

UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE

Faculty of Political Science

Belgrade, September 2020

At the meeting of the Department of International Studies, held on 10 September 2020, the Master Thesis Defense Commission (hereby the Commission) for the candidate Milica Marković was formed with the following members: Prof. dr Natalija Perišić, doc. dr Goran Tepšić and prof. dr Nemanja Džuverović. The Council for the Second and Third Cycle of Studies has accepted the proposal made by the Department.

After reading the master thesis, the Commission is submitting the following report.

R E P O R T

The master thesis of Milica Marković entitled "Peace Education in schools of the Western Balkans" is comprised of four chapters alongside with the Introduction, Conclusion and the Reference list.

In the Introduction the candidate defines the aims of the research and addresses the reasons for choosing the topic. The candidate emphasizes the importance of implementation of Peace Education in both primary and secondary schools' curricula. The candidate is also extracting the importance of theories namely: social interdependence theory, constructive controversy theory and integrative negotiations theory in regard to the Peace Education's implications. The candidate depicts an overview of the named theories in connection with the Peace Education. The substantial lack of official and formal initiatives for the implementation of Peace Education in curricula is emphasized. However, NGOs in the Western Balkans have been particularly within the realm of Peace Education and the candidate also points out some of the substantial contributors to the peacebuilding initiatives and efforts.

The first chapter is entirely devoted to the relation of Pedagogy and Peace Education. The candidate initially provides a historical overview of Peace Studies as a scientific field. The periods pre, in between and post-wars were all marked by the Peace Educators' and Peace Activists' efforts in various manners. The institutionalization of Peace Studies took off after the World War II and the candidate is naming some of the most prominent institutions which, up

to this day represent pillars for the Peace Science. The candidate is portraying the competencies that children gain through classes dedicated to Peace Education. She then further sketches the importance of the classroom and its environment for the enhancement of peacebuilding skills acquisition.

The second chapter is dedicated to the three theories: social interdependence theory, constructive controversy theory and integrative negotiations theory in relation to Peace Education and pedagogical activities. Their implications are further elaborated. The candidate is making an effort to present their relevance in activities conducted during the lessons dedicated to Peace. The candidate is presenting the connections among students' acquisition of the peacebuilding skills and the before mentioned theories. All of the theories contain certain mutual characteristics which are beneficial for the implementation of the Peace Education. Secondly, the candidate is describing children's developmental phases and children's attitudes to conflict resolutions. She later elaborates the importance of mediation as a reconciliation process, especially when the children consequently become mediators themselves and conquer the obstacles on the way to the peaceful conflict resolution.

The third chapter is dealing with the case of Peace Education in the Western Balkans. The candidate is primarily providing a brief history of Peace Education in the region. She then deals with the two cases of Peace Education initiatives. Quaker Council for European Affairs and Nansen Dialogue Centre in Bosnia and Herzegovina and their enterprises are presented. Children of different ethnicities and religions have had chances to cooperate and work together while learning about the Peace and upgrading their skills crucial for young, empowered and democratic citizenship. Simultaneously, the candidate is dealing with the cases of Peace Education initiatives in the Republic of Serbia (i.e. Nansen Dialogue Centre Serbia, Lillehammer and Bujanovac and Schools of Mediation in Vojvodina)

The fourth chapter is devoted to Peace Educators' responsibilities and future and further implications of Peace Education, be that as a separate subject or within the already existing ones. It has been noticed that when implemented within other subject, Peace Education seems to resonate the most with all the parties, so the candidate is eliciting particular piece of advice for the further enhancement of Peace Education. She also depicts some of the potential threats and future dangers in regard to Education in general, with the particular insight in Peace Education.

In the conclusion the candidate is encapsulating the importance of instances such as Quaker and Nansen initiatives in relation to Peace Education. The findings have shown that the parties, be they in conflict or not, have to spend time together to get to know each before they

are even able to peacefully resolve conflicts. Direct contact humanizes the other one and it provides an insight into others' perspectives. The candidate is extracting the lack of initiatives in regard to Peace Education coming from the official governmental institutions. Hence candidate's conclusion that regardless of the named absence of interest or scarcity of sources Peace Education calls on motivated, eager and optimistic educators willing to implement its values in their teachings.

The Commission is convinced that the candidate Milica Marković has shown understanding of the nexus between peace and peace pedagogy. Also, the Commission is satisfied how the candidate has applied theoretical concepts in the empirical part of the paper. Based on this, the Commission concludes that the master thesis "Peace Education in schools of the Western Balkans" by Milica Marković fulfils all the formal criteria for the public defence.

The Commission:

Prof. dr Natalija Perišić

doc. dr Goran Tepšić

Prof. dr Nemanja Džuverović