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Chapter 6. "The Happy Child" As an Icon of Socialist



Transformation: Yugoslavia's Pioneer Organization

Ildiko Erdei

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Full text

- 1 “We are carrying youth, enthusiasm and strength through this once lifeless neighborhood ... echoes the loud refrain from the ‘lower school’ (Serbian part) in Starćevo, a small village in Vojvodina. They are following Tito’s Torch of Youth and hurrying to meet the Pioneers of the ‘upper school,’ in a Croatian part of the village, to join their warm greetings and sincere wishes for a long life for our beloved Comrade Tito. Men and women merrily greet them on their way, leaning out of their windows and in front of their houses, cheering them on with a smile.”¹ Although this was a local event in a village in Vojvodina, in the northern part of Serbia, in June 1953, the ritual embodied key images of the time—youth in action, the ideology of brotherhood and unity, the cult of the leader, enthusiasm and undivided support from the people.² It could have happened (and it did) in any other place in Yugoslavia. Demonstrating devotion to the ideals of revolution and socialism, and to the icon of the revolution—the (at that time) marshal and later lifetime president Josip Broz Tito—made up the entire content of a number of socialist rituals over the following years.³ The main protagonists of the scene above were members of the children’s mass organization, the



Yugoslav Pioneer Organization—Pioneers for short. Mass Pioneer organizations came into being after 1945 in Yugoslavia as well as in the rest of the Communist world—in the Balkans (Romania, Bulgaria, Albania), in Central Europe (Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland) and outside Europe (China, North Korea, Cuba). Pioneer organizations were created on the Soviet model. Their objective was to build up patriotic emotions and develop a sense of belonging to the ideological collective from the earliest age. Organizations like “Kisdobos” (Young Drummers) in Hungary, and “Soimii patriei” (Falcons of the Homeland) and “Organizatia pionerilor” (Pioneers’ Organization) in Romania, enrolled school children aged 6 to 14.⁴ In Bulgaria, after the Second World War, three children’s organizations were merged into one—the Dimitrov Pioneer Organization “Septemvriiche” (“Little children of September”), founded in 1944 under the guidance of the Bulgarian Communist Party; the “Stamboliiche,” affiliated to the Peasant Youth Union and named after Aleksandar Stamboliiski, head of the Agrarian Party and prime minister from 1919 to 1923; and the “Red Swallow,” affiliated with the Union of Socialist Youth . The new organisation was dominated by the Bulgarian Communist Party and its leader Georgi Dimitrov, whose name was incorporated, after his death, into the official name of the organization. The Pioneer organization in Bulgaria was closely linked to schools, and for the pupils in first and second school grade, “Chavdarche” groups (“cheti”), named after the legendary outlaw Chavdar and the partisan brigade “Chavdar,” were formed for each school class.⁵

- 2 In every country where the Pioneer organization existed, its members were considered pioneering builders of the future, who would move the society forward, finding new paths to socialist goals. Their whole upbringing and education, both in and after school, was created with reference to the Communist Party, under the supervision of ideologically and class conscious teachers and Pioneer leaders, who monitored and controlled the “correct” way of growing up. At an early school



age (or even before that, as in Romania and Hungary) children were converted from the status of “ideologically undecided” to “ideologically decided” members of the community through a political ritual of reception into this organization. The organization and its members were generally encouraged to appreciate the personality of Communist Party leaders, which could escalate into actual cults of adulation. The “difference between the former (child) and future (pupil/ Pioneer) status was dramatically emphasized through the ritual of the reception into the Pioneer organization, as Miroslava Malešević has illustrated in the Yugoslav example⁶. The child was also reaching the first stage of social maturity, where he or she was expected to start fulfilling obligations of society. In that way, the state in socialist Yugoslavia took an active part in molding childhood, separately from the family’s natural responsibility for early socialization. In short, admission to the Pioneer organization was the first initiation among many that would transform the person into a fully acculturated member of the socialist community. Unlike in traditional society, the socialization process was entrusted almost completely to various official organizations, all of which were organized and controlled by the Communist Party.⁷

- 3 The emphasis on children’s upbringing and their role in the development of socialism was brought about through systematic monitoring of their growing up in a manner and to a degree incomparable with any other previous historical period. There are two interconnected reasons for this. First, the regime’s future-driven utopian vision of a world changed by the personalities of its citizens made its interest in childhood inevitable. Investment in its own future was an on-going task of all the socialist regimes, and the “ideologically decided” children were the seeds of the promised future.⁸ Another reason was the harsh social circumstances under which many if not most children in prewar Yugoslavia were growing up. In his study of the first postwar years of Communist rule in Yugoslavia and the cultural policy of



“agitprop,” Ljubodrag Dimic’ cites prewar statistics that reveal all too little schooling of any kind. According to his data, immediately before the Second World War, the population of Serbia (and the same could be said for Yugoslavia) was predominantly rural. Almost three-quarters of the population were living in villages, and there was a very high percentage of illiteracy. Just 30 percent of children had attended school. Since the majority of them were living in villages, they were obliged to help their parents in seasonal agricultural work; it was not uncommon for them to attend school only from time to time, in line with the agricultural season. Traditional customs may also have contributed to the very low percentage of children who continued their primary education. Members of some ethnic groups, for example Romanians, tended to marry early and usually dropped out of school at the age of 13 or 14. The new Communist regime used these failings to criticize the former government from the interwar era.

4 The new regime sought to develop a cultural and educational policy that would involve as many children as possible, in an effort to influence their lives and their thinking. In order to meet the needs of the population for basic literacy, the state initiated under Agitprop (the party body in charge of supervising and organizing cultural and educational programs, 1945–52) a mass campaign of “national enlightenment” (*narodno prosvet’ivanje*), aimed primarily at increasing literacy. But, as Dimic’ notes, “the aim of the project of national enlightenment was not only to teach the people to read and write, *but to make them be able to use that knowledge in order to change their lives and the life of the whole community*” (my italics).⁹

5 Until now, there has been little ethnological, anthropological or historical research on mass organizations and upbringing in socialist Yugoslavia. Studies have chiefly concentrated on the party’s ideological motivation in controlling all aspects of life, emphasizing the importance of the ritual of admission to the Pioneer organizations,¹⁰ the appropriation of traditional



holidays and the invention of new ones to celebrate the postwar transformation of society,¹¹ and “ideological indoctrination” through ABC books.¹² In this chapter, however, we consider the Pioneer organization as an institutional framework for producing childhood in Yugoslav socialist society.¹³

6 This chapter accepts the assumption of modern sociology that childhood is a “social construction,” in other words that it represents not only a biological but also, and primarily, a social and cultural category. As Chris Jenks has put it: “Childhood is to be understood as a social construct, it makes reference to a social status delineated by boundaries that vary through time and from society to society ... Childhood then always relates to a particular cultural setting.”¹⁴ Studying children and childhood, according to this author, is actually a process of exploring various social contexts and sociological structures that set the limits in which a variety of childhoods are “created” and the normative system of expectation is generated. Jenks turns our attention to another important problem: the question of collective practices binding a child after he or she has become an independent social subject. He believes that “the way that we control our children reflects, perhaps as a continuous microcosm, the strategies through which we exercise power and constraint in the wider society.”¹⁵ The transformation of the Pioneer organization into a “true children’s organization” began in the same year (1950) as “self-management” was established in Yugoslav companies. Along with the change in the content and method of work, the transformation also brought a change in the manner of social control of children. In the years that followed, a particular combination of “merry,” “childish” forms with serious, ideological content was made. It created a way to control youth in a more indirect, informal and seductive, yet more innocent way—and one that was equally effective.

