

Zoran Janjetović

THE EDUCATION OF THE ETHNIC-GERMANS IN YUGOSLAVIA IN THE INTER-WAR PERIOD

Not by chance, the increasing of the importance of education overlapped with the increasing national consciousness with most European peoples. The school, becoming increasingly an instrument for education of subjects of an ever more national state, was allotted a growing role in shaping of their national consciousness. Therefore it is clear why the question of schools became and remained vital for most national minorities. It had similar importance also for national minorities in the Yugoslav territory – both before and after its foundation and both for the peoples who had been national minorities before the First World War, and for those who became minorities after 1912 or 1918. The relations between the Yugoslav peoples and the peoples who were national minorities in Yugoslavia were also reflected through the question of institutional education, being often the main bone of contention in their mutual relations. In this chapter we shall deal with the question of the Volksdeutsche education in the inter-war Yugoslavia.

The peoples who became national minorities in Yugoslavia, just like the Yugoslav peoples, developed, in terms of education and culture in general, under disparate conditions. The Swabians of the Vojvodina and Slavonia, although somewhat better off than their neighbours of other nationalities, had fewer schools than the more discriminated Serbs.

As in many other things, the situation in education in the Northern parts of Yugoslavia was quite different and much better than that in the Southern parts.¹ Unlike in the Southern parts of the country, a much tighter school network was built there until 1918.² This is, according to Martin Mayer, what the survey of literacy and education looked like around 1900 in the territories which were incorporated into Yugoslavia in 1918:³

Province	% of illiterate	# of primary schools	# of secondary schools	1 school per capita
Slovenia	18.2	679	25	47.222
Cro/Slavonia	54.4	1.536	22	119.180
Dalmatia	72.2	457	7	88.786
Vojvodina	34.5	1.200	16	84.185
Bosnia/Herz.	87.8	487	11	175.618
Serbia	79.0	1.425	22	132.350
Maced/Kosovo	?	381	20	83.240
Montenegro	?	136	2	119.212

¹ As for the Vlachs in the North-East of Serbia proper, they never had schools in their own language, and allegedly never asked for them. (T.R. Georgievitch, *The Truth Concerning the Rumanes in Serbia*, Paris 1919, p. 32.) In that indirect way too, they were denied recognition as a national minority, and therefore we leave them out of this work.

² In the Vojvodina on the eve of the First World War, that network was twice as developed as in Serbia proper, and four times more than in “Southern Serbia”. (M. Mayer, p. 53.)

³ M. Mayer, p. 54.

This (incomplete) table shows not only great regional differences in literacy levels, but differences in the level of civilization also can be discerned and visible, among other things, in the lack of statistics. There were differences in the level of literacy among different constituent parts within the Habsburg Monarchy. Here is the literacy rate in percentages in Hungary, Croatia and Austria in 1880 and 1910:⁴

Country	1880	1910	% above 6 years in 1910
Hungary	36.4	58.2	68.7
Croatia	20.6	44.0	52.6
Austria	34.5	56.4	66.7

These differences between various parts of the Monarchy were hiding differences between its various peoples. This is how literacy rate looked like in percentages in Hungary:⁵

People	1880	1910	% over 6 years in 1910
Hungarians	44.6	67.0	79.2
Germans	56.8	70.4	82.2
Slovaks	32.9	58.0	69.7
Romanians	9.4	28.2	33.1
Ruthenians	7.3	22.7	27.9
Croats	19.8	47.0	56.0
Serbs	19.8	40.4	48.0

This is how the illiteracy rate of members of different nationalities looked like in percentages in Croatia in 1900:⁶

People	men	women
Germans	26.7	35.4
Serbs & Croats	63.3	77.2
Hungarians	48.3	61.1
Czechs	22.2	33.3
Slovaks	58.5	65.2
Ruthenians	61.4	73.8
Slovenes	40.4	45.8

Such (i)literacy rates were the result of the number of schools, literacy of the immigrant members of the minorities in their old homeland, material and other factors. As for the Croatian authorities, which, according to the Croatian-Hungarian Compromise of 1868, were in charge of education,⁷ they were not inclined to open schools for members of the minorities, and a considerable number of the originally minority schools was croatianized during the 1880s. This particularly true of German schools in predominantly Roman-Catholic settlements.⁸ Thus, some 120.000 Germans had only some 20-odd schools, most of them in Syrmium, whereas in Đakovština, despite their considerable numbers they had none.⁹ In 1910 bilingual instruction was introduced in all schools for them, but due to the lack of German teachers, it was implemented only in larger places: in all others, it became completely croatianized.¹⁰ On the other hand, a large number of so-called Julian schools for the immigrant

⁴ Katus, *Die Magyaren*, p. 484.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Valentin Oberkersch, *Die Deutschen in Syrmien, Slawonien und Bosnien. Geschichte einer deutschen Volksgruppe in Südost-Europa*, Stuttgart 1989, p. 130.

⁷ Ferdo Hauptmann, *Der kroatisch-ungarische Ausgleich von 1868*, in: *Der österreichisch-ungarische Ausgleich von 1867. Seine Grundlagen und Auswirkungen*, München 1968, p. 44. Cf. also articles 48 and 49 of the Compromise. (*Ibid.*, p. 195.)

⁸ Altgayer, p. 6.

⁹ AIDGL, *Nachlas Lichtenberger; Geiger, Nijemci u Đakovu*, p. 77.

¹⁰ Josef Volkmar Senz, *Das Schulwesen der Donauschwaben in Jugoslawien*, München 1969, p. 20.

Hungarians was opened by the Julian Society. They were attended also by the non-Magyars, many of them Germans.¹¹ Six railway primary schools were founded in the 1890s, 77% of the railway employees being Hungarian.¹² The real aim of these schools was as much the Magyarization of the non-Magyar pupils, as the preservation of the nationality of the Magyars.¹³ They operated mostly in cities and towns, and they were rivaling the Julian schools which were scattered throughout villages and farms. Because of their aims, but also because of the generally strained relations between the Croats and Hungarians, these schools were a thorn in the flesh of the Croatian authorities, which did their utmost to hinder their work.¹⁴

However, the Hungarian education was most oversized in the Vojvodina, which belonged to Hungary proper. According to a Hungarian memo for the League of Nations, there were 645 Hungarian primary schools with 1.832 teachers in 1913/14. This is how they and their teachers were divided:¹⁵

Kind of school	#	# of teachers
State	266	790
Communal	67	252
Catholic	224	639
Calvinist	26	57
Lutheran	25	44
Jewish	28	39
Private	9	11

On the other hand, the Serbs, who enjoyed certain school autonomy used to have 179 schools with 592 teachers, whereas all other nationalities put together, had 79 primary schools and 802 teachers. If this is compared with the number of inhabitants, one can see that the Hungarians who comprised one quarter of the population had almost 2/3 of the schools, and almost half of all teachers. According to this document, the Hungarians had 227 day care centres and nurseries with 279 teachers and 148 nurses. Furthermore, there were 61 communal and 2 state artisan schools with 399 teachers as well as 7 communal, 2 cooperative and one commercial schools with 51 teachers in the same territory.¹⁶ In order to get the complete picture, here are the primary-educational facilities that other nationalities possessed in the three counties the parts of which fell to Yugoslavia after 1918.

¹¹ The data about these schools are contradictory. Stajić claims there were some 100 of them. (Stajić, *Mađarizacija*, p. 91.) Laszlo Szita mentions some 150 classes in 75 schools opened in Croatia between 1904 and 1918. (Szita, pp. 178-179.) The same number is adduced by Gujaš. Some of them were in Bosnia. (Gujaš, p. 91.) In a petition of Imre Prokopy and others to the League of Nations, 65 Julian schools with 115 teachers were mentioned. (*Pétition présenté a la Société des Nations au sujet de la destitution en masse des instituteurs de nationalité hongroise en Yougoslavie et de la loi yougoslave du 27 septembre 1929 sur les écoles normales d'instituteurs*, Paris 1930, p.) A document from (probably) the first half of the 1920s mentions 17 village Julian schools, but it was probably a mistake. (*AJ*, 66, 63/165.) As for the Julian Society, it was founded in Budapest in 1904, by politicians, magnats and writers in order to protect the culture of the Hungarians abroad. It was named after Fra-Julian, considered a paragon of love for the Hungarian race. It enjoyed the support of the Hungarian government and large Hungarian landowners. (Gujaš, pp. 87-88.)

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 72-74. Sajti claims there were 88 Julian and railway schools in Croatia and Bosnia. Twelve of them belonged to the railway. (Sajti, *Hungarians*, p. 162.)

¹³ Thus in the railway schools in 1906/07, out of 943 children from the interior, 598 were non-Hungarians. (Gujaš, p. 83.)

¹⁴ Gujaš, p. 91.

¹⁵ *Memorandum sur l'enseignement primaire de la minorité hongroise et la nouvelle loi du 5 décembre 2919 sur l'enseignement primaire en Yougoslavie*, Budapest 1930, pp. 5-6. The same data in: Ammende (ed.), pp. 367-368.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

The Timis County: 168.000 Romanians had 128 primary schools; 70.000 Serbs had 44 primary schools; 3.000 Slovaks had one primary school; 165.000 Germans had 18 primary schools.

The County of Torontal: 200.000 Serbs had 74 primary schools; 87.000 Romanians had 40 primary schools; 16.000 Slovaks had 4 primary schools; 166.000 Germans had 13 primary schools.

The Bacs-Bodrog County: 145.000 Serbs had 66 primary schools; 30.000 Slovaks had 11 primary schools; 190.000 Germans had 18 primary schools.¹⁷

It is clear from this that the Serbs and Romanians had somewhat better educational possibilities on the primary level due to their ecclesiastic and educational autonomy. However, one should keep in mind that even in autonomous Serbian and Romanian schools the Hungarian language, history, geography and civics were mandatory subjects taught in Hungarian.¹⁸ This additionally diminished the number of classes for learning other subjects in mother-tongue.

Unlike the Serbs and Romanians, the Slovaks and Germans had no institutions that would protect their rights in the field of education, which, coupled with other factors, influenced the number of their primary schools. It is clear that the Germans were worst off. Most of the Swabian communes which gave their schools over to the state for economic reasons, allowing thus their Magyarization.¹⁹ Considerable part of materialistically oriented Swabians wanted their children to learn the Hungarian language as well as possible, in order to facilitate their social climbing.²⁰ Unlike great part of the peasantry, they didn't think they needed any school, but they felt what they needed wasn't the school in their mother-tongue, but rather in the "state" language. Magyarized, and from the state increasingly dependant teachers, furthered this tendency.²¹ Some, for reasons of snobbery, fell in to the Hungarian propaganda that Hungarian was "genteel" whereas German was "boorish". Gradual awakening of the national consciousness during the First World War would start changing this attitude. However, this process, developed faster in the Vojvodina than in Slavonia due to the greater number and compactness of the Swabians, as well as the attitude of the authorities.

Secondary education of the minorities was no better than the primary one. This is how according to another Hungarian petition to the League of Nations the Hungarian secondary education looked like in the same territory. There were 69 secondary schools: 4 state and 4 communal high-schools, one confessional high-school, one state six-year secondary school, one higher school for girls, three state higher commercial schools, one communal higher commercial school, one cooperative higher commercial school for boys, one private higher commercial school for girls, 20 higher state primary schools, 14 higher communal primary schools, 7 private higher primary schools, two communal higher primary schools, 5 confessional higher primary schools, two agricultural schools, one male and one female teachers training college.²² If it is known that the much more numerous Serbs had just two high-schools and two teachers training colleges,²³ and other peoples not even that, it is clear

¹⁷ I. Senz, pp. 212-213. Whereas the number of Serbian schools is similar to that from the Hungarian memo for the League of Nations, the total is higher for other nationalities – due to the schools in territories which didn't fall to Yugoslavia. This is particularly true of the Romanian schools.

¹⁸ Branislav Gligorijević, O nastavi na jezicima narodnosti u Vojvodini 1919-1929, Zbornik Matice srpske za istoriju, 5, 1972, p. 56.

¹⁹ J.V.Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 27; AJ, F. 335, f. 80; SBNS KJ, Redovan saziv za 1932/33. godinu, knj. III, Beograd 1933, p. 66.

²⁰ Freie Stimmen, March 30, 1933.

²¹ J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 27.

²² Pétition présenté a la Societé des Nations au sujet de l'enseignement secondaire hongrois en Yougoslavie, Geneve 1930, p. 5.

