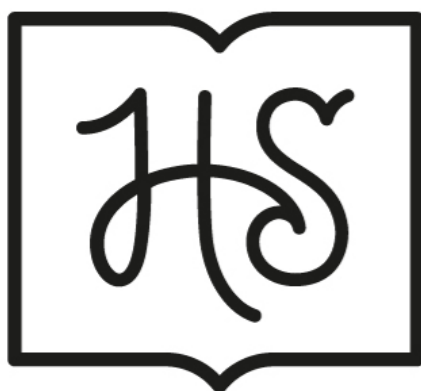


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## Pedagogy as part of university education in Slovakia – historical and contemporary perspective.<sup>2</sup>

Blanka KUDLÁČOVÁ

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### ABSTRACT

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#### *Pedagogy as part of university education in Slovakia – historical and contemporary perspective*

This paper presents and analyses the process of constitution of Pedagogy as an independent academic discipline in Slovakia after formation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918. The first part of the paper deals with origination of the Faculty of Arts, Comenius University in Bratislava (1919); the second part pays attention to the origination of the Seminar of Education and beginnings of teaching of pedagogy at the given faculty, based on archival research findings; and the third part of the paper outlines a strife for the character of pedagogy after the socio-political changes in 1989. In the period of socialism, which lasted in Czechoslovakia from 1948 to 1989, pedagogy lost its international character and was influenced exclusively by the Russian pedagogy based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism. A more complex reflection of pedagogy of this period has been missing so far, which represents a challenge for us, historians of education.

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Pedagogy as an independent academic discipline became a part of university education in Slovakia a little later than in the neighbouring countries, which has its historical justification. The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 meant for Slovaks a negative interference into the process of national emancipation, which according to Škvarna (2012), started retarding. Čečetka, in his publication *Zo Slovenskej pedagogiky* (tr. *From the Slovak Pedagogy*), points out the negative elements which were already intervening in the sovereign culture and education of the Slovak nation after the revolution in 1848. According to him, the Compromise “opened the gates wide for Magyarisation” (Čečetka 1940, p. 67).

The situation changed with the formation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, when a new stage in the history of the Slovak statehood began. One of the primary tasks became the restoration and building-up of education connected to the urgent need of education of new

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<sup>2</sup>The study originated with the support of the project of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic: VEGA No. 1/0263/14 *Educational Thinking in Slovakia from 1918 to Present*.

generations for individual fields of political, social and economic life. A central governing authority – the Ministry of Education and National Awareness (further MENA) based in Prague, with a subordinated Department of Education (orig. *Školský referát*) based in Bratislava – was established. It was the first institution that managed education in Slovakia. According to Kudláčová (2014), the biggest problem for Slovak pedagogy in this period was a missing generation of Slovak pedagogues as well as institutions in which educational science would develop and new generations of teachers would be trained.<sup>3</sup>

### **Establishment of the Faculty of Arts, Comenius University in Bratislava**

In the period of the first Czechoslovak Republic (1918–1938) Comenius University (CU) in Bratislava was the only university in Slovakia that provided education in the field of humanities and social sciences. It was established by a law in 1919 and immediately upon its origination the first doubts about the establishment of the Faculty of Arts were expressed. They regarded mainly the issue of staffing of individual fields by Czechoslovak professors, but also the issue of a low level of the Slovak language of secondary school students, which they could only study after 1918 (Hanuš – Weingart 1925). However, strong rational reasons overcame these doubts. The Faculty of Arts was meant to become:

1) a bastion of national awareness in humanities and social sciences, 2) a scientific centre in the field of research in Slovakia, 3) a cultural and educational institute of Slovakia (ibid.).

It is interesting that even before the Faculty of Arts was established and before the first Professor Assembly was appointed, the “Extension of Prague Universities” held, following the interest of their former secretary M. Weingart, a fourteen-day courses for teachers of burgher schools (orig. *meštianske školy*) and public schools (orig. *obecné školy*) in Bratislava in July 1921 (Hanuš – Weingart 1925, p. 63). These were the first university lectures at the Faculty of Arts. They were held in the County House (orig. *Župný dom*) in Bratislava and they were attended by 389 participants, which demonstrates a great interest (ibid.). The goal of the lectures was to provide a comprehensive picture of Slovakia from a philological point of view and historical point of view. Among the speakers was the only Slovak, Milan Hodža, an outstanding Slovak politician and statesman; the rest of the professors were from Czech universities.