7  This reform of the Pioneer organization was of great consequence in the process of “childhood production” in

socialist Yugoslavia. The early 1950s were important as a time of change both for Yugoslavia generally and for the Pioneer organization as well. Prior to 1948, the Yugoslav Pioneer Organization had given unequivocal support to the “first country of Communism,” the USSR. Soviet influences were visible in every aspect of life, and particularly in a cultural and educational policy that in the immediate postwar period was under strong influence from the Soviet model. After the political departure of the Soviets, a period of political decentralization and a slow political and cultural liberation began. Part of that process was a transformation of mass organizations and of the Pioneer organization as well. This change was announced in a party document of 1950, which prescribed a change in the approach to children. But before we consider this important change, let us briefly summarize the history of the Pioneer organization in Yugoslavia.



ЖИВЕО ПРВИ МАЈ ДАН РАДНИКА И
СЕЉАКА
ЖИВЕО ВЕЛИКИ ~~СТАЛИН~~ ТИТО

Remaking the impact of the Soviet influence—Pioneers celebrating 1 May 1946. The inscription on the banner reads “Long live Great Stalin,” but post festum the word “Stalin” has been crossed out and Tito’s name added



“Short-Sleeved Heroes”

8 The Yugoslav Pioneer Organization was born during the Second World War and died in 1991, during the first months of warfare between yesterday's neighbors sworn to the Partisan motto of “brotherhood and unity” (*bratstvo i jedinstvo*) and bonded by common Pioneer membership. The last generation of Pioneers tied red scarves around their necks on 29 November 1989, when the country to which they swore their loyalty was living its last peaceful days. During the Second World War, many monographs on this organization claim, the Pioneers organized spontaneously or under the leadership of the KPJ (Communist Party of Yugoslavia) and the SKOJ (Communist Youth League of Yugoslavia). They joined Partisan units on front lines across the whole of divided Yugoslavia. The first organized body was the Montenegrin Children's National Liberation Movement, founded in November 1941. It recruited boys and girls aged 10 to 15, on condition that they “do not drink, do not smoke, and do not carry a sling-shot.”¹⁶ Youngsters throughout *Yugoslavia followed the example of the Montenegrin children. The Pioneer organization was officially constituted on 27 December 1942, at the First Antifascist Congress of Yugoslav Youth, when the main aims of the Youth organization regarding the new Pioneers were set down. According to Children to the Sun of Freedom*¹⁷ and *The Yugoslav Pioneers Organization 1942–1945*,¹⁸ Pioneer organizations grew like mushrooms after the rain, on the front lines and on liberated territories. Such statements were intended to give the impression of a mutually reinforcing and constantly growing number of Pioneer groups.¹⁹ As already noted, the concept, the basic organizational principles and the ethos of the Yugoslav Pioneer Organization came from the USSR. They drew on the Soviet experience of the “V. I. Lenin Pioneer Organization,” established in 1922 and built “on the principles of collectivism and self-initiative, on the wide stimulation of children's initiative.”²⁰ Articles from the first Pioneer newspaper, *The*



Pioneer, first published in 1942 in different parts of the country, help to trace the influence of the Soviet model. Many articles focused on the attention Soviet authorities were paying to the upbringing and education of children. They stressed the benefits already achieved by growing up under socialism—the collective spirit, creative education, a stimulating atmosphere for learning and improving existing skills, and the development of a sense of discipline. The article “From the Country Where Happy Children Live” shows everyday life in a Soviet school collective, describing it as a “beautiful building, with marble columns, luminous rooms and big mirrors that reflect the happy faces of the Soviet children.”²¹ Much space was also given to promoting a belief in science and its capacity to liberate the minds of the people, particularly the young.

- 9 Young Pioneers were involved in a great number of activities, some being “civil” tasks (gathering food and clothes for soldiers and wounded), and some military duties (snatching weapons from German soldiers and giving them to Partisans, courier missions, guarding villages, enacting small diversions, and so on). Children left without families would join Partisan units and enthusiastically took part in battles.²² Some, like Boško Buha, Sava Jovanovic´ Sirogojno, Milka Mika Bosnic´, Fana Koćovska and several others, became celebrities of the NOB (People’s Liberation War) as child-heroes (“pioneer-national heroes”).²³ They then became role models for the postwar generation. The basis for Pioneer activities was worked out during the war, when it was proclaimed that Pioneers should be recruited in villages and introduced to the basic features of Partisan organization and discipline, so that “the existing love of Pioneers for Partisans should grow deeper and more intense.”²⁴ During the war in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia and Montenegro, 356 community and 1,267 village Pioneers’ councils, 7,120 labor squads and 13,000 Pioneer units were formed.²⁵ In May 1945, 40,000 of the 800,000 Partisan total were under the age of 15.²⁶ They were organized as true military formations, with ranks, missions



and real weapons actually used in combat. These children's lives were strongly affected by the war. The youngsters were not only the objects of wartime destruction and deprivation; they were also actors in the war. Thus the borderline between the world of adults and children was blurred, because a whole generation had prematurely to take on the duties and responsibilities of adults. The Communist leaders of Yugoslavia would often return to the role that these youngest fighters performed in war. This they used partly to underline the necessity of the liberation war, since "mere children" saw its importance and risked their lives for the cause. In addition, leading party officials, including Tito himself, used every opportunity to refer not just to the war years but to the prewar period as well as a time of "childhood deprivation" or "no childhood at all." On his birthday, Tito delivered the following message to the Pioneers that traditionally paid him a visit: "My childhood, like the childhood of my friends and of the great majority of children, was full of suffering and pain, filled with disappointments, because we couldn't achieve what we wanted to... Because of that, all of us who have had such a childhood now have a duty to care for the youngest—to create a pleasant childhood for you, since we did not have one."²⁷ Another example of this "child-centered ideology" came from the speech that Moša Pijade, one of the party leaders, gave in 1949 to a group of young researchers. He said that he regretted not being 50 or 55 years younger, and added: "I wish I could be young again to be able to have a childhood as you have. For our childhood was empty and meaningless, insubstantial, compared with all that our people's state offers you today, in order to make your childhood useful and pleasant, and colorful, interesting, bright and joyful."²⁸ Thus everything that had happened before the Communists took power was described mostly as lost time. More precisely, it was called a period of "stolen childhood," so the state and the party, as protectors of children, felt obligated to bring back this lost childhood.²⁹





Childhood in World War Two—Pioneers with wooden guns salute the commander

“Tempo, Tempo, Pioneers!”