²³ Apart from that, the Serbs had also three burgher-schools. (Gligorijević, O nastavi, p. 57.)

how oversized the Hungarian secondary education was – since larger part of secondary school students were not Ethnic-Hungarians. It was the true reflection of the magyarizing policy the Hungarian government pursued in the last decades before the First World War.²⁴

From what was said above it is clear how great an advantage the Hungarian authorities wanted to create for the Hungarians, compared to other nationalities. However, the assimilationist effect of such a policy in minority regions was negligible,²⁵ whereas the Hungarian people as a whole, despite the high culture of the elite, remained on the average less educated than the masses of the national minorities.²⁶

The situation of the German education in Slovenia was somewhat similar to that of the Hungarian one in the Vojvodina. It was also oversized, but its expansion was due equally to longer traditions of school education and the tradition of higher culture (that had been in German for centuries, even if many of its creators were not native-speakers of the language) and to nationalist tendencies since the second half of the 19th century. Over time the Slovenes gained increasingly more opportunities for education in their mother-tongue. However, in this respect, there were differences between the crownlands, and indeed, between parts of the same crownland. The process of expanding Slovenian education went on slowly and arduously, and it hardly made sorties above the level of elementary education into the field of lower high-schools. The German education was ousted mostly in Crain, where, except for Kočevje, only several German primary schools remained – which corresponded to the ethnic make-up of the province's population. On the other hand, of all ethnically mixed crownlands, it remained strongest in Carinthia, where, the Slovenes were a dwindling minority compared to the Germans. Under the guise of the so-called "utraquist" (bilingual) schools instruction in German predominated there. Just as the Südmark was helping funding of German schools and German pupils, the Slovene Association of SS. Cyril and Methodius, was helping found private Slovenian schools, with and without the right to issue certificates. National struggle between the two peoples was raging in the field of education stronger than in many others. Roughly put, for the education in the Slovenian territories, the following principle was valid: the higher the school, the more German instruction it imparted.²⁷ Thus the teachers training college in Ljubljana was in German and Slovene (but with more German), whereas those in Maribor and Celje, were all-German. All six-year high-schools, except for the one in Idrija which was German-Slovene, were in German. In Crain there were two German and four German-Slovenian high-schools. (The Slovenian being taught in lower, and German in upper grades; only since 1908 some subjects in upper grades were also taught in Slovenian.) In Styria, the Slovenes managed after protracted struggle, to obtain parallel Slovenian classes in

²⁴ I. Dolmányos, Kritik der Lex Apponyi. (Die Schulgesetze vom Jahre 1907), in: Nationale Frage in der Österreichisch-Ungarische Monarchie 1900-1918, Budapest 1966; Dimitrije Kirilović, Pomađarivanje u bivšoj Ugarskoj, Novi Sad 1935; Idem, Asimilacioni uspesi Mađara u Bačkoj, Banatu i Baranji. Prilog pitanju demađarizacije Vojvodine, Novi Sad 1937. The disreputed Apponyi's school law foresaw that the instruction be in Hungarian alone from 7th to 9th grade, that if a minority school should adopt Hungarian as the language of instruction it couldn't reverse that decision, as well as that there would be 39 school hours for learning Hungarian, and 43 for learning the mother-tongue. This meant, that apart from learning Hungarian, there was not much time left for anything else. (I. Senz, p. 176.)

²⁵ Macartney, The Habsburg Empire, p. 726.

²⁶ Jászi, Magyarieni Schuld, p. 208. Jászi explains that by the fact the Hungarian intelligentsia consisted mainly of Jews and foreigners who had no contact to the people. Jončić's statement the Hungarians were the most developed and the most cultivated national minority is imprecise, and in the given context untrue. (Koča Jončić, Nacionalne manjine u Jugoslaviji, Beograd 1962, p. 12.)

²⁷ A general survey see in: Ervin Dolenc, Kulturni boj. Slovenska kulturna politika v Kraljevini SHS, [Ljubljana 1996], pp. 29-30.

high-schools in Celje²⁸ and Maribor,²⁹ but the high-school in Ptuj remained staunchly all-German.³⁰ In the German enclave of Kočevje until 1918, there were 33 primary schools, one four-grade burgher school, one nine-grade higher high-school and two day care centres. These German schools had their own school inspector.³¹ The tendency of secondary education being in German reflected the old traditions, but also social needs: a Slovene could aspire to higher offices or a career in business, science etc., only if he was fluent in German. At the same time, the knowledge of that language was the reliable away for the Slovenes to keep in touch not only with the important culture of the large German-speaking area, but also with the latest trends in the Western culture in general.

On the other hand, the question of the school instruction was an increasingly ticklish one in the era of nationalism. It was troubling the inter-ethnic relations before 1918, and it would continue to do so afterwards. The Deutscher Schulverein, a nationalist society for aiding German schools in the “endangered parts”, built 11 primary schools in Kočevje and helped build 8 more.³² Despite aid from without, the weak spot of the schools in Kočevje was that they were mostly one- or two-grade schools, whereas the number of pupils was declining due to the fall of the number of the inhabitants.³³

The German education in the Yugoslav territories of the Habsburg Monarchy until 1918 was the least developed in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This is understandable in view of the small number of members of the settlers, general undevelopment of the country, comparatively short time since the colonists had come, and hard pioneer way of life. There were 40-odd German schools in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 8 of them at factories. Some of these schools were private, some communal and some confessional. Some were given over to the government later on in order to get rid of the expenditures. Some of the others also enjoyed government support, but since 1910 the Bosnian Diet was not willing to support purely minority schools – with a plausible excuse that the local population also lacked a huge number of schools. Some schools German received help from nationalist societies from Austria and Germany.³⁴

As can be seen from this short overview, education of various groups of Germans inhabiting territories which would become united in Yugoslavia in 1918 was very unequally developed. The degree of the development of education depended on their place in the pecking-order within different parts of the Habsburg Empire (Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina), economic power, cultural level, the time and place of colonization, number of inhabitants, national consciousness, traditions, aid from mother-country, etc. In the following part of this chapter we shall see what changes in the field of German education were brought about by the foundation of the Yugoslav state, what its minority school policy was and how it affected German-language schools.

The processes of taking over power with almost simultaneous changes (or at least beginning of changes) in the school system took place in all territories that would become part

²⁸ The government of Casimir Badeny fell over the matter of the parallel classes in the Celje high-school, showing how in nationality questions small causes can have momentous consequences. The next government, headed by Kilmansegg, smoothly assigned the money for the parallel Slovenian classes. (Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire*, p. 661; Taylor, pp. 211-212.)

²⁹ The Slovenes managed to get parallel classes there already in 1888 with no opposition. The Germans deemed that town firmly German, so they had no fears Slovenian classes could endanger the supremacy of the German culture. (Taylor, p. 211.)

³⁰ Gestrin, Melik, *Istorija Slovenaca*, pp. 209-211, 267-268.

³¹ Karner, p. 24; *Jubiläums-Festbuch*, p. 15.

³² 500 let, p. 43.

³³ Gottschee. *13 Jahre Gottscheer Gedenkstätte. 650 Gottscheer Volksgruppe*, [Graz] 1980, p. 64.

³⁴ Kraljačić, *Kolonizacija*, pp. 122-123; Gujaš, p. 91; AIDGL, *Nachlas Lichtenberger*; Hoffmann, pp. 24-27; J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, pp. 20-21; Drljača, *Kolonizacija*, 50; HWBGAD, I, p. 502.

of Yugoslavia. The People's Administration in the Vojvodina decided on December 9, 1918, that the instruction was to be in the mother-tongue of the majority of the population.³⁵ However, this was not easy to implement. Teachers who would know the mother-tongue of pupils were lacking.³⁶ Part of the minority teachers, having been educated at Hungarian schools, wasn't able to impart instruction in their mother-tongue.³⁷ Part of the pupils couldn't speak their mother-tongue, but Hungarian. Also, there was resistance both on part of the teachers (especially Hungarian ones) and of part of the pupils and their parents.³⁸ In many cases, Hungarian teachers refused to swear the oath of allegiance to the new authorities, and Budapest encouraged them in this.³⁹ Part of the Hungarian teachers left their working places on their own free will, and part of them were punished by the Yugoslav authorities or transferred across the demarcation line, i.e., expelled.⁴⁰ Some Hungarian teachers were actively spreading propaganda against the new order, against opening of non-Hungarian schools,⁴¹ or against learning Serbian,⁴² whereas part of the non-Magyar teachers remained under their ideological influence, or even surveillance.⁴³ There were cases of Hungarian Roman-Catholic clergy agitating against the teachers who had sworn the oath of allegiance to the new state.⁴⁴ The resistance on part of the non-Hungarian pupils and their parents, many of them Germans, was expressed in the wish to continue their education (if only temporarily) in Hungarian which they completely mastered, and not in their mother-tongue, the expert terminology of which was unknown to them.⁴⁵ There were also cases of Slavic children continuing to attend Hungarian schools out of inertia,⁴⁶ and some Bunjevci in Sombor were paying for private Hungarian lessons as late as 1920.⁴⁷

³⁵ AV, 81, 305/1919; 53/1919; 575/1919; Gligorijević, o nastavi, p. 57.

³⁶ Pančevačka gimnazija 1863/64-1963/64, Pančevo 1964, p. 27.

³⁷ AV, 81, 561/1919.

³⁸ Several pupils of the high-school in Novi Vrbas were incarcerated in the Petrovaradin Fortress because of the pro-Hungarian demonstrations in spring 1919. It is interesting, and in a way typical, that one of the later leaders of the German national minority, Franz Hamm, was among them. (AJ, 66 (pov.), 51/105; AV, 81, 1526/919.)

³⁹ AV, 81, 1218/1919; 203/1919; 509/1919; 134/1920; 126/IV, 27429/930; Judin, p. 20; Dimić, Kulturna politika, III, 58. Some were softened by suspension, so they eventually consented to swear the oath of allegiance to the state. (AV, 81, 305/1919.) In some cases the authorities were willing to accept only the statement of obedience instead of the oath. (AV, 81, 310/1919; 120/1920.) Some Hungarian teachers worked as late as February 1920, although they swore no oath, and the Ministry of Education ordered that they be made to do it by withholding their salaries. (AV, 81, 27/920.) Some Romanian teachers refused to swear the oath too. (AV, 81, 52/1919.) Some Hungarian teachers in Subotica first swore to be loyal, but then renounced their oath and started agitating against the new authorities. The mayor demanded them to be suspended, and if possible, interned. (AV, 81, 69/919.) It should be stressed that swearing the oath of allegiance was in keeping with the Article of Law XXVIII/1907 (the disreputed Lex Apponyi), then valid in the Vojvodina. (Sajti, Hungarians, p.148.)

⁴⁰ AV, 81, 6403/1919; 463/1919; 2930/918; 48/1919; 13/1919; 9206/1919; 30/1919; 120/1920; Mesaroš, Položaj, pp. 64, 93.

⁴¹ AV, 81, 1103/1919; 9206/1919; 9589/1919; 145/1919.

⁴² AV, 81, 1718/1920.

⁴³ AV, 81, 0397/20.

⁴⁴ AV, 81, 1583/1919.

⁴⁵ AV, 81, 988/1919; 8395/1919; 145/1919; Mesaroš, Položaj, p. 191. Demands for educating non-Hungarian children in Hungarian came as late as autumn 1922. Thus the Roman-Catholics of Veliki Bečkerek demanded in October 1922 reopening of the private school run by nuns in Hungarian, although the pupils would be predominantly Germans. (AJ, 74, 75/110.) To make allowances for the lack of language skills, the Ministry of Education temporarily permitted auxiliary use of Hungarian. (AV, 81, 145/1919.) A German course was organized in Pančevo in 1919 for 54 German girls unable to follow higher school instruction in that language. (AV, 81, 6445/1919.) There were German children speaking only Hungarian in the 1930s too. (AJ, F. 335, f. 89; Jugoslovenski dnevnik, July 4, 1930.) There were also demands from the pupils of the closed Hungarian schools to have private exams in Hungarian. (AV, 81, 1511/1919.)

⁴⁶ AV, 81, 2517/919; 509/919.

⁴⁷ AV, 81, 388/1920. This shows that the Hungarian influence remained strong, and maybe that the non-Magyars feared the return of the Hungarian power, so that they wanted to be prepared for anything that may

Apart from firewood and other necessities,⁴⁸ the lack of schoolbooks was felt particularly keenly.⁴⁹ Old Hungarian textbooks could be only partly used, and then only after they have passed censorship.⁵⁰ There were no new schoolbooks because it was difficult to find qualified authors to prepare textbooks in various languages.⁵¹ Among other things, their appearance was hindered by lack of money, and simple lack of paper.⁵² Throughout 1919-1920 teachers' salaries came from Hungary, and they were usually several months in arrear. On the other hand, the school property meant for the maintenance of schools was taken away from them, facilitating their falling under the state control.⁵³

In March 1919, the Department for the Bačka, the Banat and Baranya (BBB) was founded in the Ministry of Education that determined, based on the pupils' mother-tongue, the language of instruction in each school and determined how many classes of Serbian language, geography and history would be taught, as well as, how many non-Serbian classes each school would have.⁵⁴ The »Order about temporary organization of all day care centres, elementary, economic and apprentice schools« was passed the same month, that introduced respective mother-tongues as languages of instruction, whereas classes previously foreseen for learning Hungarian were now used for learning respective mother-tongues.⁵⁵ Serbian children were forbidden to attend Hungarian schools if there was a Serbian school in the place they lived in.⁵⁶ However, if there was no appropriate school near by, even Serbian children had to go to a Hungarian one if they wanted to continue their education in the first after-war years.⁵⁷

The main tendency of the educational policy in the Vojvodina was the reduction of the oversized Hungarian school system. The main winners at that, were the Serbs and other Slavs, and partly Germans, whom the authorities wanted to win over and separate from the Magyars.⁵⁸ With the help of the People's Administration, the Germans retrieved in 1918/19 several previously magyarized primary schools, and during 1919/20 and later, burgher schools in Apatin, Odžaci, Bačka Palanka, Bela Crkva etc.⁵⁹ A private German burgher school was founded in Pančevo, and the school board in Novi Vrbas decided in 1920 that the originally German Evangelic high-school there, that had been magyarized, should reintroduce

come. The head of the Educational Department of the People's Administration Dr Milan Petrović forbade private Hungarian lessons for high-school students in autumn 1919. (Sajti, Hungarians, p. 150.)

