

REPRESENTATION OF CONFLICTS IN EIGHT GRADE TEXTBOOKS: ANALYSIS FROM MICHAEL APPLE'S PERSPECTIVE*

UDK: 37.016:316.48(73)
373.3(73)

Original Scientific Article
doi: 10.5281/zenodo.4618276

Mladen RADULOVIĆ**  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6427-9026>

Institute for Educational Research, Belgrade

Miloš JANKOVIĆ

*Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory
of the University of Belgrade*

Abstract:

Building upon ideas on the importance of conflict for social action and role that selective tradition and hidden curriculum have in society, the aim of this paper is to analyse the way in which conflicts are presented in the 8th grade elementary school textbooks. Content analysis of the textbooks has been conducted. After noting every representation of each conflict and labelling the conflict as violent or nonviolent, five separate categories have been defined by the means of induction, representing different types of conflicts: 1. international; 2. intranational; 3. conflicts

* This research was funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia (Contract No. 451-03-9/2021-14/200018).

This article was realised with the support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, according to the Agreement on the realisation and financing of scientific research.

** mradulovic@ipi.ac.rs

for improvement of position of a specific group; 4. conflicts between individuals; 5. intellectual conflicts. The first four types of conflicts represent social conflicts in a narrow sense, while the fifth type is based on Apple's notion of intellectual conflict. Results show that intellectual conflicts are almost non-existent. Among social conflicts in a narrow sense, the most common are international conflicts, which are, at the same time, the most violent. Other types of conflicts, such as those representing struggle of one population group for improvement of their position, are less common, and are mostly represented as nonviolent.

Key words: education, selective tradition, hidden curriculum, social conflicts, Michael Apple.

If we perceive education as a potential initiator of progressive changes in society, it seems necessary to distance from the common activist approaches which emphasize free education available to everyone. Certainly, such requests should not be neglected, but contextualized. The battle halting at the idea of free education for everyone would be insufficient (perhaps even counterproductive), if we neglect other important facts regarding the role of school in society.

In order to understand the role of school better, Gramsci's concept of hegemony could be helpful. Simply put, it refers to the way in which different institutions are used for "acquiring consent and winning over people for the ideology of the ruling class". (Stanković - Pejnović 2020, 408). Hegemony is

not a form of physical coercion, but something “which saturates the society to such an extent” that as Gramsci put it “even constitutes the limit of common sense for most people under its sway”, and could be seen as totality of soft power (Williams 1973, 8).

Schools, as well as other educational institutions, have a great potential for exercising this kind of power and play an important role in constitution of common sense. They make it possible “that institutions, common-sense rules, and knowledge are seen as relatively pre-given, neutral, and basically unchanging” (Apple 2004, 78). In that sense, when thinking about school in the context of progressive social changes, it is vital to understand the *normality* that school creates, as well as who benefits from such normality.

Schools create *normality* by different means. Some involve evaluation process and physical organisation of space, and others the content being taught (or overlooked) at schools. This paper presents analysis of the content of school textbooks, and attempts to determine what kind of perspective and message is offered to students. In that sense, the topic of analysis will be the presence or absence of social and intellectual conflicts in the eighth grade elementary school textbooks. Although there are numerous studies regarding representation of conflicts in education, the most common goal of these studies is to evaluate whether the manner in which conflicts are represented supports their resolution (Davies 2003; Tomlinson and Benefield 2005; Bickmore 2006). The goal and theoretical standpoints of this paper are significantly different from such studies. Building upon Michael Apple’s notion of conflict as something not necessarily bad and in need of resolution, this paper will attempt to understand what kind of normality is created by its representation.

ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF REPRESENTATION OF CONFLICTS IN EDUCATION

Bases for this paper are Michael Apple's ideas presented in his well-known book "Ideology and Curriculum". By observing education in America, Apple attempted to make a connection between curriculum, social and intellectual conflicts, and legitimisation of certain type of normality (common sense - Apple 2004). In order to comprehend his claims adequately, it is necessary to offer definitions of certain terms and concepts, such as: social conflict, selective tradition and hidden curriculum. They will be followed by his argumentation which, at the same time, presents theoretical basis for this paper.

