav” or in respective republics

“Slovenian”, “Croatian”, “Serbian”, “Macedonian” etc. in synonymous meanings, since no significant difference was made among the educationalists from different nations (republics). Apart from that, the attributes like “socialist”, “Marxist”, “Marxist-Leninist”, and later even “self-governing” educational science were used to mark a specific science on education in Yugoslav society⁴. (Schmidt, 1985; Sagadin, 1982; Potkonjak, 1977) Education itself was also denoted as “socialist” or “self-governing”. Differently from Soviet educational science, the expression “communist education” was hardly ever used.

The forties and fifties gave rise to the main aporiae which marked the ideological development of educational science in socialist Yugoslavia. The first problem was the definition and the name of the science of education in Yugoslavia. Since the Marxist approach claims that there is no “general education” but only “concrete education in a certain historical period”, the standpoint was that apart from a general definition of pedagogy as a science of education, there must be devised a special definition of pedagogy as a science of socialist education. This was particularly important at the beginning of the fifties, during the departure from Soviet educational science when it was claimed that there were various sciences of socialist education: apart from the Soviet one, there were others, such as: Chinese and Yugoslav sciences of socialist education, as well as adequate left-wing educational science in the West. Thus educational science has both international and national character, as was claimed by the famous educationalist, Dragutin Franković⁵, in his first work on the break with the Soviets in 1958. The Soviets do not only want socio-economic and ideological-political domination over Yugoslavia, they want scientific domination as well.

Emphasizing the national character of educational science so untypical of socialist internationalists marked the end of the period of “Sovietisation” and a search for a new mode of development of educational theory and practice. This new mode was provided by pre-war doctors in educational sciences, representatives of the spiritual-scientific pedagogy tradition, which was supposed to be dressed in a new, Marxist suit, professors of Zagreb and Ljubljana Universities, Stjepan Pataki, and Vlado Schmidt. The support to the new authorities was not sufficient for science of education to gain scientific status and full academic recognition. The political order which found its social legitimacy in the “scientific socialism” placed before all sciences including science of education the task of new methodological determination. This task could only be performed by theoretically highly competent educationalists.

They started a risky game with the authorities. On the one hand, they claimed that “socialist pedagogy is a young science with us which must not be separated from education or the social conditions for the development of education”. On the other hand, they insisted on the acceptance of the methods and techniques of empirical educational researches that came from the West, mainly through UNESCO, during the

⁴ Potkonjak, N. (1977): *Teorijsko-metodološki problemi pedagogije*. [Theoretical-methodological Problems of Pedagogy]. Belgrade: Education; Sagadin, J. (1982): Neki putevi, stranputice i teškoće u metodološkom razvoju naše pedagogije u poratnom periodu. [Some directions, misdirections and difficulties in methodological development of our educational science in the post war period]. *Pedagogy*, Vol 37, No. 2-3, 495-499; Schmidt, V. (1985): *Socijalistička pedagogija između etatizma i samoupravljanja* [Socialist pedagogy between state and self-government]. Osijek: Faculty of Pedagogy.

⁵ Franković, D. (ed.) (1958): *Povijest školstva i prosvjete u Hrvatskoj* [History of School and Pedagogy in Croatia]. Zagreb: HPKZ.

education reform of the fifties. The following rhetorical forms were used to legitimise the scientific status of: “our search for our own identity in the theory and practice of socialist education” and “creating our own and authentic Yugoslav Marxist pedagogy”.

The development of social sciences in socialist countries was characterized by the specifically interpreted prevalence of practice over scientific theory and research, with practice understood as the ideologically proclaimed order. In this context, insisting on theoretical and methodological issues in Yugoslav educational science, on epistemological reconsiderations, the development of educational research methodology, or initiating and maintaining communication in professional educational circles nationally and internationally, represented subversive acts in the ideological order which aspired to have answers to all fundamental questions on social development, especially the education system development.