⁴⁸ Some schools were devastated by the army. (AV, 81, 0397/20.)

⁴⁹ AV, 81, 239/919; 9004/1919; Pančevačka gimnazija, p. 27.

⁵⁰ AV, 81, 389/1920; 5262/919; 3867/1920; ASANU 14530 / XIV 2

⁵¹ It took long to solve this problem. (AV, 81, 3478/919; 2463/919; 2421/919; 0397/20; 2468/1919; 7571/1920; J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 45.) Later on, publication of schoolbooks was centralized, and the schoolbooks for members of the minorities were written by authors from the "state people". (AV, 126/IV, 54742/938; M. Mayer, p. 69; J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 71.) Nevertheless, the lack of textbooks for the minorities wasn't rectified even in the 1930s. (AV, 126/IV, 1128/939; SB Senata KJ, Redovan saziv za 1933. godinu, knj. I, Beograd 1934, p. 212.)

⁵² AV, 81, 3478/919; 12786/1919.

⁵³ Sajti, Hungarians, pp. 148-149.

⁵⁴ Gligorijević, O nastavi, p. 58; Mesaroš, Položaj, p. 187. Sometimes there were parallel school managements: an old Hungarian head-master for Hungarian classes, and a new Serbian one for new Serbian classes. (Sajti, Hungarians, p. 149.)

⁵⁵ Dimić, Kulturna politika, III, p. 10; Gligorijević, O nastavi, p. 58.

⁵⁶ AV, 81, 463/1919; 10569/1919.

⁵⁷ Thus for instance, the Sombor high-school opened no upper grades in 1919/20, so the Serbian pupils had to enroll in Hungarian classes. They, however, demanded not to learn the Hungarian language, literature and history, but corresponding Serbian subjects. (AV, 81, 7958/1920.) Similar cases occurred as late as the 1930s. (AV, 126/IV, 24908/30; AJ, 66, 4/9; AVII, pop. 17, k. 21, f. 3, d. 12.)

⁵⁸ AV, 81, 561/1919; Dimić, Kulturna politika, III, p. 11. However, this pro-German tendency was not universally accepted by all in the educational apparatus. The school inspector from Vršac, Lj. Jovanović, for instance, suggested that the authorities support the Magyars against the local nationally conscious Germans. (AV, 81, 11064/1919.)

⁵⁹ J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 37.

instruction in German, from September 1 of that year. During the same year, German was introduced as the language of instruction in the local burgher school for girls there. The Germans founded a private high-school in Hatyfeld (Žombolj) in autumn 1919, whereas in Vršac, Pančevo and Novi Sad they managed to have parallel German classes opened in the local high-schools.⁶⁰ The Germans managed to found primary schools in Syrmium, Slavonia and Bosnia – but only one in each region.⁶¹ In spring 1919, the Germans in Timisoira, then under Serbian control, decided to found one burgher and one secondary school, and the Ministry of Education was willing to be forthcoming in that respect.⁶²

The Hungarian school system couldn't be completely dismantled in 1919 because the peace treaty wasn't signed, but preparations were made to that end.⁶³ In mid-1919, the Department for the BBB of the Ministry of Education, worked out the "Basic principles for liquidation of elementary, secondary, professional and burgher schools in the BBB", which foresaw mandatory learning of the Serbian language,⁶⁴ history and geography in all schools, showing thus the main tendency of the plan. One to two burgher schools were envisaged for the national minorities. Teachers training colleges for members of the minorities were not foreseen, just minority classes in such Serbian schools. Confessional schools could survive only as private, if they could finance themselves. In order to reduce the number of Hungarian schools, children of various nationalities were to attend schools in their respective languages,⁶⁵ or in Serbian, and with the Magyars, the effects of the Magyarization in the first generation were regarded as non-existing. The plan was to be put to practice gradually over five years, and at the expense of the Hungarian state which was to take care of laid off and pensioned teachers. These premises became to a great degree, the basis of the minority educational policy.⁶⁶ This also laid the foundations of the name analysis (i.e. analysis of ancestry) at enrolling children in schools, in order to prevent children of Slavic descent from enrolling into Hungarian or German classes, in the last resort, with the wish that the number of pupils in these classes would fall below the minimum prescribed by the law, so that they could be closed down.⁶⁷ Complaints about the name analysis (which was several times temporarily abolished – at least on paper, and for some minorities) would become stock in trade of the minority politicians when talking about educational matters.⁶⁸

⁶⁰ AV, 81, 1113/1919; Plautz, p. 67; J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, pp. 38-39; HWBGAD, I, pp. 339-340. The foundation of the high-school in Žombolj and the parallel classes in Vršac, were helped also by the Germans from the Romanian territory. (Kausch, p. 64.)

⁶¹ In Brezik (Slavonia), Klenak (Syrmium) and Pošinci (Bosnia). (Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, p. 37.)

⁶² AV, 81, 1578/1919.

⁶³ AV, 81, 2546/919; Gligorijević, *O nastavi*, p. 61. At first the authorities had to make certain concessions, such as exemption from celebrating Serbian holidays, the right to have exams in Hungarian or sending bilingual official letters. (AV, 81, 11031/1919.)

⁶⁴ Due to lack of teachers, this wasn't always easy to implement. (J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, p. 44.)

⁶⁵ In practice this tenet was often disregarded. (AV, 126/IV, 26346/30; 33958/30.)

⁶⁶ AJ, 66 (pov.), 51/105; Gligorijević, *O nastavi*, p. 61; Mesaroš, *Položaj*, pp. 188-189; Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, III, pp. 11, 65, 69.

⁶⁷ AJ, 14, 27/71; AV, 81, 553/920; 496/920; 359/920; 599/920; 43312/30; 39862/30; 126 IV, 30533/930; 11240/30; Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, III, p. 66; Mesaroš, *Položaj*, pp. 193, 195, 202; Sajti, *Hungarians*, 151; Macartney *Hungary and Her Successors*, p. 419. Proposals were also aired that inspectors be assigned to every primary school to determine the pupils' nationality. (AV, 81, 381/920.) The name analysis was not practiced only in Yugoslavia, but in Romania and Czechoslovakia too. (Cf. Gower, p. 43; Kolar, pp. 113, 115, 117; *Pétition présentée à la Société des Nations au sujet de la destitution*, p. 6.)

⁶⁸ ASANU, 14530/XIV 2; *Neue Verschlechterung der Lage der deutschen Minderheit. Gegen einer offiziöser Darstellung dieser Lage, Nation und Staat*, VI, 2, 1932, pp. 106, 108; SBNS KJ, *Redovan saziv za 1932/33. godinu*, knj. III, Beograd 1933, p. 161; Ammende (ed.), pp. 345, 369; Plautz, p. 71; J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, p. 102; Mesaroš, *Položaj*, pp. 179, 189. Under the Davidović government, the name analysis was mitigated. In the second half of 1925 it was abolished (except for Slovenia) by Velja Vukićević. In November 1927 it was abolished again for a short time by minister Kosta Kimanudi. (Grentrup, pp. 241-242; Mesaroš, *Položaj*, pp. 167,

As we have seen, in Croatia, which after the Croatian-Hungarian compromise of 1868 had autonomy in school matters, the most developed minority education was Hungarian. It was almost thoroughly dismantled after the 1918 upheaval. The Croatian authorities abolished Julian and railway schools, together with libraries founded alongside them.⁶⁹ However, as we have seen, this brought little improvement to the Ethnic-Germans: indeed very numerous German schools were also closed down, although in Syrmium only temporarily.⁷⁰ In Bosnia-Herzegovina minority schools in villages mostly survived the revolution – partly because bilingual educating had been introduced already in 1910. However, the number of minority schools, especially German ones in towns, decreased, partly because of the departure of the German labour force.⁷¹

The most dramatic change in the field of German education coupled with the change of government happened in Slovenia.⁷² Already on November 16, 1918, the People's Government introduced Slovenian as the sole language of instruction; German instruction was foreseen only for classes with at least "40 real Germans".⁷³ In the next three years, this led to closing down or turning into Slovenian of: 11 two-grade, 5 three-grade, 12 four-grade and 23 five-grade German primary schools. Only in 14 communes, parallel German classes in Slovenian primary schools survived. Furthermore, in Lower Styria, 19 "utraqulist" (bilingual) schools were turned into Slovenian, and 20 private German primary schools (partly with day care centres) in Styria and 14 in Carniola were shut down. Slovenian was introduced as the language of instruction also in burgher and high-schools in Maribor, Celje, Ptuj, Kočevje, as well as in the six-year high-schools in Maribor and Ljubljana and in the teachers' training college in Maribor. Only in Ljubljana a six-year German high-school survived a few more years. As for German teachers, they were fired, and most of them emigrated to Austria.⁷⁴ Like in the Vojvodina, name analysis was soon introduced in order to reduce the number of German pupils only to the "real Germans".⁷⁵

The common feature of all measures of the (still not centralized) authorities in the Yugoslav provinces in the field of minority education during the first few years after the foundation of Yugoslavia, was (sometimes a drastic) reduction of schools teaching in the

182, 204; Suppan, Jugoslawien, p. 786; Pržič, p. 237; Nation und Staat, I, 2, 1927, pp. 116-117.) Minister of Education, Božidar Maksimović, ordered on August 3, 1929, that pupils in the Vojvodina be enrolled according to their mother-tongue and nationality. (AJ, F. 398, f. 1.) Another order to stop analyzing names was issued by the minister of education on November 23, 1936. It turned out soon, it remained only on paper, because already in February next year Hungarian representatives complained again. (Mesaroš, Mađari, pp. 136, 147.) It is interesting to note that in 1930 a school strike occurred in Kočevje after 150 German children were enrolled in Slovenian classes. It stopped only after some 100 pupils were transferred to German classes. (PA, Abt. IIb, Nationalitätenfrage, Fremdvölker, Politik 6, Jugoslawien, Bd. 5.)

⁶⁹ Szita, p. 179.

⁷⁰ Altgayer, p. 9.

⁷¹ Hoffmann, p. 27; HWBGAD, I, p. 502.

⁷² In a way, this was symbolized by common internment of the educational referendary for Carniola, Kaltenecker, together with the chief of the Ljubljana police, his deputy, president of the provincial court and several other officials on October 29/30, 1918. (Pleterski, p. 366.)

⁷³ Andrej Vovko, Nemško manjšinsko šolstvo na Slovenskem v obdobju stare Jugoslavije, Zgodovinski časopis, XL, 3, 1986, p. 311; Wutte, Lobmeyr, p. 58; Penič, p. 388; HWBGAD, III, p. 330; Dolenc, p. 26.

⁷⁴ Dolenc, pp. 30-33; Vovko, pp. 318-319; Penič, p. 388; Suppan, Zur Lage, p. 179; Josef Perz, Fritz Högler, Das Schulwesen des Gottscheer Landes, in: Jubiläums-Festbuch, p. 132; Wutte, Lobmeyr, pp. 59-62. In Kočevje 17 primary schools were shut down, and 17 became just classes of Slovenian schools, with Slovenian teachers. (HWBGAD, III, p. 76.) In the same work, on p. 79 it is claimed, there had been 33 primary schools in Kočevje until 1918, which makes abolishing of 17 and survival of 17 as classes impossible. Doris Kraft speaks about 101 closed German schools in Slovenia. (Kraft, p. 134.) At that, she adds up quite arbitrarily schools and classes. About the situation until May 1921 cf. the memo of the Slovenian Germans in: PA, Abt. IIb, Deutschum in Jugoslawien, Politik 25, Bd. 1.

⁷⁵ Suppan, Zur Lage, p. 180; Vovko, pp. 313, 317.

minority languages. Apart from members of the respective nationalities, these schools were attended also by members of other nationalities, the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes included. This held true particularly for German schools in Slovenia and Hungarian ones in the Vojvodina and Slavonia. The new authorities used that as a pretext to shut down as many minority schools as possible. That it was just a subterfuge was testified by the fact that schools attended only by members of the minorities were also shut down. The quoted plan for the reduction of Hungarian schools in the BBB, was the general guideline of the school policy towards the minorities in the next 20-odd years, although in other parts of the country it wasn't that clearly stated.

