

## ANTHROPOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN THE LIGHT OF EUROPEAN TRANSFORMATIONS

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*In this text I reflect on the contemporary transformation of the educational arena within the context of European integration. The emphasis is on the processes and reactions concerning the transformation of educational policies and curricula in the (widely understood) anthropological community. I summarize some of the recent trends in British and American humanities, and trace some avenues along which anthropological reflection, research and practice concerning these issues might be conducted in the future.*

**Key words:** *educational reform, (anthropological) educational policy, Bologna process, ethnology/anthropology in the Balkans, audit culture, critical pedagogy*

### INTRODUCTION

This text represents a reflection and a consideration of the changing nature of contemporary higher education, and the prospects of anthropology as a discipline within this context. I begin by offering an overview of the profound transformations that had occurred in the educational sphere in previous decades, and their manifestations within the European environment. Then I consider some of the phenomenological idiosyncrasies of these processes in South-East Europe and the Balkans, focusing on an observation of how they had been reflected upon within native anthropologies. Thirdly, I

present a brief summary of the reactions to these transformations in two of the arguably most important “traditions” in anthropology and humanities in general – British and American, respectively. These reactions have occurred simultaneously and often interchangeably on two fronts, the theoretical (or academic) and the practical (or political). First I offer a summarization of the theoretical evaluations of this process, and then an outline of the political strategies of resistance to it that have sprung up in these two centers. In the end, I reflect on how (as well as if and why) these theories and strategies could be appropriated within the context of the anthropological traditions in these parts of Europe and the Balkans.

## THE GLOBAL TRANSFORMATION OF EDUCATION

Observing that the structure, functions, and indeed the very idea of education are undergoing radical changes today does not require much theoretical sophistication. One need only have a slight acquaintance or connection with an educational institution, or pay regular attention to articles or advertisements in newspapers and magazines, to observe that words and phrases such as “knowledge society”, “European Higher Education Area”, “Bologna process”, “standardization”, “student mobility”, “marketization” etc. come to define the educational sphere in ever-increasing and expanding ways.

What is going on? These words and phrases stand for a phenomenon, trend, or process, which can be observed at the global level and, as such, is usually termed *neoliberalism* in education. Of course, this is not to say that particular manifestations of this process do not differ in manner, speed or context; however, since both their origins and their future impact show striking similarities, they not only can but indeed should be analyzed as a global trend.

In opposition to the “*Bildung*” concept that was prevalent throughout modernity, education in its neoliberal form is increasingly viewed and evaluated not in terms of “individual development” or “enlightenment”, but in those of efficiency. This means that educational content is only good as far as it can be put to use. Its use, again, is much less in general refinement, and more in specific tasks and activities that can provide financial benefit to

those who possess them, thus increasing their chances on the global workforce market (see Delanty 2003). Rendering explicit the link between education and work is by no means incidental, since neoliberalism in education is, of course, closely connected with economic neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism in economy shares some characteristics with its predecessor, “classical” liberalism. It places equal rhetorical emphasis on the importance of free market and people as individual economical agents. However, unlike classical liberalism, the neoliberal form does not *de facto* strive to abolish the control of such collective entities as the state or society; rather, such control is even intensified in order to ensure maximum productivity and the resulting success or advantage on the global market (see Olssen 1996). Therefore, in neo-liberalism, governments and, increasingly, corporations that span the boundaries of nation-states, do allow or even support the dynamics of free market, but *under* strictly regulated conditions.

Education in neoliberalism reflects this agenda. No longer a “privilege of the privileged”, the massive growth of education has led to an increase in the number of educational institutions, and a resulting increase of competition among them. With the fall of Communist states in Europe, the last educational systems in this part of the world that were heavily governmentally subsidized disappeared, which means that the competition among educational institutions now is primarily for resources, both public and private, the latter mostly coming from students. In this race, it became increasingly important to be able to demonstrate educational quality, and in no uncertain or abstract terms – rather, education adopted the managerial language, giving rise to the *quantification* of results.

Educational institutions that nowadays operate within neoliberal economic systems are required to measure their quality in terms of productivity or efficiency. But, like we said, criteria of productivity or efficiency are neither characteristic of the institution, nor “universal” in any philosophical sense. In accordance with the neoliberal market ideology, they are usually defined by a super-ordinate authority such as the state or a union.

