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**Yugoslavia and her ethnic groups:
National identity and the educational arena***

Educational and cultural policies designed to promote national identity are politically and socially defined. These policies must, therefore, be examined in their broader historical political and social contexts. This paper examines these contexts and explores the intersection between political objectives, national identity and education in the former Yugoslavia.

Analysis of this intersection reveals that various policies designed to foster national identity and political unification of Balkan Slavs balanced precariously between unifying and destabilizing, sometimes succeeding in allying incumbent ethnic groups but sometimes serving to divide and fragment them. For instance, prior to the 20th century, while most of the Balkan peoples were ruled by foreign powers, those Slavs seeking liberation from foreign domination and unification with other Slavs harnessed "Slavic" national identity to combine and fortify political strength. In the early years of Yugoslav unification and nation-building, from 1918 to 1940, the Yugoslavs grappled with the national question, but oppressive nationalist policies splintered ethnic groups, and the country experienced several incidences of genocidal nationalism. Finally, during the socialist period, from 1945 until the final disintegration of Yugoslavia beginning in the late 1980's, the Communist League of Yugoslavia confronted and attempted to "resolve" the national question by declaring the equality of all languages, cultures and ethnic groups and proclaiming "Brotherhood and Unity" of all socialist members of Yugoslavia.

What is interesting about Yugoslavia's attempts to address the na-

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tional question is that officials and policymakers used the educational arena as a transmitter of national identity. They formulated language and nationality policies and used educational media and institutions as forums to either fuel or mediate nationalist conflict. Through each of the historical periods of Yugoslav nation-building, nationality policy in education mirrored broader social and political objectives and was manipulated to either establish commonalities between ethnic groups or to underscore differences.

National movements, Slavic unity and the "Yugoslav Idea"

In the 19th century, pre-Yugoslavia years, officials and intellectuals mobilized Slavic identity by fostering linguistic and cultural links in an effort to energize and organize Slavic ethnic groups. At this time, the Habsburg Empire ruled the majority of Croats and the Slovenes, and the Ottomans administered Serbia.

Serbia achieved full autonomy from the Turks in 1830, and under the reigns of Milos (1815-1838) and Karadjordjevic (1842-1858), Serbian officials developed state institutions and defined the Serbian national program. Stefanovic Karadzic, a Serbian scholar, compiled the first modern Serbian grammar and dictionary at this time; one of his greatest contributions was the standardization of the Serbian language. Karadzic established the stokavian vernacular dialect as a language standard, and since a majority of Croats also spoke this dialect, this standard served to forge a common linguistic bond between the two peoples¹.

Though these aspects of Karadzic's work brought Serbs and Croats together, others had the opposite effect. For example, Serbs and Croats alike shared the view that a nation was definable by its language. Karadzic argued, in an article in 1836 entitled, "Serbs All and Everywhere", that all South Slavs who spoke stokavian were Serbs. The implication of this argument was that lands where stokavian was spoken—Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Istria, Bosnia, Hercegovina and Vojvodina—belonged to Serbia. Serbian intellectuals and officials incorporated Karadzic's views into all Serbian grammar, geography, history and

1. Charles Jelavich, *South Slav Nationalisms - Textbooks and Yugoslav Union Before 1914* (Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1990), 7.

literature textbooks², which helped to institutionalize Serbian national identity in the educational arena but which also served as an immutable point of contention in future relations between the Serbs and other ethnic groups.

In the same period that Serbia won her autonomy, Croatian leaders had to fight to preserve their autonomous rights in the Habsburg empire. A new generation took over leadership of the Croatian national cause, however, and the Croatian scholar, Ljudevit Gaj, was instrumental in guiding this new generation. Gaj's name became synonymous with the "Illyrian" movement; as his studies led him to believe that all of the Balkan Slavs, Bulgarians, Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes alike, were descendants of a single race, the Illyrians (the Serbs and the Slovenes found little appeal in this idea). Like the Serbs, Gaj also held the view that a nation was definable by its language, and he persuaded Croatian intellectuals to adopt stokavian as a standard language in order to achieve linguistic conformity among the Balkan Slavs.