According to Coser, social conflict is defined as "a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals" (Coser 2001, 8). This definition will be used in this paper for two reasons. First, unlike other authors, Coser emphasises that social conflict is not fought over any but "significant goods and values" (Đukić 2018, 196). This is important as it emphasises political connotation of conflict. Second, when talking about positive functions of social conflict, Apple makes a reference to Coser's definition.

Building upon Coser's ideas, Apple improves his understanding of conflict by introducing intellectual conflict. Although this kind of conflict is not necessarily different from social conflict, it could remain unnoticed in Coser's definition. Intellectual conflict could be understood as struggle of different scientific and interpretive paradigms. This type of conflict needs to be perceived from the perspective of social conflict, as intellectual struggles are socially located and occur for "significant goods and values". Apple underlines that inside scientific community "invisible battle for the limited amount of prestige available" is fought and that this prestige could be transferred either to cultural or economical capital (Apple 2004, 84). In other words, intellectual struggles often exceed scientific field.

Regarding selective tradition, our theoretical background are the ideas of the author who influenced Apple's theory. Raymond Williams regards the culture of selective tradition to be a link between contemporary culture that can be experienced only by living community members, and the culture that existed in a particular period of time in the past. It could be said that selection is made from the entire culture of the particular period, so that contemporary culture can be explained and positioned in a particular way which is most commonly determined by particular values and interests (Williams 2006, 41–44). Selection regulates “that certain meanings and practices are chosen for emphasis” while “others are neglected, excluded, diluted, or reinterpreted” (Apple 2004, 77). Bearing this in mind, selective tradition makes an important part of hegemony.

Finally, this paper uses a somewhat different definition of hidden curriculum from the originally offered Philip Jackson's definition. This author defines aforementioned concept as follows: “As implied in the title of this chapter, the crowds, the praise, and the power that combine to give a distinctive flavour to classroom life collectively form a hidden curriculum which each student (and teacher) must master if he is to make his way satisfactorily through the school. The demands created by these features of classroom life may be contrasted with the academic demands of the “official” curriculum, so to speak, to which educators traditionally have paid the most attention” (Jackson 1990, 33–34). Apple also quotes Jackson, but offers a slightly broader definition that will make this concept more applicable for the analysis of textbooks presented in this paper. He defines hidden curriculum as: “norms and values that are implicitly, but effectively, taught in schools and that are not usually talked about in teachers' statements of ends or goals” (Apple 2004, 78–79).

After we have clarified meanings of relevant terms and concepts, it would be useful to observe how Apple connects them. According to him, school plays an important role within hegemonic construction of common sense. School is legitimizing the existing social and political status quo by creating the sense of normality and inevitability of the world we live in,

among students. The way in which conflict is treated in curriculum is one of the vital elements that explain this kind of influence made by school (Apple 2004, 77–78).

Apple takes into consideration the role of conflicts in curricula of both natural and social sciences. When it comes to natural sciences, Apple finds that curricula emphasize “consensus theory of science” (Apple 2004, 83). Scientific achievements are treated as “fairly isolated data one masters for tests” (Apple 2004, 82). Numerous conflicts are not presented to students, which “underemphasizes the serious disagreements over methodology, goals, and other elements that make up the paradigms of activity of scientists” (Apple 2004, 83). Representation of science development as cumulative and not dialectic, is empirically unfounded (Apple 2004, 84). Furthermore, it prevents students from noticing that “without disagreement and controversy science would not progress or would progress at a much slower pace” (Apple 2004, 83).

Apart from intellectual conflicts, serious social conflicts for prestige as a valuable commodity, are being fought within scientific communities (Apple 2004, 84–85). In that sense, “strong competitive element in the scientific community can encourage members to take risks, to outdistance their competitors, in effect, thereby increasing the possibility of new and exciting discoveries” (Apple 2004, 85).¹ Finally, “conflict is also heightened by the very normative structure of the scientific community itself” as one of the most important scientific norms is the norm of “organized scepticism” (Apple 2004, 85).