- 10 The fundamental program aims, organization forms and symbols of membership to the Pioneers’ organization had been created in wartime. In numerous Pioneers’ groups, “Tito” caps with red stars were worn, and some elements of the admission ritual to the organization were recorded now and then (a formal song, the oath). The war’s end brought new challenges for the organization. Tasks were to be more organized, internal organization and mutual communication among numerous Pioneer groups improved. The first task was to reformulate the main duties: military missions were to be exchanged for labor competitions contributing to rebuilding the home, the front and the victory of socialism. The new slogan for the whole society, including Pioneers, became: “All for the front, all for victory” (see Document 1). The new program of the Young Pioneers’ Organization, from 1945, defines it as a “voluntary organization of children aged 6 to 14, regardless of sex,” whose aim is to “develop self-discipline in work and learning on a



daily basis and cultivate all aspects of cultural life, playtime and especially physical education among the youngest in a free country."³⁰



Iconography of a Pioneer gathering in the first postwar years: party and state flags, portraits of the leaders and heroes frame the stage and watch over the performance

- 11 There were already warnings that work with Pioneers, which was still the duty of the Senior Youth in the years that followed the end of the war, should not be reduced only to “marching and blind obedience of the adult’s orders.”³¹ In the postwar setting, party leaders recommended that the social base of the Pioneer organization leaders be enlarged, accepting not just youth activists but also teachers and other professionals. In 1946, the organization changed its name to the Yugoslav Pioneer Organization and adopted formal regulations. According to that year’s Statute of Organization, the symbols of the organization became the red Pioneer scarf and a blue cap with a badge; the Pioneers’ flag, trumpet and drum were required for rituals. A Pioneer anthem was also established, and the slogan “For the country with Tito—to the future!” adopted.³² A Pioneer oath to be sworn on admission to the organization was also created. The oath was slightly changed over the years, but its original message, emphasizing the




Pioneer's undivided loyalty to the state and society, remained the same. (See Document 3.) The new program spelled out a range of Pioneer's duties that exceeded the narrow limits of responsibilities to the organization. Pioneers were "obliged to study well, respect their teachers and attend school regularly, to love and cherish their work, to respect their parents and help their families, to take care of younger siblings, to cherish love towards freedom fighters and Yugoslav army commanders, to help invalids, to be of assistance to the families of soldiers killed in action, to do favors to the old, needy and sick, to conduct themselves in a polite manner, not to drink or smoke, to be honorable, sincere and modest, to be true friends and to help each other, to be disciplined, to fully and correctly fulfill the tasks and duties given to them by the Pioneer organization."³³

- 12 It is clear from this quotation that the program of the organization regulated the whole range of relationships of a child/Pioneer towards other persons, relationships previously taught in the family or in church (towards parents, among children in the family, attitudes towards the old and weak, basic moral standards). The primary social environment of the child was no longer his or her family but the socialist institutions and the mass organization that was to care for children. Documents that describe the organization of different newly invented socialist festivals subtly reveal the changing relations and prescribed attitudes of the Pioneer towards his or her family. It is expected from the Pioneer that the sense of belonging to the organization should outweigh all other possible identities, particularly that of belonging to the family. Thus, when the Pioneer had to perform certain tasks, he or she was instructed, as in one case, to "agitate their mothers to persuade them to bake cakes and prepare presents for Children's Day (the celebration of New Year in place of Christmas)."³⁴ The organizer of the celebration in the village of Crepaja judged the "agitation" as successful, for "almost all the children have brought the cakes at the time it was ordered."³⁵





Discreet encounter of the “old” and “new” traditions: the decoration on which the young Pioneer stands is a traditional folk textile

- 13 Beside the tendency to socialize children’s upbringing and take over family responsibilities, the state tried to watch over children day and night and to become a regulator of children’s behavior in every possible context. The instructions to Pioneer leaders directly in charge of carrying out government directives stated that Pioneers should always be aware of their role and the conduct that it required. The red scarf stood as a token of belonging to the organization and a reminder of moral obligations which were to be fulfilled at all times. An  instruction to Pioneer leaders in 1945 (see Document 2) explained why Pioneers should always wear their scarves.

Apart from representing a “symbol of Pioneer dignity” and “uplifting the spirit,” the scarf is an “obstruction and reminder.” As a sign of “ideological determination,” it gives other Pioneers and adults the right to watch over the wearer’s behavior and warn him or her if needed. Thus the scarf “forces a Pioneer to be well-behaved”³⁶ and becomes a powerful method of control and self-control. This shows how the state used different methods, both explicit and implicit, to convey desired messages and to shape the *habitus* of children by regulating their body-space relations and prescribing proper behavior in every possible situation.³⁷ The power of the red scarf did not come just from its being the ultimate metonymical sign that could substitute for the full Pioneer uniform. Nor was it just that it represented a powerful symbol of initiation into the organization. The red scarf was no ordinary piece of cloth. It was believed to have transformative power that could change the personality and affect the behavior of those who wore it. In this context we can talk about a belief in a transformative capacity for cloth, and textiles in general, that is well known in folk poetry and traditional rituals.³⁸





Pioneer uniform (without the cap)—blue skirt, white shirt, and red scarf (replicating the colors of the national flag)

- 14 All these efforts to organize and supervise the behavior of Pioneers proved to be inadequate for creating a socialist man³⁹—the goal proclaimed in party and government top levels as the major measure of accomplishment for Yugoslav socialism. According to Milovan Djilas, then still a leading party official, if the goal was the creation of a “socialist man who loves his country and respects other nations ... a man of a rich inner life, physically and morally fit, strong and joyful,”⁴⁰ it was essential to start from the beginning, from the education of the youngest members—to start from the school and Pioneer organizations. This signed instruction from the Central



Committee of the KPJ found its way to all Pioneer organizations by the summer of 1950. What needed to be changed, in the opinion of the party, was the way of recognizing the value of Pioneers in themselves and the methodology of working with them. The organization must become a "true children's organization."⁴¹ The instructions went on to say that the Pioneer organization should be an educational-entertainment organization which will "satisfy the needs of children for play, entertainment and gymnastics, which will develop all characteristics and inclinations that contribute to proper and universal human development through organized cultural work, various excursions, expeditions, camping, etc."⁴²

15 The former mandate of the organization was criticized for being too adult-directed and openly political, in content and overly militarized for children: "The weaknesses we have been faced with can be found particularly in rigid patterns of work with children, in too slowly finding out and developing different ways of work with them, in introducing certain obtrusive political matter (lectures and political information for children), in introducing an exaggerated military spirit and discipline which was inappropriate for children and their interests, with the result that the Pioneer organization was still not popular enough among children." Djilas concluded that one of the reasons for such a deficiency was that the organization did not offer to children "enough play, entertainment and everyday children's fun."⁴³


16 This concern of the socialist community for its youth was not motivated, as one might at first assume, exclusively by the desire for ideological control over young members, as suggested by Miroslava Malešević.⁴⁴ The attention towards children and the young, as Petr Roubal argued for Czechoslovakia, rests at the very core of the socialist regime, and insistence on "childishness" can be considered one of its main characteristics. Roubal cites a semiotic analysis which shows children to be the only "true new people" because they



are unburdened with a past, i.e., a bourgeois inheritance, and represent the future inhabitants of heaven.⁴⁵ Children are seen as a blank sheet of paper waiting to be filled with various qualities and overall ideologically correct contents. That is why, during the political process of reforming Pioneers' organizations, there also occurred a reconceptualization of the world of grown-ups and children, and the borderline between the two categories, that had been obscured and unbalanced during the war and shortly after. The authority of the older generation was again introduced.

