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# Constitutive discontinuity. Education and pedagogy in the socialistic Serbia (1945–1990)

**Abstract:** This paper treats the discontinuity in educational policy and pedagogical science in the period of Yugoslav socialism in Serbia. It has been stated that during that period a modernized educational system was being built. Today a deeper understanding and review of that new system is necessary in order to build a comprehensive picture of the development of education in Serbia. The essential principles of Serbian/Yugoslav Marxist pedagogy are discussed in particular, and some of its contradictions, developmental stages and achievements are pointed out in detail. In this context, the particular issues on further study of the socialist period in the development of Serbian education and pedagogy are initiated, in order to find its adequate place in the explanation of the way Serbian pedagogy developed its identity and the role in creating the educational policy.

**Keywords:** socialistic education in Serbia (1945–1990), Yugoslav Marxist pedagogy, educational policy

UDC: 37(091)

Scientific article

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## Introduction

Serbian teachers are still insufficiently integrated into the European community of pedagogical research partly because they lack self-reflection on the historic passage that Serbian pedagogy took during the mono-ideological era of scientific socialism. Although interested in theory and practice of Soviet education and pedagogy (Noah 1969; Brofenbrenner 1970; Morton 1972; Nigel 1979), especially after the “Sputnik shock”, Western researchers had no curiosity about the other countries that were under Soviet domination. In spite of a tendency in former Yugoslavia to stress an independent and authentic path to socialism, the pedagogy of the socialist period has not been systematically explored either by domestic or by foreign authors. That is why we believe the task of researchers of the history of education is to restore that gap in our pedagogical self-knowledge.

Socialist education and pedagogy in the former Yugoslavia represent an evident discontinuity in the history of South Slav people and ethnic minorities. If we leave it unexplored, this discontinuity can become permanent in understanding the pedagogical heritage of the states emerging from the break-up of the common state. The fact that continuities in the Balkan countries are a rather rare phenomenon makes the need to restore them even greater. Restoring continuity is a necessary precondition for the development of an intranational dialogue on education. Rather than a means for neutralizing the discontinuity, it should become a research site for a critical analysis of socialist pedagogy.

Therefore, we position our examination of the issues of education and pedagogy from the socialist period in the context of historical discontinuity/continuity in pedagogy from the past. The period under study is clearly outlined by the end of World War II and the establishment of the socialist Yugoslav state on one hand, and by its ideological and formal disintegration on the other. However, the territorial boundaries are not as clear as the chronological boundaries. The existence of the former common experience of building the self-managing socialism, and the institutional and personal interconnections of Yugoslav pedagogues makes the discourse about the narrower national (intrarepublic) developments of the education systems and science of education more difficult. Since ignoring national

differences might neglect the historical realities in the former Yugoslav republics, chronological considerations along the continuity/discontinuity dimension should be combined with the territorial considerations along the federal/republic distinctions.

With such a determined chronological-territorial framework of research of the development of education and pedagogy during the socialist period, we can now proceed to explicate the methodological approach: (1) the research should have an intra-Yugoslav comparative character; (2) the research should not ignore the history of ideas but at the same time it should not be reduced to it; a fruitful epistemological approach should pay equal attention to both the ideas and the development of the institutional framework within which the ideas were developed; (3) the social and ideological basis of the socialist period in our history forces one to pay special attention to the relationship between the construction of social formation and the ideological aspects of the development of the educational system and to the role of the pedagogic science in this process; (4) the personal preferences of leading Yugoslav pedagogues should not be ignored in such a context, nor should the theories in the domain of general pedagogy and specific pedagogical disciplines; (5) the character of federal and national organizations of pedagogues needs to be assessed; (6) the analysis should include the documents of the sole political party (Yugoslav Communist Party), the sources illustrating the efficacy of socialist education, pedagogical journals, and other printed sources; (7) the advancement of scientific research in education in the socialist period should receive special attention, as well as the efforts to internationalize the research and the process of professionalization in education (formal acknowledgement of the profession of school pedagogues); and (8) the continual advancement of education of pedagogues should be given special attention.