What is significant about Gaj's views is that they provided a bridge for closer cooperation between the Croats and the Serbs, a tie which began with linguistic union and which in time, it was hoped, would lead to political union. To further this goal, Gaj enunciated that every educated Croat should learn the Cyrillic alphabet in order to read the works of Serbian writers³. His concepts laid the basis for the unitarist idea of a single Yugoslav people or nation, and they also raised the important issue of whether the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were three separate Slavic peoples or one nation with three names.

Gaj's ideas were important in developing Croatian national consciousness, and the Illyrian idea continued to play a role in the development of a national Croatian culture. In Croatian lands under the Habsburgs, textbooks illuminated the idea of a common language of the Serbs and Croats, and in Croatian schools Croatian and Serbian students were encouraged to respect each other's religions, traditions and cultures⁴, a policy which was designed to unify the two ethnic groups politically and

2. *Ibid.*, 7.

3. The Serbians used the Cyrillic alphabet for their written language; the Croats until this time used only the Latin alphabet.

4. Charles Jelavich, *South Slav Nationalisms - Textbooks and Yugoslav Union Before 1914* (Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1990), 8-9.

culturally.

When Serbian and Croatian authorities adopted the Literary Agreement of 1850, they secured an additional milestone in Serb-Croat language and literary relations. At this time, a number of prominent Croatian and Serbian scholars agreed that the ijekavian variant of the stokavian dialect should be adopted as the literary language of both Serbia and Croatia; this agreement received official sanction from the Serbian government in 1868 and from Croatian authorities in 1892. The Serbian variant, ekavian, was preferred by many Serbs at this time, but stokavian nevertheless in one or another of its forms was to be the official literary language of both Serbs and Croats⁵.

Serbian and Croatian authorities in this instance devised language and literary commonalities as a means of unifying their respective nationality groups, and their hope was that through cultural and scholarly material the two groups would forge a Slavic national identity. The issue of which variant would prevail in literary usage and other political, social and cultural realms was not in actuality resolved in this agreement, however; conflict over language variant preference resurfaced continuously between the Serbs and Croats throughout their future relations.

Serbia achieved full independence from Turkey in 1878, and in the *Nagodba* or Compromise of 1868, Hungarian officials granted Croatia administrative autonomy and full control over her own educational system⁶. Croatia subsequently passed the Education Law of 1874 which removed the control that the Catholic Church exercised over schools and placed educational institutions under the jurisdiction of Croatian state authorities. The Education Law and this new secularization of education also meant that both Serbs and Croats in Croatia would use the same textbooks; Croatian authorities calculated this political move with the hope that Serbian children, through their exposure to Croatian history and geography textbooks, would grow to become loyal citizens of Croatia and resist attraction by the Serbian kingdom⁷.

This was a period of time, however, when many nationalist Serbian authorities harbored goals of creating a South Slav state through Serbian

5. *Ibid.*, 10.

6. *Ibid.*, 12-13.

7. *Ibid.*, 14.

acquisition and administration of several Balkan states, including Bosnia, Hercegovina and Macedonia. Simultaneously, however, strong nationalist Croatian convictions revealed Croatian beliefs that all South Slav lands were of Croatian nationality and domain. Thus, Croatia's calculated passage of the 1874 education law was unsettling to nationalist Serbs in the Habsburg monarchy, and many of these Serbs demanded its suspension for Serbian students⁸. Naturally, this discontent and protest aroused suspicions and animosity between Croats and Serbs.