- 17 The older generation alone was set up as responsible and authoritative in relation to others (children in this case). The only task to be performed by children was now to study. This indicates great confidence in the power of knowledge to change people and the community. Lisa A. Kirschenbaum has shown the strength of the revolutionary concept of knowledge in the Soviet model of preschool education. She talks about the Soviet vision of the "revolutionary generation in progress," which is expected to change not only its old-fashioned teachers, but also its parents.⁴⁶ This belief in the power of education to change life was shared by most prominent Yugoslav party and state leaders. They instructed children: "Your task is to study, that is your job ..." as a part of a general "people's enlightenment" campaign, organized and conducted under the strong guidance of the party. The belief in the power of knowledge to transform people and to make them able to change others too, with the final goal to create a new socialist man, was thereby spelled out. What was needed was a fresh start. Pioneer units were linked to schools and thus launched on the mission of producing a socialist childhood.

"More Fun, Please"—Creating One "Happy and Bright" Childhood

- 18  In order to get the reform going, a variety of activities for "correct creative development" and "encompassing personality" was to be set up with the necessary "material

support.” Newly planned children’s activities would take place in specially created centers, and necessary symbols of the organization, plus now toys, books and magazines, would be supplied as soon as possible. Beyond the Pioneer corners and Pioneer residences, “Pioneer cities” were built near Belgrade and Zagreb, and a Pioneer valley near Sarajevo. Playgrounds were also supplied with equipment required for proper physical training. The world of children/Pioneers was gradually institutionalized in activities and content. Special Pioneer summer houses were built, Pioneer holidays set up, Pioneer magazines and radio stations founded, a “Pioneer railway” was created, and a later renowned child-orientated event called the Yugoslav Pioneer Games was organized for the first time. Artistic creation for children was stimulated (children’s literature, children’s movies), and children by themselves were encouraged to engage in different art forms.⁴⁷ During the first year of the reform, the accent was put on limiting the newly created Pioneer “children’s world” to providing “children’s joy,” which was made the measure of a successful reform.⁴⁸ Determining and restricting “Pioneer areas,” in which their activities could be planned out and supervised, was later followed by the planned organization of children’s time in detail. So much time was scheduled that this left little space for the personal interests and the needs of their families.

- 19 Most of a Pioneer’s time was to be planned and filled with “socially useful” work. Apart from attending school, they had to complete a number of “working classes,” during which they would do chores to maintain the school area and the surroundings. Thus Pioneers would gain insight into the meaning of work, and be prepared to become creative personalities.⁴⁹ Projects for gathering litter and medicinal plants were organized on a regular basis. Not only was the time filled with “correct” subjects, but in the process Pioneers were given to believe that they were benefiting the national economy. Document 4 below recommends that all the



activities organized by the Pioneer organization should connect joy with responsibility, health and morality, practice and creativity: "To build the characteristics of a socialist man within a child, the organization should help both school and family in the general education of children ... In the company of young naturalists children are eager to explore, for example, the life of certain animals ... The technical circle awakens an interest in technology, builds curiosity, creates a thirst for knowledge, and connects theory with practice ... In the physical education circle, attractive forms of sporting activities should be used to organize healthy free time filled with joy ... It is also vital that all Pioneers take part in socially useful work that is planned and systematic in helping the population—gathering scrap iron or medicinal herbs, cleaning and repairing rooms, taking part in village work and other tasks. Socially orientated Pioneer's work is of obvious importance. Children's work makes pupils self-disciplined ... more critical and strict with themselves and their friends."

20 Social improvement in general was one of the main aims of Pioneer organizations, and in the first postwar years particular emphasis was placed on technical and hygienic education. Reports sent "from the field," from villages and towns to regional and republic Pioneer organizations, comment daily on "hygiene measures" and issues of health. Concern with hygiene was an obvious example of how care for the bodies of the Pioneers came to be part of the creation of the "new socialist man."⁵⁰ In other areas, a whole week called Technical Week was devoted to getting acquainted with technology. It was considered that "polytechnic education and physical activities should be the key-work of the Pioneer organization in the development of socialist society."

21 Schedules were not organized purely on a daily or seasonal basis, nor were they left to be filled randomly with a mass of ideologically correct events. The flow of time was to be ordered on a longer-term basis and given meaning in order to serve educational and pedagogical purposes and systematically



convey political and social messages. This was done by inventing a completely new calendar of festivals, by introducing new, "truly Pioneer" and "truly socialist" holidays, instead of the old, mainly familycentered traditions. Major Pioneer holidays and manifestations that mobilized the attention and energy of the young were the New Year ("a true Pioneer holiday"), A Salutation to Spring, Technical Week, Beginning of the School Year, Pioneer's Day (the end of a school year), and Republic Day (day of the admission to the Pioneer organization).

- 22 Although the "novelty" of the ritual calendar was emphasized in order to distance the new society from the past and its remnants, the efficacy of the new ritual system owed a lot to existing traditional ritual structures, cultural logic and systems of meaning. Lydia Sklevicky has shown in her analysis of the "New Year" celebration in the immediate postwar period how the resemantisation of "old" into a "newly created" socialist holiday, with children at the center, was accomplished. Christmas was switched to the New Year. Sklevicky argues that this was done in Croatia in the period 1945–50 and relatively "painlessly" because the basic ritual structure, its semantic and cognitive features remained stable and unchanged.⁵¹ Data from the Kovačica area in the Vojvodina also show the interplay of the old, religious and family-based rituals with the new ones. Their frame of reference was indeed changed but their structural place in the calendar and sometimes their functions remained stable. An example taken from the teacher's notebook, an unofficial document for internal use only, suggests that, at least on the level of habitual use of language, it was very hard to separate "the old" and "the new." "For 'Vrbica' take them out to play; in case of bad weather, give them movies if there are cinemas, and onstage programs in other towns ... Salutation to Spring will be held from 20 to 25 April ... Mention to the squad councils that the program should be serious and ideological."⁵² The terminology used to point out the time when the Salutation to Spring should be organized



“around Vrbica” (Vrbica being an Orthodox Christian festival before Easter), reveals both the power of the old calendar and traditional rituals in times after the revolution and the continuing attachment of people to the old traditions and customs. Pioneer’s Day was celebrated at the end of the school year, when the program of “inspection of work results” was prepared. According to the inscription released by the central committee of the NOJ, manifestations should last for two to three days and have three parts: a formal part, a cultural part and a public physical exercise part. This structure of the manifestation was based on three main “contents”: political content in the form of a ritual, keeping the “tradition of revolution” through artistic forms, and manifesting the discipline of the “body of the unit.”⁵³