Considering the above, this paper focuses on a review of the questions, problems, and dilemmas related to the research of the socialist education and pedagogy and suggests a few assumptions and interpretations of this historical period.

### **New routes of educational politics in socialism**

The revolutionary change of government in Serbia/Yugoslavia in 1945 had significant considerations for the domain of education. It represented a sharp discontinuity with the pre-war education politics, but at the same time it was not able to fully compensate for the modernization deficits in industrial and cultural developments in Serbia. Yet, the enthusiasm invested in the edification of people was unrivaled in the Serbian history of education. The agents of that enthusiasm were teachers who belonged to the Advanced Teachers' Movement, notably Miloš B. Janković (1885–1984), with revolutionary experience since the first decade of the twentieth century (Vuković 1968). From their perspective, some of the main objectives were the attainability of the education system for poor rural and labor populations, an ideological focus in education, secular schools (Janković 1981), and the education of technical intelligence as a basis for the country's industrialization (Pavlović 2003).

It is necessary to stress that the revolutionary transformation of pedagogy and education did not assume cultivation of alternative pedagogic routes as it did in Russia after the October Revolution. On the contrary, the sole ideology and centralized system of education did not encourage alternative schooling. The spirit of collectivism was the core of a new school and out-of-school socialization of children and youths. The state and national causes and the fundamental nature of building the school system in pre-socialist times prevailed in an effort to affirm the new nations (Macedonians and Montenegrins) and to establish a system for the education of ethnic minorities. The politics of ethnic affirmation in socialist Yugoslavia are still unexplored, as well as the emancipation of women through the school system. In our opinion, these two issues have a greater significance for the conception of the school system than an effort to construct it as an alternative to bourgeois pedagogy, which also has to be analyzed.

The statistics of cultural development and the development of the network of public schools indicate the problems that the creators of educational policy had to contend with. Beyond a doubt, they courageously grappled with the inherited difficulties. The development of the school system in post-war Serbia was inspired by the “romantic fervor,” as a researcher of this period, Tomislav Bogavac (1980, p. 54), has pointed out. The inherited situation in education was extremely unfavorable, not just as a consequence of the destruction of war but also because of the lack of a functional network of school institutions from the pre-war period. Although the 1929 law outlined a compulsory eight years of primary education, its implementation was moot. Almost 30% of children were not in the school system, and among those enrolled only some 50% graduated (Aksentijević 1971, p. 33). According to the statistics for 1931, Serbia had 56.3% illiterate inhabitants (32.6% males and 78.7% females) (Bogavac 1980, p. 42). Enrollment in secondary education was even lower and before World War II only 0.5% of residents had a university diploma (*ibid.*, p. 39). The question is whether pre-war Serbia had a complete school system or whether its formation was the result of educational politics from the post-war socialistic period.

Serbia emerged from World War II as a dominantly agrarian society. Immediately after the war, there was a tendency toward urbanization with the immigration of mainly unqualified labor power into Belgrade, primarily. The first task of the new socialistic government was to increase the population’s literacy. From 1945 to 1948, 824,794 inhabitants of Serbia were enrolled in literacy training, with a 70% success rate (*ibid.*, p. 49). However, it became apparent that the eradication of illiteracy was impossible without a compulsory eight-year primary education. The promotion of a free eight-year primary school started with the federal *General School Law* in 1958 and the respective law in Serbia in 1959. Even before, there were efforts to continue the duration of primary education with prolonged primary and secondary schools. The inclusion of children of ages between 7 and 15 years in primary education during the Quinquennial Plan for 1947/48 to 1952/53 amounted to 63.5% (*ibid.*, p. 63). The battle for compulsory eight-year primary education, with the new conception of polytechnic education as one of the main demands of Marxist pedagogy (learning during and alongside working), was reduced to only

one accomplished task, the inclusion of two school subjects, General Technical Education and Socialist Ethics, in the curriculum (1958).