## **EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION AND ETHNOLOGY / ANTHROPOLOGY IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD**

In the context of contemporary Southeast Europe and/or the Balkans, these concepts have had an even increased significance. For the majority of the most recent or prospective EU member states, inclusion into the European Higher Education Area became one of the prerequisites and/or necessary steps towards integration into European Union. Therefore, the issues of educational transformation were, from the very beginning, endowed with significant political meaning. Old national educational curricula were viewed as “backward” and often equated with the (predominantly Communist or Socialist) regimes under whose wings they had sprung into existence. The transformation of educational programs in Balkan countries – and, less obviously but more importantly, the transformation of the very structure of education, especially higher education – became to a certain extent exemplary for the transformation of the entire political and governing structures. Simply put, educational integration and adherence to the European standards – as exemplified in the Bologna declaration and the ensuing documents – were often regarded, or at the very least rhetorically utilized, as a metonymy for European integration in general.

What inevitably followed is that – not unlike in the rest of the developing world – education and its contemporary transformations became the ground of political and symbolic struggles and contestation. Some of these trends can be traced back in history (see e.g. Bačević 2006a), but that is, for the time being, of lesser relevance. What is important is that the entire educational systems in Southeastern Europe have undergone radical changes, and that these changes reflected quite neatly the power struggles not only within academia, but within society as a whole. In short, the transformations of the educational arena have caused many conflicts and misunderstandings, and have – if nothing else – quite forcefully put forward the issues of legitimacy, relevance and applicability of the educational programs as they were taught, *vis-à-vis* the globally transforming world.

In native ethnologies and/or anthropologies in these parts of the globe, educational transformations were received, I believe, with a certain degree of surprise, occasionally even suspicion and shock. With the political context in mind, it seems quite understandable why the transformation of

educational systems should resonate deeply with academic strategies within the disciplines of ethnology and anthropology. In most of the Balkan states, ethnology and anthropology were first established within the context of the formation of national (or, in some cases, regional) identity (Naumović 1999, 1998; Kovačević 2001). Therefore, since their inception, they carried the agenda or at least the label, of “national sciences” (Naumović 1999). In most cases, again, then, they were conceived more in terms of description of ethnic, regional or national characteristics and differences, and less as a contribution to the unified and/or universal study of man (see Kovačević 2001). Regardless of the specific strategies these disciplines may have exercised during the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including their differing agendas in relation to the bloody breakup of former Yugoslavia, ethnology and anthropology – especially in Croatia and Serbia – had the uneasy burden of possible association with nationalist projects. So, it is partially in these terms that their subsequent (including the future) transformations should be conceived.

Of course, particular responses and curricula solutions to the integration into the European educational arena vary among countries, in relation to many criteria<sup>1</sup>. But, I believe that the majority of these strategies can be divided into two general categories (to make clear, I do not believe these strategies are universal on the national level; on the contrary, they differ between academic centers, institutions, and often even particular practitioners of the discipline). In one category is the **internationalization**, or “**anthropologization**”, of the existing curriculum. In these cases, curricula that were already in use in educational institutions that had the opportunity to educate future ethnologists and/or anthropologists were reformed towards a broader scope, which usually put more emphasis on the global (or “universal”) aspects of humanity, on the one hand, and on the other further elaborated courses

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<sup>1</sup> The data on which this observation is based were mostly gathered through (participant) observation of the presentations of curriculum reforms in different countries, not limited to the Balkans, that took place during the conference *New Curricula in Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology in Europe – Reflections*, that was organized by the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology of the University of Zagreb, and took place in Zagreb in June 2007. I use this opportunity to extend my warm thanks to the organizers and conveners of this conference.

and topics that had to do with the very core and foundations of this type of knowledge in general – such as methodological and theoretical courses, lectures on the philosophy of sciences and humanities, and an orientation towards reflection on the process of production of anthropological knowledge and the consequences of its application. The other category, however, is usually represented by a form of **“re-traditionalization”**, in which the national and more **“ethnological”** parts of the curriculum are accentuated and even glorified. This represents an emphasis on the type of knowledge that is usually very applicable but also local and particular in scope. In accordance with this, it is not normally over-concerned with the politics or policies of the production of this type of knowledge.