In part of the curricula referring to natural sciences, both intellectual and social conflicts are being confined from students. In this way children are denied knowledge of existence of conflict and its important purpose. By removing conflicts from the natural sciences curricula, the selection of tradition is performed. This selection creates two “tacit assumptions”. The first “centres around a negative position on the nature and uses of conflict” while

1 Competition in the scientific community could be understood as a form of social conflict as stakes are commodity of significant value, and the goal might be neutralization of the opponent (other actors within the scientific community).

“the second focuses on men and women as recipients of values and institutions, not on men and women as creators and recreators of values and institutions” (Ibid, 80). In other words, deleting conflicts from the natural sciences curricula implicitly suggests that conflicts are not a legitimate means of action and should therefore be eliminated. Children are implicitly taught that it is not their task to shape the world, but to learn to accept it as it is. These implicit messages sent by the means of selective tradition could be described as hidden curriculum.

When it comes to the social sciences curricula, there is a twofold delegitimization of conflicts. Firstly, curricula lack the representation of different “paradigms of viewing society” (Apple 2004, 87). This aspect of ignoring both social and intellectual conflict within the (social) scientific community could be understood in the same way as already described in natural sciences.² Curricula contain only those paradigms which represent “society as basically a cooperative system” (Apple 2004, 86). Conflict is treated as “not an essential feature of the network of social relations we call society” (Apple 2004). Secondly, Apple claims that in social sciences curricula not only are the positive aspects of conflicts not shown, but also the actual conflict is not mentioned at all; not even as a social phenomenon (Apple 2004, 89). He gives examples of conflicts which occurred in numerous racial and class struggles, as well as in struggles for emancipation of women. These sorts of conflicts are either non-existing in curricula, or there are no references of their importance “for developing a group consciousness and a cohesiveness not heretofore possible” (Apple 2004, 90).

Building upon Coser, Apple emphasises several functions of social conflicts. Some of the most important, and for this paper the most relevant, are “pointing to areas of needed redress” and creating group experience that supports cohesion. (Apple 2004, 91)

Bearing in mind all aforementioned, the set of assumptions that follow will be the basis for this paper. First, it will be regarded that represen-

2 For more information regarding the importance of the representation of interpretative conflicts in literature subjects, see: Graff 1987, 2008; 1993.

tation of intellectual conflicts can empower students to “participate in the social and political life of their community, which implies having a skill for negotiating different social arrangements” (Kolarić 2017, 210–211). In other words, representation of intellectual conflicts will be deemed as something that can support development of students as “creators of values and institutions”, while the lack of their representation in curricula shapes students into becoming passive recipients of “values and institutions”.

The second assumption will be that representation of social conflicts would point to the areas that need to be reformed, as well as a desired social group so as to identify with it and build cohesion within it. By analysing types of conflicts represented in, or omitted from curricula, we can identify the areas (not) suitable for reforming. Besides, we can identify social groups that are represented as potentially dangerous, in case their members develop group mentality, as well as socially desirable groups for students to identify with. If lack of representation of intellectual conflicts shapes students into recipients of values, the type of social conflict that is (not) represented in curricula suggests the (un)desirable values to which students are referred.

Analysis of representation of social and intellectual conflicts will be conducted on textbooks as one of the basic teaching tools. It could be argued that textbooks present “type of program documentation” (Plut 1994, 12). In that sense, they “present, in a relatively objective manner, standard or norm which school system is trying to achieve” (Rosandić 1994, 43). Besides, textbooks are means through which school aims to achieve its socialization role, hence they contain “norms, wishes, ideas regarding the most desirable relations” i.e., “rules that need to be adhered” (Plut 1994, 12–13). Bearing all this in mind, it seems that textbooks might be a key point for analysing and understanding Apple’s concepts of selective tradition and hidden curriculum.