Slavic national identity reached a new peak between 1878 and 1903. In 1878, the Habsburgs occupied Bosnia and Hercegovina, a move which generated much bitterness among the Serbs, who looked upon these lands as being rightfully theirs. Many Croats supported the occupation, however, since they hoped that sometime in the future the provinces would be joined with what were then Croatian lands to form a greater Croatian state; this possibility would also ensure Croatia's advantage over the Serbs for the leadership of the South Slav movement. Naturally, the differing reactions shared by the Serbs and Croats to the Bosnia occupation sharpened suspicions and worsened relations between them⁹.

When Serbia battled in 1885 over the future of Macedonia, the Serbian leadership, inspired by recent independence and new national programs, worked to foster Serbian patriotic sentiments through the educational system. It became increasingly apparent that Croatian national aspirations were in direct conflict with those of the Serbs, and in 1902 an article depicting this conflict appeared in *Srpski knjizevni glasnik*, the leading literary periodical in Belgrade. Written by Nikola Stojanovic and entitled, "Serbs and Croats", the author glorified Serbian past achievements and restated earlier Serbian denunciations of the Croats as tools of the Serb's enemies (the Catholic church, the Hungarians and the Habsburg government).

Croats, in reaction to this article, rose in protest within and outside of Serbia, assaulted Serbs, vandalized their stores and generally harassed them. Thus, this 1902 scholarly article reflected broader Serbian efforts to incite "Greater Serbian" national identity but succeeded in arousing

8. *Ibid.*, 14.

9. *Ibid.*, 15.

Croatian hostility and further embittering relations between the two ethnic groups¹⁰.

The Yugoslav Idea, dampened by heightened Balkan conflicts for a brief period, reemerged from 1903 to 1914, as both Serbia and Croatia experienced leadership changes. In addition, new youth movements in the Balkans became "South Slav" oriented. The Czech professor, Thomas Masaryk, influenced many students, mainly from Croatia, but also from Slovenia and Serbia, to unite behind a Yugoslav program. Though those who favored a unified Yugoslav state remained a small minority, consisting mainly of intellectuals, discussions concerning the possibility of Yugoslav unity became increasingly frequent, and some parties and organizations incorporated this theme into their political programs¹¹.

Officials and intellectuals who employed "Yugoslav-oriented" terminology in educational and cultural works at this time harbored great interest in advancing their respective ethnic groups' and nations' political objectives under the guise of a "Slavic" state. For instance, Illyrianism as espoused by Gaj in Croatia had as its main aim to provide a linguistic basis for the unification of the Croatian lands, and official Serbian goals were to enlarge and enhance the Serbian-administered state, not to create a Yugoslavia with equal rights for all ethnic groups. Slovenia, long included by both Serbs and Croats in a future South Slav state, supported Yugoslav unity only to the extent that all South Slavs in the Habsburg empire should work together; Slovene political parties did not advocate any arrangement which included Serbia¹².

Regardless of their underlying motivations, however, officials of these various ethnic groups manipulated national identity in educational and cultural media and institutions; language and literary policies were the vehicles for this manipulation. In some instances these policies facilitated cultural and political bonds between the various Slavs, but many times ethnocentric features of these policies divided the different ethnic groups. In all cases, events in the educational forum mirrored broader social and political goals which each ethnic group held; at times these goals coincided, other times they collided.

10. *Ibid.*, 16-17.

11. *Ibid.*, 20.

12. *Ibid.*, 30-31.

National identity and nationality policy in early Yugoslavia

Delegates from the “National Council”, which included representatives of Croatian, Serbian and Slovenian political parties, formed The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on December 1, 1918. The union essentially was the consolidation of those South Slav lands from under the disintegrating Habsburg empire with the independent Serbian and Montenegrin kingdoms. The basic national issues that had previously divided the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were not resolved prior to their unification, however, and these problems resurfaced during World War I and festered during the early years of the Yugoslav state.

One point of contention, for instance, was that the terms of the union and the provisions of the 1921 Constitution left the Serbs with dominant political and administrative control¹³. The entire interwar period was marked by destabilizing Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian competition over this political control, conflict over questions of national identity, and unrest among the smaller ethnic groups.