What were then, the goals of the educational policy of the Yugoslav state toward the national minorities? Was there a particular educational policy toward the Ethnic-Germans that would differ from that toward other minorities? Were the goals of educational policy toward national minorities different, and could they be separated from the general goals of the educational policy? Could there be an educational policy during the inter-war period at all, with so many changes of governments and ministers of education? This last question asked Ljubodrag Dimić too, after having analyzed the budget of the Ministry of Education in the 1920s.⁷⁶ He points out frequent changes of ministers without a vision,⁷⁷ for whom, just like for the MPs in the Parliament, education was just a (small) chip in their mutual political haggling and skirmishing.⁷⁸ On the whole, there was no educational policy that would pursue the goal of spreading literacy among the population, elevating its civilization standards and adjusting the working force to the needs of the economy.⁷⁹ Until mid-1930s there was no permanent curriculum, whereas temporary ones in use were incomplete and unclear.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, in one segment of the primary and secondary education a guiding idea and a constant feature like a red thread survived all changes of cabinets, ministers, parties and regimes. It was the ideology of the national and state unity which schools crammed into the heads of generations of pupils.⁸¹ Its aim was to overcome the ethnic, confessional, cultural and other divisions the past centuries had left behind as heritage to the Yugoslav peoples. To be sure, such ideology met with the resistance of the peoples whose national consciousness was already mature.

Such ideologized instruction was imposed on members of the national minorities too – in the official language or in their mother tongues. At the same time, ministers of education usually stressed that the goal of the government's educational policy wasn't assimilation, but removing of the bad consequences of the Magyarization and Germanization.⁸² However, this was only partly true. As we shall presently see, the restrictive educational policy was only for the smaller part leveled against the consequences of the Magyarization and Germanization. It pursued, if not assimilation (that proved impossible in many cases, anyway), than weakening

⁷⁶ Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, I, p. 102.

⁷⁷ 41 cabinets with 24 ministers of education (each of them being in office 8 months on the average) were changed between 1918 and 1941. (M. Mayer, p. 69.)

⁷⁸ Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, I, p. 214.

⁷⁹ M. Mayer, p. 202.

⁸⁰ AJ, 66, 7/16; M. Mayer, p. 73.

⁸¹ AV, 126/IV, 44326/30; ASANU, XIV 2; AJ, 66, 57/146; 56/140; Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, I, pp. 88, 118, 233, 250, 262-263, 276, 281; *Ibid.*, II, pp. 135, 138-140, 154, 224; M. Meyer, pp. 60, 140, 202; Gligorijević, *O nastavi*, p. 65. Provincial school inspector of the Danube province, Živojin S. Đorđević, wrote in 1932: "The instruction in national subjects [i.e. official language, history, geography and civics] is in the centre of every elementary school, and therefore of ours too; in the case of the national minorities, this is particularly true. " (AJ, 66, 7/16.) Svetozar Pribičević formulated that more blatantly: according to him, such policy was in state interest, and "everyone living in this state had to bow to such national character [of the educational policy]." (SBNS *Kraljevine SHS, Redovan saziv za 1926/27*, III, p. 382.)

⁸² ASANU, 14530 XIV 2; Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, I, p. 233. Among themselves, some lower officials saw exactly the assimilation as the goal of the educational policy. (AV, 126/IV, 29044/30.)

of the national consciousness of members of the national minorities and keeping them in ignorance of their mother-tongue (for which the government didn't care much). On the other hand, instruction in the "state language", history,⁸³ and geography didn't yield the desired results, although ¼ or even 1/3 of the classes was foreseen for the "national subjects".⁸⁴ By imposing roughly the instruction in "national subjects" the authorities achieved an effect that ran opposite of the foreseen, reducing the desire to learn the "state language" even with the members of the minorities who had felt it for practical reasons.⁸⁵ Obviously, the Yugoslav authorities learned nothing from the minority policy of the old Hungary.⁸⁶

Constituent part of the educational policy is the educational legislature. There were 37 various laws and orders concerning education in force in the territory of Yugoslavia at its founding. There were several draft bills of educational laws in the 1920s, and all of them contained stipulations about the education in the languages of the national minorities.⁸⁷ As in many other fields, Yugoslav politicians were not able to come to an agreement and pass unified school laws for the whole country.⁸⁸ The last draft of the primary school law before the imposition of the dictatorship, was submitted by the minister of education Milan Grol in October 1928. It contained the same stipulations concerning national minorities as the draft submitted the year before, and it awoke great dissatisfaction on the part of representatives of national minorities and their mother-countries. The German Party submitted on December 20 their alternative draft of that portion of the law concerning minority education. The proposal foresaw separate minority schools in mother-tongue of the pupils with minority teachers. The "state language" would be taught from the third grade up, six classes a week. A special minority section would be opened in the Ministry of Education. Minorities would have to be given the right to found, fund and supervise private schools. In places with no state of private minority school, private lessons for up to ten pupils would have to be allowed. The Ministry of Education would have to take care of the textbooks for minority schools. Due to the imposition of the dictatorship this draft was never discussed.⁸⁹ However, if one considers the overall Yugoslav educational policy of the inter-war period, it is not very likely this draft would have met with the approval of the Parliament.

The laws on primary, secondary and burgher schools dealt little with education of national minorities. It was yet another proof of the policy of neglecting national minorities pursued by the ruling circles. The Law on Primary School, promulgated on December 9, 1929, stipulated in the article 44 that the instruction would be imparted in the "state

⁸³ Teaching Hungarian history was forbidden in the Vojvodina right after the upheaval. (AV, 81, 816/920; 235/1920.) Soon teaching of Hungarian cultural history was abolished too. (Sajti, Hungarians, p. 146.) On the other hand, the historical image of the national minorities as imposed on their youths in schools, was quite a bad one. (Cf. Zoran Janjetović, National Minorities and Non-Slav Neighbours in Serbian Textbooks, Internationale Schulbuchforschung/International Textbook Research, XXIII, 2, 2001.) The Czechs and Slovaks were granted the privilege of learning the "Czechoslovak" history at schools from January 1928. (Gligorijević, Politička istupanja, p. 154.)

⁸⁴ AJ, 66 (o.n.) F 74; Dimić, Kulturna politika, II, pp. 135, 138, 154. In order to prevent members of the national minorities from negligent learning of the "state language" and national subjects, it was proposed to set up special commissions which would supervise the learning process. Punishment for negligent learning or bad marks in two national subjects was to be repetition of the same grade. (Ibid., I, p. 263; AV, 126/IV, 32207/30.)

⁸⁵ AV, 81, 1709/1919; 126/IV, 27429/930.

⁸⁶ The naïve belief that learning "national subjects" was the right way to awake loyalty, or even facilitate assimilation, was shared by the educational authorities of Bulgaria, Romania and Albania too during the inter-war period. (Höpkern, p. 233; Kolar, p. 118.)

⁸⁷ In mid-1923 the minister of foreign affairs proposed that the stipulations about the national minorities be left out of the draft of the bill on primary schools, so that the government wouldn't tie its hands in this matter. He championed the solution of the minority question through bilateral agreements. (AJ, 66 (pov.) 7/25.)

⁸⁸ Gligorijević, O nastavi, p. 77-79.

⁸⁹ AJ, 80, 29/149; Der Minderheitenschulgesetzentwurf des deutschen Abgeordnetenklubs, Nation und Staat, II, 4, 1929, pp. 275-280; Suppan, Jugoslawien, p. 719; Gligorijević, O nastavi, pp. 79-80; Plautz, p. 76-78.)

language". For members of national minorities founding of parallel classes of at least 30 pupils was foreseen,⁹⁰ or of at least 25, in special cases and with the approval of the minister. Curricula were to be as in the Yugoslav classes. Instruction was to be in the mother-tongue of the pupils, whereas the "state language" was to be a mandatory subject.⁹¹ If there were several minority classes in one school, they could have a common head-master. The Yugoslavs had to attend Yugoslav classes if they were available, and members of minorities either Yugoslav classes or those of their own nationality, but in no case classes of another national minority. All teachers became state employees, and private schools were abolished – except for those opened under international agreements. The last mentioned stipulation was mitigated in article 164 that enabled the then existing schools to survive if they accommodated with the stipulations of this law.⁹² The law provided also for the preparatory classes for members of national minorities, but they were not mandatory.⁹³ Laws on secondary schools (August 31, 1931) and on teachers training colleges (September 27, 1929) contained no stipulations about instruction in the languages of national minorities or about a possibility for opening private schools of these kinds, whereas the Law on Burgher Schools of December 5, 1931, explicitly foresaw immediate closure of the state minority burgher schools, and gradual closure of the private ones. At that, it was openly stated this was done because members of minorities "in the more cultured parts of our country" were more capable than the Yugoslavs who were being "ousted in all sectors of the economy". Members of minorities were to be educated in the "state-building spirit" through education in the "state language" in burgher schools.⁹⁴

The school laws partly made legal the already existing practice, and partly made possible further reduction of the minority education.⁹⁵ This held true particularly for burgher schools that were initially seen as a convenient educational blind alley for members of minorities. Since attendance of these schools made further education impossible and since they, as practical schools, enjoyed considerable popularity in the former Habsburg territories, instruction of Serbian and respective minority languages with four classes a week each was introduced in them in 1920/21. In that way, the authorities wanted to discourage members of minorities from attending secondary schools or from studying at universities.⁹⁶ As for secondary schools and teachers training colleges, the authorities used the fact the Convention on Protection of Minorities didn't oblige them to grant these schools to members of minorities, so that they were not mentioned in the laws. In that way the government staved off any kind of obligation in that matter, without tying its hands for eventual concessions in the

⁹⁰ That limitation existed ever since the upheaval of 1918 (AV, 81, 670/1920.), and, being fixed by the law, it remained in force, except for the Banat Romanians after 1933, until the end of the inter-war period. (AV, 126/IV, 27609/940.) To tell the truth, the limitation was not always observed, so that in some cases classes with less than 30, or indeed less than 25 pupils, operated. (AV, 126/IV, 23676/31; 2121/931.)

⁹¹ Although the law granted the right to instruction in the mother-tongue, police pressure was sometimes put to bear on those parents who demanded what the law guaranteed them. (AV, 126/IV, 50220/30.)

⁹² the same held true for day care centres. In the Danube Province considerable number of day care centres were brought in accordance with legal requirements. (AV, 126/IV, 22685/931.)

⁹³ J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, pp. 88-89; Gligorijević, *O nastavi*, pp. 80-81. The Law on Primary Schools caused dissatisfaction in German diplomatic circles which were very preoccupied with the minority question in those years. (PA, Abt. IIB, *Unterrichtswesen*, Polirik 17, *Jugoslawien*, Bd. 1.)

⁹⁴ Gligorijević, *O nastavi*, p. 82. However, minority classes in burgher schools were reopened at the order of the minister of education in February 1932 (Mesaroš, *Mađari*, p. 82.), only to be closed again during the 1932/33 school-year. (J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, p. 104.) This, as well as, some other examples to be adduced further, testifies that the Yugoslav governments didn't take laws too seriously and that chief factors at decision-making were potential political gains.

⁹⁵ Mesaroš, *Mađari*, p. 50.

⁹⁶ Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, II, p. 163. Nevertheless, in accordance with the general tendency of reduction of minority classes in all kinds of schools, the number of minority classes at burgher schools was gradually also diminished. (ASANU, 14530 – II 7/20.)

future. In that respect, the school laws from late 1920s and early 1930s remained in the tradition of the minority school policy pursued until then.

The trend of reducing minority educational facilities was continued, especially toward the Germans in Slovenia, throughout the inter-war period. Thus, according to some German authors, only five parallel German classes in primary school remained in Kočevje by 1929.⁹⁷ However, this seems a bit exaggerated, since other authors adduce 25 classes for 1932,⁹⁸ and 16 for 1940/41,⁹⁹ although this testifies that the fall of the number of German classes was continuous.¹⁰⁰

In the Vojvodina, putting schools under state control which had started already in autumn 1918 was continued just two days after the peace treaty with Hungary had been signed in Trianon, on June 6, 1920, when they were declared state institutions.¹⁰¹ This meant, the state took over to pay the teachers (making them thus dependant of the government), whereas the communes were left to take care of school buildings and their material needs. On August 20, 1920 the Serbian law on primary schools of 1904 and the law on secondary schools of 1912 were extended to the Vojvodina.¹⁰² On July 13, 1920, the Department of Education in Novi Sad made a new curriculum for secondary and professional school, which envisaged instruction only in Serbian. All schools would be either Serbian or shut down. Only in some places parallel minority classes could survive. The decision of the School Board of Novi Vrbas about turning the local Hungarian high school into a German one was approved; in Bela Crkva Hungarian classes were shut down and Serbian ones (and not German as one would have expected in this predominantly German town) opened; the high school that the Germans had founded in Žombolj survived, but was reduced to a four-grade school; Hungarian state burgher schools in Kula, Odžaci and Topola were closed down (but German ones were not opened in these predominantly German places), and those in Kovin, Novi Sad, Palanka, Turski Bečej, Novi Bečej and Titel were merged with Serbian secondary or burgher schools.