METHODOLOGY

Starting from the previously mentioned insights regarding (1) importance of conflict for (social) action; (2) role that educational selective tradition and hidden curriculum have in society; and (3) specific significance that textbooks have for educational process; the aim of this paper is to analyse the way in which conflicts are presented in the written content of the 8th grade elementary school textbooks (lessons, literary texts used, questions for discussion, etc.). Since the research conducted is explorative by nature, no explicit hypotheses have been formed. Nonetheless, based on some previous studies (Rosandić 1994) and Apple's insights it could have been expected that different interpretations will not be present and that representation of national conflicts would be dominant. Furthermore, we relied both on Coser's and Apple's definition of "conflict", trying to give the conflict the broadest possible meaning, in order to enable analysis of representation of different kinds of conflict (social in the narrow sense, and intellectual). In that sense, every implicit or explicit confrontation between two or more actors over scarce goods is regarded as conflict, regardless of whether those actors are individuals, collectivities (e.g. states), or ideas (opposing theories and interpretations), and whether those goods are territory, power, reputation or something else.

In order to select textbooks for the analysis of depiction and frequency of the represented conflicts, the first step was to review educational content provided by official curriculum, in order to determine in which textbooks we can expect a conflict to be presented (Rulebook on the curriculum for the eighth grade of primary education 2019). Educational contents for each subject were inspected to determine whether there were contents that could lead to representation of conflicts in the textbook. In this way, the curricula for all mandatory subjects were analysed (curricula for elective subjects and foreign languages were not analysed). It is important to note that in order to conclude with certainty which textbooks might contain repre-

sentation of conflict, it would be necessary to know all educational contents mentioned in the program. Being aware of this limitation, the authors of this research independently analysed curricula, and in further research included the textbooks for which at least one of them concluded to potentially contain representation of conflict. The result of this process was the analysis of textbooks for the following subjects: history (curricula covers content such as revolution in Russia and Europe, World War II, etc.), Serbian language (because of numerous literary works and topics like the language reform of Vuk Karadžić), geography (topic of integration and disintegration processes), biology (topic of evolution and the human impact on the environment), arts (because of different war themed art pieces). The subsequent process included choosing the textbook used in most of the schools³. In this way we decided to analyse textbooks for history, geography and biology issued by Zavod za udžbenike, Serbian language reading book published by Klett and arts textbook printed by BIGZ.

Content analysis of the textbooks was conducted in two phases. The first step was noting every representation of each conflict, amount of space dedicated to each conflict⁴, as well as labelling the conflict as violent or non-violent. Afterwards, 5 separate categories were defined by the means of induction, that represented different types of conflict (1. international conflicts: between countries or different ethnic groups; 2. intranational: political party related conflicts, conflicts of different levels of governance for political power; 3. conflicts for improvement of position of a specific group of citizens: racial, class or gender related; 4. undefined social conflicts presented

3 Results of the selection of textbooks for each school are available on web page of the Ministry of Education: <http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/kompletirezultati.xlsx>

4 A paragraph was intended to be a unit of analysis. Nevertheless, the analysis was not conducted consistently. In the analysis of the reading book the paragraph could not be used as a unit of analysis, as it was not suitable for poems and other literary works in which conflict appeared as a theme throughout a literary work.

as conflicts between individuals⁵; 5. intellectual conflicts: between theories and interpretations) and each conflict was appointed to one category. Consequently, the first four types of conflicts represented social conflicts in the narrow sense, while the fifth type was based on Apple's notion of intellectual conflict.

Finally, some of the characteristics of represented conflicts which were difficult to quantify were also noted. In this part of the analysis, special attention was given to the words that were emphasised when describing a conflict (using bold text formatting, or their position in the text). Additionally, elements that were not (but regarding the topic of the textbook could have been) present in the textbook, were also accounted for. Such observations are undoubtedly less objective and less consistent than quantitative observations, though they can certainly contribute to a deeper understanding of the way in which conflicts are represented in the textbook.

RESULTS

In the analysis of the five selected textbooks, we have recorded some sort of conflict in 126 instances. As displayed in Table 1, the most common conflicts presented in the textbooks are international conflicts (54,3%), while the least represented ones are intellectual conflicts (3,1%).