National identity in these early years of Yugoslavia, as manipulated by official leadership, was promoted to unify and legitimize a Serb-dominated Yugoslav nation-state. This meant that legitimization of the new state would be accomplished only by successful enhancement of a particular “Yugoslav” national self-consciousness in which maintenance of cultural expression of various ethnic groups was negated or non-existent.

In fact, guarantee of cultural rights of minorities remained unrealized in this early period of unification. For example, Macedonians^[*] and Bosnian Muslims remained unidentified as separate nations but counted as Serbians, and the Macedonian language became officially a Serbian dialect. In addition, conflicts between the Serbs of Belgrade and all Croats became a serious national problem, and tensions between the two groups persisted throughout the interwar period. In 1931 the Kingdom leadership renamed the country Yugoslavia, and by decree its inhabitants became members of one Yugoslav nation that still did not

13. *Ibid.*, 276.

[* *Editorial Board*: The terms *Macedonia*, *Macedonians*, *Macedonian nationality*, and *Macedonian language*, as used in this study, do not reflect the views of this periodical].

embrace political federalism or cultural autonomy for ethnic groups¹⁴.

Thus, throughout the early years of Yugoslavia, many ethnic, religious and cultural minority problems remained unsettled. Some ethnic groups, i.e., Macedonians and most smaller nationality groups, lacked basic rights such as the right to use respective native language in schools and other cultural institutions¹⁵. Competing ethnocentric and broader political programs played out in educational media and institutions in the 19th century and in these early years of unification ill-prepared the Slavs for peaceful coexistence in a Yugoslav union, and in 1941 World War II and nationalist tensions throughout Eastern Europe plunged the country into bloody ethnic terrorism.

National identity and socialism in Yugoslavia

There can be no doubt that Yugoslav leaders remained painfully aware of the mass killings that took place within their country during World War II as a result of ethnically motivated hatred. At the conclusion of the war, Marsal Tito launched an appeal to the Yugoslav nation: "Now we must win another great victory;... We must strengthen brotherhood and unity still further, so that no power can ever again destroy it"¹⁶. Tito's appeal for "Brotherhood and Unity" reflected the Yugoslav leadership's recognition of the need to unify the various nationalities in the country under one banner, "socialism", so as to insure the integrity of Yugoslav socialism and to fortify the Yugoslav state against destabilizing elements of ethnic nationalism.

By many Marxist accounts, however, the relationship between socialism and national identity was problematic, and so finding a solution to the national question in Yugoslavia was crucial to ensuring the success of socialism in this country. The earliest Marxist formulations of the nationality question posited that nationalism was a product of capital-

14. Carole Rogel, "Edvard Kardelj's Nationality Theory and Yugoslav Socialism", *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* XII, 2 (1985) 346-347.

15. Trivo Indjic, "Affirmative Action: The Yugoslav Case", In *International Perspectives on Affirmative Action* (Bellagio Conference, August 16-20, 1982, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, paper published May, 1984), 203.

16. Daniel A. Dorotich, "Ethnic Diversity and National Unity in Yugoslav Education: the Socialist Province of Vojvodina", *Compare* 8, 1 (1978) 88.

ism and was in opposition to the theme of socialist unification of the working class. Marx himself dismissed the national question, however, as an issue which would resolve itself following the socialist revolution.

Lenin initiated the first stage of reconciliation between Marxism and nationalism when he recognized that the national aspirations of oppressed nationalities were legitimate and could be utilized by revolutionary movements seeking overthrow of capitalist regimes. In communist states, therefore, the recognition of rights of oppressed nationalities resulted in legitimization of those expressions of national culture, as long as they did not violate the "universalistic spirit of Marxist ideology". This communist doctrine also accepted the nation-state as the "institutional mechanism for expediting the goals of revolution", a notion which Stalin promoted with the goal of "building socialism in one country"¹⁷.