These types of strategies, though somewhat general in description, reflect very well the two types of interests that (prospective) students - at least to the best of my knowledge<sup>2</sup> – can harbor when deciding to study ethnology and/or anthropology. Their interests usually lean either towards the general concerns – such as the “nature” of Man and Humanity, common and shared characteristics of all human beings, processes of globalization and identity-construction (which are inevitably envisaged as universal and all-pervading) – or towards the very particular, small-group oriented interests, such as concern for, and often fascination by, elements of identity (“real” or imagined, it does not matter) of a specific group of people – regardless of whether they perceive it as their own or completely different, i.e. exotic: examples would be Croatian folk songs, Indian bead necklaces, Serbian pagan beliefs, Native American dances, Montenegrin and Albanian legal customs, or Eskimo (Inuit) hunting practices.

Regardless of this, however, these two strategies of curriculum reform – “internationalization” and anthropologization on the one hand, and “re-traditionalization” or ethnologization on the other – bear a striking

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<sup>2</sup> This knowledge, again, is a product of participant observation. As the Head of the Socio-Cultural Anthropology Program in Petnica Science Center in Valjevo, Serbia, I normally encounter many high-school students interested in anthropology, some of which later go on to become students of anthropology. Also, for a couple of years I was an assistant in teaching the course on the History of Serbian Ethnology at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, which gave me lots of opportunities to get acquainted with the interests of first-year students, for whom this course is compulsory.

resemblance to some of the dominant political responses towards the globalization process in general, and the transformation of education as its part. These processes are embraced by some, or at least viewed open-mindedly, though with a consideration towards the political implications; while, by others, they are met with profound skepticism, and re-affirmation of the particular and local values. However, what remains peculiarly absent from these strategies is a profound – and often, any – reflection on the multifold and complex nature of the transformations of the contemporary educational spheres. Simply put, though ethnological and anthropological curricula have transformed as a consequence of the integration of the European Higher Education space, there has been little consideration – in anthropology in particular - of the phenomenology and significance of these transformations. This points to a dangerous tendency – not totally uncommon nor unprecedented in anthropology - for its practitioners to remain distant from political concerns and consequences, concentrating instead on the technicalities of the implementation of particular agendas, or resorting to specific and peculiar research interests. This is not to say that ethnologists and/or anthropologists failed to problematize some aspects of EU integration; texts by Kovačević (2006), Erdei (2005), Naumović (2002, 1999), and a number of other anthropologists (and this is Serbia only) are a proof that this is not the case. But, until this conference, anthropological discussion that would focus on the particularities of educational and curricula reform within the context of EU integrations was, like I said, curiously absent in this part of the globe. Even now, it is only emerging; and profound theoretical and practical knowledge that could be based on the triangle between anthropology, education, and politics is still very far from reality. This is sad, since some other anthropologies have known for a long time that relationships between anthropology and education are by no means one dimensional or simple.

Therefore, in the following pages I will offer an overview of how recent educational transformations were conceptualized, both theoretically and practically, in the UK and US; then I will summarize their strategies of “resistance” to the neoliberal tendencies; and, finally, I will consider if there is something that could be learnt from these tendencies that could be applied within the contexts of contemporary curricula in Southeast Europe.

## **TWO THEORETICAL CONCEPTS: *AUDIT CULTURE* AND *CRITICAL PEDAGOGY***

Anthropologists in the United Kingdom were among the first to observe, name and analyze this trend. From economy (or, to be more precise, accounting) they borrowed the term, “audit culture” (Strathern 1996; Power 1997, 1994), to refer to the systematic quality assessment, evaluation and control of educational institutions and programs by governmental, and, to a lesser extent, independent bodies. Like the regular, educational “audit” is performed at regular intervals and its results define which educational institutions are going to continue to be recognized and (partially) funded by the state, and which are going to go “down the drain”.

In Britain this trend was initiated by the government of Margaret Thatcher, who introduced measures to curb the public and stimulate the private sector. As a result of decreased governmental funding, educational institutions were required to become accountable to the public (i.e. the taxpayers), and thus the “audit” methods were introduced to both secure the quality of education and eliminate those institutions that fall short of the standards. Although at face value a quite reasonable and logical strategy, it soon became obvious that educational audit was, actually, accomplishing something far different from the assurance of quality in education.