- 23 Preparation for the holidays and their celebration took a large portion of Pioneers’ time after school. Apart from compulsory activities, Pioneers were organized into sections that had to relate a child’s talents to the ideas and ideals of socialism, as outlined in Document 4. Even vacations, when children were free from school duties, were not left free for children’s disposal. During the winter break, pioneer leaders were instructed to organize activities in the snow.⁵⁴ During summer, apart from the usual season projects for medicinal plant gathering, picnics were organized to stimulate “children’s joy.” Data from the Kovačica area show that while organizing picnics and arranging other children’s festivals and activities, other local and mass organizations were involved (the Women’s Antifascist Front, the People’s Front, People’s Youth, Yugoslav Army, work collectives, sport clubs, and so on). Sklevicky notes that these mass activities were initiated not only with enthusiasm, but also with subtle forms of repression, such as work release only to support the celebrations. In a report on the organization of a picnic which was supposed to make “joy” for children, we also find pressures to secure a massive outing of children, waiting eagerly for their free time: “Around 1000 of Kovačica’s Pioneers saluted the spring on 27



April. Early in the morning, members of the administration took a truck and drove with music and trumpets and drums to wake up Pioneers, and collected those already awake and waiting in the schoolyard, which was the gathering place. Those Pioneers who liked to sleep longer were called out on the microphone ...”⁵⁵ Obviously, one was not even to decide about how much time to spend sleeping. The party preferred “dreaming with eyes open,” instead of less controlled and proscribed dreaming in private.

24 During collective summer vacations, the children’s day was also fully planned, and the organization of time and activities still resembled the military structure and organization of the army. Thus each day began with the salute to the flag and ended with the daily report to the leader (commander) of the group. Summer camps would generally end by the campfire with a program that would “bring the revolutionary tradition to life.” In short, the party tried to arrange the entire life of Pioneers and fill it with content that “relates to the child’s needs,” as it determined those needs. Responding to needs it alone had created, the party produced the symbols of its own success—happy faces of young Pioneers. This policy of (presenting) happy childhoods, identical to Soviet practice in the 1930s, was tied as much to the desire of the state for discipline and recruiting dedicated Communists as it was to the interests of the children themselves.⁵⁶

25 Supervision of Pioneer’s everyday life was also attempted, their time arranged, activity areas outlined and controlled. In time, such activity did become more engaging. Psychologists, pedagogues, writers, and poets entered the organization, inventing and creating more appropriate and more attractive ways to spread the message of belonging to the socialist collective. We may conclude that the aim of the reform of the Pioneer organization was realized. A new basis for the ideological socialization of children was established, one that was not “overtly political” and “obtrusive,” as was the case during the first postwar years. Instead of complicated



ideological litanies, which were completely inappropriate for the children, the upbringing and education of the young Pioneers in the years that followed the 1950 reform were marked by the "ideology of the happy child." This ideology was not original. As with many other aspects of Communist ideology, such as belief in science and technology and permanent progress toward the utopian future community of equals, and confidence in the transformative capacities of the young generation, came from the USSR.

- 26 It is paradoxical that the "ideology of the happy child" that originally came from Soviet influence on other socialist countries, was in the Yugoslav case used to exactly the opposite end. The reform of the Pioneer organization that initially represented the institutional setting for the production of Yugoslav socialist childhood appeared shortly after Yugoslav Communist leaders had broken with the USSR in 1948. Thus the "ideology of the happy child" and the policy of creating a socialist childhood became the means to differentiate Yugoslavia from yesterday's close friends and role models. The latter were now accused of being corrupt and alienated from the original ideas of Marxism–Leninism. As an article in a regular column called "IB reality" in the local weekly *Pančevac* in 1953 noted, in every surrounding country that belonged to the "Eastern Bloc" almost everything had gone wrong. The column emphasized the dangers of bureaucracy that threatened the Pioneer organization in neighboring Hungary. The professionalization of the latter was criticized in order to support the new direction of the Yugoslav Pioneer Organization. The YPO was to promote individual initiative, creative activities and rounded development of the personalities of the children. In addition, the "happiness" that was to be produced could be seen as a safeguard against the rising bureaucratization that was seen as potentially threatening to Yugoslav society as well. The investment in children with its enormous symbolical potential supported the anthropological optimism of the Yugoslav socialist project.



Thus, the "ideology of the happy child" resonated both with Communist ideology's forward-looking orientation, along with the more concrete social and political circumstances of the moment within which it was first created and then changed.

- 27 Yugoslavia's Communist leaders felt that investment in the proper upbringing of children was an investment in the future of the society as well. They carefully planned how the Pioneers would become the "bearers of the future," transformed through education and creativity, and therefore able to transform their parents, teachers, and the whole society. Through the ideological socialization of children in various contexts, party leaders and educators tried to connect the times past, the "founding myth" of the revolution, with a projected imagined future. Both past experiences and future perspectives were invested in the upbringing of children, making them the embodiment of the Yugoslav socialist project. It might seem self-evident that the "ideology of the happy child," with its ideological aims and content, did not leave any room for the genuine happiness of children. However, as childhood memories of different generations of Yugoslav Pioneers demonstrate, such a conclusion would be only part of the truth.
- 28 It would in fact be difficult to call an institution of such long standing as the Pioneer organization simply a success or a failure. It might well seem a total failure to those who witnessed the "real future" of the country and the organization in comparison with the "utopian vision" that was imagined in the 1950s. Many of those who grew up being guided by the "ideology of the happy childhood" took part in the most unhappy warfare of the 1990s. Belgrade's Pioneer City, built during the early 1950s as a place to celebrate children's creativity, is today a home for war refugees. It stands as a sad metaphor for different stages of a once confident ideology.
- 29 Nevertheless, it would be incorrect to conclude this chapter by picturing childhood in socialist Yugoslavia only in such dark tones. True, there were a lot of children not so pleased, if not



unhappy, at not being able to celebrate publicly church or other religious holidays, or having different views of past and present events. Still, as Lydia Sklevicky also argues for the social transformation of the 1950s in Croatia, newly introduced holidays must have been a source of real pleasure for children. Indeed, brand-new clothing, exciting festive events, visits to the seaside or just a handful of candies, always with cautious reference to the state and party as the noble donors, must have brought joy. As Sklevicky put it, such experiences certainly offered, at least temporarily, "separation from the difficulties of everyday life, relief from the shortages on the harsh road to the bright future."⁵⁷

Sources

Document 1:

30 Today a great part of our country is free. We must have that in mind in order to strengthen our work and to standardize it. There are two main tasks in front of our country;

To drive out the enemy and liberate the whole of the country

To build up the liberated parts of the country and to prepare for the grand effort of building new, free, federal democratic Yugoslavia.