A consequence of the rhetorical strategy of “nationalisation of pedagogical knowledge” was the development of two uncritically wide-spread points of view among many educationalists. The first one was the myth of authenticity of the way which Yugoslav educational science was following. A similar phenomenon in the analysis of German educational science development after the Second World War was marked by Edwin Keiner as the “German syndrome” (Keiner, 2002). Although both West-German and Yugoslav educationalists believed that the development of educational science was characteristically connected with their respective countries, a short comparison indicates numerous similarities with the academic development of educational science in European countries (Gretler, 1999). Thus, for instance, university educational departments are opened in Yugoslavia during the fifties and expanded in the sixties. In the dispute on the status and problems of educational science in Yugoslavia in Sjeme near Zagreb in 1963, it was pointed out that there were 8 university departments for education with 21 teachers (Potkonjak, 1994a: 72-73). Also, in 1963, the leading journal *Contemporary school* was renamed into *Pedagogy* and gained the status of exclusively scientifically-theoretical journal. In its own way, this proves to be favorable for the academisation of leading German educational journals in the second half of the fifties, as indicated in Keiner's research (Keiner, 2002). To illustrate changes in pedagogical discourse, we will use the result of content analysis of articles published in leading Yugoslav journal “Pedagogy”. Following topics dominated in the period between 1946 and 1970: social and moral education, polytechnic and technical education, curriculum, teaching the mother tongue, changes in the school system, special pedagogy and history of schooling. On the other hand, in the period 1970-1990 we could find quite different kind of topics, such as: the character of pedagogy as a science, basic educational categories – teaching and learning, the aim of education, the relationship between social inequality and education, professional orientation ect. (Vujisić-Živković, 2006)

The other myth is about the backwardness of Yugoslav educational science in comparison with the “progressive educational policy” applied in the country. Although careful insights would show that Yugoslav educational science was neither so authentic nor so “backward in comparison to practice”, as was often claimed, these two myths mark the strategy of “nationalisation of pedagogical knowledge” present for a long period of time. Pushing social responsibilities on schools, tendency to include social issues and strategies for solving them in the school program and the transfer of responsibility for solving social and economic problems with political authority in

education is one of the main characteristic of post-war Yugoslav practice. Paradoxically, the same process of educationalisation we could recognize in the European schools. The disproportionate imposition of responsibility to schools and other educational institutions to address social and economic problems led to first forms of resistance among educationalists.

Before and after students' riots in 1968, critical position develops in Yugoslav educational science. It is only in this period that it becomes clear that the main problem is sorting things out between ideology and education as a research and scientific area. Professor Aleksandra Marijanovic points out that the word "our" in the phrase "our Marxist pedagogy" equals "beloved", and that it hinders the consideration of the real state of affairs. This revealed the complex dynamic of the relationship between the urge for social modernisation, higher level of ideological control and homogenisation of educational thought. As a reaction to the events in 1968, during the seventies and eighties, programmes for international presentation of Yugoslav educational science were either postponed or completely prevented. Similarly, holding the international educational congress in Yugoslavia in 1977 was not made possible. The hardly initiated practice of publishing international issues of the journal *Pedagogy* in English is stopped and there remains only one Institute for Educational Research in the whole country.

The period that followed, after the nineties, has remained outside of our research questions and we will deal with it just so we could once again stressed that its key features was an idealistic attempt to "establish the lost continuity".

Conclusions

We have identified six main stages in the development of educational science in former Yugoslavia:

- 1) the strive for academic affirmation and presence of heterogeneous scientific and pedagogical schools (1918-1929);
- 2) the integration of New Education and nationalist educational policy (1930-1941);
- 3) the "sovietisation" of Yugoslav pedagogy (1945-1952);
- 4) academic institutionalisation of pedagogy and acquaintance with western methodology (1952-1962);
- 5) formation of Yugoslav Marxist pedagogy (1963-1977) and
- 6) facing repression toward social sciences in Yugoslavia as a reaction of the regime to what happened in 1968 (1978-1990).