The quantified assessment system proved to be overtly rigid and insensitive to the requirements and specific methods of educational institutions that were dealing with minorities or children with special needs, for instance. Also, its techniques were efficient when it came to investigating the *form* of education but much less its *content*, the latter being less easily susceptible to quantitative evaluation. Furthermore, it led to a “proletariatization” of the working force, especially in higher education, increasing the overall number of working hours and decreasing the autonomy of university teachers and researchers (for examples and data, see Shore and Wright 1999).

However, audit culture proved to be more than just a technical nuisance. In a number of studies, anthropologists started pointing to the mechanisms at work that were more important and more effective than peer-reviewing or citation indices. One of the most important theoretical influences came from the appropriation of Foucault’s (1995) terms of power relations. Somewhat akin to the Panopticon (Shore & Roberts 1995), it was shown that the system

of audit entailed a relation between the observer and the observed, in which the institutions or entities that do the observing are endowed with power they exercise in evaluation and discipline of the observed, thus coercing them into “obedience” or at least adherence to the rules set from “above”. Instead of empowering the students or the teachers/researchers, the audit system actually supported only the bureaucratic class that was developed to survey the educational process. Besides the disempowerment of the subjects of the educational process, the audit system – like all surveillance systems – worked to create a climate of fear (of being observed, of being negatively evaluated, and of losing one’s job or funding) and mistrust between colleagues (Shore & Wright). Therefore, not only did it jeopardize the creativity of education, but it also sought to destroy the very basis on which it rested: its autonomy. Under neoliberal governance, universities and schools became observation grounds closely monitored by the state and judged primarily in terms of its economic interests.

A similar unrest arose in North America. There the manifestations of the neoliberal trend are usually termed the “commoditization” or “corporatization” of education, pertaining to the fact that, being viewed and used as a commodity, knowledge has largely come under the influence of great corporations. The decrease of funding of the public sector (proportional to the increase of funding for the military), that has been occurring at a more-or-less steady rate in the United States since the nineties, created a climate of instability in the higher education area. Among the most prominent consequences were decreased tenure and the proliferation of short-term, narrow, and skill-specific programs in educational institutions (often financed by corporations) that catered to the demand for the same type of jobs (often offered, you might guess, by the same corporations), that came to be known as “McUniversities” and “McJobs”, respectively. Therefore, in America the power over education is not so much exercised by the state as by national and multinational corporations, sometimes in a very visible form that entails the literal “branding” of educational spaces (see Ritzer 2000; Klein 2000; also Michael Moore’s 2002 film, “Bowling for Columbine”).

Critical pedagogues, again, are warning of the even greater consequences of the corporatization of the university space. One of the key points in which the arguments of contemporary critics of American education intersect is the fear that the marketization of education will lead to the further demolishing

of the public sphere, silencing of critical thinking and therefore endangering of democracy<sup>3</sup>. In fact, they claim that this is already happening. Instead of educating people how to examine things from an independent point of view, education offered at McUniversities concentrates on narrowly-defined skills, thus directing students towards the pursuing of only their own, particular, market interests, and the denial of any interest in common good. Giroux, for example, claims that this type of education if not causes, then at least enforces the preoccupation with the private domains and the loss of any interest in the public and the political, trends that can be easily observed in contemporary Western societies (2005, 2003). This is where citizenship steps in. If people are to become responsible citizens, then, the argument goes, they must learn to investigate and critically evaluate their environment, as well as desire to change it; contemporary education, at least as how neoliberals envisage it, strips them of all such pretensions or, at the very best, writes them off as a form of Romanticist-meets-Enlightenment, but in every case, *passé* thinking. Therefore, the future with “blank” producers and consumers, instead of informed citizens, does not seem like a really cheerful option – at least not to its critics.