In order to improve the general education structure of population, it was necessary to also work with other levels of education. The classical gymnasium still dominated secondary education, enrolling 42% of secondary-school students, but the network of secondary and lower vocational schools was growing, and later they were transformed into schools for qualified workers (*ibid.*, p. 121). Workers had a chance for advancement at the so-called technical schools, but it was still considered an insufficient step towards democratization in the sense of availability of education for the working class. Higher education was developing extensively in spite of numerous problems. It was considered that the inherited education structure of the population did not satisfy the needs of industry for a highly qualified technical cadre, as well as the needs of the modernized health protection system and the new secondary level educational institutions, which demanded more highly educated teachers (Vujisić-Živković 2013). Art schools were also opened along with some specialized schools which, together with the schools teaching the languages of ethnic minorities, contributed to the process of democratization and the completion of a modern education system (*ibid.*)

After the post-war phase of romantic enthusiasm, the socialist education politics from the 1950s and 1960s were transformed into the more complex forms of the development of the systems of education, culture, and science. Social and economic conditions, the most important factors according to the Marxist pedagogues, presented an objective obstacle for the development of education and for the achievement of the proclaimed goal to increase the efficacy of the education system. High expectations were related to the praxis of self-management that began to be implemented in the school system in 1950 through decentralization of education politics to the level of the republics. The Education Councils were introduced at the level of the republics, while at the local level, the school boards were established in educational institutions (Stamenković 1971). However, there was no trace of autonomy in designing school plans and programs either in the initial or in later phases of the self-management system.

The lack of a highly educated cadre was evident in all segments of the economy and social superstructure (Bogavac 1980, p. 101). The level of workers' education and the emancipatory ambitions of politicians were not well balanced. Also, the duty ideologues had been preoccupied with the idea that workers should understand and be aware of the nature of productive relationships, rather than being merely poor performers of manual or intellectual jobs within their profession (Pavlović 2003; Potkonjak 1994b).

All these were problems characteristic for the first decades of the socialist transformation of education in Serbia. It is difficult to determine whether the period after Soviet domination was in line with the tendencies in education in European countries. Some of the reforms, which were obviously similar to those in Europe and supported by UNESCO, were presented in a manner of our authentic phraseology (Vujisić-Živković 2010). One can vindicate some of the emancipatory moves in education, such as the increase in equality of women and ethnic minorities in

education, the increase of the availability of education to rural and the workers' youth, as a significant inheritance of Yugoslav socialism from this period.

Between the mid-1950s and 1960s the realized changes stabilized at all levels of the education system in Serbia. The enrollment of children with primary education at the beginning of the 1960s was 73% and enrollment in secondary school was 37%; gymnasiums lasted for four years and the significance of vocational schools became noticeable. The percentage of people with a university diploma in 1952 was 0.66%, and between 1952 and 1965, the number of university students increased nine times (Bogavac 1980, p. 113 and 144), and the university network expanded with new universities opening in Novi Sad and Niš, and later in Priština.

The expansive growth of university education, combined with economic crisis, resulted in the students' revolt in 1968 with negative consequences on general changes in education. As a reaction to the events in 1968, as discussed by Nikola Potkonjak (1980; 1988; 1994b), the *Resolution of the X Congress of SKJ on Education* was adopted in 1974, which was followed by the conception of a "vocationally-oriented education" (*usmerjeno izobraževanje*). It was partly a response to the global problems of secondary-school and partly as a contribution to the creation of the self-management school, where education during and alongside work could resolve increasing tensions between the sphere of education and the sphere of production. All secondary schools were transformed into "school centers" (educational organizations) and children with workers' backgrounds were assigned to enrollment in secondary schools, while gymnasiums as the heritage of a class society were abolished.<sup>1</sup> Pronounced attention was paid to the general Marxist education at all levels of the education system (Potkonjak 1980, p. 71). Worth noting is that the investment in education was around 7% of GDP and comparable to such indicators for developed countries (Potkonjak 1973, p. 25). However, radical reform has been stuck in school egocentrism and competing tendencies to diminish and multiply professional profiles, in accordance with the spirit of self-management. The most important task of the reform, to establish the relationships between school and production, was reduced to a pure formality (Potkonjak 1994b).