During the course of lectures a decision to establish the Faculty of Arts and to begin with lectures immediately after appointing the Professor Assembly was made. Historical facts confirm it: on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1921 the President of the Republic appointed the first Professor Assembly<sup>4</sup> and nine days after the appointment, on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1921,<sup>5</sup> the first meeting of

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<sup>3</sup>The Slovak students at institutes of education, too, studied in Hungarian during the period of the monarchy (Kázmerová 2012, p. 14).

<sup>4</sup>The first Professor Assembly consisted of: Prof. Hanuš (history of Czech literature), Prof. Škultéty (philology and Slovak literature), Prof. Orel (music science), Prof. Pražák (contemporary Czech and Slovak literature), Prof. Chotek (geography), Prof. Heidler (modern history), Prof. Weingart (Slavic philology) (Weingart 1925, p. 64).

the Professor Assembly was held. Lectures began on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1921. Professors Hanuš and Weingart describe it as follows: “We felt that we were starting a new period in our life as well as in the cultural life of Slovakia” (Hanuš – Weingart 1925, p. 64). It can be said that the establishment of the Faculty of Arts CU was the Czech professors’ work. There was only one Slovak (Prof. Škultéty) among the seven founding professors, one professor lectured at the Masaryk University in Brno (Prof. Orel) and five professors lectured at Charles University in Prague. It is reasonable to ask what the goal of the enormous activity and engagement of the Czech professors in favour of the new Slovak philosophical faculty was. Professors Hanuš and Weingart state the following in the preface to the first volume of a book of scientific papers of the Faculty of Arts CU from 1921: “Our aim is clear: to represent our scientific fields fairly despite all the difficulties and obstacles, to educate our students, especially Slovaks, rigorously and to contribute to real *critical* solutions of Slovak scientific problems as long as our strength allows – in one word, regardless of other aspects, to fulfil the task of a researcher and a teacher. That is the meaning of our activity in Slovakia and for Slovakia” (Weingart 1925, p. 203).

### **Beginnings of the Seminar of Education and Teacher Training at the Faculty of Arts, Comenius University**

The establishment of the Seminar of Education, as the first academic institution focused on the development of scientific pedagogy and teacher training in Slovakia ever, was literally dependent on the help of the Czech professors, like in other fields. The first mention of a need and provision of teacher training at the Faculty of Arts CU in Bratislava was found in the *Protocol of the Professor Assembly Meeting from 20<sup>th</sup> January 1921* (orig. *Protokol zo schôdze Profesorského zboru zo dňa 20. januára 1921*). Prof. Pražák proposed Dr. Otokar Chlup, an associate professor of pedagogy at Masaryk University in Brno, to supply teacher training already in 1922.<sup>6</sup> The proposal was adopted unanimously. In the same protocol, Weingart pointed out “the significance of lectures on pedagogy and he holds their provision acute, since according to the Examination Regulations, students have to take a pedagogical-didactic exam after the 4<sup>th</sup> semester, and they have to declare beforehand that they attended lectures on pedagogy.”<sup>7</sup> Based on the proposal of the Professor Assembly, MENA deputed Chlup “to supply 5 lectures on pedagogy and 2 seminars in the same field” beginning in the academic year 1922/23 by a letter No. 92247/22.<sup>8</sup> Lectures on pedagogy have become a part of education at the Faculty of Arts CU in winter term 1922/23.

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<sup>5</sup>Archives of the Comenius University (further on CU), Faculty of Arts CU, Coll. A-1, 1921–1931, box No. 5, The Protocol on the Meeting of the Professor Assembly of the Faculty of Arts, CU in Bratislava from 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1921.