Instead of minority secondary, professional and burgher schools, parallel minority classes in Hungarian were opened in Sombor, Novi Sad and Pančevo, whereas in German only in Vršac. The possibility of opening few more classes in other places was left open, provided there were at least 20 pupils in upper, and at least 30 in lower grades. As for teachers members of national minorities, they could be employed if they were qualified and if they

⁹⁷ Schemtisch, p. 23. It is not to be ruled out, that in this case only the town of Kočevje is meant, for which Vovko adduces only six parallel German classes in 1930/31. For the whole of Slovenia he adduces 54 classes with 1.841 pupils. (Vovko, p. 316.)

⁹⁸ Suppan, Jugoslawien, p. 700. In 1928 there were 27 German classes in Kočevje. (Idem, Zur Lage, p. 203.)

⁹⁹ Gottschee, 13 Jahre, p. 71. According to the authors of this publication, there were 51 classes in that year, with 903 and 1.521 German children. (Ibid.)

¹⁰⁰ Vovko adduces 18 German classes in 14 schools with 700 pupils in 1940/41. (Vovko, pp. 316-317.)

¹⁰¹ Gligorijević, O nastavi, p. 61; J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 50. It is not known if proclamation of this measure was made on purpose immediately after the official, internationally recognized separation of the Vojvodina from Hungary and its unification with Yugoslavia, but it is certain that that move was planned in advance. The only minority with schools officially represented in the Parliament, the Slovaks, submitted through their MP Štefanke, a complaint of the Bačka Evangelical Seniorat of August 24, 1920, in which it was demanded that Slovak schools remain under the control of the Slovak Evangelical Church. The authorities never deigned to answer this petition. (J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 55.)

¹⁰² Ammende (ed.), p. 368; Gligorijević, O nastavi, p. 61; Momčilo Isić, Osnovno školstvo u Srbiji 1918-1941, I, Beograd 2005, p. 42. The goal was to put almost the whole school system under state control and to make it impossible for private schools to awake national consciousness of minorities. (ASANU, XIV 2.) The state schools used the buildings of communal and confessionnal school until March 1928, partly paying rent. (Vereš (ed.), p. 89.) On March 16, 1928 the minister of education Milan Grol ordered to register them as state property, what was effectively a confiscation. (J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 77.)

spoke Serbian – to learn it they were given two years.¹⁰³ All Serbian and Montenegrin textbooks were approved for use, whereas those from the Vojvodina needed the approval of the Main Educational Council. The textbooks for minorities were to be written according to the same curriculum as the Serbian ones, and they needed the approval of the Ministry of Education.¹⁰⁴ On October 1, all minority burgher schools were shut down in places where a Serbian counterpart existed, and in them parallel minority classes were opened if there were at least 30 pupils. It was precisely determined which burgher schools could survive and where. On September 20 it was ordered that Serbian and minority schools follow the same curriculum. The Serbian language was to be taught from the third grade onwards, until the conditions were met for it to be taught from the first grade up.¹⁰⁵ What is striking, is that despite the larger benevolence toward the Swabians, as compared to the Hungarians, after the reduction of secondary and burgher schools, more of these schools for the Magyars than for the Germans survived. This mirrored probably more the number of available teachers than the actual larger forthcoming toward the Hungarians than toward the Germans. It was not that easy for the educational authorities to slash the oversized Hungarian schools and to open new ones, or classes for members of other minorities.

Interesting was the fate of the six-year high school the Germans had opened in Žombolj. It enjoyed no public status right to the end of the 1919/20 school-year,¹⁰⁶ when its further operation forbidden by a wired order of the Ministry of Education containing no explanation. The delegation of the commune went to Belgrade to complain, to be informed that only state schools could operate. The delegation invoked the existence of the Serbian school autonomy in Austria-Hungary,¹⁰⁷ but was told that Serbian confessional schools were also put under state auspices.¹⁰⁸ The Swabian delegation then proposed that the school survive, even as a state-run one. The Ministry of Education accepted this, but only if the eight-grade German high school became just the division of the four-grade Serbian high school that would be opened; the commune of Žombolj would have to board and lodge 20 Serbian war orphans who would attend the school. Having no alternative, the Germans accepted.¹⁰⁹ Obviously, it was pressure to “strengthen the Serbiandom” on the Romanian border. This can be concluded from several other cases where schools were to strengthen the Yugoslav character and the population in “nationally endangered”, usually border areas.¹¹⁰

Similar fate to that of the high school in Žombolj, had the one in Novi Vrbas, which became a eight-grade division of the four-grade Serbian high school in Srbobran.¹¹¹ On July 14, 1921 minister of education Pribičević ordered closure of the first grades of the minority’s secondary and burgher schools, with the subterfuge, that they were not mentioned in the Constitution. The intercession of the Kulturbund managed to prevent this, but in the years that

¹⁰³ The head-master of the high school in Vršac, Marčetić, suggested just one year in March 1920. (AV, 81, 385/1919.)

¹⁰⁴ There were very few minority schoolbooks during the inter-war period. (Cf. Mesaroš, Mađari, p. 379.)

¹⁰⁵ Gligorijević, O nastavi, pp. 61-64.

¹⁰⁶ AV, 81, 8014/920.

¹⁰⁷ It was adduced as a model already in a memo that representatives of the German minority submitted to the then Prime Minister Protić in January 1919. (J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 34.) The German representatives kept adducing the example of the Serbian ecclesiastical and educational autonomy as their declared aim.

¹⁰⁸ This was correct from the formal point of view. However, with the creation of Yugoslavia they had lost their reason for being.

¹⁰⁹ Plautz writes about the obligation to take 20 Serbian pupils. (Plautz, p. 69.) The same is affirmed by Kausch (p. 69) and in the HWBGAD, I, p. 283. Senz speaks about 40 orphans. (J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 58.)

¹¹⁰ AJ, 66, 57/145; 74, 56/140; 66 (o.n.), F. 88; AV, 81, 2310/919. Slovenian national organizations from Kočevje demanded in 1937 reopening of the 5th and 6th grades of the local high school in order to lift the depressed national spirit of the local Slovenes. (AJ, 37, 47/305.)

¹¹¹ J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 59; HWBGAD, I, 340.

followed Hungarian and German classes in these schools were shut down.¹¹² In 1922, at the instigation of the Serbian head-master, the German high school in Vršac was closed down.¹¹³ However, parallel lower classes for the Swabians were opened in the Novi Sad and Pačevo high schools in 1921/22.¹¹⁴ After Žombolj was ceded to Romania in 1923, the pupils and the teachers of the local high school were transferred to Vršac, where the German upper classes were reopened.¹¹⁵ However, they were shut down, together with the German upper classes in the high schools in Novi Sad, Pančevo and Novi Vrbas in February 1925.¹¹⁶ It is not improbable that this was the government's revenge that the German Party joined the opposition,¹¹⁷ although this measure certainly tallied nicely with the general tendency to reduce the minority education. This can also be discerned from the fact that in the Vršac high school, the parallel classes of the 4th, and then the 2nd and 1st grades were gradually abolished between 1926 and 1929. Contemporary authors explained this by insufficient knowledge of Serbian the German pupils had acquired in the lower grades, which allegedly prevented them from following the instruction in the upper grades which was in Serbian. According to these authors, it was necessary to enable the Germans to learn the "state language", because "not only would it be necessary for them in their future life, but they would in that way best come to love this beautiful land of ours, they would come better to know and make contacts with their Serbian fellow-pupils, which would last them also when they have grown up."¹¹⁸

As for primary schools, they operated in the language of the pupils: for members of minorities separate classes were opened if there were 60 pupils, i.e. 55 in two classes, or 45 in three or more. The Serbian language, history and geography were mandatory subjects in minority classes too. The generally restrictive tendency was only partly mitigated in the attitude toward members of some Slavic minorities – except in Bosnia.

The order of the minister of education Svetozar Pribičević of June 18, 1925, that primary schools were to be in the "state language" and that for members of minorities, if they numbered more than 30, parallel classes from the 1st through 4th grade could be opened, served further "nationalization" of education. Instruction in minority classes was to be in the mother-tongue of the pupils, with the exception of the "national subjects." If there were less than 30 pupils in one class, and more than 30 in the whole school, several classes could be combined, on condition that the total number didn't surpass 50. If there were not enough pupils of a given national minority, the class would be shut down.¹¹⁹ As we have seen, these principles had been mostly introduced right after the upheaval, and they mainly remained in force throughout the inter-war period. Soon after this decree, followed the name analysis that had to reduce the number of minority classes.¹²⁰ It too, despite occasional abolishing and less

¹¹² AJ, Zbirka Ljube Davidovića, 323/76; Gligorijević, O nastavi, p. 68; J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 60.

¹¹³ PA, Abt. IIb, Unterrichtswesen, Politik 17, Jugoslawien, Bd. 1. The same head-master, Marčetić, had accused the local Germans of being Pan-Germans, already two years before. (AV, 81, 421/1920.) The official excuse for closing the school was that the pupils were leaving it without adequate knowledge of the "state language". (Margan (ed.), p. 384.)

¹¹⁴ J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 59; HWBGAD, I, 340.

¹¹⁵ The Germans in the Vojvodina had 561 classes with 26.091 pupils in 193 schools in 1923/24, which was significantly more than in 1917/18. (Suppan, Jugoslawien, p. 717.)

¹¹⁶ J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 60; Margan (ed.), p. 382; Scherer, p. 30.

¹¹⁷ Cf. the previous chapter.

¹¹⁸ Margan (ed.), p. 385.

¹¹⁹ Gligorijević, O nastavi, p. 70.

¹²⁰ Ibid. Several orders and instructions which modified it were issued, but they didn't change its meaning and its goal. Thus in 1922 it was ordered that father's nationality would be decisive at enrolment, whereas in moot cases the educational authorities were to decide. In such cases, forthcoming was to be shown to non-Hungarian mothers trying to save their children from Magyarization. In 1925 it was ordered that children whose parents spoke even a little bit of the "state language" attend classes in that language or preparatory classes. In early August 1929 the Ministry of Education ordered that the Germans, Hungarians and Romanians be enrolled

vigorous implementation, remained a constant feature of the Yugoslav educational policy towards national minorities.

In that context, there was another constant feature of the Yugoslav educational policy towards minorities. It was limitation or even prevention of the Yugoslav citizens of minority origin to attend secondary schools or universities in their mother-countries, with which the relations usually weren't good.¹²¹ The Yugoslav authorities feared, and not without reason too, minority students would be infected with separatist, irredentist, revisionist and other nationalist ideas in their mother-countries, which would be harmful for the Yugoslav state and national unity. Hungarian universities were the most suspect, but German and Austrian ones, also teeming with nationalism, were also not seen as safe for the Volksdeutsche students.¹²² In that respect members of minorities were visibly discriminated against, as compared to the Yugoslavs who were free to study wherever they chose.¹²³ Gradually increasing number of members of national minorities (especially the Germans and Magyars) enrolled in Yugoslav universities.¹²⁴ However, after some time the number of Ethnic-German students at the Belgrade University started to stagnate since most of the Volksdeutsche continued studying in Germany and Austria.¹²⁵ They used to have student associations at the universities in Yugoslavia. Thus, for instance, Germans students of the Zagreb University founded in 1925 the Association of German Students (Vereinigung deutscher Hochschüler) which had a house of its own. In Belgrade the Volksdeutsche students had the association Suevia which started as an alimentary community, only to obtain its own house with social rooms, kitchen and lodging for 30 students in 1933.¹²⁶ These associations were transmitters of Nazi ideas in the late 1930s.¹²⁷ Apart from them, there were several other German students' associations in smaller places.¹²⁸ It should be stressed that considerable part of the Volksdeutsche students

according to their mother-tongue and nationality, whereas pupils of Yugoslav nationality were to be enrolled into Yugoslav classes. It was forbidden that pupils of one national minority attend classes of another. (Gligorijević, O nastavi, p. 71.) Clearly this measure was aimed at the Hungarians whose schools enjoyed greatest prestige from before 1918, but it affected members of all minorities. (AV, 126/IV, 18503/931.)

¹²¹ AJ, 66 (pov.), 60/159; 51/105; 66, 57/145; HWBGAD, I, p. 284; Mesaroš, Položaj, pp. 197, 204, 210-211; Popi, Rumuni, pp. 98, 117-118; Wutte, Lobmeyr, p. 62; Dimić, Kulturna politika, III, pp. 69-70, 93-94, 112, 123-124; Macartney, Hungary and Her Successors, p. 421. According to Suppan, there were 284 German students in Yugoslavia, with approximately the same number studying in Germany and Austria, where some of them had ties with Pan-German circles. (Suppan, Jugoslawien, p. 724.)