The essential characteristics of the development of the system of education in socialist Serbia/Yugoslavia can be reduced to the following: (1) the permanent extension of the network of schools and the extensive development of university education; (2) the ideological (Marxist) indoctrination of education and the consequential separation from religious institutions; (3) the collectivistic spirit and the institutionalization of socialization of children and youth (Vujisić-Živković 2006); (4) the effort to socialize schools in a self-managed manner, as opposed to the Communist Party's ideological monopoly prominent in this sphere of social life; (5) the domination of technical and medical sciences in the system of education, which themselves were subordinated to the dogma of dialectic materialism and

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<sup>1</sup> The aim of transformation of all secondary schools into the "educational institutions" was to finally abolish the privileged place of gymnasiums compared to the schools that educated people for the professions in production. Such discrimination was ascribed to the bourgeois society and was described as specific dualism (Potkonjak 1980, p. 30). This was one of the key changes brought on by the conception of "vocationally-oriented education," which blossomed in Serbia during the second half of the 1970s.

ever-present leftist opposition from the social sciences and philosophy, and the rightist, conservative one, mostly from humanistic camps (Pavlović 2003); (6) the effort to establish a balance between the penetration of the ideas from West and the socialist Yugoslav practice (Potkonjak 1994b).

### **Contradictions and achievements in the development of pedagogy as a science**

The first period in the constitution of pedagogy in socialist Serbia was signified by the dominance of Soviet, Marxist-Leninist pedagogy. A few pedagogues, professors Stjepan Pataki (Croatia), Borisav Stevanović, and Miloš B. Janković (Serbia), participated in the session of the Academy of Pedagogical Science of RSFR in 1945. The cult of Makarenko was transferred to Yugoslavia. The textbook, *Pedagogy*, by Jesipov and Gončarov, was published in 1947 in Belgrade and had several editions; anthologies of pedagogical ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Plekhanov, Stalin, and Krupskaya were published, as well as articles by Soviet writers of pedagogic psychology. Special attention was given to wide dissemination of the ideas of Soviet system of upbringing (Vujisić-Živković 2006). The orientation to Soviet pedagogy assumed the critique of the pre-war German pedagogy and idealistic conceptions of education (Šmit 1952, p. 131–133), and the adoption of Marxist-Leninist standpoint as the only correct one in the science and practice of pedagogy. The period of Soviet domination had ideological influences which lasted much longer beyond the break in the relationship between Yugoslavia and USSR in 1948 (Potkonjak 1997b). Because of this, it is difficult to determine the exact position of Serbian pedagogy in the relationships between the West and East during the Cold War period. We could assume that the incidental consequences of Soviet domination were theoretically relevant for the subject of the science and its methodology, for the history of pedagogy, and for pedagogic psychology. One should not undermine the fact that at that moment in Serbian pedagogy there was a systematic interest in the domains of theory of pedagogy discussed above.

Compared with Croatia and Slovenia, there were some deficits in the cadres and theories in Serbia during the post-war period. In Serbia, those who had experience in scientific research and knew foreign languages were ideologically incorrect, while the ones with proper ideological orientation had no capacities for research in the domain of upbringing and education (Potkonjak 1994b, p. 23). In 1946, some important events took place: the Yugoslav Association of Pedagogic Societies (*Savez pedagoških društava Jugoslavije*) was established; its journal, *Contemporary School*, was launched; and the respective associations were organized in each republic (Potkonjak 1994a). The establishment of these associations was in accordance with the party policy to instigate scientific-professional associations whose work was not limited to professional specialization, departmentalization, and publishing the journals, but conceived to exhaust the whole area of social engagement of pedagogues and to promote their scientific accomplishments.