<sup>6</sup>Archives of the CU, Faculty of Arts CU, Coll. A-1, 1921–1931, box No. 5, The Protocol on the Meeting of the Professor Assembly of the Faculty of Arts, CU in Bratislava from 20<sup>th</sup> January 1922, pp. 1-2.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Archives of the CU, Faculty of Arts CU, Rectorate Coll., Personnel Department, reg. mark. B II/2, personal file of prof. Otokar Chlup, box No. 73.

I discovered that MENA approved the Statutes of the Seminar of Education, Faculty of Arts, CU in Bratislava by a letter No. 143.609/IV on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1923,<sup>9</sup> however, the wording itself was not found in the archives. The Seminar of Education started its activity in the academic year 1923/24. A model for organisation of the Bratislava-based Seminar of Education was the Seminar of Education at Charles University in Prague, which was established by Prof. Gustav Adolf Lidner in 1882. The Seminar shaped three Czech professors of pedagogy, namely Prof. Otokar Chlup (1923–1927), Prof. Josef Hendrich (1928–1937) and Prof. Jan Uher (1937–1938), who led the Seminar of Education in Bratislava since its establishment until 1938. It can be assumed that they implemented aims, methods and forms of education organisation similar to those in the Prague-based seminar. The period, during which the Seminar of Education was led by the Czech professors, can be labelled as the first stage in its development.

Statutes written by Prof. Hendrich from 7<sup>th</sup> April 1932 were found in the archives of the CU.<sup>10</sup> They contain 10 points within one page, in the A4 format. The focus of the Seminar of Education can be found in the 1<sup>st</sup> point, “The purpose of the Seminar of Education is to educate its members for an independent scientific work in the field of pedagogy. Issues related to secondary school in particular need to be taken into account both from the theoretical and practical perspective”. A definition of the content of seminars is also interesting (point 3): “Seminars include: reading and explication of pedagogical documentation, experiments in the field of pedagogy and didactics, reviews of contemporary pedagogical documentation, independent lectures of the members, individual written assignments”. The Seminar of Education had a reference library at its disposal too (point 8). The director of the Seminar had to submit a report about its activity to MENA at the end of each year (point 9). The Statutes of the Seminar of Education from 1940, approved by MENA by a letter No. 37.757/40-IV/1c from 15<sup>th</sup> November 1940,<sup>11</sup> whose author is Čečetka, were also found in the same archival collection. It is a more extended work than the statutes from 1932. It consists of 16 points spread across of three pages, in the A4 format. The aim of the Seminar of Education was very similar, “to educate its members for independent scientific work in pedagogy, to train them from the perspective of methodology of education for practical school needs, mainly for teacher practice at secondary schools” (1<sup>st</sup> point). In the 5<sup>th</sup> point of the statutes he speaks of establishment of the Second state Slovak grammar school in Bratislava as well as a practice school for the needs of the Seminar of Education.

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<sup>9</sup>Archives of the CU, Faculty of Arts CU, Coll. A-1, 1921–1931, box No. 5, The Protocol on the Meeting of the Professor Assembly of the Faculty of Arts, CU in Bratislava from 10<sup>th</sup> November 1923, Part IV. Missives, Point 19.

<sup>10</sup>Archives of the CU, Rectorate CU, Coll. C-9, 1921–1931, box No. 96, Statutes of the Seminar of Education.

<sup>11</sup>Archives of the CU, Rectorate CU, Coll. C-9, 1921–1931, box No. 96, letter MENA No. 37.757/40-IV/1c from 15<sup>th</sup> November 1940.



Methodology practice (point 6), which is held in three-semester cycles, is new to the statutes; it is an equivalent of today's teaching practice.<sup>12</sup>

Regarding the arrangement and relationship of pedagogy to other scientific fields, a proposition made by Prof. Weingart related to systemisation of departments at the Faculty of Arts CU was found in a protocol from the 1<sup>st</sup> extraordinary meeting of the Professor Assembly from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1926.<sup>13</sup> From my point of view, it is the first attempt of this kind, since no similar reference was found in the minutes from the previous period. The proposition classifies individual disciplines into four scientific fields: I. Philosophical Sciences, II. Geography and Ethnography, III. Historical Sciences and IV. Philological Sciences. The Seminar of Education was one of the four departments within philosophical sciences, alongside with two departments of philosophy (with a different specialisation) and a department of psychology.<sup>14</sup>