5 While specific good over which conflict is held is clearly stated for the first 3 types of conflicts, when it comes to fourth group, the cause of conflict is left for reader to interpret. Hence, these conflicts are labeled just as "conflicts between individuals", without explicitly stating the good over which the conflict is fought. All of these conflicts are presented in Serbian language reading book.

Table 1. Representation of conflicts per category

Conflict category:	Number of representations
International conflicts	70 (54,3%)
Intranational conflicts	33(25,6%)
Racial, class or gender related conflicts	13(10,1%)
Conflicts of individuals	9(7,0%)
Intellectual conflicts	4(3,1%)
Total	129⁶

At the same time, among the represented conflicts, the most common ones are violent conflicts which most frequently appear in international conflicts (three-fifths of total conflicts in this category - Table 2)

Table 2. Violence in conflicts

Conflict category:	Violent	Non-violent	Not explicitly stated
International conflicts	42 (60%)	21 (30%)	7 (10%)
Intranational conflicts	17 (51,5)	10 (30,3)	6 (18,2)
Racial, class or gender related conflicts	3 (23,1%)	8 (61,5%)	2 (15,4%)
Conflict of individuals	1 (11,1)	7 (77,8)	1 (11,1)
Intellectual conflicts	0	4 (100%)	0
Total	63 (48,8%)	50 (38,8%)	16 (12,4%)

However, the data presented in such a way give a distorted picture vis-à-vis representation of conflicts in different textbooks. Namely, the vast majority of conflicts (112, or 88,9%) are represented in history textbooks.

6 In literary works, in 3 separate cases two types of conflicts intertwine (e.g. international and personal), so in these instances the same conflict is noted twice (in two separate categories) - thus a total number of 129 instead of 126 mentioned in the text.

The rest of the conflicts are represented in the Serbian language reading book, while the other three textbooks do not have a single representation of conflicts. Since most of the conflicts are represented in history textbooks, it comes as no surprise that distribution of these conflicts per category is similar to the summary view. Since in history textbooks it is possible to use paragraphs as a measure of the amount of space dedicated to a certain conflict, it should be noted that international conflicts, apart from being the most common ones, are also the conflicts to which most space is allocated.

As shown in Table 3, on average approximately 2 to 3 times more space has been given to representation of international conflict than to conflict from any other category.

Table 3. Representation of conflicts per category in history textbooks

Conflict category:	Number of representations	Space (paragraphs)
International conflicts	64(57,1%)	3
Intranational conflicts	33(29,5%)	1,6
Racial, class or gender related conflicts	12(10,7%)	1,4
Conflict of individuals	0	0
Intellectual conflicts	3(2,7%)	1
Total	112	2,4

Apart from violent conflicts being represented more often than non-violent conflicts and the ones where violence is not explicitly stated, each violent conflict in this textbook is allocated almost two times more space than the other types of conflict. Overrepresentation of violent conflicts is particularly noticeable in representation of international conflicts (which are most commonly represented as violent). On the one hand, the space allocated for each violent conflict is significantly larger than the space allocated for

representation of nonviolent conflicts. On the other, among conflicts that represent struggle of one group of citizens for their position (racial, class and gender related), the vast majority are nonviolent conflicts (Table 4).

Table 4. Violence of conflicts in history textbooks

Conflict category:	Violent		Non-violent		Not explicitly stated	
	Number of representations	Space (paragraphs)	Number of representations	Space (paragraphs)	Number of representations	Space (paragraphs)
International conflicts	38 (59,2%)	3,9	19 (29,7%)	1,9	7 (10,9%)	1,4
Intranational conflicts	17 (51,5%)	1,3	10 (30,3%)	2	6 (18,2%)	1,2
Racial, class or gender related conflicts	3 (25%)	1,3	7 (58,3)	1,2	2 (16,7%)	2
Conflicts of individuals	0	0	0	0	0	0
Intellectual conflicts	0	0	3 (100%)	1	0	0
Total	58 (51,8%)	3,1	39 (34,8%)	1,7	15 (13,4%)	1,4