Communist leaders in Yugoslavia, however, in conceptualizing the relationship between nationalism and communism, were also influenced by Stalin and by the Austro-Marxists, including Karl Renner and Otto Bauer. The Austro-Marxists were inspired to articulate a political program dealing with the national question because they faced their own instability problems in the multinational Habsburg empire. These Marxists considered nationality to be a matter of folk culture and language and believed in offering cultural autonomy while withholding administrative and political autonomy (administrative and political autonomy, they felt, were potentially disintegrative concessions)¹⁸. Stalin's work, "Marxism and the National Question" (1913) warned, however, that even cultural autonomism was inherently reactionary. Stalin did offer as the ideal solution a system of regional or territorial autonomy which would permit nationalities to enjoy self-administration and self-determination without obstructing the future unification of all nations¹⁹.

Apart from the influence of these early Marxists, Yugoslav nationality policy developed also as a pragmatic response to their own local historical and political realities and conditions. Yugoslavia evolved into a

17. Paul Shoup, "National Communism in Eastern Europe Revisited", *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* XVI, 1-2 (1989) 254-255.

18. Sabrina P. Ramet, *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia, 1962-1991* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1992), 43.

19. *Ibid.*, 44.

multinational state with a federal structure in which the republic and provincial Communist parties were quite powerful and identified mainly with the interests of their respective republics and nationalities. In addition, the Yugoslav federal government had become increasingly dependent on both the political and financial support of the republican and provincial governments. Thus, the Yugoslavs realized that they trod a delicate line between nationalism and communism, and between loyalty to the regime and loyalty to regional and local traditions and interests²⁰. In short, they recognized that without the legitimacy and loyalty afforded by the various nations and ethnic groups, the socialist regime would not survive.

In the post-Stalinist period in Yugoslavia, therefore, Communist officials encouraged open and frank discussion of the nationality question. In addition, federal officials organized the decentralized administrative system largely by nationality; their goal in designing this political structure was to retain language and cultural differences while limiting national identity conflict. This practical solution to the nationality problem was also intended to define language rights as an area in which nationality rights could be pressed.

The Yugoslavs did not make the traditional Marxist argument that the success of the socialist revolution would be marked by an end to nationality differences. In Yugoslav Marxist theory, nationality was protected by and expressed in the socialist state. The Constitution of 1946 declared Yugoslavia to be a federal republic from which all forms of ethnic, religious or other discrimination would be excluded. The period following these declarations witnessed an "ethnic rebirth" of all Yugoslav peoples, as schools were removed from church jurisdictions and all national languages were made equal before the law²¹.

Yugoslav officials made provisions to the Constitution in 1953 that further guaranteed the right of free cultural expression of all nationality groups. Further, in 1957, Edvard Kardelj, a Slovene scholar and chief Yugoslav theoretician, urged the Yugoslav public to have confidence in the system of socialist self-management (established in the early 1950's)

20. Paul Shoup, "National Communism in Eastern Europe Revisited", *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* XVI, 1-2 (1989) 257-258.

21. Carole Rogel, "Edvard Kardelj's Nationality Theory and Yugoslav Socialism", *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* XII, 2 (1985) 343-344.

as one way to prevent recurrence of interwar ethnic problems. According to the self-management model, political, economic and cultural policies formulated and implemented democratically at the local level would safeguard national and nationality interests²².

In 1958, Kardelj also issued a theoretical justification for the Yugoslav brand of Communism, in which he argued that local differences must determine the path of socialist development. This argument applied to the relationship between Yugoslavia and Russia and to that among the Yugoslav republics. Limits to this policy, however, included concerns about the growth of ethnically nationalist sentiments. These concerns thus limited nationality rights to the right to full use of ethnic groups' language and cultural expression as protected and promoted by official policy while prohibiting attempts to gain further national rights (i.e., independence)²³.