Regarding the character of pedagogy, it was influenced by personalities who led the Seminar of Education. Since it concerned three Czech professors of pedagogy in the first stage, it is obvious that their opinion platform within the discussion on the character of pedagogy in the interwar Czechoslovakia influenced the direction of pedagogy in the seminar in Bratislava. The discussion regarded a dispute between a quantitative conception (positivist and later pragmatic and behaviouristic) and a philosophical, spiritual-scientific conception (known also as the Příhoda – Chlup dispute). According to Kasper/Kasperová, the discussion was “a proof of scientific maturity on one hand and scientific openness of the Czech interwar pedagogical theory on the other” (Pánková – Kasperová – Kasper 2015, p. 14).

Otokar Chlup (1875–1965) led the seminar in the first years of its existence (1923–1927). He was left-oriented<sup>15</sup> and firmly anchored in classical European culture, which caused his resistance to an exaggerated degree towards new pedagogical movements. Chlup distanced himself from Příhoda's reformism due to its quantitative character, however, he sympathised with the movement of new schools promoted by the Swiss pedagogue Ferriere. His broad scope and an excellent overview can be seen in the range of courses he taught at the Seminar

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<sup>12</sup>The first semester was focused on familiarity with curricula, textbooks and special methodology of individual subjects; the second semester paid attention to observations in practice classrooms and their critical evaluation and the third semester concerned with observations and teaching practice (ibid.).

<sup>13</sup>Archives of the CU, Faculty of Arts CU, Coll. A-1, 1921–1931, box No. 5, The Protocol on the Meeting of the Professor Assembly of the Faculty of Arts CU in Bratislava from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1926, The Protocol on Normalisation of Departments (Prof. Weingart's proposal for the systematisation of departments at the Faculty of Arts CU).

<sup>14</sup>In the first year of the existence of the Faculty of Arts only courses from the field of philology, history and music science were taught. Weingart's proposal makes it obvious that philological sciences (17 departments) and historical sciences (8 departments) had a dominant position among the total number of departments (34 departments) (ibid.).

<sup>15</sup>O. Chlup joined the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in 1921. From 1919 he worked in the J. A. Comenius Institute of Education in Prague (orig. *Pedagogický ústav J. A. Komenského v Prahe*) and participated in the establishment of the School of Higher Pedagogical Studies (orig. *Škola vysokých štúdií pedagogických*) in Prague (1921) and in Brno (1922). He also gave lectures at the School of Higher Pedagogical Studies and he led it after 1925. He was also an associate professor at Masaryk University in Brno.

of Education.<sup>16</sup> Chlup was not embedded in Slovakia like his successor Hendrich. Čečetka, in an evaluation report on Chlup's significance to Slovak pedagogy, expressed himself diplomatically, "professor Chlup's interest in pedagogical activity in Czech lands did not allow him to expand his work in Bratislava and to anchor himself more permanently" (Čečetka 1955, p. 147). In February 1924 Chlup informed the Professor Assembly of the faculty, in a written form, that he had requested MENA for an exemption from the lecture load beginning in 1924/25.<sup>17</sup> It is not clear if it was connected to the delay with regard to professorship (the proposal was approved at the faculty on 6<sup>th</sup> May 1924<sup>18</sup>) or with his prolific publication activity, lecturing and organisational activities. Based on the above mentioned delays, which are recorded in several minutes of the Professor Assembly,<sup>19</sup> in April 1926, Josef Hendrich, an associate professor of pedagogy at Charles University in Prague, was approached regarding substitution.<sup>20</sup> MENA approved the substitution by a letter No. 392/27-28, beginning in the winter term 1927/28.<sup>21</sup>