As opposed to history textbooks, in Serbian language reading books representation of conflicts is much less common (only 14 conflicts altogether), therefore quantitative representation would be inappropriate. At the same time, small number of conflict representations is one of the main findings in the reading book analysis. It should be emphasised that conflicts are almost non-existent in the part of the reading book dealing with interpretations of literary works (it appears only on 3 occasions). Even when conflict is an essential part of a literary work, it has been neglected in the instructions

for its interpretation. Additionally, it should be stated that, compared to the history textbook, reading book shows mostly nonviolent conflicts. Furthermore, while there are no conflicts of individuals in history textbook, they are the most common conflicts in the reading book. As different literary works are collected in the reading book, in some cases international or class related conflicts are represented as conflicts of individuals, therefore these categories cannot be completely separated, which is one of the peculiarities of the reading book. The other peculiarity has already been mentioned in the methodology part of this paper. Namely, it has not been possible to use a paragraph as a content analysis unit, not only because some of the literary works are written in verse, but also because in prose literary works the idea of conflict is present throughout the work, so it could not be located in one paragraph only.

Finally, certain characteristics of represented conflicts could not be quantified and therefore were not analysed as systematically and exhaustively as the previously mentioned ones. Nonetheless, they represent excellent addition to the previously displayed results of content analysis. For example, although it is clear from previously said that conflicts are represented in small number of textbooks, some of our observations could suggest that lack of representation of conflicts in some textbooks is a matter of conscious avoidance. Namely, conflicts do exist in the areas that are part of curriculum, but they don't exist in textbooks. The best example of this can be found in the arts textbook, where it is peculiar that not only are conflicts absent from the written content, but also they seem to have been intentionally avoided in the paintings presented. The textbook covers the topic of cubism, and Picasso is represented by two pieces - "The Young Ladies of Avignon" and "The Ladies-in-waiting", while his most famous war themed painting ("Guernica") has been skipped. A similar way of avoiding representation of conflict, in this particular case intellectual conflict, could be seen in geography textbook. The stance that "integration processes are the precondition for progress" (Stamenković and Gatarić 2008, 123) is represented without the attempt to

problematize it, while definition of globalisation is given without offering pros and cons.

Apart from the not-represented conflicts, it is also important to emphasize certain characteristics of the represented conflicts, complementary with the findings of quantitative content analysis. Quantitative analysis has shown that the conflicts through which one group of people fights to improve their position (racial, class or gender related) are the least frequently represented as well as the least violent collective conflicts. This kind of representation is further emphasised by the fact that in some cases they are presented in marginalized sidebars (e.g. attempt of revolution in Russia - Rajić, Nikolić and Jovanović 2006, 13), in addition to their non-violence being emphasized by bolding that piece of information (12). Moreover, the fact that international conflicts are most common, party-related somewhat less common, and race/class/gender related least common, is not merely a matter of the content selection, but also of its interpretation. There is a noticeable tendency to interpret some of the conflicts which could be party-related as international (e.g. party-related conflicts in the Kingdom of Hungary – Rajić, Nikolić and Jovanović 2006, 62), and class-related as party-related (nineteenth-century conflicts between the rulers and the prince in Romania, or the Timok rebellion – Rajić, Nikolić and Jovanović 2006, 25, 40). Finally, it should be noted that marginalization of the conflicts for improvement of position of one group of population is aided by the fact that even when such conflicts are represented, their key characteristics are not mentioned. For example, in the representation of the February and October Revolution words as “class” and “class revolution” are not mentioned (Rajić, Nikolić and Jovanović 2006, 79–80).