31 Two tasks: our people must deal with the war and work. Pioneers must help them and must prepare for new efforts.

The major war task is: "Everything for the front, everything for victory." That slogan should be written and exposed in a visible place in every room where Pioneers meet. Every gathering, every meeting should have as its first point for discussion the motto: "Everything for the front, everything for victory." Pioneers should talk and decide what they can do to make a contribution to victory (to collect garbage, to visit the wounded Partisans, etc.).



Those comrades who are exceptional in their work should be praised, and those whose results do not satisfy should be warned ... Both successes and failures should be mentioned and referred to in the school paper. ...

In order to grow up as true renovators of our country, we should be decent Pioneers at first. Therefore, every Pioneer must know very well the aims of the Pioneer's Organization and be a good pupil. We shall start to standardize the work of the Pioneer's organization in the whole country soon: You will get regulations concerning uniforms, internal organization, etc... An organization standardized in such a manner should be looked forward to with joy and you should be proud to be its members. Until then, it would be useful to talk over certain questions. In the following ten days organize about two meetings with all the members. At each of these meetings the first discussion point is going to be: "Everything for the front, everything for victory." The second issue at the first meeting should be: "Why do we need to be good pupils?" At the second meeting have proper discussion on the following question: "Which are the most important tasks of Tito's Pioneers?"

32 The Pioneer's leaders should be well prepared to chair and facilitate these meetings. Take notes about the course of the meeting. These scripts should be sent to us.

33 *Source*: "Our new tasks," in *Pioniri*, Belgrade, 5. III, 1945, 8.

Document 2:

34 Demand that Pioneers always be attired properly, making sure that they wear the Pioneer's scarf. The scarf is a sign of the Pioneer's dignity and honor. The scarf helps to lift the spirit. But the scarf is also an obstruction, a reminder as well. If a Pioneer is wearing his scarf it would be shameful for him to hang on a tram, to climb a tree, to shoot at birds. Besides [if he is wearing the scarf—I.E.] the other pioneers and the adults



will remind him to behave properly. The scarf forces the Pioneer to be good.

- 35 *Source:* Instructions to the Pioneers' leaders, published in the brochure "Pionirski rukovodilac," May 1945, cited in Dragoslav Ognjanović and Rada Prelic', *Pionirska organizacija Jugoslavije, Dečje novine, Gornji Milanovac, 1982, 217–18.*

Document 3:

Pioneer's Oath

Today when I'm becoming a Pioneer
 I give my honorable Pioneer
 word That I will diligently learn and work
 Respect parents and teachers
 And be a faithful and honest friend
 Who keeps his word of honor;
 That I will follow the path of the best Pioneers,
 Appreciate the glorious deeds of Partisans
 And all progressive people of the world
 Who stand for liberty and peace;
 That I will love my Homeland
 Self-managing socialist Yugoslavia
 And its brotherly nations and nationalities,
 And that I will build a new life,
 Full of happiness and joy.

Document 4:

- 36 The Pioneer organization complements school in the universal education and upbringing of pupils, and together with family culture, gives a unique educational and upbringing system to children in the FNRJ (Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia).
- 37 The Pioneer organization should be an educational organization gathering children aged 6 to 14, which will provide the pleasure of play, and physical education with its joyful features, and through organized work with children, create artistic initiative, a sense of living in a collective, friendship, love of work and study, and love of our



motherland. Building the characteristics of a socialist man within a child, the organization is supposed to help school and family in the general education of children ... In the company of young naturelovers, children are eager to explore, for example, the life of certain animals ... The technical circle awakens interest in technology, builds curiosity, creates a thirst for knowledge, and teaches to connect theory with practice ... In this [physical education] circle, beautiful forms of physical activities should be used in organizing healthy free time filled with joy ... It is also vital that all Pioneers take part in socially useful work that is planned and systematic in helping the population —the gathering of old iron and medicinal herbs, cleaning and repairing rooms, taking part in village work and other things. Socially orientated Pioneer's work is of evident importance. The use of child activity in work makes pupils self-disciplined, and makes them more critical and strict with themselves and with their friends.

38 *Source:* Report from the annual council of the vicinity council of the Pioneer Organization of Kovačica, 18 February 1951.

Notes

1. "Škola—nosilac kulturnog života," *Pančevac*, 6 June 1953, p. 4.
2. The main sources used in this paper are published and unpublished archives on Pioneer organization's activities in the Kovačica district of Vojvodina, between 1950– 1955, from the Historical Archive of Pančevo, the Vojvodina Archive, and various publications about the history of the Pioneer's Union. Also used are articles taken from the specialized Pioneer magazines, Pioneers' letters to Tito, directions for creative work for the Pioneer instructors, songs and poems about Pioneers and their duties, Pioneer oaths, all published in special issues for the Pioneers themselves and those working with them. In addition, during my research I organized a workshop entitled "A Childhood in Socialism" in Belgrade in February 2002, where anthropology students from Ljubljana, Zagreb, Belgrade and Skopje took part in sharing their experiences of growing up under socialism as the last generation of "Tito's Pioneers". Their oral testimonies were of use in interpreting "the old material" and locating it in a longer time frame. Although this chapter is a case study, its assumptions relate not only to



other parts of Yugoslavia but to other countries too, due to the nature and organization of Communist governments.

3. In 1948, a resolution was made that a Pioneer Union would celebrate the following holidays in a formal way: Republic Day (29 November), A Salutation to Spring, Pioneer's Day (27 November), New Year (31 December) and the beginning of the school year, together with other ordinary public holidays. Some of these holidays died out over time, while others arrived on the scene. The most important Pioneer and youth-related holidays remained Republic Day, when new members of were admitted to the organization, New Year's Day—which was declared “a true Pioneers' holiday”—and, from 1957, the Day of Youth, when young people organized and involved in the birthday celebrations of the president of the Republic, Josip Broz Tito, by carrying the Torch of Youth and taking part in a mass patriotic gymnastics show. The central event was performed on 25 May, on Tito's birthday, in the JNA (Yugoslav People's Army) stadium, and it was called a *slet*. Apart from this central manifestation, numerous local *slets* were organized in each community which the Torch of Youth passed through.

4. Milan Ristic', Dubravka Stojanovic', eds., *Childhood in the Past, 19th and 20th Century (Additional Teaching Materials)* (Belgrade: Association for Social History, 2001), 64–66.

5. *Kratka Bulgarska Entsiklopediia* (BAN: Sofia, 1964), 2: 177–78; I wish to thank Rossitza Guentcheva for providing me with information about the way the Pioneer organization was constituted and the way it worked in socialist Bulgaria.

6. Miroslava Males'evic', "Prijem u Pionirsku organizaciju," *Etnolos'ke sveske V* (1984), 80

7. The whole of one's personal life could be seen as an obligatory and constant succession of initiations into one after another mass organization—first one became a Pioneer, than a member of the youth organization, afterwards a member of the party. All adults were obliged to be members of the People's Front, and women had an organization of their own called the AFZ'. One could also be organized according to personal interests and skills. The reason is that the state wanted to organize, observe and control every possible activity of its citizens. An excellent picture of the way the Communist Party organized political and cultural life in the late 1940s and early 1950s is given in Ljubodrag Dimic', *Agitprop kultura* (Belgrade: Rad, 1988).