Prof. Josef Hendrich (1888–1950) led the Seminar of Education in 1928–1937 and he impacted on it the most out of the three Czech pedagogues. Hendrich accepted the Slovak culture and environment we could consider it to be enculturation. He was an excellent Comeniologist and in the Seminar of Education he delivered lectures on history of pedagogy and education with respect to Slovak history, general pedagogy, pedagogical psychology, didactics, methodology and organisation of education. In the then discussion on the character of pedagogy in Bohemia he inclined to the philosophically oriented pedagogy and criticised empirically-oriented pedagogy and Příhoda's reform (*Filosofické proudy v současné pedagogice*, 1926). On 31<sup>st</sup> March 1931 he was appointed a full professor of pedagogy at the Faculty of Arts CU.<sup>22</sup> During his time in Slovakia Hendrich also established the State Academy of Education in Bratislava (orig. *Štátna pedagogická akadémia v Bratislave*) and became its first director (1930–1937). In 1937 he left for Prague, to a vacant professor

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<sup>16</sup>Courses: History of Educational Theories Since Renaissance; History of Modern Pedagogy; Experimental Pedagogy; Chapters from Pedapathology; Reading and Explication of Claparede's Work; Childhood Psychology and Pedagogical Experimentation; Works: Child Psychology; Didactics Fundamentals; Emotions and Willingness Psychology; Reading and Explication of Thorndike's Treatise *On Education* and *Education Psychology*; Secondary-School Didactics and Analyses of Secondary-School Textbooks (List of Lectures at the CU in Bratislava in 1923/24–1925/26, AS CU, Bratislava).

<sup>17</sup>Archives of the CU, Faculty of Arts CU, Coll. A-1, 1921–1931, box No. 5, The Protocol on the Meeting of the Professor Assembly of the Faculty of Arts CU in Bratislava from 28<sup>th</sup> February 1924, Part II. Missives, Point 11.

<sup>18</sup>Archives of the CU, Faculty of Arts CU, Coll. A-1, 1921–1931, box No. 5, The Protocol on the Meeting of the Professor Assembly of the Faculty of Arts CU in Bratislava from 6<sup>th</sup> May 1924, Part V. Reports, Point 47.

<sup>19</sup>Archives of the CU, Faculty of Arts CU, Coll. A-1, 1921–1931, box No. 5, The Protocol on the Meeting of the Professor Assembly of the Faculty of Arts CU in Bratislava from 6<sup>th</sup> May 1924, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1926, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1927, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1927.

<sup>20</sup>Archives of the CU, Faculty of Arts CU, Coll. A-1, 1921–1931, box No. 5, The Protocol on the Meeting of the Professor Assembly of the Faculty of Arts CU in Bratislava from 10<sup>th</sup> April 1926, II. Dean's Information, Point 3 and a copy of the letter.

<sup>21</sup>Archives of the CU, Faculty of Arts CU, Rectorate Coll., Personnel Department, reg. mark B II/2, personal file of prof. Josef Hendrich, box No. 73.

<sup>22</sup>Archives of the CU, Faculty of Arts CU, Rectorate Coll., Personnel Department, reg. mark B II/2, personal file of prof. Josef Hendrich, box No. 60.

position at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University. According to Pšenák (2005), the most appreciated of Hendrich's works, from the perspective of the Slovak educational community, is *Ako sa kedysi na Slovensku študovalo* (1937) (tr. *How We Once Studied in Slovakia*). His greatest achievement in the development of education in Slovakia was the fact that he gained Juraj Čečetka for Slovak pedagogy, who habilitated during the last year of Hendrich's stay at the Faculty of Arts (4<sup>th</sup> June 1937).

The last of the three Czech professors who headed the Bratislava-based Seminar of Education was Professor Jan Uher (1891–1942), who led it in the academic year 1937/38. He worked at the Faculty of Arts in 1937–1939 and he was also a director of the State Academy of Education in the same period. Uher focused on the field of general education, civic education, didactics as well as new educational and psychological trends which he was critical of (*Základy americkej výchovy*, 1936; tr. *Foundations of American Education*). Together with Chlup they represented the so called Brno wing of the Czech school of education having a very critical attitude to the reform of Příhoda (Uhlířová 2013). After the declaration of Slovak autonomy, Uher, alongside with the rest of the Czech professors, received a layoff decree and had to leave the territory of Slovakia.<sup>23</sup>

The above mentioned Czech professors inclined to a philosophically oriented pedagogy and were critical toward the quantitatively-oriented pedagogical trend and pedagogical pragmatism. It can be deduced that their lectures on pedagogy in the Seminar of Education in Bratislava in 1923–1938 were oriented the same way.