Since 1958, the profession of school pedagogues as school collaborators was

gradually established as a part of an ambitious conception of the educational professional team (Trnavac 1997). This was an important step to further improve the pedagogues' education, thanks first to the Department of Philosophy Faculty in Belgrade, but also to the social promotion of the pedagogic profession. The relationship between the profession and the scientific discipline has been changed, with positive and negative effects. A positive effect was reflected in profiling the education for pedagogues, while a negative effect was the process of "cleansing" or "purification" similar to the one in Germany by Edwin Kainer (2002, p. 91). On one hand, it enabled a more intensive development of pedagogy as a theoretical and research discipline, and on another, it resulted in the banishment of a wide circle of teachers from the discussions about important issues in pedagogy. Such a process was characteristic of all European countries, but half-heartedly observed or explored (Vujisić-Živković 2009).

At the same time, pedagogy was striving for affirmation as a research discipline. That struggle was neither easy nor always successful. There was enormous dogmatic resistance, where pedagogical scientific work was perceived as pure deduction of party politics in education. The general determination of the socialist regime to legitimize its scientific basis ("scientific socialism") was reflected in the field of pedagogy. The introductory address by Professor Stjepan Pataki at the First Congress of the Pedagogues in Yugoslavia, organized in Belgrade in 1952, "*The Tasks and Methodology of Scientific Pedagogical Research Related to the Resolution of the Third Plenum of Central Committee of Yugoslav Communist Party*," expressed in advance the mentioned duality in the approach to that topic. "Socialist pedagogy is, in general, still a young science [...], which has to reject idealistic illusion of its autonomy in relation to social reality, but it is a science which through the research of the practice, discovers its [...] laws, principles and rules." In order to achieve that, Pataki stressed that pedagogy has to change its methodological grounds and accept methods and instruments of empirical research (1952, p. 4). Professor Vlado Schmidt (1958), in *How to Develop our Pedagogical Science*, argued that pedagogical science could not develop alongside social reality, and that is why it should not be obstructed but rather instructed by the use of the attribute "socialist". Schmidt was tenacious fighter against methodological dualism in pedagogic research and was against the overemphasis of deductive or inductive methods in pedagogic research. He discussed that aim in a significant number of papers, including the introduction to the Yugoslav textbook, *Pedagogija*.<sup>2</sup> As this period in the development of Yugoslav socialist pedagogy was related to the school reform from 1958, methodological reorientation was expected to serve the concrete aims of the advancement of education and upbringing, namely, the politics in education. Even high-ranking politicians such as Vladimir Bakarić, condemned pedagogy for "lagging behind" (Potkonjak 1994a, p. 6). Most frequently, the pedagogues reacted to such accusations by calling upon the statement of A. S. Makarenko that says pedagogy is a "super-dialectic science," and it is hardest to grapple with challenges in this area (ibid.). However, by the beginning of the

<sup>2</sup> Krneta, Lj., Potkonjak, N., Schmidt, V., and Šimleša, P. (1964). *Pedagogija*. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska.



1960s, some essential changes of methodological orientation in pedagogy happened. In line with UNESCO's manuals for methodology, translated in mid-1950s, the methodology of pedagogical research was formed as a scientific and teaching discipline. In 1961, the Institute for Pedagogical Research of Serbia<sup>3</sup> was established, and in 1962, the federal journal, *Contemporary School*, was transformed into the scientific-theoretical journal, *Pedagogy* (Vujisić-Živković 2006).

