# POSTMODERN PEDAGOGY

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**Abstract:**
   The text deals with the reflections on the relation between postmodernism and pedagogy, considering the ways postmodernism has influenced pedagogic currents. The basic characteristics of postmodernism have been analysed, especially those significant for pedagogy. The relation between the criticisms of pedagogy of modern age and the main objections against such pedagogy has been considered, i.e. the differences between the pedagogy of modernism and the pedagogy of postmodernism. Being considered one of the main features of postmodernism, pluralism has significantly influenced pedagogy; as a consequence, we are facing the issue of the influence of postmodern perspectives on curriculum, with an emphasis put on the relation between philosophy and pedagogy in postmodernism. What has been noticed for pedagogy is that it has been marked by the demand for pragmatism, diminishing its scientific character and pushing it away from philosophy. Pedagogy has been expected to be used as a practical science in social-political purposes, attributing seemingly scientific determination to it. Deprived from philosophy, it has lost its scientific character and real purpose; this has been further supported by the new function of knowledge in postmodernism. Postmodern thinking raises new challenges to pedagogy and makes it express stronger inclinations towards the search for new visions and the refinement of human existence (towards better and more humane society) in order to encourage human intellectual potentials and decrease aggression, violence and poverty, having in mind that the age of postmodernism has been marked by the alarming value system shift from philosophical establishment of basic philosophical issues of existence towards narrow definition of economic interests, whose social development on the whole has been narrowed down to economic rationality, reflected in profit.

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*The consequences refer to cynicism, despair, moral indifference and some kind ofmyoptic directedness. Knowledge has gained a character of goods, knowledge acquisition is separated from education, individualism is ruling the scene, moral aspects of education have been neglected. The ethics of responsibility of globalization has been bypassed… The first step to be made in the right direction is a turn to the philosophy of education not even yet discernable in Serbia.*

**Key words:** *pedagogy, postmodernism, philosophy of education, pluralism.*

Formulating the theme I have faced a great dilemma, in spite of the fact that I have been dealing with the issues of pedagogy and postmodernism for more than a decade now. I had doubts whether the title of the paper to be *Pedagogy in Postmodernism*, or, for example *Postmodern Pedagogy* or *Postmodernism and Pedagogy* or vice versa. Nevertheless, being not up to explicate the reasons for each of the stated possible titles and not having strong arguments in favour of any, I have made up my mind for this title, starting from the recognizable and acknowledged features of postmodernism nowadays directly or indirectly influencing pedagogy, marking it down as being neither less than a science of education, nor, according to my modest assessment, special pedagogy. I will state only some of the characteristics of postmodernism making this influence recognizable. My impression is that there is a significant question of postmodern worldview in my looking back to the title of the paper. As it very name says, postmodernism is a response, i.e. a reaction to modernism. While modern age believed that science was leading us on its road to progress, postmodernism opens to dispute the very issue of efforts towards improvement of life in modernism, raising a question whether our lives are really better due to the progress of technique and technology. Postmodernism has observed the culmination of modernism in the $20^{th}$ century through what had been brought about by the powers like totalitarianism, technocracy, consumerism and modern war and the conclusion is that this can be considered from the angle of efficacy and the improvement of people's lives, but it can also bee seen from the angle of dehumanizing, mechanical influence on our lives. Holocaust was efficient, technically, coldly rational; the reaction of postmodernism is that there must be a better way to think about life and things.

There is another related question: what about centuries old issues of truth and knowledge. A postmodernist could say: "The truth is what people agree about" or "The truth is what works" or "There is no Truth, but a number of small *truths* wondering around" Postmodernists are inclined to reject an

idealized view on the Truth inherited from the ancient times and existing nowadays and to replace it by a dynamic, changing truth which depends on the time, space and perspective. Instead of searching for unchangeable and unchanging truth, they strive for celebration of the dynamic diversity of life.

Basic characteristics of postmodern thinking, usually expressed by the majority of authors (Digest, Hlynka i Yeaman 1992) could be paraphrased and would refer to the following: pluralism of perspectives, meanings, methods, values – everything! search for ambiguous meanings and the respect for them as well as for alternative interpretations, many of which are ironic and unintentional; criticism or negative attitude towards Grand narrations which should explicate everything. This refers to great scientific theories, as well as the myths in our religions, nations, cultures and professions which are to explain why things are as they are; the acknowledgement that – having in mind that there is a pluralism of perspectives and ways of gaining knowledge – there are also multiple truths.[2]

Within the field of education the reception and perception of what is called postmodernism varies largely between countries such as USA, France or Germany (Beck, 1993). In France, where a great deal of significant authors like Lyotard (1989, 1992, 1993), Baudrillard (1983, 1990, 1991) or Derrida (1978, 1988) have given main inputs for this discussion, the word "postmodernism" is not popular even in the case of these philosophers. Actually, there might be a good reason for not using the vague term used in different ways both in various disciplines and within the same disciplines (Welsch, 1988). In Germany, philosophers of education often refer to the work of Lyotard (1993) and his characterizations of postmodernism as an insight into the process of delegitimization of the so called "meta-narrations" (Becks, 1993). In the United States of America, it seems to be the case that postmodernism is seen as a broader and more general attack to the concepts like causality, determinism, egalitarianism, humanism, liberal democracy, objectivity, rationality or a "sovereign" subject (Rosenau, 1992).

It seems important to mention that there are authors who do not see postmodernism as anti-modernism; the rather think of postmodernism as a state radicalizing the features of modernism. From this perspective, a difference should be made between "anti-modern postmodernism" and "pro-

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[2]The same authors (ironically!) suggest four easy steps to become a postmodernist:
Observe concepts, ideas and objects as texts. Textual meanings are open for interpretation.
Look for binary opposites in all texts. Some common opposites are good/wrong, progress/tradition, science/myth, love/hatred, man/woman, truth/fiction.
"Deconstruct" the text showing that the opposites are not always true.
Identify the texts that are not present, the groups which are not represented and all the slips and shortcomings, either intentional or not, yet significant.

modern postmodernism". Welsh (1988) describes postmodernism in the following way: radicalized pluralism, pluralism of concepts like truth, justice or humanity, the state that, on the one hand, offers lots of freedom and on the other, opens even more problematic questions (Welsch 1988: 5-7).

Modern search for unity and continuity both in social dimension and in theory has become problematic, but not impossible – unity and continuity are the main features of modern (metaphysical) dream, but from the perspective of postmodernism, universal claims are no longer non-metaphysically grounded. In other words, postmodernism has been focused on heterogeneity of modern pluralism, while within the project of modernism (Habermas, 1988) radical pluralism was seen as a threat to ideas like solidarity, humanism and emancipation.

Many authors have posed a question referring to possibility to offer an appropriate definition of postmodernism. According to Usher and Edwards (Usher & Edwards 1999: 9) it could be claimed that postmodernism criticizes "faith in rationality and science promising faith in inevitable progress with the purpose of improvement of a man". To put it more precisely, postmodern criticisms have focused on the conceptions of non-relative truth, non-relative rationality and non-relative science (Foster & Herzog, 1994: 3).

We will once again briefly turn to the relation between something called modernism and something else called postmodernism, paying attention to the issue of pluralism. The first association to the previous comments on the context of the test tat comes to mind is a quotation from the book of Usher and Edwards (1994: 2) who give access to a positive "definition" of postmodernism: "It is likely that it is best understood as a state of mind, critical, self-relational attitude and style, a different way of looking and work, rather than a firmly determined body of ideas, as a clearly described position or a set of critical methods and techniques".

## 1. The Issue of Pluralism in Postmodernism

Postmodernist pluralism can be discussed at least at two levels: as a sociological finding (e.g. Gehlen, Berger, Bell, Habermas, Jameson) and/or as a philosophical issue. From sociological point of view, pluralism has nowadays been discussed calling on technological development of information transfer. From this standpoint, both universalism/standardization, on the one hand, and pluralism/invidualization, on the other, are constantly growing (Beck, 1986; Munch, 1991). Munch calls this a paradox which seems to suitably describe the situation of highly developed and extremely complex societies as "dialectic of communication society" (Munch, 1991). The paradox is growing along with the growth of the focus on communication and

information, while relevant knowledge, mere practical knowledge is no longer
based on the "real" experience" but on the second-hand experience.