The second stage in the development of the Seminar of Education dates back to 1938, when the first Slovak, Juraj Čečetka, became its director. Čečetka (1907–1983) is considered to be a founder of scientific pedagogy in Slovakia and he is also the first Slovak university professor of pedagogy in Slovakia.<sup>24</sup> During his studies at Charles University in Prague he met O. Kádner, who influenced him in the field of pedagogy and F. Krejčí and V. Příhoda, who influenced him in the field of psychology. The impact of these strong personalities led Čečetka to a decision that influenced his professional career permanently: to deal with a science that represented a synthesis of psychology and education – educational psychology (Kudláčová 2013). Already during his studies in Prague he volunteered in Pedological Institute and Psychotechnical Institute, which later opened the opportunity to work in the Psychotechnical Institute in Bratislava (since 1928). This is where he met his life-long friend, the founder of psychology in Slovakia, Anton Jurovský. The focus on the problems of the youth led Čečetka to cooperation with pedagogues who worked at the Seminar of Education at the Faculty of Arts CU in Bratislava at that time. As suggested earlier, under the impact of prof. Hendrich he started to concentrate on the field of education and he habilitated in pedagogy. In the academic year 1937/1938 he began to give lectures on pedagogy at the

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<sup>23</sup>Archives of the CU, Faculty of Arts CU, Rectorate Coll., Personnel Department, reg. mark B II/2, personal file of prof. Jan Uher, box No. 195, letter No. 130.823/38-IV.

<sup>24</sup>Čečetka studied at a traditional Hungarian grammar school in Lučenec, where he graduated in 1925. After the graduation he studied philosophy and French at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague and he attended lectures on psychology.

Seminar of Education as the first Slovak. He was appointed a full professor in pedagogy in 1940.

The period of WWII was scientifically very fruitful in Čečetka's life. He published notable works in the field of pedagogy: *Zo slovenskej pedagogiky* (tr. *From Slovak Pedagogy*) (1940), *Príručný pedagogický lexikón* (tr. *Lexicon of Pedagogy*) in two volumes (1943) and *Úvod do všeobecnej pedagogiky* (tr. *Introduction to General Pedagogy*) (1944). After WWII and the termination of the Slovak State, based on the results of the so called "verification of professors", Čečetka could not perform activities that he was entitled to by his full professorship until 1946. After 1947 he continued in his intensive publication activity, published the work *Výber zo slovenských pedagógov* (tr. *Selection of Slovak Pedagogues*) and a two-volume university textbook *Pedagogika I. and II.* (tr. *Pedagogy I and II*) (1947 and 1948). Čečetka's work from the 1940s represents the fundamentals of scientific pedagogy in Slovakia. He was also active in the field of journal founding: in 1934 he founded a journal *Pedagogický zborník* (tr. *Pedagogical Proceedings*) and a journal for parents *Dieťa* (tr. *Child*). Čečetka's great diligence can be seen in his bibliographical data – he published 556 titles, including 24 books (Miháľechová 2007). Čečetka's work cannot be strictly associated with a certain pedagogical conception. According to Wiesenganger (2014, p. 68), "he rather defines himself against individual authors and directions", he forms his own views and opinions; however, they were not synthesized. His caution could have been connected to two dictatorial political regimes which arose in Slovakia after 1938. Čečetka led the Seminar of Education until 1950, when under the Higher Education Act (No. 58/1950 Coll. of Laws of the Czechoslovak Republic) seminars were replaced by departments.<sup>25</sup>