The Federal Constitution of 1974 and the republic and provincial constitutions of the same year defined the civil rights and freedoms of the various nationalities more precisely²⁴. "Nations" now referred to the more numerous ethnic groups or national majorities, including Serbs, Slovenes, Macedonians, Croats, Muslims, Montenegrins. "Nationality" replaced "national minority" (officials viewed the term "minority" as being derogatory). "Ethnic group" became the third nationality category, though its precise differentiation from the first two categories is not clear. In addition, the only difference in rights guaranteed to the three groups or categories is that nationalities and ethnic groups could not, like nations, form separate states²⁵. Article 170 of the federal Constitution further guaranteed free expression of belonging to a nation or nationality as well as free expression of each ethnic culture including the freedom to use respective language and script in educational and cultural institutions.

The Federal and republican constitutions additionally stated that officials would "provide the means" to ensure and facilitate full equality of

22. *Ibid.*, 349-350.

23. *Ibid.*, 352.

24. Trivo Indjic, "Affirmative Action: The Yugoslav Case", In *International Perspectives on Affirmative Action* (Bellagio Conference, August 16-20, 1982, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, paper published May, 1984), 204.

25. *Ibid.*, 205.

all ethnic groups and cultures; constitutional clauses guaranteed this provision by declaring that members of all nations, nationalities and ethnic groups had the right to school instruction conducted in their own languages or mother tongues. The republics typically additionally guaranteed provision for the development of schooling, press and other public information media and cultural-educational activities of all nationalities. This clause has been interpreted as a commitment by the republics to provide additional funds required for bilingual schools, though implementation of this commitment took place only when required by provisions of communal statutes²⁶.

Thus, language and nationality policy in Yugoslavia was formulated mainly at the federal level, implemented through the formation of more detailed policy at the republic level, which was implemented through the formation of even more detailed policy at the communal level²⁷. Despite political and legal guarantees of full equality of ethnic groups, however, the troublesome national question was mitigated to a great extent but never solved.

Legally no ethnic group could express ethnocentric national identity in the political realm, but national expression was allowed in all cultural domains, including education. Therefore, it was in the cultural and educational arenas that regional ethnic groups sought to enhance their ethnic preeminence in multinational Yugoslavia.

For example, in 1954, representatives of the Croats, Serbs and Montenegrins signed an agreement in Novi Sad which affirmed that the spoken language of Serbs, Croats and Montenegrins was one language with a uniform literary standard. The Novi Sad agreement further declared that the standard language had two equally acceptable pronunciations, ijekavian and ekavian and that the language could be represented either in Latin or in Cyrillic. Serbs and Croats, the agreement continued, should learn both alphabets, to be taught and used in educational institutions and media²⁸.

The Novi Sad agreement, however, failed to resolve matters of lan-

26. James W. Tollefson, "The Language Planning Process and Language Rights in Yugoslavia", *Language Problems and Language Planning* 4, 2 (Summer, 1980) 146.

27. *Ibid.*, 142.

28. Thomas F. Magner, "Language and Nationalism in Yugoslavia", *Canadian Slavic Studies* 1, 3 (Fall, 1967) 336.

guage policy among the Serbs and Croats²⁹; the issue of using two variants of the language was a lasting point of Serb-Croat contention. The importance of this difference was both sociological and political —the adamant use by each group of a particular variant caused aggrievement to the other group³⁰. For instance, the desire of the Croats to maintain and reinforce the western variant struck the Serbs as parochial and potentially separatist, while the Croats viewed Serbian efforts to spread their eastern variant as arrogant and unitarist. In addition, since Belgrade was the capital of Yugoslavia and the seat of various government bodies and agencies, Serbia had great influence in spreading eastern lexical forms and ekavian variants through the country³¹.