The notion of a dichotomy of modernism and postmodernism is
problematic – dichotomies give some structure for the discussion but are easily
used for purposes of simplification (Welsch, 1995). Postmodernists themselves
may have cultivated some self-misunderstandings when they viewed their task
as a broad and general attack on pretended (modern) fundaments of social
practice and theory generation – and rigid apologists of the so-called project of
modernity helped to cultivate this view by interpreting postmodernism
exclusively as a threat to what was supposed to be fundamental in both views,
normatively and theoretically. This modern belief is nourished by the use of an
architectural metaphor (Uhle, 1993); society, on the one hand, so it is
implicitly postulated, has to have a moral fundament, a groundwork, let us say
shared values as the base of social interaction and legitimate practice – and
theory, on the other hand, is viewed to ground on shared concepts of
rationality and truth. Postmodernism then is regarded as the attempt to
delegitimate or deconstruct this groundwork with the consequences of ethical
relativism and theoretical chaos – or, in other words, as the establishing of the
imperative: do whatever you like! Maybe it would be helpful to primarily ask
whether there really is a fundament with regard to social practice and theory
generation, whether such a fundament is necessary and, after all, possible.
Referring to the works of Feyerabend, Goodman and Kuhn, Foster and Herzog
(1994) argue that "serious questions" have been raised already some time ago
"about accepted conceptions of a non-relative science, a non-relative truth, a
and a non-relative rationality" – three relevant aspects of the constitution of
such a fundament. Many authors agree that it is neither possible nor necessary
to keep such an idea alive (Fleischaker, 1994; Foster and Herzog, 1994; Usher
and Edwards: 1994). Rational consensus in regard to (normative) values or to
theoretical premises may be desirable, and the belief in the possibility of
rational consensus might even be a necessary feature of any argumentation
situation. However, some embarrassing helplessness has to be stated whenever
rational consensus is supposed to be found: it just does not provide helpful
orientation for any of today's ethical problems or theoretical debates. Some of
the reasons are:

- the complexity of relevant issues (Luhmann, 1990);
- deduction problems (Hoffe, 1979);
- the variety of language games (Wittgenstein, 1993) and heterogeneous
  types of discourses (Lyotard, 1989) and
- the insufficient abilities of real subjects as members of various
  discourse communities, especially when the gap between competence
  and performance with regard to rational and moral motivation

increases as the interests of the discourse participants are concerned (Tugendhat, 1992a, Reichenbach, 1994).

The many-foldedness of social and scientific life and of practical and theoretical interests demands a variety of criteria specific for a given situation, that - which can easily be shown – in most cases turn out to be incompatible (Eilingsfeld, 1994). The decision of which criterion is valid or useful in certain situation can be based either on rational reasoning or on "the power of a better argument" (Habermas, 1991); this mostly depends on the existence of a common, i.e. shared, language game or the type of a common discourse. This power may fully dissolve as different games are played and no common "highest or superior principle" (Welsch: 1998), in other words, no "supreme principle" can be named any more that could possible resolve such conflicts. What Lyotard (1993) calls "meta-narratives" has been actualized in the modern belief that the aim of inter-discursive consensus can be achieved by means of rational argumentation. Such a belief not only requires metaphysical assumptions that – from the postmodernism perspective – cannot be accepted any longer, but also extremely idealistic discourse setting, as well as competences of discourse participants. However, the lack of the "superior judge" does not always lead to mere confusion and chaos; it does not mean that a consensus cannot be reached while different players play different games; it rather means that the agreements reached in such antagonistic situations do not have superior or common rationality for their grounds; it seems that they are reached thanks to a certain type of coordination process (Giegel, 1992). With regard to the relevant theoretical and ethical issues, argumentation often finds itself in a deadlock situation, where opposing arguments turn out to be the right ones, i.e. legitimate ones, but, after all, incompatible.

Nevertheless, decisions have to be made anyway, and this means that the clam for rationality has to be revised in order to coordinate interests, validity claims and social interaction. Social and scientific life is full of agreements that neither ground on shared rationality nor shared values or shared theoretical premises – such fundaments are not necessary for social interactions or for solution processes in disputes – if they were, total chaos would have emerged a long time ago. This interpretation does not imply that discourse rationality would be a matter of negotiation processes, rather, it implies some – let us call it "postmodern" – modesty when raising or testing validity claims of truth or rightness.

Modernity stands for universal validity claims – claims that may not be questionable with regard to their desirability or their noble motivation – but this universality cannot be founded non-metaphysically (Tugendhat, 1992b), nor can it be established within the framework of Habermasian consensus theory that claims to be non-metaphysical.

Modern thinking is based on the dualism of the particular and the general, the dualism of the singularity and the universality; on the other hand, modern thinking is, of course, mainly interested in generality and universality. Particularity, diversity and discontinuity are creating a problem for modern thinking and for the modern belief in discursive universalities (Foster and Herzog, 1994). Modern thinking cannot really handle the special, the singularity. The special and the singularity are only accepted as long as they are able to serve as an example for something more general. Postmodern authors, on the other hand, such as Lyoard (1989), give prominence to the singularity, to things and situations that are not comparable, maybe not even understandable. it is a certain ethical attitude to not always trying to press the special and incommensurable into the modern schemes of the one and only truth or one and only morality.

### The Influence of Postmodern Pluralism on Pedagogy

At this point the discussion becomes relevant for the relation between pedagogy and postmodernism. Due to the limited time and space, this part of discussion will focus on the influences postmodernism has had on constructivism, nowadays already considered a generally accepted didactic paradigm. An undisputable link between pedagogy and postmodernism is seen in thinking about postmodernism as an underlying philosophy about the world, and about constructivism as a rather general theory of cognition, suggesting how the mind works and how we know things. The roots of many constructivist beliefs about cognition are traceable to postmodern philosophies which depart from the rationalist, objectivist and technocratic tendencies of "modern" society.

### Table 1 illustrates this relationship between constructivism and postmodern philosophy

| Philosophy | Theory about cognition |
|---|---|
| postmodernism | Constructivism |
| Postmodern philosophy emphasizes contextual construction of meaning and the validity of multiple perspectives. Key ideas include:<br><br>- knowledge is construed by people and groups of people; | - Mind is real. Mental events are worthy of study.<br>- Knowledge is dynamic.<br>- Meaning is construed.<br>- Learning is a natural consequence of |

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|---|---|
| - reality is multi-perspectival;<br>- truth is grounded in everyday life and social relations;<br>- life is a text; thinking is an interpretative act;<br>- facts and values are inseparable;<br>- science and all other human activities are value-laden. | performance.<br>- Reflection/abstraction is critical to expert performance and to becoming an expert.<br>- Teaching is negotiating construction of meaning.<br>- Thinking and perception are inseparable.<br>- Problem solving is central to cognition.<br>- Perception and understanding are also central to cognition. |

In truth, not all constructivists are postmodern in their orientation. In psychology, constructivism originally reflected the thinking of people like Piaget and Vygotsky, who were basically modern in orientation. The current didactic instructional models of Spiro, Jonassen, Bereiter, Resnick, Lesgold, etc – while definitely constructivist – show varying degrees of postmodern influence (although some may be postmodern without realizing it!). It is possible to have a constructivist view of cognition while still retaining a fairly traditional, modern view of science, method and technology.

It seems that it should also be noted here that postmodern thinking can lead to what is considered positive or negative outlooks on life. On the down side, some postmodernist theories can lead to despair, cynicism, moral indifference and a kind of myopic self-centredness. At the same time, other theorists are using postmodern ideas to fashion very positive, hopeful, even spiritual approaches to life (Spretnak, 1991; Tarnas: 1991).

Postmodern plurality as a sociological finding and a philosophical problem has, as is often found in literature, an impact on the curriculum with regard to at least three aspects: (1) the status of knowledge, (2) the teaching method, and (3) the normative dimension.[3]

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- Unlike the project of modernity, postmodernism distrusts the premises of necessary and possible unity and continuity. The abilities to be developed in the postmodern condition are no longer primarily competences of ego-identity (Uhle, 1993), who are able to find consensus on issues at question on the base of rational argumentation by the power of the better argument. In a postmodern world there are many better arguments – but they are incompatible and antagonistic. Postmodern knowledge does not provide universal criteria by the means of supreme principles that can serve t find consensus, but, still, it provides the insight that agreement has to be and can be reached even if the participants remain in dissent concerning fundamental premises. The claims of postmodern curricula become more modest: consensus becomes local.

- The above descriptions of what is called postmodernism do not have obvious consequences on the contents of the curriculum. However, they are of relevance with regard to how knowledge is acquired and dealt with in instruction. Postmodern knowledge is also the knowledge is also the knowledge about the paradox effects of knowledge: the establishing of global standardization and conformity on the one hand and of local heterogeneity and individualization on the other hand. This paradox is due to the structure of communicative action: communication is enculturating the subject and, at the same time, important for its individuation. As communication and information possibilities get faster and more connected, the tendencies of gaining nothing but superficial and purely pragmatic knowledge also increases. This is a potential problem for the functioning of democracy if democracy is not just reduced to the majority rule. Teaching knowledge in a postmodern world means to be sensitive about the functions and quality of knowledge. The tendency to teach more and more knowledge that is disconnected from the world in which the learner lives – Husserl called it *Lebenswelt* – may be due to the scientific orientation of teaching and the problematic plurality of the scientific world. To start with the lived world and actual experiences of the learners might become a crucial point in school and teaching as the delegitimation process of metanarratives continues and deconstructs the modern belief in the continuity of history and biography, emancipation and humanism. Lived worlds are heterogeneous and pluralistic, but that does not mean that the postmodern individual would live in some permanent identity crisis (as some sociologists like to exaggerate, for instance Berger et al, 1987). Nevertheless, from a pedagogical perspective unity and continuity in the relationship between teacher and learner and with regard to the knowledge transmitted and constructed is an important feature of today's schools (Noddings, 1992). This circumstance requires a stronger inclusion of the lived world, especially because the postmodern condition tends to move school and teaching in the opposite direction.
- On the normative dimension, postmodernism asks for a reflected attitude towards pluralism and tolerance (Zimmerli, 1994). Pluralistic tolerance does not imply that anything is OK and that everything has to be accepted – such a concept is rather unethical and undemocratic. Pluralistic tolerance is nourished by the insight into the heterogeneity of discourse types and language games. So, today's task is to accept this fact and to develop the ability to fight for one's own convictions without using violence, in other words, to learn to live with more or less permanent disagreement and dissent. This seems to be more important than to achieve the high and surely noble ideal of the subject that searches for consensus by rational argumentation – an ideal that just a few achieve, anyway. The development of the ability to endure disagreement and dissent is closely connected to the insight that there is always a lack of information and knowledge, and it is connected to individual, often hurtful experiences of getting stuck with powerless, helpless and lacking arguments. To focus on complexity, discontinuity and differences in school and teaching may lead to this postmodern modesty – a modesty that resigns from the modern belief that there are rational solutions to every problem and that there is some higher sense and meaning in every difference.