8. About the Communist vision of the future and the role of the party in representing it, see chapter 11 in this volume.



9. Ljubodrag Dimic', *Agitprop kultura* (Belgrade: Rad, 1988), 128.

10. Miroslava Males'evic', *ibid.*
11. Lydia Sklevicky, "Nova godina: Od 'mladog ljeta' do 'političkog rituala,'" in *Konji, zene, ratovi* (Zagreb: Druga, 1996), 175–85.
12. Radina Vučetić, "ABC Textbooks and Ideological Indoctrination of Children: 'Socialism Tailor-Made for Man' or 'Child Tailor-Made for Socialism?'" in Slobodan Naumović and Miroslav Jovanović, ed., *Childhood in South East-Europe: Historical Perspectives on Growing Up in the 19th and 20th Century* (Belgrade and Graz: Zur Kunde Sudosteuropas—Band II 28, Udruženje za društvenu istoriju—Ideje 2, 2001), 249–65.
13. In this paper I rely on two important concepts in studying childhood, which both suppose the socio-historical condition of childhood as a social experience. One of them is a historical concept introduced by Filip Aries in his work *Centuries of Childhood*, which presumes that childhood is a historical phenomenon of more modern times. According to Aries, only from the eighteenth century onwards can we talk of childhood in the modern sense, because from then on we can follow the separation and division of the children's world from the adult's and the establishment of specific ideas, modes and cultural codes concerning children; this Aries and his disciples named "the discovery of childhood." The other concept is related to modern approaches in the sociology of childhood, which identifies childhood as a "social consequence," in other words which, believe that there are different socio-cultural modes of nurture and child upbringing in different times and space, which are also "sociologically subtle, or rather socially distinguished" (S. Mihajlović-Tomanović, "Childhood in History, between Ideas and Practice," *Sociology*, vol. XXXVIII, nr. 3 (1996), 440). And the last but not the least of the research tradition is the anthropological approach to growing up, established and developed in the school of "culture and personality," most particularly in Margaret Mead's works. More about these approaches is to be found in F. Aries, *Vekovi detinjstva* (Belgrade: Zavod za Udzbenike I nastavna sredstva, 1989); S. Mihajlović-Tomanović, *ibid.* 429–43; S. Mihajlović-Tomanović, "Perspectives and Problems in the Sociological Study of Childhood," *Sociology*, vol. XXXVIII, nr. 2 (1996), 327–31; Chris Jenks, *Childhood* (London: Routledge, 1996). These sources provide the operational definition of childhood. In this chapter, the term childhood will consider not only the age of life itself but also certain forms of social practice (principles, institutions, activities) determining this age and making it differ from other intervals of life producing a specific social experience.

14. Chris Jenks, *Childhood*, 7.

15. *Ibid.*, 69.



16. The Youth Movement magazine wrote about this first Pioneers organization on 2 February 1942: "The youngest Montenegrin people's liberation organization has a board of five persons: three boys and two girls. It organizes conferences each Saturday in which literary essays are read. One of the essays had the topic: How do I imagine/see Hitler? ... The Pioneer organization gathers donations for the NOF. Our youngest comrades—while older ones are on the front line—watch carefully over the village; Partisan couriers and Partisan explorers are greeted with "Death to Fascism," and they conduct themselves as friendly hosts in their villages." Petar Kačavenda, *SKOJ* (Communist Youth League of Yugoslavia) *i omladina u ratu i revoluciji* (Belgrade: NIRO "Ekspres," 1979), 76.

17. Momčilo Stefanović, *Deca suncu slobode* (Beograd: NIRO "Četvrti juli," 1979).

18. Dragoslav Ognjanović and Rada Prelić, *Jugoslovenska Pionirska organizacija 1942–1945* (Gornji Milanovac: Dečje novine, 1982).

19. Data on the organization of Pioneers' groups, their squads and divisions, were not reported systematically, but announcements of a huge overall total nonetheless appeared regularly in publications on Partisans, Pioneers and the Liberation War in general. The unreliability of these totals was all the greater because Pioneer organizations were "fluid" and unstable during the war, being formed and disbanded depending on military demands and the size and stability of liberated territories.

20. *Kratka Bulgarska Entsiklopediia* (Sofia: BAN, 1964), 2: 177; translation by Rossitza Guentcheva.

21. "Kako žive deca u Sovjetskom Savezu," *Pionir, list najmlađih u Sremu*, 1942, 16.

22. There are indications that the child-Pioneers' participation in Partisan units was used as a strategy for the mobilization of adults; tales about the voluntary involvement of Pioneers in Partisan units and details of their extraordinary bravery put grown-ups to shame and forced them into joining the Partisans (Ognjanović, Prelić, 186). Stas'ica Zajović witnessed a similar strategy in the warfare of the 1990s, when women war volunteers in Montenegro were used to induce men to join the fighting in larger numbers and to mobilize public support (S. Zajović, "Women and Militarism in Serbia," *Women Against the War*, 3–4 (1995): 36–43).

23. In NOB literature Pioneer-soldiers and Pioneer-national heroes were all claimed to be children under 15 at the end of April 1941. New research shows that some of those Pioneer-heroes were over 15 at that time, and that they belonged in the Youth category instead.



24. Mihajlo Ogrizovic', *Hrvatski pioniri u narodnoj revoluciji* (Zagreb: Savez drus'tava "Nas'a djeca" republike Hrvatske, 1977), 17–20; in D. Ognjanovic' and R. Prelic', 80.

25. Kačavenda, 77.

26. Ognjanovic' and Prelic', 202. Since most of the data are based on the memories of participants of the National Liberation War, and because there is no official recorded evidence, the data on the total number of organized Pioneers must be treated with reservation.

27. Momčilo Stefanovic', XV.

28. Ognjanovic' and Prelic', 232.

29. A childhood in socialism is more likely a "produced" than "invented" social phenomenon (according to Aries' theory). It is certain that Yugoslav Communists did not "invent" childhood, although they consciously exploited the metaphors of children and childhood in political communication. As for the practice of childhood, the sets of specific activities, images, and principles that constitute and culturally define an age group, it was now to be democratized, to be made accessible to all social levels.

30. "Program Organizacije mladih pionira Demokratske federativne Jugoslavije," in D. Ognjanovic' and R. Prelic', 216–17.

31. 31 Ognjanovic' and Prelic', 217.

32. There are indications that in different republics of Yugoslavia over time the colors of the scarves or the caps changed. Thus there is information that in Bosnia in certain periods the color of the cap was white, while in Slovenia there are examples of yellow scarves. I have no idea when this differentiation started or with what intention.

33. Ognjanovic' and Prelic', 220.

34. History Archive Pančevo, Fund of the Pioneer Vicinity Council in Kovačica 1950–1952.

35. Ibid.

36. "Pionirski rukovodilac" (May 1945), in Ognjanovic' and Prelic', 218.