¹²² German and Austrian universities were steeped in nationalism already before the First World War, whereas during the inter-war period the Nazis managed to gain the predominant influence on students in both countries rather quickly. We have seen that the "Renewers" brought their ideas from there to Yugoslavia. The universities in Germany were made to toe the line in 1933, so that studying at them became potentially even more nefarious to Yugoslav interests, as the authorities noticed the Volksdeutsche students were spreading "Hitlerism" in their homeland over holidays. (AJ, 14, 27/71; Zbirka Cincar-Markovića, fas. II; 66 (pov.), 70/183; 38, 48/106; Grunberger, pp. 335-341; Mosse, pp. 193, 254, 268, 271.)

¹²³ To be sure, members of minorities could much more easily obtain permission to study in countries which were not their mother-countries.

¹²⁴ The proportion of minority students at the Belgrade University 1929-1941 lagged behind their share in the total population: the Hungarians were 1.06%, Germans 1.68% and others 1.23% of the students. (Dimić, Kulturna politika, III, p. 360.) The number of German students at Yugoslav universities increased only from 371 to 382 between 1931/32 and 1937/38.

¹²⁵ The number of German students at Yugoslav universities increased only from 371 to 382 between 1931/32 and 1937/38. The reason was that, despite the obstacles, greater part of the Volksdeutsche still studied in Germany and Austria. (Suppan, Jugoslawien, p. 703.)

¹²⁶ J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, pp. 110-111.

¹²⁷ AVII, pop. 17, k. 95b, f. 6, 9, 19; Hrvatski državni arhiv (henceforth: HDA) grupa XI, kut. 28, inv. br. 2881, SB, ODZ, 5793/1939.

¹²⁸ HWBGAD, I, 284, 341. On the make-up of the Volksdeutsche students in Yugoslavia in the 1930s, cf.: Kosier, pp. 141-142.

received scholarships from the leadership of the Kulturbund, that, in principle, had to be paid back.¹²⁹

What was the situation of one of the two key links within the framework of such a minority educational policy, namely of minority teachers? It followed to the largest degree the development of minority education. At the time Yugoslavia had been founded, the Hungarian education in the historical Hungary and the German one in Slovenia were oversized. Accordingly, there was a discrepancy in the number of Hungarian teachers (among whom there were many magyarized Germans and others) in the Vojvodina and German ones in Slovenia on the one hand, and the number of minority or Yugoslav teachers on the other. This disparity started changing fast through the large exodus – willing and coercive – of German and Hungarian teachers. As for other nationalities in the Northern parts of the country, they (including the Yugoslav ones) all suffered from lack of the teaching staff. This shortage was gradually alleviated during the inter-war period, but it was never completely rectified: lack of teaching personnel existed throughout Yugoslavia and it couldn't be removed for financial reasons.¹³⁰ It was coupled with lack of minority teachers¹³¹ that was only partly due to lack of money with the ministry of education. The other main reason was the wish of the educational authorities to keep the number of minority teachers low. To that end, enrolment of minority candidates into teachers training colleges was made difficult,¹³² whereas permissions to found minority teachers colleges or minority classes in Yugoslav ones, were granted only with difficulty and usually under pressure of foreign policy factors.¹³³ As we have seen, the Yugoslav authorities wanted to raise members of the national minorities in the spirit of national and state unity and to impose on them learning of the “state language”, deeming in that way even if they didn't cause assimilation of the national minorities, they would develop their love for Yugoslavia.¹³⁴ They believed this could be better achieved if instruction for minorities was imparted by teachers of Yugoslav nationalities.¹³⁵ The second best solution was employing young minority teachers who were educated in Yugoslav teachers training colleges.¹³⁶

¹²⁹ AJ, 38, 403/554.

¹³⁰ M. Mayer, pp. 107-110.

¹³¹ AV, 126/IV, 20048/931; Ammende (ed.), pp. 344, 347; Lenard, *Narodne manjine*, p. 733. Officially, 143 Yugoslav, 43 Hungarian, 33 German 11 Slovak and 5 Romanian teachers lacked in the Danube Province in 1931. (AV, 126/IV, 1676/931.) However, this doesn't mean this reflected the true educational needs: the list referred only to the number of vacant working places.

¹³² J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, pp. 64-65; Mesaroš, *Položaj*, p. 204. Among the students of the Vršac teachers training college in 1930, there were 264 Yugoslavs, 5 Czechoslovaks, 46 Germans, 7 Hungarians, 8 Romanians and 6 others. (AV, 126/IV, 44326/30.) In the Novi Sad teachers training college, there were 204 Yugoslavs, 14 Czechoslovaks, 13 Germans and 6 Hungarians in October 1930. (AV, 126/IV, 44362/30.)

¹³³ Unlike other minorities, the Czechoslovak Union was permitted in 1928 to hold teachers courses in order to at least partly alleviate lack of teachers. (Lenard, *Narodne manjine*, 733; *Narodna jednota*, May 23, 1931.) These teachers (mostly Yugoslavs and Russians!) were to remain in service until adequate replacements were found (AV, 126/IV, 4156/931.), although some of them hadn't even finished high school. (AV, 126/IV, 4156/31.) Furthermore, 20 Slovak and 7 Czech teachers from Yugoslavia attended a course in Czechoslovakia. (*Narodna jednota*, May 21, 1932.)

¹³⁴ Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, II, p. 50. Just how absurd this notion is, was noticed by one of the initiators, and later one of the first critics of Hungarian nationalism, count Istvan Szechenyi who picturesquely said that the moving of the tongue was not the same as heartbeat.

¹³⁵ AJ, 66 (pov.), 57/146; Gligorijević, *O nastavi*, p. 73; Mesaroš, *Položaj*, p. 198. However, some Yugoslav teachers were not equal to the task they had been given, so they came under influence of the minority environment in which they worked. (AJ, 66, 99/283; AV, 126/IV, 13581/931.)

¹³⁶ AV, 126/IV, 20048/931; Gligorijević, *Jugoslovensko-rumunska konvencija*, 99. After considerable part of the pre-war minority teachers had been sacked or retired, most of minority teachers received favourable marks from their supervisors. German teachers (who were even better educated than their Yugoslav opposite numbers) received the best marks, whereas the Romanian ones were given the worst. (AJ, 66 (s.n.) F. 7; F. 75; F. 73; 14, 27/71.)

Since there were not enough Yugoslav teachers for minority classes on the one hand, and since many minority teachers remained in the state territory (especially in the Vojvodina) even after the exodus, on the other, the latter had to be retained in service. Furthermore, massive firing of minority teachers would be difficult to bring in accordance with the obligations from the Convention on Protection of Minorities and would give the country bad name in European public opinion. Therefore the Yugoslav authorities vacillated, torn between the desire to reduce the number of minority teachers and the need to keep at least the minimum of them, necessary both for minority classes and the statistics. The means with which the undesired were to be removed were exams in the “state language”, because the authorities were guided by the idea that knowledge of the language was a kind of statement of loyalty.¹³⁷ In 1922 programmes and rules for such exams for secondary school teachers were made. The exams yielded poor results, so they had to be repeated in 1926, and finally in 1928, after which 85 Hungarian teachers lost their jobs.¹³⁸ It would, however be fair to say that the authorities showed an unexpected leniency by tolerating throughout the years a considerable number of minority teachers who hadn’t learnt the “state language”.¹³⁹ Above all these were older teachers who in their old age had neither the will nor the capability to learn the new official language, so that the number of minority teachers who spoke no “state language” remained high even after 1929.¹⁴⁰ It is not to be excluded that some of them considered it beneath them to learn it. Apart from the language exams, from early April 1929 the revision of qualifications of all secondary school teachers who had graduated in Hungary and other revisionist countries started.¹⁴¹ This was in keeping with the tougher policy toward minority teachers after the imposition of the dictatorship and was, among other things, reflected in the retirement of 114 Hungarian, 93 German and 6 Romanian teachers after the Law on Primary Schools had been passed.¹⁴²

Together with the exodus, difficulties at enrollment into teachers training colleges, but also small interest of members of national minorities to be educated in a language that wasn’t their native one for a poorly paid teaching profession,¹⁴³ lack of minority teachers in parallel minority classes was aggravated by unemployment of part of educated minority teachers, as

¹³⁷ One month (sic!) Serbian language courses for minority teachers were organized in Subotica in October 1919. (AV, 81, 6016/1919.) A referendary in the Ministry of Education stated in mid-1934 that those minority teachers who spoke the “state language” had success in their work with children, unlike those who didn’t speak it. (AJ, 66, 7/25.) It is not to be excluded that he, like many school inspectors, wasn’t able to control instruction in minority languages and that he checked only knowledge of the “national subjects”. He accused teachers alongside the Northern border of secretly working for Hungary.

¹³⁸ Suppan, Jugoslawien, p. 719; G. Nikolić, p. 213. According to some information from the Ministry of Education from 1929, 165 German and Hungarian teachers were discharged because they didn’t speak the “state language”. (PA, Abt. IIb, Nationalitétenfrage, Fremdvlker, Politik 6, Jugoslawien, Bd. 4.) According to others, 114 Hungarian, 43 German and 6 Romanian teachers were dismissed. (Vinaver, Jugoslavija i Mađarska 1918-1933, p. 403.) Teachers had to take exams in official languages in other countries too. So for instance, German exams were organized for the teachers of the Burgenland Croats in Burgenland in 1923/24. (Bela Schreiner, Das Schicksal der Burgenländischen Kroaten durch 450 Jahre/Sudbina Gradišćanskih Hrvata kroz 450 ljet, Eisenstadt s.a., p. 49.)

¹³⁹ These were often transferred for punishment to “Southern Serbia” (i.e. Macedonia, Kosovo and the Sandjak) to learn Serbian (sic!). (Suppan, Jugoslawien, p. 719.) Nevertheless, Sajti claims the Yugoslav educational authorities treated old Hungarian and German teachers more humanely than the Romanian ones. (Sajti, Hungarians, p. 146.)

¹⁴⁰ AJ, 66, 4/11; 66 (pov.), 57/146; 16/41. Similar examples occurred in the following years too. (AV, 126/IV, 23117/30; 42346/30; 2201/31; 1128/939.) On the other hand the Ministry of Education demanded of the teachers of the “national subjects” and head-masters of schools with minority classes to “understand at least to a certain extent respective minority languages.” (AJ, 66 (pov.), 57/146.)

¹⁴¹ Dimić, Kulturna politika, I, p. 254.

¹⁴² Mesaroš, Mađari, pp. 50-51.

¹⁴³ J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 39; Mesaroš, Položaj, p. 197.

well as by the fact that the Ministry of Education often posted minority teachers in Yugoslav classes, whereas Yugoslav teachers who spoke no or only little language of their pupils, were often employed in minority classes.¹⁴⁴ Representatives of national minorities kept complaining about such phenomena throughout the inter-war period.

The first influence of the introduction of the dictatorship on minority education was restrictive. The school legislation was unified, but due to principal prohibition of private schools, it left little room for minority education, self-initiative and educational self-help on part of members of minorities. At the same time, it only strengthened the wish of certain national minorities to achieve cultural and educational autonomy. This idea wasn't new: it was espoused practically from the foundation of Yugoslavia particularly by the Germans, who took the Serbian ecclesiastical and educational autonomy in the historical Hungary as the model.¹⁴⁵ Their representatives expounded the idea on many occasions in the Parliament, in talks with representatives of the government, at international conferences and in Yugoslav and foreign press.¹⁴⁶ Basically, the idea was also acceptable for other minorities,¹⁴⁷ and it also had many adherents in the circles of minority representatives in Europe.¹⁴⁸ The Volksdeutsche were the only to achieve some, albeit rather modest, results in that respect.

It may be said that the main direction of the development of minority education in the inter-war Yugoslavia was determined in the first half of the 1920s. Until the mid-1920s most of the schools were brought under state control and a large number of minority schools or classes were shut. This trend was most vigorously continued in Slovenia, following the numerical decrease of the German minority in that province. However, in other parts of the country, certain changes in the field of education of certain minorities occurred. This was true above all of the German and Romanian minorities, and only to a small degree of the Hungarian one. In the case of the Volksdeutsche, it was an indirect influence of the gradual change in the orientation of the country's foreign policy. In the case of the Romanians, the perceptible improvement came about as a result of the most direct influence of foreign factors, i.e. of the Convention on Minority Schools in the Banat from 1933, whereas a moderate and inconsequent improvement of the educational situation of the Magyars was the result of a combination of factors of domestic and foreign policy.