Inspired by the activities of the Yugoslav Association of Pedagogical Societies and the Federal Committee for Pedagogical Science, the researchers' community reacted with the Counselling, held on Sljeme, near Zagreb, in 1963. The keynote address during that meeting was given by Professor Dragutin Franković (1963), who presented some gloomy data on the number of pedagogues-researchers and their abundant teaching hours, advocating for the construction of a seven-year research program in pedagogy, and for creation of federal institute for scientific research in pedagogy. All the domains of research in pedagogy were assessed and the guidelines for improvement were outlined. Only a few of the established aims for research in pedagogy, defined by the researchers' community, have been realized in Serbia due to many reasons. Primarily, a wave of self-management in pedagogy from 1970s brought with it the return of professional texts polluted with phraseology and the global crisis of pedagogy in the 1980s, reflecting on the situation in Serbia. Besides, the search for an authentic course of pedagogy frequently ended with the process of "nationalization of pedagogical knowledge" (Vujisić-Živković and Spasenović 2010). By giving a label of scientific legitimacy to political changes in education, pedagogues were looking for legitimacy for their own autochthone scientific courses, which often isolated them from the contemporary theory of pedagogy. The government, otherwise interested in the world promotion of Yugoslav self-management, did not react positively to the pedagogues' striving to organize an international congress in Yugoslavia in 1978 because the leading pedagogues were labelled as unreliable, leaning too much toward the tendencies of the Praxis philosophy<sup>4</sup> (Potkonjak 1994b, p. 127).

In Serbia during the 1970s, a large number of monographs were printed with discussions of particular methodological issues. The most valuable book was *Theoretical and Methodological Problems in Pedagogy: Epistemology of Pedagogy* by Professor Nikola Potkonjak (1977), which represents the most comprehensive treatise of Serbian socialist pedagogy. The author advocated for pedagogy as a unique science of upbringing. The character of pedagogy was to be an applied science, but not at the expense of its relative scientific autonomy and constant need for reviews of theories. During the 1970s and 1980s some fundamental studies of the problems of intellectual and moral upbringing were conducted by Jovan Đorđević (1977, 1983, 1986). Also significant was a visible advancement in original research in the areas of pedagogic psychology by Radivoje Kvašček (1978;

<sup>3</sup> *Programi Instituta za pedagoška istraživanja Narodne republike Srbije [The programs of the Institute for Pedagogic Research of National Republic of Serbia].* (1961). Beograd: Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika Narodne Republike Srbije.

<sup>4</sup> *Praxis philosophy* was named by the journal of the same name, published in Zagreb, publishing the articles by the advocates of the Marxist concept of de-alienation and democratic socialism.

1980a; 1980b); and internationally acknowledged and significant contributions to the development of preschool and school pedagogy by Aleksandra Marjanović (1977) and Nedeljko Trnavac (1983; 1987). These were years when the andragogues, led by Dušan Savićević (1983; 1986; 1989), grappled for the independence of andragogy from pedagogy.

However, the crisis of the discipline, recognizable on the international scene, did not remain without domestic consequences, where the most strident was the idea that a unique science on upbringing is impossible, or that it should be reorganized according to the demands of “educology.” Such attitudes were advocated primarily by Croatian authors (Nikola Pastuović). The “educological” perspective was not based on new scientific results as a justification, and today it is mostly understood as a pronouncement of the destruction of the unique Yugoslav pedagogical space (Potkonjak 1994b).