37. This happens to be true not just for the 1950s but also for the period after Tito's death, although there were some changes in what was meant by the wearing of the red scarf. During the 1980s, on every 4 May (the day Tito died), different ways of commemoration were organized. These included memorial hours at the beginning of every school day, dedicated to the memory of "beloved Comrade Tito" and "revolutionary traditions." According to one student, the Pioneers in her school (in Belgrade) were obliged to wear their complete Pioneer uniform on that occasion, which



was already unusual at that time. If, during the 1950s, the red scarf was understood as an effective means to control the behavior of the Pioneers, its function was expanded during the 1980s to help preserve and refresh memories of the "revolutionary past" and to remember "the founding father" of Yugoslav socialism.

38. This can be clearly seen in the famous oral poetry cycle dedicated to the Battle of Kosovo. Everything that either the heroes wear, or that was put on their horses, has an evident meaning whose purpose was to support the strength, faith, morality and other important characteristics of the heroes and to further strengthen their abilities; belief in the transformative capacity of cloth can be found in some of the traditional rituals, where it is believed that, for example, "the shirt made for a day" (*kos ˇ ulja jednodanka*) has the magical power of being bulletproof in times of war. Magical and transformative capacities are particularly ascribed to the cap, which is believed to be synonymous with the person who wears it. Therefore, in some parts of Serbia a widow is obliged to wear her late husband's cap for a year after his death, which is intended to ensure his presence around her and control her behavior for a prolonged period. See Tihomir –Dorđević, *Zle oči u verovanju Juz ˇ nih Slovena* (Beograd: Prosveta, 1985); Veselin Čajkanović, *Mit i religija u Srba* (Beograd: SKZ, 1973).

39. At the Third Plenary Session of the CK KPJ (Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia) in 1949, we find a resolution concerning educational measures, which Milovan Djilas took part in formulating. The necessity of reforming the educational system was emphasized, with the intention of making it more comprehensive and efficient in creating a "new, liberated and brave socialist man, whose perspectives are broad and versatile, and to whom foreign bureaucracy and narrow-mindedness are unknown" ("Resolution from the Third Plenary Session of the CK KPJ," *Savremena s ˇkola* 8–10 [Belgrade, 1949], 1). On 29 September of the same year, during Children's Week, Marshal Tito, speaking to Pioneers, said: "What is most important for our country today, what is most precious? People are! And people will be what we make of them in their education. That is why we have to pay attention that children, who will become the responsive citizens of this country, are given conditions for a fine and proper upbringing, that they are healthy and well brought up citizens of socialistic Yugoslavia ... Whom do we build factories and other structures for; whom do we build this country for? We are building it for our future inhabitants ..."; *Tito među nama* (Ljubljana: Dopisna delavska univerza, 1972), 43.



40. Milovan Djilas, "Problemi obrazovanja u borbi nas ˇ e zemlje za socijalizam," *Savremena s ˇkola* 8–10 (Belgrade, 1949), 13.

41. Realizing the sensitivity of the social context, the proposed reform of the Yugoslav Pioneer Organization could be understood as a realization of a then popular slogan: "Factories to the workers, land to the peasants," in the context of the children's world. It was under this slogan, on 27 June 1950, that an *Act on ruling private companies and larger economy associations by working collectives*—Act on Self-management, for short—which "outlined" the Yugoslav "way to socialism," was passed.

42. History Archive Pančevo, Fund of the Pioneer Vicinity Council in Kovačica 1950–1952.

43. Ibid.

44. Miroslava Males'evic', 81.

45. Petr Roubal, *Display and Disguise: the Place of the Czechoslovak Spartakiads in Socialist Regime and Society*, MA Thesis (Budapest: Central European University, 2000), 21.

46. Lisa A. Kirschenbaum, *Small Comrades—Revolutionizing Childhood in Soviet Russia, 1917–1932* (London: Routledge, 2001), 131.

47. Srđan Karanovic', one of the famous Yugoslav movie directors, made his first film as a Pioneer. His was also the very first Pioneer film in Yugoslavia. The film was shown at the Pioneer Film Festival in Zagreb in 1961.

48. Since the reform of the Pioneer organization started during the first five-year plan, its rhetoric fits into that of the "plan." Those who were to carry out party's orders to create a "true children's organization" had the task of "producing" as much children's joy as possible. This devotion to producing joy, élan, creativity, naturally related to children, happened at the same time that Communist leaders, including Tito, publicly declared "bureaucracy" a chief danger, a "contagious disease" for society. This production of children's joy, or the socially organized enhancing of children's true élan, and creating the symbolic value of enthusiasm, could be seen as an antidote to bureaucratic infection.

49. This practice was based on another Leninist revolutionary concept: the transformative capacity of creative work that would appear after abuse and control were removed. This idea was the foundation for the concept of workers' self-management and workers' control, proclaimed in Yugoslavia in 1950.

50. Insistence on the importance of hygiene was certainly one of the longest lasting features in socialist upbringing. An anthropology student from Croatia recited the following Pioneer verse that she remembered from childhood as an important message. This rhyme remains, ten years after the disappearance of the Pioneer organization, still a part of the



educational program in Serbian kindergartens. It goes: "Little soap, little soap, make bubbles on my head; clean face, clean hands, cheeks of red; we shall ask the mirror who is looking clear, little mirror shall reply: A clean Pioneer."

51. Sklevicky, 184–85.

52. History Archive Pančevo, Fund of the Pioneer Vicinity Council in Kovačica 1950–1952.

53. Ibid.

54. A report of the Republic Council of Pioneers to the Vicinity Council in Kovačica, No. 110, History Archive Pančevo, Fund of the Pioneer Vicinity Council in Kovačica 1950–1952. The report consists of an instruction for celebrating New Year and organizing free time during the winter break; "winter work" consists of details for the organization of games in the snow, a description of the games, and how to arrange the play according to the "*Pioneers in the Snow*" and "*To the Snow, Pioneers*" manuals.

55. History Archive Pančevo, Fund of the Pioneer Vicinity Council in Kovačica 1950–1952.

56. Compare Kirschenbaum, 134. In the Yugoslav case, instructions for organizing Pioneer manifestations reflects the intentions of the organizer. For example: "... if in the course of arranging the celebration we get every Pioneer's attention, those Pioneers will look forward to the celebration and attend happily; thus the success of the program would be greater" "... to avoid the big crowd that could spoil the children's mood, Pioneers are to be divided into small groups ..." "... leaders of the groups gather their Pioneers for physical games and fun, but it is to be done in a clever way so that children alone ask to go to play" "... then the whole group can spare some time gathering edible plants or killing some pests. All the work should be carried out according to the preference and interest of the Pioneers, so that children see play in all the work". Scenery of the "*Salutation to the Spring*" celebration, March 1951, Fund of the Pioneer Vicinity Council in Kovačica 1950–1952.

57. Sklevicky, 186.

Author

Ildiko Erdei



Ildiko Erdei is an Anthropologist who teaches at the University of Belgrade, Department of Ethnology and Anthropology, and focuses mainly on the anthropology of political rituals and urban anthropology.

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