## STRATEGIES OF RESISTANCE

What can the anthropologists do? In the United Kingdom, anthropologists of education look to political anthropology in the research agenda, and to reflexivity in the political. What does this mean? Shore and Wright claim that, first, one has to understand the dynamics of the contemporary educational space(s), including the interests of its political actors, and only then to try to appropriate the concepts by which education is measured nowadays. This means that “audit”, or forms of control, would not disappear entirely but would be defined by the anthropological or academic community, instead of externally imposed. This solution seeks to “capture” the key terms and “redefine”, or “reinvent” them, in ways that strip the state (or the market) of

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<sup>3</sup> This line of criticism actually rests on the assumption that democracy IS the ultimate, and common good, and as such can be understood in terms of American intellectual heritage. It is, of course, highly disputable if it could bear the same “weight” in its original form were it applied in different contexts.

some of its determining power. However, one might notice that this agenda is not utterly subversive. It does not, in effect, undermine the economical and political structures that define education; it merely seeks to evade them. In this sense, the “reflexive” answer to the marketization of education offered by British anthropologists to some extent supports the capitalist, modernist view of university.

Some critics from North America have offered more radical solutions. In particular, Peter McLaren, in an article with Gustavo Fischman (2000), calls for the abolishment of (some) of the economical forces underlying education. They cite an example of *Escola Cidadã* in Mexico, where students and parents were able to provide for most of the school’s funding, and therefore could control the teaching and curriculum. According to Fischman and McLaren, in this example we can see how community effort can at least result in a decrease, if not in total abolishment, of state control over education.

Michael Apple offers a different voice of dissent. He points to the dangers of another political current, the neoconservative, and the consequences of both neoconservatism and neoliberalism on education. But, he is also very mindful of the partiality and/or utopianism of contemporary critical projects, stating that they all too often turn into “Romantic possibilitarian rhetoric”. Therefore, he suggests

(...) that the rhetorical flourishes of the discourses of critical pedagogy need to come to grips with these changing material and ideological conditions. Critical pedagogy cannot and will not occur in a vacuum. Unless we honestly face these profound rightist transformations and think tactically about them, we will have little effect either on the creation of a counter-hegemonic common sense or on the building of a counter-hegemonic alliance. The growth of that odd combination of marketization and regulatory state, the move toward pedagogic similarity and traditional academic curricula and teaching, the ability of dominant groups to exert leadership in the struggle over this, and the accompanying shifts in common sense—all this cannot be wished away. Instead, they need to be confronted honestly and selfcritically. (... Therefore), at least part of our task may be politically and conceptually complex, but it can be said simply. In the long term, we need to “develop a political project that is both local yet generalizable, systematic without making Eurocentric, masculinist claims to essential and universal

truths about human subjects” (Luke, 1995, pp. vi-vii). Another part of our task, though, must be and is more proximate, more appropriately educational. Defensible, articulate, and fully fleshed out alternative critical and progressive policies and practices in curriculum, teaching, and evaluation need to be developed and made widely available (Apple & Beane, 1995; Brodhagen & Apple, in press). But this too must be done with due recognition of the changing nature of the social field of power and the importance of thinking tactically and strategically (2004:40-41).

### **WHAT ABOUT US?**

It is now time to turn to the implications of the current struggles for anthropology, education and citizenship in this part of the world (regardless of what we decide to call it). It is both obvious and unavoidable that the educational systems in most European countries are converging towards a goal termed the “European Higher Education Area”. It is also beyond doubt that some of the consequences of the unification of the European university space are at least predominantly positive. However, it seems equally obvious that its consequences do, in a very explicit sense, fit the neoliberal agenda. For example, student mobility, though it does aid culture contact and enable young people to travel and improve, will – probably – never be completely reciprocal. In other words, students are still “gravitating” towards the economically stronger countries, which, incidentally, traditionally offer better study programs; once they get there, they try to stay in that country, or a similar one, or the United States, which is still seen as the Mecca for prospective students, graduate or postgraduate. Therefore, student mobility is neither preventing the brain drain nor helping the exchange of staff and ideas; more likely, it only reinforces the existing economical and political order (see e.g. Chevaillier 2003).