DISCUSSION

One of the first findings of this paper would be that conflicts are represented in small number of the eight grade textbooks. This was expected after the review of the eight grade curricula, yet the analysis of the textbooks delivered more drastic findings, as conflicts were represented only in two textbooks. If we divide conflicts into two groups: social conflicts in a narrow sense (categories 1 to 4) and intellectual conflicts, there is a noticeable difference in their representation in favour of former, while latter are almost non-existent. Additionally, among few intellectual conflicts there is not a single one that could be characterized as a conflict between different science paradigms. Within the social conflicts in a narrow sense, not all categories are equally represented. The most common ones are international conflicts (between states and different ethnical groups), which are at the same time the most violent ones. Furthermore, some of the conflicts were presented as national, even though they could have been represented as political or class conflicts. These findings share common ground with previous studies, suggesting that not much has changed in the past 30 years when it comes to presence of patriotism as a motive in textbooks (Rosandić 1994). Other types of conflicts, such as those representing struggle of one group of population for the improvement of their position, are less common and mostly represented as nonviolent.

Ignoring intellectual conflicts deprives students of understanding the real dynamics of functioning of different social communities. Interpretations and social norms presented in textbooks seem as *naturally given*, as they do not demonstrate competitive scientific and interpretive positions. Besides, this approach neglects agency of scientists, theorists and interpreters who are working and creating in specific social context and whose results are often contradictory and opposing. Not showing intellectual conflicts in textbooks creates the image of both natural and socially-political reality as neutral by nature, whose evaluation and modification is both impossible and undesirable. The only thing left for students to do is discover the world “as is” and

adapt to it. In other words, complete lack of representation of intellectual conflicts in textbooks is an act of selective tradition which sends specific implicit messages to students. Those messages are a part of the hidden curriculum. The fact that they are not explicitly articulated does not make them less efficient. On the contrary, “*incidental learning* contributes more to the political socialization of student” than “deliberate teaching” of explicit messages (Apple 2004, 79). This kind of hidden curriculum shapes students into recipients instead of creators of norms, values and institutions. As this seemingly natural process affects students’ understanding of their role in society, it could be described as a part of broader hegemonic impact.

In order to understand which values and groups are implicitly (or in some cases explicitly) specified as desirable for students to identify with, we will use the analysis of conflict in a narrow sense. Firstly, individual conflicts represent only 7% of the total number of conflicts, or 7,2% of the social conflicts in a narrow sense. Since for the group identification and group cohesion, group (or collective) conflicts have a more important role, no special attention will be given to individual conflicts. It is important to understand in which way representation of different kinds of collective social conflicts in a narrow sense contributes to forming different group and value identifications. In that sense, a greater representation of collective than individual conflicts is of importance, and implies that social conflicts in a narrow sense can really be considered as creators of certain values.

When it comes to collective social conflicts in a narrow sense, the most common ones are international conflicts (59%). Significantly less represented are internal state conflicts, and only 15% of collective social conflicts are class, race and gender related conflicts. Based on this data, it could be argued that class, race and gender related struggles are often neglected in textbooks, even though history recognizes a significant number of such conflicts. Bearing in mind that representation of conflicts could suggest 1) which social issues are legitimate and 2) which groups are desirable for a person to identify with, the message sent to students by representing or omitting certain types of conflicts is obvious.

It could be argued that only conflicts related to defence of one ethno-national group from the attack of another ethno-national group are perceived as legitimate, that is, the only legitimate issues are the ones opposing the ethno-national expansion. Consequently, a group desirable for a person to identify with would be the ethno-national group. Furthermore, a number of internal state conflicts could suggest that struggles for political power are also legitimate. Nonetheless, taking into consideration the number of conflicts represented, the issues regarding relationship of one ethno-national group towards the other are perceived as more legitimate than internal struggles for political power. Class, race and gender related conflicts are scarcely represented in the eighth grade textbooks. This suggests that this type of struggle is often perceived as neither important nor legitimate. Additionally, these conflicts are often represented as non-violent ones, which sets a legitimate frame when it comes to class, race and gender related struggles. On the other hand, most of the international conflicts are represented as violent, which could be understood as justification of violence as a legitimate way of fighting for ethno-national goals.

If we understand the lack of representation of intellectual conflicts as a forming factor for making students recipients of values, group characteristics and social, political and economic institutions, then presence or absence of representations of certain types of social conflicts in a narrow sense sends another implicit message. It could be argued that students are left with the impression that the only legitimate conflicts allowing violent means are the ones fought in the name of ethno-national collective. Moreover, it seems apparent that for students, the most desirable identification is the one with these very groups. On top of that, the importance and value of class, race and gender related conflicts for understanding the social issues of community has been left at the margins, which makes identification of individuals with these groups unlikely.