## Comparing Modernist and Postmodern Educational Theory

From *The Death of Truth,* retrieved from the site:
www.xenos.org/classes/papers/pomoedu.htm

|  | Modernist Theory | Postmodern Theory |
|---|---|---|
| Knowledge | Educators ideally should be authoritative transmitters of unbiased knowledge | Educators are biased facilitators and co-"constructors" of knowledge. |
| Culture | Culture is something students should learn about, but can also be a barrier to learning. Students from diverse cultures must be trained in a shared language, or medium of communication, before teachers can transmit knowledge to them. | The modernist goal of unifying society results in domination and exploitation, because unity is always based on dominant culture. All cultures are not only of equal value, but also constitute equally important *realities*. Minority students must be "empowered" to fight against Eurocentric enculturation. |
| Values | Traditional modernists believe that educators are legitimate authorities on values, and therefore *they should train students in universal values.* More liberal modernists argue that *education should be "values-neutral."* Teachers help students with "values clarification"--deciding what values each individual student will hold. Values can, and should be separated from facts. The most important values are *rationality and progress.* | Education should help *students construct diverse and personally useful values in the context of their cultures.* Values are considered *useful for a given culture*, not *true* or *right* in any universal sense. Since teachers cannot avoid teaching their own values, it's okay for teachers to openly promote their values and social agendas in the classroom. Important values to teach include striving for diversity, tolerance, freedom, creativity, emotions and intuition. |
| Human Nature | Modernists generally *believe in a stable, inherent self that can be objectively known.* In addition, since humans are thought to have a stable essential nature, IQ tests, | Students have no "true self" or innate essence. Rather, selves are social constructs. Postmodern educators believe *self-esteem is a pre-condition for learning.* They view education |

| | and other similar "objective tests", can be used to discover students' innate intelligence. By giving them mastery over subject matter, teachers enhance students' self-esteem. Education helps individuals discover their identities. Individuals and society progress by learning and applying objective knowledge. | as a type of therapy. Education helps individuals construct their identities rather than discover them. Individuals and society progress when people are empowered to attain their own chosen goals. |
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**The Influence of Postmodern Perspectives on the Curriculum**

Education is a normative enterprise and has two major pedagogical resources: teaching and the curriculum. The purpose of any curriculum used by school is the achievement of certain desired end states and virtues by their students. Such desired end states are derived from societal values and skills deemed necessary for the functioning of society. On the level of educational theory one can talk of "curricular ideologies", referring to the value premises from which practical educational decisions are made. Curricular ideologies are mainly the consequences of preferred *Weltanschauungen* – views of the world – and as such, at least in democratic and pluralistic societies, are various and heterogeneous ( F. Oser, R. Reichenbach i J. C. Walker , 1999*)*.

The debate is characterised by a rather poorly and vaguely defined use of the terms "modern" and "postmodern" and is often conducted in quite emotional ways. The discourse on postmodernism in education began only a decade ago and is rather abstract. It remains unclear what influence postmodern concepts and claims of delegitimation have on education – both teaching and the curriculum. The reasons for this unsatisfying situation may be the vague concepts of some postmodernists and/or the difficulty of approaching a fruitful discussion between modernists and postmodernists. With respect to this lack of clarity and understanding it is philosophically legitimate and necessary to continue this discussion while trying to focus on specific fields of application. From a long-term perspective, the impact of this discussion on the curriculum is of great importance.

We will briefly deal with some of the ideas presented as contributions to an international symposium designed to reflect the influences of modern and postmodern conceptions of knowledge on the curriculum and on curricular ideologies. The contributions represent various views on the general topic and

specific fields of application; thus some of the ideas will be good incentives for further reflection and dealing with the issue on the meanings and the ways of postmodern pluralism; at the same time, efforts will be made at considering its reaches and the influence it has on the curriculum. Only some ideas of pluralisation of the curriculum in the sphere of morality will be outlined in this text. Denis Phillips criticizes some papers from the perspective of contemporary analytic philosophy, drawing on his long-standing interest in the validity of postmodern criticism of modern education thought and practice.

### Moral  Education Curriculum and Postmodern Pluralism

Discussing in particular the implications of Heideggerian and Gadamerian hermeneutics for multicultural education, Deborah Kerdeman comments on post-structuralism, de-constructionism, radical hermeneutics and postmodernism. She argues that despite important differences, all share the views that interpretation consists in a trembling interplay of signs and tests that encompasses both the interpreter and that which is interpreted. Caught within the unceasing dialectic, the modern subject becomes deconstructed and displaced. Consciousness, self, rationality dissolve as postmodernism revels in life's vexing ambiguities.

This orientation shares much with the hermeneutics of Martin Heidegger. As the philosopher John Caputo tells us, postmodernism represents less a departure from Heideggerian hermeneutics than a "radicalization" of "its innermost direction and momentum". Both regard life as difficult and troubled and "would keep a watchful eye for the ruptures and the breaks and the irregularities in existence". In two important respects, however, postmodernism differs from Heidegger's hermeneutics. While memory and pre-understanding are central for Heidegger, they have no place in postmodernism. Moreover, with the radicalisation of hermeneutics, the capacity for reflection utterly evaporates.

Concentrating on the curriculum of moral education, Fritz Oser notes that extreme postmodernists conclude that there are good reasons to distrust modernity's moral claims. He points out that postmodernism, especially when the term "post-modernist" is used rather fuzzily, is often regarded as a threat to moral understanding and universal conceptions of morality. Moderate postmodernists, among many others, argue that universal moral claims are idealistic, even fictional, but that the ideas of ethics and justice are not disclaimable. Both views are products of philosophical reflection on the possibility and necessity of morality.  Philosophical and ethical reflections do, in fact, influence the development and evaluation of curricula on moral education. It is important for us that many authors now consider that this influence is often overestimated and, consequently, researchers working on

curricula of moral education may commit deduction fallacies. Thus, it is considered that moral education does not emerge from philosophical reflection, but from the fact of education.

Oser discusses the impact of postmodern plurality and diversity of norms and values on the curriculum of moral education, showing that many concepts of moral education are, in fact, jeopardized by the characteristics of the postmodern world. He then outlines necessary characteristics of any curriculum of moral education with regard to postmodern *Lebenswelten* (life-worlds), arguing that the equation of pluralism and ethical relativism has to be refuted. The same author also discusses the curricular possibilities of balancing postmodern realities and moral necessities. The main feature of a curriculum of moral education capable of handling postmodern pluralism and relativism is its procedural orientation.

Roland Rechenbach argues that the prevalence of postmodern approaches in teaching and education is not a matter of personal preference, but, rather, follows from the transformation of the meaning of knowledge as a characteristic of the *Zeitgeist*. The concept of an "open future" is an important feature of the postmodern world. Modern beliefs of (necessary) progressive development is society have lost their appeal to many people. In addition, major theoretical frameworks (meta-narratives) that typically stood for the "project of modernity" became less and less compelling. This process of deligitimation is accompanied by radical shifts towards an information society in which the significance of knowledge and information becomes merely pragmatic. Traditional humanistic concepts of education and personality formation on the one hand, and learning and knowledge, on the other hand, have to be reconsidered from a perspective involving both the virtues of modernity and postmodern scepticism with respect to idealistic and rigid biases of modern thought. Reichenbach focuses on the question of whether curricular adaptations to the postmodern challenge are necessary and desirable. Denis Phillips, unrepentant modernist, accepts postmodernists as a stream within modernism, more sceptical than the postmodernists themselves of the grand narratives of both modernists and postmodernists. In this way he may have saved the curriculum from the implications of being decentred, and himself from responding to a position which cannot be a position, namely postmodernism.[4]

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[4] The ideas proposed in the discussion above have been taken from the symposium introduction (American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, San Francisko, 1995), , written by F. Oser and R. Reichenbach, and modified, with their agreement for publication in EPAT, by J. C. Walker

## 2. Postmodern Knowledge Theories

According to the assessment of many authors, the outstanding technological and scientific progress of the 20th century has not been encouraging enough in social and cultural sense, leading to obvious social and cultural negligence of substantial spheres of human existence, as well as reduced social and cultural concepts in regard to human capacities growth. Z. Golubovic can see this in the manifestation of emphasized incapability of people to understand the complexity of postmodern world, which, under the influence of globalization, looses hope in the possibility of struggle against dehumanization of individuals and society, in the circumstances in the more and more obvious increasing depression of not only transition societies, but also developed countries. At the same time, global terrorism has been obviously used as an alibi for the more emphasized repression (Golubovic, Z. and Jaric, J). In the way education reforms have been carried out, increasingly more expressed utilitarian approaches to world understanding are noticeable, while knowledge transfer, supposed to prepare individuals for life, before all, refers to the ways of adjustment to the existing power structures, which, in the era of globalization, instead of better understanding between people and various cultures, leads to the spread of xenophobia and encouragement of fight against "the enemy", justifying constant wars in the world (ibid). Therefore Z. Golubovic holds that when living in a society people are increasingly less able to understand, let alone influence, virtual reality is created, offered by digital technology as a postmodern way of life; thus, running away from reality, under the impression that there is no possible way to resolve the existing problems of the global crisis, people playfully accept the condition of being unable to get creatively involved in life and try to change something.