Although negotiations with Romania on regulation of minority education on both sides of the border had been going on already in the 1920s, the first minority (the numerically insignificant Italians excluded) which experienced a (mild) improvement of its educational (and coupled with it of its overall) situation, were the Germans. However, even for them the

¹⁴⁴ AV, 126/IV, 24806/931; 13574/931; 17001/931; 5369/31; 5368/31; 9069/30; 22708/940; SBNS Kraljevine SHS, Redovan saziv 1926/27, III, pp. 377-378; Ibid. za 1931/32, knj. III, Beograd 1932, p. 221; SB Senata KJ za 1933, I, pp. 211-212; Mesaroš, Položaj, p. 204; Idem, Madari, pp. 375-376; Suppan, Jugoslawien, pp. 708, 719; HWBGAD, III, p. 76. Margan excuses this solely by lack of minority teachers. (Margan (ed.), pp. 383-384.) In Kočevje this was indeed the reason, although the authorities in Ljubljana must have been glad that it was so. (Grothe, pp. 180-182.) In a school in the town with German majority, Ruma, in 1931 there were 17 German and 9 Serbian classes but all teachers were Yugoslavs. (AV, 126/IV, 14278/931.) In the German school in that town there were 10 German and 5 Yugoslav teachers. (AV, 126/IV, 10001/31.) Furthermore, there was uneconomic employment of Yugoslav teachers who spoke some minority language (usually Hungarian). (ASANU, II9/15.)

¹⁴⁵ Plautz, pp. 70, 72, 76; J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 34. A concrete plan for German school autonomy from May 1919 see in: Kausch, p. 69.

¹⁴⁶ ASANU, 14530/XIV 2; AJ, 80, 29/149; PA Abt. Iib Nationalitätenfrage, Fremdvölker in Jugoslawien, Politik 6, Jugoslawien, Bd. 2 and 3; SBNS Kraljevine SHS, Redovan saziv za 1926/27, knj. III, Beograd 1927, pp. 376-377; SBNS KJ, II redovan saziv za 1936/37. godinu, knj. II, Beograd 1937, p. 761; Morocutti, p. 81; Dimić, Kulturna politika, III, p. 17; J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, pp. 81-82.

¹⁴⁷ Hungarian representatives aired similar demands. (Dimić, Kulturna politika, III, p. 73.) The expert for international law on minorities, Dr. Fedor Nikić even considered the Hungarians the main champions of that concept. (Fedor Nikić, Manjinske i privatne škole i naša prosvetna politika, Letopis Matice srpske, knj. 320, sv. 3, 1929, p. 404.)

¹⁴⁸ J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, pp. 65-66.

improvement came neither quickly and easily, nor was it equally felt in all parts of the country where they lived.¹⁴⁹

The great economic depression taught the king and the government that in the field of economic aid, nothing was to be expected from the traditional political friends France and Czechoslovakia. Because of that, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, a gradual turning toward Germany began, which would culminate some ten years later, under quite changed foreign political circumstances, by accession of Yugoslavia to the Tripartite Pact. One of the factors which, in the opinion of the German diplomacy, hindered any rapprochement, was the position of the German minority in Yugoslavia.¹⁵⁰ In order to remove this hurdle, that was enlarged by very unfavorable reception with which the Yugoslav Law on Primary Schools met in Germany, the Yugoslav government decided to grant the Volksdeutsche certain concessions in the field of education.¹⁵¹ Thus the minister of education Boža Marinković signed a decree on September 1, 1930 which enabled the Germans to enroll their children into schools based on the parents' statement and the language spoken in the family. Enrolment was to be made through parity commissions composed of parents and representatives of the educational authorities, and the moot cases would be solved by the minister of education. Under this decree the Volksdeutsche were exempted from article 45 (paragraph III) of the Law on Primary Schools, which enabled them to start learning the "state language" only from the 3rd grade onward, and not from the 1st. Furthermore, German teachers were allowed to organize literacy courses and to teach the "state language" under government supervision. It was allowed that the language of instruction in the first two grades of the higher primary school be German,¹⁵² private day care centres were permitted, and preparatory classes foreseen by article 5 of the Law on Primary Schools, were no longer mandatory for the Germans.¹⁵³ In the last part of this decree, foundation of a private German teachers training college was permitted.¹⁵⁴

It was typical that the Volksdeutsche learned of this decree from foreign press:¹⁵⁵ the Yugoslav authorities had great fear of precedent in minority policy, i.e. that concessions given to one minority would be demanded also by others.¹⁵⁶ To be sure, this fear wasn't groundless.

¹⁴⁹ In the field of education it was hardly felt at all in Slovenia.

¹⁵⁰ PA, Abt. IIb Politische Beziehungen Jugoslawien und Deutschland, Politik 2, Jugoslawien, Bd. 3. Since 1929, the year when Germany particularly started championing the interests of the Volksdeutsche in Europe, the question of the German minority would become one of the main ones in the relations with Yugoslavia during the next few years. (Höpfner, pp. 157, 319.)

¹⁵¹ ASANU, II/9/15; Das Schicksal, p. 26E; Höpfner, p. 320. Among other things, by giving school concessions the Yugoslav government wanted to forestall the Volksdeutsche petition to the League of Nations. (Höpfner, p. 322.) As a herald of concessions and a gesture of goodwill in the field of education, reinstatement of certain number of dismissed German teachers could be interpreted. (AJ, 66, 2/5)

¹⁵² The "national subjects" were in the "state language" (AV, 126.IV, 10695/31; 12979/31.), although several exceptions also occurred (such as in Nemačka Crnja in 1931). (AV, 126/IV, 25075/31.)

¹⁵³ AV, 126/IV, 23427/931.

¹⁵⁴ AJ, F. 398, f. 1; Dimić, Kulturna politika, III, pp. 26-27; J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, pp. 95, 218; Pržić, pp. 237-238; Vovko, pp. 314-315.

¹⁵⁵ J.V. Senz, Das Schulwesen, p. 95. The leading German newspaper in Yugoslavia, the Deutsches Volksblatt, published the decree only on January 23, 1931. (Pester Lloyd, February 14, 1931.)

¹⁵⁶ This reason was adduced by the foreign minister Marinković, to the German ambassadors Köster in November 1929 and to von Heeren on May 28, 1930. (Höpfner, p. 320; PA, Abt. IIb, Nationalitätenfrage, Fremdvölker, Politik 6, Jugoslawien, Bd. 5.) The argument that the Hungarians and other minorities, and indeed the Germans in Croatia and Slovenia couldn't be granted the same as the Germans in the Vojvodina, was championed as late as 1939 by the chief of the Educational Department of the administration of the Danube Province, Milan Petrović: "Every concession given to the local Germans in those parts would be interpreted by national extremists among the Croats and Slovenes, as an attack on Croatian and Slovenian interests." (AJ, 14, 27/71.)

As for the decree on German education, it remained no secret for members of other national minorities, and indeed they asked on several occasions for what the Germans had been granted.¹⁵⁷ Since the decree was promulgated, the development of the German education accelerated somewhat, but it never went smoothly.¹⁵⁸ The greatest and most direct improvement was felt in the Vojvodina where a number of parallel German classes was opened already in 1930/31 and where the educational authorities did their best to find the necessary teachers who spoke German.¹⁵⁹ Stronger resistance to opening of German classes occurred particularly in Slovenia and Croatia.¹⁶⁰ Whereas the Slovenian educational authorities managed to hold on to their restrictive school policy until the Second World War,¹⁶¹ considerable part of the Germans in Croatia started to awake nationally, demanding opening of German classes.¹⁶² For this reason, the largest number of new classes was opened

¹⁵⁷ AV, 126/IV, 13414/939; AJ, 14, 27/71; Deutsches Volksblatt, July 9, 1931; Mesaroš, Mađari, p. 191. Czech and Slovak teachers demanded on a conference in Novi Sad in early March 1932, "German privileges" for the Czechs and Slovaks, expressing dissatisfaction that the Germans were given more than the Slavs "whom one should trust more because of the blood and heart." (AJ, 66, 7/16.) The Czechs and Slovaks aired the same demands already in mid-1931. (AJ, 66, 6/13.)

¹⁵⁸ Thus for instance a decree of April 3, 1933 reintroduced learning of the "state language" from the 1st grade, but it was withdrawn on August 25, 1934 because of the protests of the Volksdeutsche representatives. (Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, III, p. 29.) In 1933 instruction in the »state language" was introduced from the 1st grade, but it was abolished in September of the same year. For a while the decree on the way of enrolment of the Volksdeutsche children was suspended. (Suppan, *Jugoslawien*, p. 788.) It is not clear if these two authors speak about different decrees. On January 23, 1931 a German day care centre in Novi Sad was shut down, and several others which failed to accommodate to the law were also threatened with closure. (AV, 126/IV, 2916/31; 25978/931.) The press in Germany and Austria protested at slow and inconsequent realization of the school concessions. (Kreuz-Zeitung, December 25, 1930; Freie Stimmen, December 23, 1930; Berliner Tagblatt, October 1, 1930.) Among other things, analysis of names at enrolment of pupils occurred here and there too. (SB Senata KJ, Redovan saziv za 1933, I, p. 211; PA, Abt. Iib, Nationalitätenfrage, Fremdvölker, Politik 6, Jugoslawien, Bd. 5; Neue Verschlechterung, Deutsche Zeitung, Julz 3, 1932.) Complaints about obstruction on part of the lower civil servants and about lack of language skills on part of teachers continued. (SB Senata KJ, Redovan saziv za 1937/38. godinu, knj. I, Beograd 1938, p. 190.)

¹⁵⁹ AV, 126/IV, 3105/31; 10909/31; 17001/31; 10113/31; 2511/31; 2512/31; 2513/31; 2519/31; 2520/31; 2523/31; 2789/31; 3505/31; 3869/31; 9560/31; 5221/31; 5150/31; 13914/31; 13913/31; 12980/31; 22565/931; 46471/930; 44407/30; 45762/930; 3964/931; 15194/931; 15461/931; 3841/31; 3105/31. It is not clear if the comparatively high number of German head-masters (six in the district of Bačka Palanka) mentioned in a document from 1931, was connected with the school concessions the Volksdeutsche had been granted. (AV, 126/IV, 17860/31.) The same goes for the intention to remove those teachers who spoke no German from German classes. (AV, 126/IV, 9594/31.) On the other hand, closing down of German classes occurred as late as 1940, even in the Vojvodina. (AV, 126/IV, 50011/940; 34177/938; 47107/938; 29392/938; 72807/938; 14278/931.)

¹⁶⁰ Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, III, pp. 27-28, 34; Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors*, p. 416; J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, p. 91; Suppan, *Zur Lage*, pp. 206-207; Freie Stimmen, May 28, 1931; Tagespost, May 25, 1931; Deutsche Zeitung, February 5, 1931; Tagespost, February 11, 1931; Berliner Tagblatt, February 13, 1931; Hamburger Nachrichten, March 1, 1931; Koroška domovina, May 1, 1931. The improvement in education was felt only slightly in Bosnia too. (AIDGL, HA 1327.)

¹⁶¹ Despite the improvements in the Vojvodina and in Slavonia and despite the increasingly closer ties with the German Reich during the second half of the 1930s, the number of German classes continued to decrease in Slovenia. (Vovko, pp. 316, 320.) According to the Slovenian data on February 1, 1938, the Germans in Slovenia had 30 parallel classes (22 in Kočevje) with 1.238 pupils, whereas 894 German pupils had no instruction in their mother-tongue. (Suppan, *Zur Lage*, p. 233.) Already by October 1939 only 24 German classes with 926 pupils were left. (ASANU, 14530-II9.) Not even the pro-German Prime Minister Dr. Milan Stojadinović wanted to oppose his Slovenian interior minister Dr. Anton Korošec in this matter. (Ibid., pp. 222-223; HWBGAD, III, pp. 77, 80.) Due to continuous oppressive policy in Slovenia, part of the German parents lost confidence in German classes, i.e. they feared their children would not learn enough Slovenian in them. (Deutsche Zeitung, June 26, 1932.)

¹⁶² According to the senator Rožič, 58 German classes were opened in places where they hadn't existed previously in Croatia in 1931 alone. (Biber, *Nacizem*, p. 88; Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, III, p. 34.) Immediately

in Slavonia and Syrmium, although the process was coupled with resistance on part of Croatian and croatized teachers and priests, pressure of the local authorities, and even conflicts within communes.¹⁶³

The greatest gain for the German national minority was the permission to set up a private teachers training college. Its founder was to be the German School Foundation (Deutsche Schulstiftung), to the founding of which the authorities acceded already on May 15, 1929.¹⁶⁴ The Foundation was started in late June 1931¹⁶⁵ after several months of money-raising action which the Volksdeutsche press followed from day to day and furthered. Over 3 Million dinars were collected.¹⁶⁶ The main goal of the Foundation was establishing and maintaining of the German private teachers training college, which started operating on October 11, 1931 in Veliki Bečkerek, in the building of the cloister of sisters of Notre Dame. After two years of work, the college was transferred to Novi Vrbas.¹⁶⁷ In early October of the same year the approval for a private German burgher school in the same town was obtained.¹⁶⁸ These were the important achievements of the German national minority which other minorities looked at with envy.¹⁶⁹ In the second half of the 1930s the German private teachers training college became, in the eyes of Serbian observers, the hotbed of Nazi propaganda.¹⁷⁰ Despite this, it continued operating until the end of the inter-war Yugoslavia. The German educational system continued to develop in the following years, although resistance on part of the local authorities was often considerable. Obstacles were occasionally made by the Ministry of Education too, but the rise of the Third Reich, the increasing dependence of Yugoslavia on it, and finally the fall of the main Yugoslav ally, France, in 1940, enabled the development of the German education, which although it fell short of the (ever growing) Volksdeutsche desires, surpassed by far anything other minorities had. Thus, the Yugoslav Germans were allowed in autumn 1940 to found private high schools in Novi Vrbas, Apatin, Belgrade and Zagreb, as well as, a private agricultural school.¹⁷¹ These

after the Law on Primary schools was passed, 97 demands for German classes were submitted in Slavonia and Croatia. The authorities answered by procrastination and name analysis. (J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, p. 89.)