### **Strife for the Character of Pedagogy and University Education after the Socio-Political changes in 1989**

The period of socialism, which lasted from 1948 to 1989 in Czechoslovakia, affected mainly humanities and social sciences, whose founding principle was Marxist ideology. Pedagogy was significantly influenced by the Russian school; contact with scientists from non-socialist countries was practically impossible. In 1989 important socio-political changes with a positive impact on the development of the Czech and Slovak nation took place in Czechoslovakia; the accompanying phenomenon was a great enthusiasm, a feeling of freedom and openness to the world. The year 1993 was marked by a peaceful separation of Czechoslovakia into two independent states: the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>In 1953 the *Department of Education and Psychology* was established at the Faculty of Arts CU Čečetka became its head. The department existed in changed political conditions (the rise of socialism in 1948), which was reflected in the character of pedagogy, too. On the basis of cadre interventions Čečetka had to leave the faculty in 1959 and could return only after a relaxation of the regime in 1969 (Prague Spring). Tough normalisation at the beginning of the 1970s caused Čečetka's final dismissal in 1971.

<sup>26</sup>In 2004 Slovakia became a member of the European Union.

After 1989 an “ideological dispute” between two worlds of thought occurred at departments of humanities and social sciences and this struggle for independent thinking takes place at many universities (as well as in society in general) even at present. The fact that pedagogy was isolated from the development of world pedagogy during the period of socialism caused its slump, even deformation. On the other hand, great progress can be noted in the field of organisation and system of education when compared to the interwar Czechoslovakia and from my point of view it was one of the best models ever. After 1989, the problem was how to de-ideologize a functioning and good system of education. The problem is more difficult than it may seem at first glance, because the teachers’ community was an influential bearer of the ideology during socialism. Teachers who graduated in the period of socialism and were active members of the Communist Party met at schools with teachers who studied in a free democratic system. A greater problem occurred in academic departments of Slovak universities, where a specific situation originated: departments of education could be led and staffed by the same scholars as in the period of socialism, since new scholars in the field of pedagogy were only just beginning to establish themselves.

Many mistakes were made in enthusiasm for 1989 at faculties of art and faculties of education, where educational science is developed and teachers are trained. Lacking a critical review, foreign conceptions of education started to be uncritically adopted. Pedagogy started to orientate to applied disciplines; basic research and basic educational disciplines started to be considered a kind of a relic just because they existed in a deformed form in the period of socialism. This confusing process led to “uprootedness” of pedagogy and has represented a challenge for pedagogues searching for its new foundations. However, entering expert discussions with foreign colleagues we found out that we are not alone in this process of searching.

The Bologna Process, whose implementation in Slovakia was launched by the Act of Higher Education from 2002, intervened in the organisation of university study significantly. The model of a three-year bachelor’s course, two-year master’s course and three-year’s doctoral study was applied in Slovakia. Since the Decree on Teacher’s Competence determines a master’s degree for a teacher, the division of the study into two stages is redundant and complicates the smooth course of a study with a negative impact on its quality.

What can be considered positive is the origination of new, non-teacher study programmes in the field of educational sciences: e.g. social pedagogy, andragogy, out-of-school time education. Up to 1989 it was possible to study teacher training of individual subjects, mainly a combination of two subjects and non-teaching programme pedagogy. Considering the demographic development, establishment of a study programme called gerontology will obviously occur in the near future.

## Conclusion

Juraj Čechetka can be definitely considered a founding personality of modern Slovak pedagogy. Starting in the 1930s he established contacts with the European and world



pedagogy and he had an ambition to develop pedagogy further. After the end of the WWII first indications of a new orientation, particularly toward the Soviet pedagogy, appeared; which meant a final parting with the developing pedagogy of the interwar period as well as the period of the Slovak state. In the period of socialism, which lasted in Czechoslovakia from 1948 to 1989, pedagogy lost its international character and was influenced exclusively by the Russian pedagogy based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism. A more complex reflection of pedagogy of this period has been missing so far, which represents a challenge for us, historians of education.

The contemporary arrangement of Europe and the world has brought new challenges and tasks in the field of education. Educational sciences need to be “re-thought” and new foundations found. Several contemporary authors from various parts of the world share an opinion that the reflection on the educational past can play an important role in the future orientation of educational sciences (Mc Culloch 2002; Carr 2004; Śliwerski 2006; Kasper 2008; Kudláčová 2006, 2014).

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