The reasons for this can be found in the social context of the 20th century, considered by many as the grounds for "cultural fall". Among many to notice this was M. Horkheimer, who emphasized the harmful consequences of "technological civilization" back in the 1960ies, stressing that as much as it seems that technological knowledge broadens the range of human thought, it also decreases his or her ability to resist the increasing mechanisms of manipulation, weakens his imagination, independent critical judgement. He also pointed out that technological progress was followed by dehumanization (Horkheimer, M, 1963). Previous statements are in agreement with the concise diagnosis of postmodernism, simply illustrated by the name coined by P. Sloterdijkov - "spring of entropy", ruled by "entropic qualities of the old culture" and the period of "ethnic paranoia" (Sloterdijk, P, 2001), as well as with the description of A. John I., who describes postmodernism from the standpoint of culture as a break with the notion of culture as a "way of life" and the integrative factor of "world life" (Golubovic Z. and Jaric, I: 46).

The previous text has been outlined as an introduction to understanding of postmodern framework within which contemporary knowledge theories are positioned, having in mind that questions are raised in regard to introduction and supremacy of economy over the whole social existence in the function of exclusive "economic rationality", utilitarian orientation towards efficacy and success as the most acknowledged value, consumerism interpretations of all work results, including education achievements as "goods" produced and its production viewed as created to be sold; in other words, it is considered that knowledge is spent and will be spent in order to get valorised in a new production, i.e. in order to be exchanged. Thus knowledge ceases to be its own purpose; i.e. it gains "utility value". This is considered a feature legitimizing postmodernism, rather than changes in architecture and arts, as it is usually thought. Analysts therefore point out that postmodernism could have remained a mere European whip in the 1970ies, if it had not been for the changes in the development of science and politics that had given it its real importance. It is the same for culture: it is routinely produced; the spread of fashion is encouraged, increasing consumerism, with mass industrial culture production as its most appropriate form. Z. Golubovic emphasizes the pauperization of culture as a feature of the end of the 20$^{th}$ century, with limitations imposed by postmodernism to Western technological and digital civilization, marking it by "the lack of grand ideas", depersonalization of human communications and rehabilitation of national tradition without critical reconsideration as a reaction against unilaterally imposed globalization with Eurocentric characteristics, threatening to suppress historically established identities, which, according to the evaluation of many authors, has caused the revival of populism in culture (Darendorf, R, according to Golubovic, Z. and I. Jaric: 45).

It is considered that the emergence of relativising of scientific philosophical notions and research is closely connected with postmodernism, manifested in Serbia as a denial of the essence of philosophical discourse, as critical reconsideration and understanding of existential matters and modernity, as an attitude to contemporary reality, i.e. ethos. Z. Golubovic talks about this as a necessity to according to criticism determine what we can know, what we should do and what we can hope for, citing U. Eko she emphasizes that the differentiation between can be done – should be done and cannot be done asks for critical moral evaluation and is contrary to the standpoint advocating for "value free science" (ibid). Such a negative attitude towards science being liberated from its philosophical foundations is to be found in a number of authors, leading to instrumental rationality.

Along with the above stated is the statement that socio-political context of postmodern society is permeated by the dominating neo-liberal ideology striving for pure economic rationality and reducing individuals to

those addicted to "economic success", as a basic behaviour criterion of a man of "consuming society", insensitive for moral norms advocated by Kant's categorical imperative. Moral nichilism, as the morality of postmodernism is seen by many authors has, according to the already cited Z. Golubovic, the following distinguishing features:  a great number of individuals is nowadays value disoriented and satisfied by the reduced life concept, living according the principle of consumerism mentality, not thinking about the importance of the development of human and creative capacities and powers, subjected to technocratic principles as imperatives of life and behaviour; imitation and reproduction are the replacement for individual and group creativity and imagination, and the average is considered a norm, with creativity and reflctivity thus loosing the battle against the spread of populism; the ideas of Enlightenment are estimated as inefficient and marginalized (as "grand narratives"), together with the humanistic approach to the phenomena of modernity and they are replaced by "neutral discourse", strong tendencies of Euro-centrism and ethno-centrism over creative intercultural communication can be noticed, encouraging the sense of helplessness at both individual and national level in the search for the way out of the global chaos which was acknowledged and publicly announced in the world crisis in the end of 2008 (Ibid).

The mentioned moral nihilism from the angle of value is in postmodernism characterised by the relativization of the consensus of the "highest" human value. According to some, it is human dignity, as a synonym for the respect for any human being, as well as other liberal, i.e. democratic values (freedom, equality, autonomy, solidarity…). Value system as a part of a world-view (individualistic, collectivistic, altruistic, egoistic, active, passive, hedonistic…) has also, according to its characteristics, featured the transition from modernism into postmodernism. Numerous authors consider that it is easy to notice that postmodernist society has rejected the ideas on the need for the search for new visions and the improvement and refinement of human existence (better and more humane society), in order to encourage human intellectual potentials and decrease aggression, violence and poverty; in other words, the end of the $20^{th}$ century was marked by an alarming value system shift from philosophical grounds of the basic philosophical questions of existence towards narrowed definition of economic interests, boiling social development on the whole down to economic rationality, expressed by profit. The consequences refer to cynicism, despair, moral indifference and some kind of myoptic directedness. Knowledge has gained a character of goods, knowledge acquisition is separated from education, individualism is ruling the scene, moral aspects of education have been neglected. The ethics of responsibility of globalization has been bypassed.

It seems that after the previously outlined general context of postmodernism we can get closer to the views on knowledge. So, how is knowledge seen in the age of postmodernism? According to Lyotard, in it traditional form, knowledge almost entirely had exclusively narrative character, in its traditional form, knowledge used to have almost exclusively narrative character, while its legitimization referred to the transfer of grand narrations. Knowledge used to be marked by mythical discourse and indisputability, which makes basic determinants for qualification that, as it has been put by A. Halmy, could be called "primitive pattern of knowledge transfer". According to the same author, the postmodern, mythical incarnation of knowledge literally based on grand narrations (paradigms) used to be legitimated solely on the narrative convincingness of the authority. Modern science with its shaping was legitimized by speculative comprehensiveness within philosophy, on the one hand, and positive and exact verifiability within natural science framework, on the other – legitimatization has lost its traditional characteristics. In postmodern society, sciences can no longer be systematized according to the unity of a wholeness guarantying truthfulness in traditional sense. So, it seems necessary to further consider the position of postmodern scientific paradigm, and its possibilities, which, according to many authors, do not offer a promising picture of either civilizational framework in general, or scientific development under the guise of the abundance of mutually independent scientific and other discourses. It is considered that in contemporary postmodern society knowledge has significantly different place. True postmodern setting, at least according to intentions, should be liberated from ideology, while knowledge should be legitimized according to ideological way of traditional values and normative patterns. However, we cannot resist to express doubt here as to whether in such a way declaratively formulated aims can find argumentation for the possibility of achievement in life. It is therefore necessary to theoretically explain such social orientations determined by value categories of equality, freedom and rights of all social levels. It seems that in such a way we could with greater certainty approach issues dealing with knowledge tradition that have been brought to dispute. Epistemic certainty and the fixed boundaries of academic knowledge have been challenged by a "war on totality" and a disavowal of all-encompassing, single world-views. Rigid distinctions between high and low culture have been rejected by the insistence that the products of the so-called mass culture, popular and folk art forms are proper objects of study; the Enlightenment correspondence between history and progress and the modernist faith in rationality, science and freedom have incurred a deep-rooted scepticism; the fixed and unified identity of the humanist subject has been replaced by a call for narrative space that is pluralized and fluid.