On the local ground, the transformations connected with the Bologna process have led to – at times major – reshuffling of the power assets in the educational arena. As was mentioned in the upper part of this text, these changes are often very closely connected with the assets in the political arena in general, reflecting not only attitudes towards European integration but also the very broad ideas on how particular countries – including their respective educational systems – should develop in the future. Paradoxically enough,

such high stakes often prevent the participants in educational/political struggles from seeing the bigger picture, and instead turn towards petty disputes and minute power struggles in, at times, very limited areas. But, what the big picture inevitably contains is a perspective in which the educational systems, in countries which are in the process of joining or had recently joined the European Union, are primarily dependent on this context. In practice, this means that any discussion about the nature and dynamics of contemporary educational transformations that fails to take into account the respective positions and importance of particular educational systems in question within the European perspective, is at best partial, and at worst fictional.

And what emerges from the bigger picture is that respective standing of educational systems in the mentioned countries is, again, most closely connected with their economic and political strength in the European context. Put very bluntly, this means that education in the “New European” countries is, as stated above, under great risk of becoming at least a partial victim to the neoliberal transformation. There are many other – possibly, unintended – consequences of the Bologna process. It will take a very concentrated theoretical, political and reflective effort to secure even a minimum of critical stance towards the processes of integration, and a possible degree of independence in these processes. However, the whole process has been scarcely critically evaluated, especially by scholars from social sciences and humanities (for an exception see Mills 2004). It seems that the moment calls for anthropologists to think, and rethink, their strategies in light of these changes. I will offer a brief discussion for the standpoint of anthropologies in the “New Europe”. I do not intend to suggest a simple solution or a “program”; instead, I will only briefly sketch a few possibilities, and reflect on their consequences.

One possible strategy for anthropology in the light of the unification, and possible neo-liberalization, of universities in Europe is to adapt to the demands of the market, simply put. In this case, anthropology could rely on the tradition of research in political and economic anthropology, to better understand the actors and interests on the global educational market. Critics of “audit culture” in Britain are already researching alongside these lines. Their claim is that understanding the contemporary educational arena can help academics and independent researchers establish their own criteria for the assessment of educational quality and thus avoid becoming mere

“victims” of neoliberal market forces. However, this line of research might prove beneficial to anthropology in an altogether different way. It might help the practitioners of the discipline to define their research and teaching projects more in line with market demands, and this possibility is also closely connected to European area.

How? Well, some of the things that anthropology “traditionally” teaches are very much in line with the philosophy behind the unification of Europe, and the (so-called) European values. Multiculturalism, culture contact, and communicating but retaining specific ethnic, religious, gender, linguistic, regional and national traits are all *bona fide* anthropological topics. In other words, anthropological theory and practice can become very relevant in the context of European expansion. Both teaching, and research in anthropology, can help shed light on the various processes of transformation, communication exchange and identity construction and negotiation, all of which will be growing ever more important for policy creation in the forthcoming years. In practice, this means that anthropologists could decently “capitalize” their inclusion into the European higher education area.

But, some may shout, what about other values? Isn’t anthropology supposed to expand people’s minds and raise their consciences? Should we really become market-oriented and forgo all the potential for cultural criticism the discipline has carried from its early days? In this other form of thinking, we might side with the more radical contemporary analysts, such as McLaren and Apple. We may claim that it has always been the agenda of anthropology to educate responsible citizens, by informing them of what alternatives to their lifestyle and values there exist (*cf.* the elaboration of anthropology’s history of cultural criticism in Marcus and Fischer 1999). We may seek to expand the public sphere, to give voice to our informants (some of which will inevitably be “victims” of transition, wars and other political processes that this part of Europe has been undergoing in the past 15 years). We may contend it is our duty, as public intellectuals, to refuse to give in easily to the educational system which seems to strive to make its subjects merely “bricks in the wall”<sup>4</sup>, the wall that would separate the (unified) Europe from the rest of the world, or at least its most proximate possible enemies.

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<sup>4</sup> After a Pink Floyd song.

This dichotomy is somewhat akin to another methodological dichotomy elaborated by Roy D'Andrade and Nancy Scheper Hughes in a famous polemic on ethics published in *Current Anthropology* (1995): that between “objectivity” and “militancy”. Whereas the first stands for a view that anthropology should strive to give accurate portrayals and analyses, and therefore pursue the “truth”, the other contends that no discipline should be value-free, and that the anthropologists’ duty is to react, morally and politically, to the things and situations they encounter during fieldwork. The dichotomy offered here is, of course, not totally identical: what I portray is an option that rests on objective analysis but applies it in pursuit of individual and disciplinary interests, and another that strives for a value-driven approach to research and disciplinary politics, which entails the interests of groups other than the anthropologists in the process.