Tensions due to the language controversy reached a pitch in March of 1967 with the publication in Zagreb newspapers of a document entitled, “A Declaration about the Name and Position of the Croatian Literary Language”. Signed by representatives of 18 Croatian literary and academic organizations, the Declaration made two proposals: that Croatian be officially designated as a separate “literary language” and that only this “Croatian literary language” be used in official dealings with the Croatian population. The Declaration further suggested that officials and teachers be constrained to use the Serbian literary language for Serbs and the Croatian literary language for Croats, though such a policy was difficult to implement due to the mixed variety of populations in Bosnia and Croatia.

Thus, the “language issue served as a surrogate for a constellation of economic and political tensions between Croats and Serbs”. The publication of the 1967 Declaration evoked explosions throughout Yugoslavia, and the movers of the Declaration were denounced by Communist party officials and expelled from the Party³².

Due to the legal provisions in Yugoslavia for nationality groups’ free cultural expression, many historical injustices were corrected, however. For example, in 1944, officials in Macedonia claimed Macedonian as their official language, and they published a dictionary of the Macedonian language in 1961 along with a history of the Macedonian

29. *Ibid.*, 337.

30. *Ibid.*, 342.

31. *Ibid.*, 344-345.

32. *Ibid.*, 345-346.

people³³. In addition, Yugoslavia witnessed several other examples of rebirth of national minorities, including the Albanians in Kosovo. These rebirths served to test the limits of Yugoslav nationality policy, however, by producing disruptive ethnic nationalism³⁴.

For example, the Albanians in the autonomous province of Kosovo (who represent about 80 % of the total population of the province) are the poorest and second smallest population in the former Yugoslavia. Further, this province lies completely within the republic of Serbia. The early centrist Yugoslav government shut down all Albanian-language schools in 1918, and officials adopted a policy of discouraging all public education for Albanians. In addition, they seized most of the Albanian people's land and turned it over mainly to the Serbs in the region³⁵.

Belgrade's policy towards Kosovo remained restrictive until July, 1966, after which federal policy became more accommodating toward Albanian ethnic cultural and political interests. Following violent nationalist demonstrations in Kosovo in late 1968, the introduction of constitutional changes affecting the Albanians offered several beneficial concessions, including the establishment of an independent university in Pristina, Kosovo³⁶. The University of Pristina offered all instruction in the Albanian language with corresponding instruction in Serbo-Croatian for Serbian students and others. University and local officials also stimulated the enrollment of Albanian students by giving their admissions applications' preference, textbooks printed in the Albanian language were less expensive than those in Serbo-Croatian, and local officials granted Albanian literary journals greater subsidies per number of copies published than Serbian or Turkish journals³⁷.

Despite preferential treatment to Albanians in Kosovo, however, from 1968 on, Yugoslavia experienced increasing Albanian separatism

33. Trivo Indjic, "Affirmative Action: The Yugoslav Case", In *International Perspectives on Affirmative Action* (Bellagio Conference, August 16-20, 1982, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, paper published May, 1984), 206.

34. *Ibid.*, 207.

35. Pedro Ramet, "Kosovo and the Limits of Yugoslav Socialist Patriotism", *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* XVI, 1-2 (1989) 229.

36. *Ibid.*, 230.

37. Trivo Indjic, "Affirmative Action: The Yugoslav Case", In *International Perspectives on Affirmative Action* (Bellagio Conference, August 16-20, 1982, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, paper published May, 1984), 209.

and ethnically nationalist sentiment. In addition, the rebirth of Albanian nationalism in Kosovo not only destabilized the region, special treatment for Albanians may have led to new discriminations against the Serbs and other minorities in Kosovo³⁸. Further, when federal and Serbian republican officials allowed the Kosovars to complete education in their own language, many refused to learn other languages, including Serbo-Croatian. This intransigence essentially locked the Kosovars into a "self-made economic ghetto", as they were ill-prepared to assimilate or work in the more prosperous areas of Serbia or the other republics³⁹.