Let's start from the monistic concept and its obsessions in the search for a sole principle, one truth and causality of complex relations in phenomena and unification as a form of generalization, i.e. reductionism. Logic empiricism and positivism with their faith in the possibility to get to a unique corpus of scientific ideas corresponding to objective reality, based on the system of theorems, axioms, postulates, has in the last decades been marked by the omen of reductionism, reification… at the same time, knowledge, as a reflection of objective reality, independent from the learner as a kind of fascination of revelation of causal determinations according to elegant process of rational decoding, has gained a mark of vain fascination, leading to the clash of rationalism and introduction of pluralism into science, trying to understand knowledge and cognition process according to a different logics. At this point it is important to mention that it has been emphasized in knowledge theory as a basic sign of postmodernism that only one type of knowledge is scientific and that it is determined according to the rules formed by scientific discourse. Deciphering the discourse within which a phenomenon is examined the perspective is considered according to which the phenomenon is observed; or, as postmodernists would like to say, the system of rules relevant for the discourse is being revealed (Lyotard, Z. F. 1988). It might be significant to mention the types of discourse found in Lyotard: narratives, assurances, questions, as well as the statement according to which the systems of rules create knowledge, and thus there is not knowledge statement without predetermined rules. The same refers to argumentation, cognition, examination, evaluation, illustration within a certain discourse, which are realised within the rules of the determined discourse (Lyotard, Z. F, op. cit.). So, the conclusion made by many in the field is not unusual, according to which there are no meta-criteria of scientific knowledge in relation to other types of knowledge, which has been pointed out by those acceptind Harman's view on gnoseological issues: "Cognition belongs to spiritual being and the highest level of reality. It is accompanied by the function of understanding as a way or a form of arrangement; it begins with simple observation and goes as far as notional understanding (Hartman, 1998). Thus it is logical to accept the standpoint that the world of spirit is in itself multiply delineated and graded, and that there are no direct criteria on the truth and fallacy. Therefore many hold that scientific and unscientific discourses are incomparable, and that it is difficult to advocate for the existence or non-existence of a meta-discourse of general language, which would be grounds for a claim, or a judgement on which of the two discourses is better. This basic attitude, known postulate of postmodernism deals with the importance of research on the rules according to which scientific knowledge is constituted. The constitution of scientific knowledge in postmodernism is not directed to consensus and this explains the pluralism in philosophy, science and postmodernism, with the postulate

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gaining the status of constitutive element of postmodernism (Gojkov, G. 2005). Along with the previous statements, many authors emphasise the standpoint that the power of pluralistic theory is not in its coherence, but in its potential to defend incoherence. Bojanovic – Djurisic, M. underlines one of the significant determinants of pluralism in science – structuralism, based on the assumption that there is plurality of structures and elements underlying various natural and social phenomena.  Thus in the end of the last century meta-theoretical conceptions of postmodernism in social sciences were created in post-structuralism and pluralism in philosophy (Djurisic – Bojanovic, M. 2009), establishing new currents as compared to conventional approaches in science.

Therefore Lyotard holds: "Since its very beginning science is in conflict with narratives. Measured according to its own criteria, majority turns out to be a fiction. However, unless it is limited to demonstration of useful regularity of rules and if it searches for the truth, science has to justify its own play rules. As a consequence, it leads a discourse of justification of its own status. If the meta discourse explicitly reaches for one or another grand narration like dialectics of spirit, hermeneutics of sense, emancipation of a rational subject or actor, we decide to call "modern" the science which calls for the discourse in order to justify its own existence (Lyotard, Z, 1987).

The essence of the standpoint refers to Lyotard's idea on "grand narratives", the philosophies serving to justify the status of knowledge. Therefore Lyotard holds that it is a narration that knowledge serves freedom and man emancipation, so that science contributes to abolition of traditional addictedness.

Wolfgang Welsh seriously supported Lyotard's thesis within German language speaking community. His claim can be often found in the literature referring to the following: what happens here amounts to certain situation not longer interpreted according to known rules, but in a completely different way. Postmodern knowledge should develop such versatile interpretations according to different discourses and language games. Thus, according to W. Welsch (1993) postmoder knowledge is directed to "radical plurality" (ibid).

"Postmodernism is the historical period in which radical plurality becomes more serious and accepted as fundamental arrangement of society, prevailed by plural patterns of thinking and action, creating even dominant and mandatory standpoint. If such pluralism was interpreted as nothing else but mere manifestation of growth, its essence would remain unperceivable. It is, in the very least, a positive vision. It is inseparable from real democracy" (ibid).

The aim of the previous dealing with the fundamental theses of postmodern current in the field of understanding of scientific knowledge, before all with Lyotard's views, is to introduce us into what this current has done for pedagogy; or, to put it differently, it seems that it will open a possibility to

more clearly consider its influence on pedagogy. Although we will get back to these theses and try to consider the meaning of postmodernism as a movement that has deeply engrained contemporary pedagogic currents, it seems important to notice here that it has been introduced in Serbia as well, even though not theoretically explained, it moves in partial practical steps through seminars which lack theoretical grounds, or in the form of active learning workshops, good will classes, children rights classes, etc, in spite of the fact that those participating in those seminars or classes do not know what they are learning and why, what is its theoretical framework, axiological orientations, pedagogic philosophical grounds, etc.

Previous attempts at sketching the context for general shades of postmodernism and its influence in the change of the basic postulates in epistemology should be the grounds for psychological approaches to pluralism in general, and in this text, to didactics, in particular. It is significant to raise several questions here. One of them is the acceptance of the existence of pluralistic understanding of reality, followed by the question how to establish a dialogue between persons who function in different cognitive ways; the same question refers to various contexts with different rules. It is considered that individuals understand the relevant rules and meanings in a discourse in their own way, giving them their own meanings. Decoding of meaning is implied as a formal demand for mutual understanding within a discourse, as well as the readiness to accept the fact of discursive plurality, along with, according to postmodern rule, the right to equal treatment. Psychological research point to the importance of a number of personality features for the acceptance of pluralistic approaches and ideas, leading to a conclusion that pluralism refers to cognitive functions and to the readiness to tolerate diversity of ideas and disagreement of attitudes and their argumentations. Another question imposes itself at this point: is it and to what an extent possible to nurture acceptance of pluralism according to the nurture of flexibility of cognitive style characteristics of an individual (tolerance of disharmony, see Gojkov, G. Kognitivni stil u didaktici, 1995). Cognitive aspect of the acceptance of plurality has a number of aspects. Let us mention only the need of an individual to preserve in mind and reconsider argumentation that refers to a variety of attitudes on the same problem. The ability to accept simultaneous existence of different perspectives and angles, along with the respect for different argumentations even in a situation when the acceptance of one solution is beyond dispute, means that other solutions are not rejected, but the arguments in favour of another solution only seem less certain, less acceptable. This is mentioned here due to the familiar link between cognitive and affective. Psychologists have emphasized that ideas we accept fit into our cognitive patterns and broaden our intellectual frames, and vice versa. We should not deal with the pluralism of cognitive style any longer (see G. Gojkov

1995), but we should take another look on the question to be found in the mentioned study of G. Gojkov, which is in agreement with previously sketched ideas of M. Bojanovic-Djurisic on pluralism of cognitive style and pluralism in general, emphasizing the need to develop pluralism in individuals not only in cognitive sense, but also in value-affective (Djurisic-Bojanovic, op. cit.). The acceptance of Piaget's theory on development stages is also important for what we are dealing with here, i.e. the attitude according to which process of development goes through the phases of substitution and integration, from concrete to abstract, this being the essence of the change of the very process (Piaget, 1972). Namely, those supporting cognitive-developmental standpoint (Collings, 1994, according to Djurisic-Bojanovic, op. cit) hold that there is generally no hindrance to accept pluralism of ideas if the way of thinking of an individual is in question. Another idea of the same authoress is also significant, grounded on the Theory of integrative complexity (Djurisic-Bojanovic, op. cit), according to which pluralistic cognitive style involves convergent and divergent thinking dimensions. The findings of other research have shown that holistic (divergent) and integrative form of thinking has positive correlation to creative, abstract, complex and unusual ways of problem solving; on the other hand, analytic form of thinking refers to simpler, learnt, concrete approaches(Sternberg and Grigorenko, 1995). What is also important for this text is that Brophy (Brophy, 2001) in his research findings has also pointed to positive correlation between the way of thinking and a group of personality features. These findings lead to a statement that the persons with more expressed dimensions of abstract thinking can better accept pluralism of ideas. Descriptions of the persons with complex integrative cognitive style confirm the thesis on the possibility to search for the obstacles hindering the acceptance of pluralism in personality features.

Thus it seems that it could be claimed that cognitive style, as a construct implying non-cognitive characteristics as well, although as a construct still not so well defined, can be useful in this situation, and the mentioned authors do use it, emphasizing the existence of pluralistic cognitive style with the assumptions on complexity, ambiguity and diversity of phenomena. So, it is considered that pluralistic cognitive style is defined by the characteristics like openness and the absence of prejudice against thinking processes of differentiation and integration, in flexible abstract thinking, pluralistic "processing" of information and reconsideration of arguments in controversy matters. It is thought that persons with pluralistic cognitive style do not have expressed needs for reduction of a problem to familiar principles and patters, that hey are inclined to research beyond the limitations of the conventional, with expressed intellectual curiosity towards different ideas and ability to find many arguments in favour of the beliefs opposite to their own

and to simultaneously reconsider them (M. Bojanovic-Djurisic, op. cit.). This could lead to a statement that postmodern thinking, constructivism perspective or the third period marked the 20th century. Increased number of scientists has accepted the standpoint that through the gathering of empirical facts within the determined world-view will not lead to quantitatively large step ahead. New waves have come with relativity theory, quant mechanics and self-regulation theory. The ideas on relative, rather than absolute nature of observation have paved the way to progress, promoting the idea that science is not guided by a sole general order, but a coincidence. Bartalanfi's claims on self-regularity of living systems have opened to dispute the dualistic view on separation of body and soul, while mathematical tests of the idea of indeterminism have destabilized the thesis on the stability and consistency of order. The characteristics of the third period are the following:

- the criticism of the prevailing belief that there is only one right perspective, absolute truth and validity;
- ontological and epistemological assumptions on the nature of knowledge, valid in the previous periods, are being reconsidered;
- new views on the nature of knowledge have been developed. Popper has offered a standpoint according to which theoretical knowledge does not grow due to the fact that theories are true, but due to the process of their natural selection, and as it has been proposed by D. Stojnov "similarly to Darwin's view on survival of types" (Stojnov, D. 1998).