¹⁶³ ASANU, 14530-II/10; J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, p. 91; Geiger, *Nijemci u Đakovu*, p. 77; *Mariborer Zeitung*, March 12, 1932.

¹⁶⁴ J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, p. 92.

¹⁶⁵ The approval of the founding charter was granted only on September 26, 1933, which proves the Yugoslav authorities were not too keen on fulfilling the concessions they had granted. According to the charter the founders of the Foundation were the League of the Germans for the League of Nations and Understanding Among Peoples, the Kulturbund and the Central Agricultural Savings-Bank from Novi Sad. (J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, p. 98.)

¹⁶⁶ *Die Wache*, August 19, 1931; J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, p. 97. The Foundation received a permanent yearly subsidy from the Yugoslav government, which was an open secret galling the Serbian population (AJ, 14, 27/71.), as well as regular donations from Germany. (Suppan, *Jugoslawien*, 729.)

¹⁶⁷ Milan Petrović, the chief of the Educational Department of the Danube Province in 1939 deemed it good from the point of view of the state interests, that the German teachers training college was in the Protestant Novi Vrbas, the large majority of the Volksdeutsche being Roman-Catholic. (AJ, 14, 27/71.)

¹⁶⁸ The school received permission to start operating on August 29, 1931. (J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, pp. 99-100.) It worked under government supervision and the authorities determined, among other things, the time-table and the textbooks. (AV, 126/IV, 44066/38; 9302/38.)

¹⁶⁹ What members of other minorities probably didn't know, was that the statues of the private German teachers training college were definitely approved only in August 1940, as well as that the authorities limited the number of eligible candidates. (J.V. Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, p. 100.)

¹⁷⁰ The German parallel classes at the six-year high school and at the private German burgher school in the same town were seen in the same light. (AJ, 66, 101/297; 108/341; ASANU-XIV/2; Biber, *Nemci*, 86.)

¹⁷¹ Biber, *Nacizem*, pp. 84-85, 203, 224-225; Dimić, *Kulturna politika*, III, p. 49; Senz, *Das Schulwesen*, pp. 123-124; AV, 126/IV, 50054/940. The German incomplete six-year high school in Apatin into the 1st grade of which 124 pupils were enrolled, got in September 1940 two classrooms of the local burgher school. (AV, 126.IV, 4921/940; 51419/940; 51832/940.)

concessions,¹⁷² coupled with those in the fields of foreign relations and economy, were a kind of *appeasement à la yougoslave*. It is plain that other minorities which had no such powerful mother-country, couldn't even dream of anything like it.

On the whole, the Yugoslav state strove to put all education, including that of the minorities, under its control and to utilize it for raising young generations in the spirit of national and state unity. In the process, the goals were hardly modified when education of national minorities was in question. Ideological subject-matter prevailed over that of general or professional education. This was particularly striking in the school policy toward national minorities. If they couldn't be assimilated, as a rule, as restrictive a school policy as possible was applied: both when it came to the number of classes and teachers and when it came to the kind of instruction pupils received. They were to be raised in the spirit of loyalty and their national consciousness was to be weakened through neglect of quality and quantity of instruction in mother-tongue. Exceptions were made grudgingly, and usually for reasons of foreign policy or short-term pre-election calculations. The Ethnic-Germans had the luck inasmuch the Yugoslav authorities started reorientating their foreign policy toward Germany since early 1930s, which brought certain benefits for the Volksdeutsche education.

Let's see in the end what the situation of the minority education looked like when seen through the statistical data from the middle of the inter-war period (1929 and 1931) when the bulk of the reductions had already been done, and in the end of the period (1939), before the policy of concessions had reached its peak - to be sure, taking the school statistics with a grain of salt too. This is how the numbers of primary schools which operated only in one minority language looked like in 1929, according to official statistics: 50 German, 91 Hungarian, 4 Romanian, 6 Slovak, 5 Ruthenian, 7 Italian, 3 Czech. Apart from this, many schools had instruction both in the "state language" and in one of the respective minority languages: 133 German, 95 Hungarian, 26 Romanian, 16 Slovak, 3 Ruthenian, 98 Turkish, 3 Czech. There were also schools in which the instruction was imparted, apart from the "state language", also in two or even three minority languages: 11 in German, Hungarian and Serbian, 5 in German, Slovak and Serbian.

As for secondary schools, one worked in Slovak, and it was the only purely minority high school then. In the "state language" and in German 13 secondary schools operated, and in the "state language" and in Hungarian 10.¹⁷³ As we have seen, various modalities of instruction in minority languages were possible. The quoted statistics doesn't distinguish between the lower and upper grades of primary and secondary school and the number of minority classes can't be discerned from it - just the number of schools in which they existed. Similar imprecision is displayed in some other published statistics,¹⁷⁴ probably not by chance.

Here are the data for the 1935/36 school year adduced in the official publication of the Central Press Bureau:¹⁷⁵

Nationality	day care	primary school	higher primary school	# of pupils	# of teachers
Germans	36	607	118	39.927	769
Magyars	33	452	-	26.605	446
Czechoslovaks	1	119	11	7.471	122
Romanians	3	83	-	4.878	100

¹⁷² There were also smaller concessions in the field of education, such as opening of a state-run day care centre as a training class for the private German teachers training college. (AV, 126/IV, 67129/940.) In the late 1930s, and early 1940s, several private German day care centres were opened. (AV, 126/IV, 12595/940; 30219/38.) A private German day care centre still operated in Odžaci in 1938, although it had been prohibited from working already in 1932! (AV, 126/IV, 41552/38; 48737/32.)

¹⁷³ Jubilami zbornik života i rada SHS, p. 740.

¹⁷⁴ For instance: Nikola S. Tujković, Statistika škola pod Ministarstvom prosvete na dan 15. maja 1932. godine, Beograd 1933.

¹⁷⁵ La Yougoslavi e par les chiffres, Belgrade 1937, p. 143.

Ruthenians	-	23	-	1.455	23
Total	73	1.284	129	80.336	1.460

This table suggests that the Ethnic-Germans had the highest number of schools and pupils. However, this wouldn't be telling much, since they were the largest minority, so that such a result was to be expected. This survey doesn't show everything of importance for minority instruction: neither the number of classes, nor the nationality of teachers, i.e. their language skills, the number of members of minorities in classes in the "state language", nor the ratio between the minority class/pupils/teachers and Yugoslav ones. The light on this last question is partly shed by another statistics made as an answer to a Hungarian petition to the League of Nations in 1931.¹⁷⁶

Nationality	# of classes	% of classes	# of teachers	% of teachers	% of people
Yugoslavs	1.683	58.03	1.724	61.5	37.88
Hungarians	536	18	364	13	27.95
Germans	564	18.6	508	18.4	23.10
Slovaks	121	4.1	123	4.3	4.37
Ruthenians	18	0.6	27	0.96	0.83

Unfortunately, this table concerns only the Bačka, the Banat and Baranya. The results for the whole country would certainly be different, and certainly even less favourable for national minorities, and particularly for the Volksdeutsche due to the school conditions prevailing in Croatia and Slovenia. It can be discerned from the table that the inequality in regard to the number of educational institutions and teachers that existed until 1918 in favour of the Hungarians, by 1931 tipped in favour of members of the "state-building people", mainly the Serbs. It can be seen that all national minorities, with the exception of the Slovaks, and partly of the Ruthenians, had fewer classes and teachers than was their due according to their share in the total population. However, like in the previous case, it is not clear here how many minority teachers actually worked in classes with pupils of their nationality, i.e., how many Yugoslav teachers worked in minority classes and what their language skills were.

Finally, here is how the statistical survey of the minority education in the Northern parts of the country looked like in early November 1939, according to nationalities.¹⁷⁷

Germans

Province	# of schools	# of classes	# of pupils	# of teachers	# of German teachers
Drava	21	25	1.057	21	31
Croatia	4; 39 yu, d; 1 yu, cs, d	67	3.123	64	29
Vrbas	7 yu,d	11	733	10	9
Drina	1; 1 yu, d	5	237	5	5
Danube	18; 104 yu,d; 29 yu,d,h; 1 yu,d,ro; 3 yu,d,cs; 3 yu,d,h,ro; 3 d,h	594 (18 day care)	31.263 (2.080 in day-care)	576+121 relig. teachers (+ 18 nurses)	632
Belgrade	5 yu,d	45 (2 day care)	1.808 (231 in day care)	38 (2 nurses)	25

¹⁷⁶ AJ, 38, 402/553. Our table summarizes two tables from the document. Just how slippery ground the statistics is, is best shown by another statistics of the number of classes, pupils etc, in the Bačka, the Banat and Baranya from 1931 in which partly different data feature. (AV, 126/IV, 34286/930.)

¹⁷⁷ AJ, 66 (pov.), 7/25.

Teachers college 1 5 142 7

(Explanation: yu – Yugoslav; d – German; h – Hungarian; cs – Czechoslovak; ro – Romanian; r – Ruthenian.)

Hungarians

Province	# of schools	# of classes	# of pupils	# of teachers	# of Hungarian teachers
Drava	4 yu,h	4	104	4	1
Croatia	1 yu,h	2	84	2	7
Danube	28; 101 yu,h; 29 yu,d,h; 3 yu,cs,h,ro; 3 yu,d,h,cs; 1 yu,h,cs; 3 h,d	439	27.079	417	375
Belgrade	1 yu,h	2	119	2	2

Czechoslovaks

Province	# of schools	# of classes	# of pupils	# of teachers	# of Czechosl. teachers
Croatia	3; 14 yu,cs	30	1.309	33	36
Vrbas	1 yu,cs	1	22	1	1
Danube	2; 17 yu,cs; 3 yu,d,cs; 3 yu,d,h,cs	106	5.997	100	132
Morava	1 yu,cs	1	18	1	5
Belgrade	1 yu,cs	4	123	6	4

Ruthenians

Province	# of school	# of classes	# of pupils	# of teachers	# of Ruthenian teachers
Danube	2 yu,r	22	1.376	22	35
Yugoslavia	3 yu,r	23	1.411	23	36

Romanians

Province	# of school	# of classes	# of pupils	# of teachers	# of Romanian teachers
Danube	23; 9 yu,ro; 1 yu,ro,h,d; 1 ro,d	81	4.363	78	110

It can be seen from these tables that minority teachers were unequally dispersed. The number of Ruthenian teachers by far surpassed the number of Ruthenian classes, and similar was the case of Romanian teachers and classes, as well as of Hungarian in Croatia. On the other hand, teachers lacked in the Vojvodina. To be sure, just like in the previous tables, it is impossible to discern the distribution of minority teachers in minority classes from this table too. It can be partly observed on the local level in the reports of the local educational authorities. These reports, depending on place, to a larger or smaller extent confirm complaints of the minority leaders about the lack of teachers of minority nationalities for

minority classes.¹⁷⁸ However, if taken with a grain of salt and interpreted in the right way, these statistics numerically illustrate quite well what has been discussed in this chapter.

The education of the Ethnic-Germans in the Yugoslav territory experienced contradictory processes between 1918 and 1941: in Slovenia it was drastically reduced; in the Vojvodina it started to develop almost from scratch first, to be halted in mid-1920s, and then expanded in the 1930s; in Croatia, after an initial difficulties, it stagnated until 1930s, when it started developing, albeit not without hindrances on part of the authorities; in Bosnia it had little possibilities for development and on the whole it rather decreased than increased since 1918. The development was the strongest in the field of primary education. Secondary education was much slower and modest in its expansion, whereas higher learning in the German language could be acquired only abroad. Reasons of foreign policy and not the actual goodwill of the authorities were responsible for most of the improvements. Compared with other minorities, the Ethnic-Germans gradually became better off than the Hungarians (who had had a much better starting position), and in some respects equaled and in some even surpassed the situation of the Slavic minorities and the Romanians. It certainly surpassed by far the situation of the Turks who kept loosing schools or the Albanians who had no schools whatsoever. The education of the Ethnic-Germans in Yugoslavia left much to be desired, but it was more or less on the European level by the minority standards of those times. Lack of goodwill on the part of the authorities and legal limitations it produced, lack of money (with the state and the minority itself) and of teachers, schoolbooks and school-buildings prevented the education of the Volksdeutsche to reach a really satisfactory level.

¹⁷⁸ Some examples see in: AV, 126/IV, 29010/939; 10661/941; 9073/930; 33816/930; 10661931; 81/657.