One could argue that the following disputes were characteristic for Serbian socialist pedagogy:

- Intervention for an authentic course in the development of pedagogic science, with rejection or redefinition of the contribution of the bourgeois pedagogy, and since 1948, from the Soviet (“revisionist”) pedagogy.
- Hesitations related to the subject area of pedagogy, increasing in time with the independence of andragogy, the development of pedagogic psychology, and the sociology of education.
- Slow advancement in the development of research methodology in pedagogy, in the use of the results in practice, and in the education of future educators.
- Gradual development of university departments and constant practitioners’ critiques, who were positioned in federal and republics’ pedagogical associations, blaming pedagogy as being practically inapplicable.
- Insufficient concentration of researchers in some disciplines of pedagogy, which was partly compensated with good inter-republic cooperation.
- Insufficient communication with international authors in pedagogy, although there was some ongoing progress from the mid-1970s.
- Widening of the network of institutions for pedagogues’ education, but feebly capacitated with highly qualified researchers and instructors in these institutions.
- Party monopoly in theory, research, and practice in education, where theoretical works were frequently labeled as exemplification of the previously defined Party’s statements.
- The gap between the verbal advocacy for inductive approach to the issues of education and upbringing, and constant deductive emphasis on the Marxist objectives to develop expansively cultivated human personality through upbringing.
- Slow influx of pedagogic methodology in the research area of methodics, which objectively resulted in lagging behind of the methodics of teaching subjects and in their retention at the normative-descriptive level.

- The rejection of an “overcome” pedagogic inheritance, and later the rejection of pedagogy as a unique science of upbringing and education, during the constitution of the initial positions of socialistic pedagogy, in 1970s and 1980s, which corresponded to the crisis in education and pedagogic science in the West, and which in Yugoslavia was characterized as an announcement of the deconstruction of Yugoslav society.

### **Instead of a conclusion: Theses for future discussion**

Further research of the school system and general upbringing in socialist Serbia/Yugoslavia needs critical inspection of a few new sources for the study of this period in our history. First of all, they should include the politics of the Yugoslav Communist Party in the sphere of education and upbringing. Related is the reconstruction of the Marxist-Leninist base of the entire system of education and pedagogy science. Also necessary are the studies of the absorbency of the education system for the groups of lower status, combined with relevant sociological research; namely, the studies of social mobility in Serbian/Yugoslav society in the second half of the twentieth century.

The immediate task of the historians of pedagogy is to reassess the school reforms and the establishment of the school system, approached as a totality, from preschool upbringing to the educational role of the army, industrial enterprises, and the media. This would give a more realistic insight into the scope of the effectiveness of Serbian socialism in education and enable a more reliable judgment about the gap between official ideology and politics and practical reality.

Special attention should be paid to the reassessment of the scientific and research identity of pedagogy, its relationship with related social sciences, the methodics of teaching subjects, and the forms of institutional organization of scientific research. Additionally, all national pedagogies should assess the systems of scientific and professional organizations and the historians of the discipline should look for the early networks of communication within the scientific field and contribute to their establishment in the new European context.

The establishment of continuities in national pedagogic schools established after the breakdown of Yugoslavia should also assume a respect for “points of departure,” that appeared in pedagogic discourse and practice during the socialist period. Some of these points of discontinuity with civic society could look like the building principles for contemporary projections of educational policy (gender equality and multiculturalism).

For these reasons we need a more differentiated view of the socialist development of education in the former Yugoslav republics. Only such a contrasting and objectively explored image could become the subject of school research in teaching the history of pedagogy at the university level. At the same time, it can be compared with the relevant politics and practice in the West and East, as they existed during the second half of the twentieth century.

The proposed theses for future research show that only teamwork can successfully meet expectations. It would be desirable to include some specialists in the areas of general and comparative pedagogy, as well as specialists in the methodics of specific teaching subjects.

Last but not least, the emancipatory features of socialist pedagogy, which connect it with the contemporary Marxist perspectives in pedagogy, must be freed from the bureaucratic and ideological burden they carried because of historical events. The same holds true for the methodological efforts of Yugoslav pedagogues from the era of socialism, which have held the test of time. Perhaps this process will result in a reevaluation of the role and the contribution canonized in a way by the socialist pedagogy itself. If so, even better. It could create a more reliable basis for reevaluation within the context of national pedagogies developed in the former Yugoslavia.

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*Translated by  
dr. Ruža Rosandić*