Finally, in June, 1987, the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia held a two-day session devoted to Kosovo and passed a resolution calling for measures to restore law and order in the region. In October, 1987, officials from the republic of Serbia determined that organized irredentist activity was out of control in Kosovo and public security was undermined. Federal and Serbian government officials subsequently placed Kosovo's security under federal control and authorized a dispatch of militia from the Federal Secretariat of Internal Affairs⁴⁰. Since that time, Serbian authorities have adopted a hard line policy against the Albanians in Kosovo and have suspended most of their political, cultural and educational rights.

The official Communist Party line in Yugoslavia regarding Kosovo was that Albanian nationalism was dangerous because it threatened the territorial integrity and cohesion of the Yugoslav federal state⁴¹. Thus, though the foundation of Yugoslav nationality policy was language and cultural rights, these rights were explicitly and intentionally separated from political nationality rights and were to be exercised in the educational and cultural spheres, not in the political. Articles 170 and 203 of the 1974 federal Constitution qualified and limited nationality guarantees and freedoms; they stated that propagandizing or imposing of national inequality as well as any incitement to nation, racial or religious

38. *Ibid.*, 210.

39. Bogdan Denitch, "Yugoslavia: The Limits of Reform". *Dissent* 36, 1 (Winter, 1989) 84.

40. Pedro Ramet, "Kosovo and the Limits of Yugoslav Socialist Patriotism", *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* XVI, 1-2 (1989) 241.

41. *Ibid.*, 240.

hatred and intolerance was unconstitutional⁴².

The purpose of the separation of cultural and political rights was to promote and protect cultural expression of ethnic groups while restricting assertion of broader political rights⁴³. The educational arena provided a forum for this exercise of language and cultural rights, while ethnically motivated demands made outside this realm were forbidden.

Conclusions

Before formal Yugoslav unification, political officials representing various ethnic groups used the educational arena as a forum to invoke national identity consciousness, sometimes a "Slavic" or "Yugoslav" consciousness and sometimes a more narrow and ethnocentric consciousness. They attempted to realize these aims by developing language, literary and cultural links which served as vehicles for national identity development.

For instance, when elites' political goals included Slavic unification, national identity was "Slavic" oriented, and educational policies reflected attempts to form linkages and bond Slavic ethnic groups. In the early years of Yugoslav union, nationality rights became secondary to Yugoslav national identity and Serbian domination, and the implications of these political objectives were reflected in educational institutions as well, as Yugoslav authorities stripped many ethnic groups of their linguistic and cultural rights.

The socialist era of Yugoslavia offered all ethnic groups cultural equality, and Yugoslav authorities intended national identity to be a blend of "Yugoslav" identity within a socialist state while preserving the national culture of all groups through linguistic and cultural rights. These policies delineated schools as the principle arena for maximization of cultural rights, but the political arena was *not* to be the arena for voicing ethnic or cultural differences.

Thus, larger political objectives throughout these time periods were

42. Trivo Indjic, "Affirmative Action: The Yugoslav Case", In *International Perspectives on Affirmative Action* (Bellagio Conference, August 16-20, 1982, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, paper published May, 1984), 205.

43. James W. Tollefson, "The Language Planning Process and Language Rights in Yugoslavia", *Language Problems and Language Planning* 4, 2 (Summer, 1980) 143.

not simply reflected or mirrored in educational institutions. Analysis of the historical context of the former Yugoslavia reveals that these objectives were consciously manipulated through educational institutions, as elites used the educational arena as a transmitter of ethnic and broader national identities. This manipulation rendered the national question problematic, however, as both political and educational policies cultivated and nourished destabilizing and long-lasting political conflict. Attempts to foster and exploit national identity through the educational sphere from the earliest “Yugoslav Idea” failed to produce lasting resolutions that would satisfy the interests of all ethnic groups, and the final resolution materialized in the late 1980’s when ethnocentric nationalist tensions ripped Yugoslavia apart.

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