This negative attitude towards class, race and gender related groups and issues could be attributed to hegemony that acts on the level of hidden curriculum and selective tradition. The same could not be said for the atti-

tude regarding ethno-national groups and conflicts. One of the explicit goals of the eight grade students' education is "development of national consciousness". Therefore, emphasis on this type of conflicts could be related to this publicly proclaimed goal (Rulebook on the curriculum for the eighth grade of primary education 2019). In other words, the image of ethno-national issues and identification with ethno-national groups could not be regarded as a hidden goal of educational politics. Although it acts in hegemonic fashion and affects conscientiousness, the students' attitude towards ethno-national collective could not be labelled as a product of hidden curriculum.

At last, it is necessary to point out some limitations of this study. Primarily, the analysis conducted covers only textual content and omits pictures which can also contain important information. Also, only the eighth grade textbooks have been analysed. Although this specific grade is selected because it represents the final year of compulsory studies, a more complete analysis could be made by including textbooks from the earlier grades. Moreover, representation of different types of conflicts has been analysed, but not whether they are presented in positive or negative manner. Besides, even though textbooks are basic teaching tools and thus directly affects teaching content, in order to fully understand representation of conflicts it would be beneficial to observe actual educational practices in the classroom as well as to conduct interviews with educational actors. All these limitations could also be regarded as pointers for future studies.

Despite its limitations, findings of this research provide a relevant basis for evaluation of the existing educational system. If the goal of education is development of competencies for living in a just society, as stated in official curriculum (Rulebook on the curriculum for the eighth grade of primary education 2019), numerous changes in education in Serbia are necessary. Apart from changes in curricula and textbooks directed towards greater representation of intellectual and social non-ethnic conflicts, a number of other elements of education also need to be changed. It would be beneficial for the teacher education to lead towards their better understanding of importance of representation of conflicts in education and being able to use the

represented conflicts for developing open-mindedness in students regarding re-examining existing knowledge, norms and values. These changes would lead not only to a better educational system, but also, consequently, to a more just society.

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PREDSTAVLJANJE KONFLIKATA U UDŽBENICIMA ZA OSMI RAZRED: ANALIZA IZ PERSPEKTIVE MAJKLA EPLA

Rezime: Polazeći od ideja koje govore o značaju sukoba za društvenu akciju i ulozu koju selektivna tradicija i skriveni kurikulum imaju u društvu, cilj ovog rada je bio da se analizira način na koji su konflikti predstavljeni u udžbenicima za osmi razred osnovne škole. U tu svrhu sprovedena je analiza sadržaja teksta udžbenika. Nakon izdvajanja svakog predstavljanja konflikta u udžbenicima i njihovog kodiranja kao nasilnog ili nenasilnog, induktivno je određeno pet kategorija sukoba: 1. međunarodni; 2. unutardržavni; 3. sukobi za unapređenje položaja jedne grupe stanovništva; 4. sukobi pojedinaca; 5. intelektualni sukobi. Prve četiri kategorije su predstavljale društvene sukobe u užem smislu, dok se peta kategorija zasnivala na Eplovoj ideji o intelektualnim sukobima. Rezultati istraživanja pokazuju da intelektualni sukobi gotovo da

nisu predstavljeni u udžbenicima. Među društvenim sukobima u užem smislu su najbrojniji međunarodni sukobi, koji su pritom češće prikazani kao nasilni od ostalih sukoba. Ostali tipovi sukoba, poput onih za unapređenje položaja jedne grupe stanovništva, ređe su prikazani i najčešće su opisani kao nenasilni.

Ključne reči: obrazovanje, selektivna tradicija, skriveni kurikulum, društveni sukobi, Majkl Epl.

Submitted: 10. VII 2020.

Reviewed: 12. VIII 2020.

Accepted: 11. IX 2020.