Kuhn has also offered a standpoint according to which knowledge and reality are historically determined and relative at least as much as they are absolute and true. He considers that the main theoretical transformations do not follow the principles of formal logics present in modernistic period, but that scientific knowledge is the function of change and development of social awareness and values that are in different periods applied to various degrees (Kuhn, 1974). As a consequence, stability of science, as it is hold by many authors nowadays, could be explained according to the acceptance of common beliefs of scientists on the nature of things, rather than truthfulness and validity of their claims (ibid).

Some American pedagogues reproach modern education for not thinking about a completely different pedagogy needed by contemporary society. Apart from the Latino-American and Asian culture, it is thought that humanities and science should be brought closer together in the light of the cultural transformation of the school. It is also emphasized that pluralism and contingency – whether mediated through the media or through the dislocations spurned by the economic system, the rise of new social movements, or the crisis of representations have resulted in a world with few secure psychological, economic or intellectual markers. This is a world in which a

man is condemned to wander across, within and between multiple borders and spaces marked by excess, otherness, difference and a dislocating notion of meaning and attention. The modernist world of certainty and order has given way to a planet in which hip hop and rap condenses time and space into what Paul Virilio calls the "speed space". No longer belonging to any place or location, youth increasingly inhabit shifting cultures and social spheres marked by a plurality of languages and cultures.

It has not yet become so obvious to us – but it is already present in the West – communities are being refigured as space and time mutate into multiple and overlapping cyberspace networks. Young people talk to each other over electronic bulletin boards in cafes in, for example, California, and other places of public gathering, once the refuge of beatniks, hippies and other cultural radicals have given way to members of hacker culture. They reorder their imaginations through connections to virtual reality technologies, and lose themselves in the images that wage a war on traditional meaning by reducing all forms of understanding to random access spectacles (ibid).

Western authors believe that mass or popular cultures in the age of postmodernism cannot be neglected. On the contrary, there is a belief that the new electronic technologies, with their proliferation of multiple stories and open-ended forms of interaction have altered not only the context for the production of subjectivities, but also the way people "take in information". Values no longer emerge from the modernist pedagogy of foundationalism and universal truths, or from fixed identities with their requisite structure of closure. For many youths, meaning is en route, the media has become substitute for experience, and what constitutes understanding is grounded in a decentred and diasporic world of difference, displacement and exchanges.

There are authors, and the above mentioned Giroux is one of them, who consider that postmodern cultural criticism has captured much of the ennui and boredom among postmodern youth, so that what used to be the pessimism of a radical fringe is now the shared assumption of a generation (Anschaw, according to Giroux, op. cit.). If we did not agree with such an argument, there would be space for raising a question whether the contemporary conditions, i.e. postmodernism, with all its meanings, may have conditioned this feeling of hopelessness. So, we could wonder to what an extent criticism is decisive for teachers to stand against the context in which they are supposed to educate the youth, so that it could be said that they have directed their attention to wrong courses towards the lost vision of society. For most commentators the youth have become "strange", "alienated" and separated from the real world, while many in their analysis come to a conclusion that young people can be attributed by the following qualifications: hopeless, lacking aspirations, living in a world in which coincidence and randomness, rather than fight, community and solidarity, drive their destiny.

This is exactly how the themes of contemporary film show the youth: broken families, blaring rock music, schooling marked by dead time, and a general indifference towards life in general; decentred and fragmented, they view death like life itself, as merely a spectacle, a matter of style rather than substance; lost innocence gives way not merely to teenage myopia, but also to a culture in which human life is experienced as a voyeuristic seduction, a video game, good for passing time. Despair and indifference cancel out the language of ethical discrimination and social responsibility, while elevating the immediacy of pleasure to the defining moment of agency. It can also be seen in films today that a lot of young people take seriously the dictum that life imitates art, so that it is possible to shape life within a violent culture of images, in which it might be easier being dead. Of course, all these dark images of contemporary conditions surrounding young people and becoming part of their everyday lives are not absolute characteristics of the time, but they seem to occur so frequently that they have become themes of artists, especially when film is in question, revealing the dark side of youth culture while employing the Hollywood mixture of fascination and horror to titillate the audiences drawn to these films. In the postmodern aesthetics of revulsion, locality, randomness and senselessness, youth in these films appear to be constructed outside of a broader cultural and economic landscape. Instead, they become visible only through visceral expressions of psychotic behaviour or the brooding experience of a self-imposed comatose alienation (rejecting most of the values of Reagan, Bush, and Clinton era in American films). Most of young people have been described in these films as individuals who have no sense of where they have come from or where they are going, while in this world of multiple realities, "schizophrenia emerges as the psychic norm of late capitalism". (Anschaw, according to Giroux, op. cit.)

Alienation is driven inward, while irony slightly overshadows a refusal to imagine any kind of collective struggle. Reality seems too despairing to care about.[5] People talk but seem disconnected from themselves and each other; lives intersect with no sense of community or connection, as well as with no element of social activity that accompanies the individualized sense of dropping out, of self-consciously courting chaos and uncertainty (Gojkov, G. 2006).

A great number of authors view postmodern context from economic standpoint more or less in the following way: the economic relations which have created the new world are not likely to change in the time to come; the choices of young people will be increasingly reduced. In a few years, a steady job at a mall outlet or a food chain may be all that is left for the majority of

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[5]Commented images of youth are taken from the films: Slackers, My private Idaho, River's Edge

college graduates. Life is more and more like a lottery – is a lottery – with
nothing but luck of the draw determining whether you get a recording contract,
get your screenplay produced, or get a job in a local studio. Slacking is thus a
rational response to casino capitalism, the randomization of success, and the
utter arbitrariness of power. If no talent is still enough, why bother to hone
your skills? If it is impossible to find a good job, why not slack and enjoy life?
(Kopkind, according to Giroux, op cit)
Previously outlined pedagogical challenge of postmodern generation of youth
has not given way to those who create advertisements or to market research
analysts, although it is clear that corporate advertisers are attempting to
theorize a pedagogy of consumption as a part of a new way of appropriating
postmodern differences. Numerous authors consider that education should
make education more political; teachers should be guided to deal with the
conditions through which they teach and to address what it means to learn
from a generation that is experiencing life in a way that is vastly different from
the representations offered in modernist versions of schooling. The appearance
of electronic media together with a diminishing faith in the power of an
individual has undermined the traditional visions of education and the meaning
of pedagogy. The language of lesson plans and upward mobility and the forms
the teacher authority has been based upon have been radically loosing their
legitimacy by the recognition that culture and power are central to the
authority/knowledge relationship. Modernism's faith in the past has given way
to the future for which traditional markers no longer make sense. These are the
statements of pedagogues from the societies which are deeper in
postmodernism, and which, according to our modest judgement, have made
their peace with what postmodernism brings with it. However, beyond this,
and even if we accept all this as an emerging necessity, we cannot restrain
ourselves from asking whether it is possible in such conditions to avoid what
Difur has often mentioned in his work - the forming of "postmodern child".
And what if the above described images from the mentioned films for now
depicturing just marginal radical groups become frequent in more or less urban
settings of the world making huge steps towards globalization? Furthermore,
how to fight against the pedagogy of consumption? Is it realistic to expect
teachers themselves to amend what the context has given as a stamp of time?
Will the undesired effects of postmodernism for now noticeable with the
marginal categories of youth be kept on that level, or they will spread...
For many pedagogy theorists postmodern discourses are promising, but they
do not offer a solution for education of young people, who, seem to be
hostages of instability of shifting economic order and diminished hopes, on the
one hand, and the world of schizoid images, and the increased uncertainty and
randomness that structures contemporary postmodern everyday life, on the
other. Therefore they ask themselves to what an extent teachers deal with a

new kind of student who is being formed within organizational principles shaped by the intersection of the electronic image, popular culture and a dire sense of indeterminacy. They think that postmodern pedagogy has to deal with shifting attitudes, representations and desires of this new generation of youth. Thus the terms of identity and the production of new maps of meaning have to be understood within postmodernism (within new hybridized cultural practices inscribed in relations of power that intersect differently with race, class, gender etc). According to the evaluation of postmodern pedagogy such differences must be comprehended not only in terms of the context of their struggles, but also through the common language of resistance leading to the project of hopes and possibilities. This is the moment in which the legacy of critical modernism becomes valuable, reminding us of the importance of the language of public life, democratic struggle and imperative of freedom, equality and justice. In the texts we meet in scientific literature, which are mostly from America, the ground which was the first to sense postmodernism with its powerful blows and now making efforts to enlighten the ways how different identities among youth are being produced in the spheres generally ignored by schools, we come across thoughts about the need of pedagogy to comprehend the ways of creating and spreading particular forms of knowledge and desires in those diverse public and popular spheres in which sounds, images, print and electronic culture attempt to harness meaning for and against the possibility of expanding social justice and human dignity. Shopping malls, street communities, video halls, coffee shops, television culture and other elements of popular culture must become serious objects of school knowledge. In all this emphasis is put on ethics and politics that are to serve to discriminate between relations that do violence and those that promote diverse and democratic public cultures through which youth and others can understand their problems and concerns as part of a larger effort to interrogate and disrupt the dominant narratives of national identity, economic privilege and individual empowerment.