Well, like so many other dichotomies, this one is false. Anthropologists can choose to pursue both strategies, or orientations, to some extent. Namely, it is all too obvious that we should use minute analytical tools, especially those developed in political and economic anthropology, to understand the situation in the educational sphere today. We can use this understanding to, both, secure a better position for our discipline in the job market, by making its keywords relevant to the ongoing European project, and to subvert the system by helping our subjects achieve the understanding of it we have, thus making them more “equipped” to both struggle in the neoliberal arena, and at the same time teach them how to become able to critically evaluate and reflect on the processes they are a part of. This entails the formation of a sort of “double” strategy: one internal and one external. The internal strategy refers to the ways in which anthropology may be conceptualized, thought of, and debated among anthropologists themselves, i.e. within the anthropological community. The external strategy refers to the ways we will choose to display, present, and – why not – advertise our discipline to the public. But both demand careful planning and call for many discussions on the role of anthropologists themselves.

This means that anthropology, in this part of the world, has both the potential to work within the framework of contemporary educational reforms and to subvert them. Its potential, in the European context, covers the vast ground from theory to policy. Of course, particular manifestations

of this agenda would still vary according to countries, institutions, and even individual anthropologists. There is absolutely no way to predict either the form of critique or the impact it might have on the ones whom we're trying to teach how to use it and reflect on it, namely students and (our perceived) audience. This is why I will not elaborate on this topic (to some extent I have, in the Serbian national context, in Baćević 2006a and 2006b), and prefer to keep it open. But, one partial conclusion remains. Our discipline has significant opportunities to adapt to changes in the European educational area and gain some control over the process. It is how we choose to exercise these opportunities that will count.

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## ANTROPOLOŠKA OBRAZOVNA POLITIKA U SVJETLU EUROPSKE TRANSFORMACIJE

### Sažetak

Ovaj je članak svojevrsan pregled suvremene transformacije obrazovnog sustava u Europi u odnosu na obrazovne politike antropoloških zajednica – široko zamišljeno, ali sa naglaskom na "lokalno" – odnosno onih u ovim dijelovima svijeta, zvali ih mi Balkanom, jugoistočnom Europom, Novom Europom ili nekako drugačije. Započinjem sa samim počecima suvremenih obrazovnih transformacija te ih stavljam u kontekst neoliberalnih sustava vlada koje, čini se, trenutno dominiraju planetom. Zatim razmatram recepciju tih transformacija na lokalnom području, tj. na Balkanu. Iako su suvremene transformacije obrazovnih sustava, predvođene Bolonjskim procesom i stvaranjem Europske regije visokog obrazovanja, rezultirale važnim i ponekad i korjenitim promjenama u načinima na koji se etnologija i/ili antropologija predaju i na koji se poduzimaju istraživanja, začuđujuće malo pažnje je poklonjeno problematiziranju i razmatranju tih procesa unutar antropoloških zajednica u ovome dijelu svijeta. Tvrdim da su reakcije na te procese, u antropologiji i visokom obrazovanju općenito, često bile zamagljene političkim interesima i definirane u odnosu na orijentaciju prema Europskoj uniji (ili protiv nje). Zatim nudim komparativnu analizu načina na koji su takve i slične obrazovne transformacije bile teoretski usustavljene u antropologiji i humanističkim znanostima u Velikoj Britaniji i Sjedinjenim Američkim Državama te navodim koje su bile praktične i političke reakcije na njih. Na kraju, kratko razmatram kako možemo lekcije iz stvaranja discipline u Velikoj Britaniji i Sjedinjenim Državama iskoristiti kako bismo sastavili prijedloge za konstruktivnu problematizaciju obrazovnih transformacija u ovome dijelu svijeta. U zaključku tvrdim da etnologija i/ili antropologija mogu uvelike profitirati od suvremenih transformacija u obrazovnim sustavima, ali to zahtijeva odgovoran i refleksivan kritički odmak.

**Ključne riječi:** obrazovna reforma, (antropološka) obrazovna politika, Bolonjski proces, etnologija/antropologija na Balkanu, revizorska kultura, kritična pedagogija