There are two main conclusions based on the research: 1) The strategy of "nationalisation of pedagogical knowledge" was used in every stage by the representatives of all theoretical schools in order to gain social legitimacy; 2) This strategy provided successful transformation of pedagogical discourse during the changes of the dominant political and ideological regime, but it was not sufficient to provide the level of institutionalisation of educational researches comparing to the existing levels in Western and Eastern Europe.

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MODERNIZACIJA, IDEOLOGIJA I TRANSFORMACIJA PEDAGOŠKE NAUKE – SLUČAJ BIVŠE JUGOSLAVIJE (1918 – 1990)

Rezime: Razvoj pedagoške nauke u bivšoj Jugoslaviji obeležava oštar diskontinuitet uslovljen promenom političko-ideološkog poretka, a time i socijalno prihvatljivog pedagoškog mišljenja, ali i prikriveni kontinuitet između „građanske” i „socijalističke” pedagogije. Naša analiza dela jugoslovenskih pedagoga ukazuje na prisustvo strategije koju nazivamo „nacionalizacija pedagoškog znanja”. U osnovi, ona predstavlja pokušaj da se zadobije društvena, ali i akademska legitimizacija pedagoške nauke.

Nacionalizaciju pedagoškog znanja nalazimo kod predstavnika svih dominantnih pedagoških pravaca: eksperimentalne pedagogije, duhovno-naučne pedagogije, kao i u reformskim pedagoškim pokretima. Na prvi pogled paradoksalno, nacionalizacija pedagoškog znanja predstavlja i osnovno obeležje jugoslovenske marksističke pedagogije u periodu nakon Drugog svetskog rata. Ova strategija bila je uspešna u transformaciji vodećih teorijskih usmerenja („promene paradigmi”): herbartijanizma u eksperimentalnu pedagogiju, eksperimentalne u duhovno-naučnu pedagogiju i, na kraju, duhovno-naučne u marksističku pedagogiju, ali je njen uspeh u razvoju institucija za pedagoška istraživanja bio bitno limitiran nivoom modernizacije sistema obrazovanja i ideološkog nadzora nad njim.

Ključne reči: modernizacija obrazovanja, ideološka kontrola obrazovanja, nacionalizacija pedagoškog znanja.

МОДЕРНИЗАЦИЯ, ИДЕОЛОГИЯ И ПРЕОБРАЗОВАНИЕ ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКОЙ НАУКИ - ПРИМЕР БЫВШЕЙ ЮГОСЛАВИИ (1918- 1990)

Резюме: Резкий разрыв, обусловленный изменениями в политической и идеологической системе, а следовательно, и в социально приемлемом педагогическом мышлении, как и скрытая преемственность „гражданской“ и „социалистической“ педагогики, ознаменовали развитие педагогической науки в бывшей Югославии. Проведенный нами анализ произведений югославских педагогов, указывает на наличие стратегии, которую мы называем „национализацией педагогических знаний“. В основном, это попытка педагогической науки получить социальную и академическую легитимизацию. Национализация педагогических знаний наблюдается во всех господствующих педагогических направлениях: в экспериментальной педагогике, духовно-научной педагогике, как и в реформаторских педагогических движениях. Парадоксально на первый взгляд, национализация педагогических знаний представляет собой и основную характеристику югославской марксистской педагогики в период после Второй мировой войны. Такая стратегия была успешной в преобразовании ведущих теоретических направлений („изменение парадигмы“): включение педагогики Хербарта в экспериментальную педагогику, экспериментальной педагогики в духовно-научную и, в конечном счете, духовно-научной педагогики в марксистскую, но ее успех в развитии учреждений для педагогических исследований был существенно ограничен уровнем модернизации системы образования и идеологическим контролем над ней.

Ключевые слова: модернизация образования, идеологический контроль образования, национализация педагогических знаний.