The authors, who view things in this way, giving great relevance to pedagogy, consider that it must define its relation to modernist forms of culture, privilege and canonicity, and serve as a vehicle of translation and cross-fertilization. To what an extent these are realistic assumptions and whether they are declarative or not – that is an issue to be dealt with in another discussion. We would only add here that in the postmodern era pedagogy, as critical cultural praxis, is expected to open up new institutional spaces in which youth can experience and define production of cultural goods, can move in and out of theoretical discourses with the need to define them for themselves.

Moreover, these understandings of postmodern pedagogy put an emphasis on advocating criticism of postmodern teachers for underestimating

the problematic nature of the relationship between "desire and the critical enterprise". A postmodern pedagogy needs to address how the issue of authority can be linked to democratic processes in the classroom that do not promote pedagogical terrorism (which has become a common phenomenon in the West, and even here, although rarely seen, is to be expected, since it is already knocking on our door), and yet still offer representations, histories and experiences that allow students to critically address the construction of their own subjectivities as they simultaneously engage in an ongoing "process of negotiation between the self and other" (Giroux, op. cit.).

We are under the impression that, beyond all this there is a space for a question: does not this mean boiling postmodern pedagogy down to the care of renewed determination of the nature of the relation between authority and knowledge and pedagogical conditions necessary for decentralization of curricula. It appears that opening new pedagogical spaces in postmodernism leads to deformation and another methodological fixation; they are marked as political projects, through which subjects will be able to articulate their own ones within critical understanding. In such a way postmodern pedagogy is expected to deal with how power is being discussed within and between various groups, as parts of broader social context in which pedagogic institution are anticipated to be democratic public spheres. The question could further refer to the following: to what an extent postmodern pedagogy would become remote from practical science having limited application value, who is this value important to, what is meant by the idea that schools should be organized as places of over bridging, negotiation and resistance, how realistic is it to expect teachers to significantly contribute to the issues of authority in democratic processes through better understanding of shared influence that affects and ideology have on knowledge construction, struggle and identity sense? It seems that the education issue in this case has been viewed from the standpoint of social problems in which postmodern pedagogy should intervene in order to bring the lost postmodern youth back to the right track, to introduce them into reality through their readiness to become engaged into the research on public political sphere, with a precondition that they in the same time recognize the limitations of useful insights of postmodernism. Here we have in mind introducing and determining of possibilities for social struggle and solidarity, which have been often pointed out in scientific papers, and we are under impression that the first and basic task of pedagogy is motivated by practical political instrumentalization of education. This is even more noticeable with the demand for postmodern pedagogy to be directed towards redefinition of curricula, not only regarding introduction of new informational technologies, but also in regard to the demand for a politics which creates relationships among authorities, ethics, as well as power which is central for pedagogy, and which goes beyond, but does not close possibilities of radical

democratic society. It has also been further emphasised that the difference of discourse does not succumb to fashion in this logic, but, instead difference becomes a marker of struggle in an ongoing movement towards a shared conception of justice and a radicalization of social order. Let us try now, from the angle of modern pedagogy criticism and the main objections directed to this pedagogy, consider the differences between pedagogy of modernism and pedagogy of postmodernism.

It is considered for pedagogy for modernism that its aim is to more clearly and determinably place itself in the service of social-political objectives, and according to many theorists this means that it must alter its relationship towards itself, to change its basic issues and research methods. The issues it is dealing with now, instead of virtue, or questioning what human behaviour should be like, or what human life should be like, and how far does human knowledge reach, are politics and governing, while it has become the means for political desires to come true, so that now, according to the assessment of many, it is addressing the question how is it possible for someone to certainly, quickly and easily get to desirable social status and what means are in this sense available for young people. Consequently, pedagogy has been pragmatized, separated from philosophy and philosophical speculations, with realistic approach excuse, it has got to the function within which it should dedicate itself to society and social prosperity, while investments in pedagogy can be justified only if it is useful for the state and society. This petty-bourgeois tendency suits the petty-bourgeois understanding of the word, as well as pedagogy (Hajtger, M. 2003).

Many still think that if we limit ourselves to experienced knowledge and to the laws we meet there, we believe in the modern concept of science and rationality, we believe that educational science deserves scientific reputation which has been attributed to it (ibid). In the same time, pedagogy of modernism is oriented to empirical research, determination of general laws of advancement – on its way from the Ancient World, through metaphysics to scientific rationalism, to revealing firm laws in pedagogical phenomena and mastering them (Comte, A, according to Hajtger, M. op.cit.)

### 3. Pedagogy and Philosophy in Postmodernism
Previously touched issue refers to philosophical grounds of pedagogy. Many studies, along with the research undertake by Hajdger point to the question: is pedagogy philosophical discipline, i.e. is it comprised of philosophical thought and philosophical way of asking questions. This is not about whether there are philosophical questions and problems in pedagogy; it goes without saying; this is also not about whether pedagogy relies on philosophy. The question here is whether pedagogy has to be philosophy itself. Advocates of the attitude that pedagogy is actually about philosophy are

criticised for being old-fashioned. Within modern approaches pedagogy is comprehended in such a way that its name has already been renounced, in that the contemporary authors have (those who belong to the time of postmodernism previously discussed), started to use, instead of the term of pedagogy, the term of educational science. One of the reasons for this, according to the modest opinion of the author of these lines, is the negligent attitude of pedagogues who carelessly watched authors from other fields and professions entering the field of pedagogy, together with their unverified theories, pedagogical ignoramuses who think that they have finally found a field for proving themselves. Another reason could be the urge of these authors to try to serve to the structures which design the use of man (believing that they are doing something good, spreading democracy...). M. Hajdger holds that philosophical dealing with pedagogy has boiled down to saloon discussions, which, according to his assessment, has marginalized it. The mentioned author has in the argumentation of his attitudes turned back to disagreements between Socrates and sophists. Contrary to sophists, who in pedagogy saw the means for reaching an aim, i.e. practical preparation for living, Socrates advocated different opinion. He considered that before the question about gaining a virtue, another question should be dealt with, the one which is in its grounds, i.e. what a virtue is. Since that time the criticism of pedagogy has contained attitudes according to which philosophical thinking in pedagogy represent inefficient means to which negative connotations have been attributed. Consequently, even today we are facing the situation in which we are still discussing the question what pedagogy is. This assumed even more significant dimensions with Niche's assessments of education and pedagogy. His attitude has often been quoted: "In regard to contemporary pedagogical writing, a man can be certain only about one thing: there is not anything else in it which can be more deteriorated than it already is – spiritual poverty of these studies is intimidating. Now our philosophy should start not from wonder but from fear: who cannot stand this, can give up on it." (Niche, according to Hajdger, M. op cit).

Many consider that this Niche's attitude is relevant today as well, since the problems have not been overcome yet, we are still discussing what pedagogy is; it has become relativized and has lost its level, uncritically adopting problematic ideas and theories. For many authors the reasons for this lie in the fact that pedagogy has turned away from philosophy, loosing its grounds. Broader account of this has been given by M. Hajdger in the mentioned text, as well as the author of these reflections in her studies (Gojkov, G. 2005).

In the age of postmodernism, the first demand for pedagogy is to be pragmatic, as it has already been pointed out. In the same time, pragmatism pushes philosophy out of pedagogy. Before this, during the age of modernism, the development of pedagogy in a modern science was supported by the swing

of natural sciences ant their application in the life of man, as well as the development of representations promoted by various political systems, believing in man's ability to change society. This is the sign of applicability of pedagogy for social-political purposes and, according to evaluation of critics, of its seeming scientific determination. It is thought that pedagogy has been used as a means to make political aims come true, or at least, to facilitate desired social changes.

If we now try to make a parallel form this angle and take a look at applicable value of pedagogy of modernism and postmodernism, we can conclude that the essence remains the same, the differences are only in the ways we approach the function of pedagogy which is understood in this way. This is one of the reasons why such a title of the text has been chosen, justifying the acceptance of the alternatives given in the first lines of the paper.

M. Hajdger has addressed in the mentioned text the disappearance of philosophical thought within pedagogy from the standpoint of the withdrawal of philosophy itself from pedagogy. He views this as self-exclusion of philosophy from pedagogy, a phenomenon that happens when philosophy is not able to provide satisfying answers to pedagogic questions. It is the case when philosophy withdraws into scepticism. Illustrating this, M. Hajdger has mentioned the examples of V. Dilthey and J. P. Sartre. The former discriminated pedagogy as an anomaly of scientific life, claiming that it is a prisoner of metaphysics, still demanding for all pedagogical objectives to be derived from one definition of human being, which would be binding. According to Dilthey this is impossible, since philosophy cannot determine such a binding aim. All similar attempts have failed, showing that they are relative in relation to history and culture. He thought that such pedagogy incited to revolutionary changes. According to him, philosophy is not able to gain an insight into the aim and sense of life; this is possible to comprehend only from the infinite course of history, not from its present state (W. Dilthey, 1961).

Dilthey holds that the possibilities of philosophical establishment of pedagogy should be looked for in the "technology" of everything that has a soul. All which is psychological seeks perfection. According to him, getting to know this principle is the ultimate possibility to give an answer to the question "should" concerning pedagogy itself (ibid).

Hajdger's comments on Sartre's atheistic (Sartre, J. P, 1964) existentialism point to the fact that Sartre was radically sceptical regarding any possibility of philosophical establishment of pedagogy, since he perceived man as completely free subject, whose existence cannot be preceded by any essence. Potential essence preceding existence would have normative character. A man is created always anew; he himself builds his essence. On the other hand, as a God's creature, a man would have to be created according to

God's image. This idea of predetermined image of man is opposed to his understanding of freedom and subjectivity (Hajdger, M, op.cit.).

These examples have been stated here, since they, especially Sartre's opinion, can be found in scientific writing as exemplars of philosophy in which pedagogy has lost every sense, having in mind that it deals with absolute freedom which cannot be brought into connection to any "should" and thus it cannot be useful to any individual when making decisions. Anyway, apart from this, there are new attempts to design new function of philosophy in pedagogy, since pedagogy has realised that, without philosophy, without unsolved, even unsolvable discussion on determination of man and the task derived from it, it became practical science, dedicated to everyday problems, leading it to a dead end where he now is. Therefore, giving up philosophy, pedagogy has given up its own critical potential, i.e. was left without it, and now is in a position in which it has to subject itself to the demands of ruling social forces; it has turned into a mere executor of their demands and wishes (ibid). Thus, becoming a mere means, pedagogy limited itself to mere execution of the demands of technique and industry, consequently degraded itself, as well as a man, being at service of social functions. Numerous critical reflection express the attitude that this happened after pedagogy had gained scientific reputation, after it had put a lot of efforts to meet the demands of quantitative paradigm at methodological level. Pedagogy was under impression that it had a status of serious science. From the present methodological and scientific standpoint in general, it appears that, instead of leading to the development of pedagogy, it has led to its scientific decomposition. We cannot go further now without raising a question here: isn't it the case that the present time has its own philosophy: isn't philosophy of postmodernism something which is guiding such a status of pedagogy; hasn't postmodernism itself led to caving of scientific structure of pedagogy and turned it into an instrument for executing social aims? Or perhaps, to put it in milder words – not so directly: does postmodernism have influence on the present status of pedagogy; to what an extent have previous philosophies, as well as those now supporting postmodernism paved the way to such a status of pedagogy; how much is it of something new, previously unseen in pedagogical methodology now, as well as qualitative methodological paradigm pretending to turn pedagogy from normative science to real science, purified from false beliefs of rationalism? Anyway, in this moment, as a rule, pedagogy is left without education, as well, i.e. it reduces its comprehension of education determining it only applicability and its power to execute social tasks. To the modest understanding of the author of these reflections, this may be a rule, a law.

If this is our starting point, then it is clear why we have previously reflected on the efficacy of contemporary pedagogy in the sense of its betrayal

of pedagogical aims. In spite of the fact that many authors emphasise that modern pedagogy (it is meant here of pedagogy of modernism) has focused on revealing patterns, with the help of statistics, the result of this prescriptive methodology is pedagogy being subjected to political programs and entrepreneurs; means and strategies of pedagogy have served to them. We will allow ourselves to critically consider both the time of postmodernism and new pedagogical methodology, even broader – pedagogy as a science, i.e. its function and to raise the following question: what is the difference in what we have in the age of postmodern pedagogy; isn't it as well in the function of supplementation of entrepreneur's capital; how to get rid of this? The only hope is in its relying on philosophy, in which, we believe, a beam of light in the situation of hopelessness will always be found, taking in consideration dignity of man, his freedom, as well as critical power. Let's now once again turn back to the opinions according to which pedagogy has lost its edge for critical power and man's dignity, his freedom, leading, as it is thought, to a society which has become estranged from thought and judgement, criticism and giving proofs. The question we would like to deal with here would refer to the function and limitations of pedagogy, i.e. it could be: is it realistic to attribute such achievements to pedagogy, i.e. education? We would like it to be so, in that case crucial problems of the mankind would be solvable, i.e. we could expect that it is possible for powers to be driven in the direction of solutions to the problems. Unfortunately, our modest dealing with the issue suppose that it would make sense here only to turn to chaos theory, deterministic field, etc. for help, and in such a way explicate the importance of indoctrinating avoidance of mind and pedagogy's role in it. Anyway, it appears that even pedagogy of postmodernism pushes philosophy aside, or neglects it, which turns pedagogy into mechanism of individual's behaviour management; it has become technique which facilitates praxis and provides help to political, opportunistic usage of man. It is considered today that stronger advocacy of confrontation should found its place in pedagogy, confrontation with authority, emancipation and self-determination. In the same time, a little of the mentioned, apart from the declarative sphere, can be found in the pedagogy of postmodernism. We are stuck in the domain of ideas which are have not even made a move towards the clear definition of the terms themselves. Namely, the societies in which nowadays these ideas are being advocated as instruments of pedagogical self-help, have still not managed even to ultimately define emancipation and other things, which are expected, through curricular pedagogy or various teaching strategies, to be able to improve critical power and judgment ability, in order to avoid what Niche anticipated, and what, unfortunately, has come true in a way few people expected.

Labelled as "guiding service", pedagogy has been searching for the ways to get away from the status in which she meets the demands of the time, trying to avoid the role of executive organ of same predetermined philosophical system. However, in accordance with this, it is considered that such pedagogical action is inevitably connected with a "should", which does not necessarily have to be meaningless and arbitrary, but, as it is stressed by M. Hajdger, it should be the expression of real, honest strivings. In the same time, M. Hajdger, as well as others, does not think of connection with some predetermined worldview or ideology, but of articulation of a question it is impossible to give up. "Should" pedagogy is dealing with, M. Hajdger holds, can be justified neither from the standpoint of history nor from contemporary ruling norms. According to him, this should not be understood as a rejection of everyday challenges, but it should still be justified. Dealing with schooling and education for pedagogy means searching for the real sense of these processes, and this points to the philosophical dimension each normative demand, each "should" in pedagogy is supposed to be grounded upon. This is an invitation to practical use of mind which, Hajdger believes, is possible to reach through dialogue education, within which practical power of judgement is being developed, helping the educated to transform what is considered to be good in a maxim of his/her action. The author thinks that the rebirth of philosophical thought in pedagogy is a possibility for the future of education. Additionally, according to him, philosophical dimension of pedagogy does not imply that a kind of man's education should be determined in advance, the one which would be accomplished through teaching and according to which education is to be guided, since there is no point in reaching a predetermined image a man; instead, man's nature is to be brought about, i.e. a subjective being of each man. Consequently, the form remains open, while the contents offer guidelines to education. This openness within form is necessary for philosophy, since this is the only way to come to man's individuality, along with freedom. However, Hajdger himself considers that the guidelines are indispensable, in order to prevent selfhood a subject from turning into self-will (ibid).

Having offered all these arguments, we have to make a further question: how consistent previous attitudes are; does not this appear to be the acceptance of reality, a pattern following the processes of education, which even today, in postmodernism, in the scope of philosophy suffer from certain influences that may not have been clearly structured and defined; isn't it the fact that philosophy has withdrawn from the field of pedagogy, and that it, in turn, has adopted practicism and that this is a sign that we are facing another philosophy whose influences are to be considered in the time to come...

Still, apart from the fact that the previous statements are almost concluding reflections, it seems that we should deal with the relation between postmodernism, pedagogy, philosophy of education and education here. The

reason for this is a fact that philosophers of education have recently been dealing with trends in philosophy which could be called "postmodern". Thus, their influences on pedagogy, research, and pedagogical practice, especially teaching, are interesting to deal with here. However, this is left for some other occasion.

Some other authors maintain that developing philosophical postmodernism, as well as many other things, has done more good than harm. It is considered that postmodernism, as well as majority of other philosophical movements, should be viewed as a rich mine, we can get into in search for jewels of knowledge, but we do not feel obliged to take all unrefined, sharp stones home with us. What would be the jewels, the positive side of postmodernism? Looking back on mostly positive sides of postmodernism does not mean that we have forgotten about the other ones, but that we want to make a balance, since it seems that there have lately been too many critical tones in comparison to positive ones regarding postmodernism.

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