
Du national au global ? La recherche en histoire de l’éducation dans les États baltes (1990-2015) : le cas des thèses de doctorat

Iveta Kestere and Irena Stonkuviene

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The History of Education is a meticulously nurtured field of study in the Baltic states. The political events of the late 1980s – Gorbachev’s perestroika, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and freedom from Soviet dictatorship with the renewal of independence for Lithuania (1990) and Latvia and Estonia (1991) – marked a definitive break with the past. This study addresses the first 25 years of independence during which Baltic education historians attempted to break out of the confinement of dictatorship and join the global, understood as Western, community of education historians beyond the Iron Curtain. We raise the following questions: How modern did the History of Education in the Baltic States become during those twenty-five years? How closely are Baltic historians of education following global trends?

Our sources are 84 doctoral dissertations (Estonia – 23, Latvia – 22, Lithuania – 39), defended from 1990 until 2015 on the topic of the History of Education. We followed the conclusion of Hofstetter et al. that dissertations are a resource, which often creates bridges to new fields of research while simultaneously generally belonging to intellectual legacy: in the case of the Baltic states, the dissertations analysed are ideal reflections of “old” and “new”

accumulations of education history during the transitional period between the Soviet era and democratic nation-state building. Dissertations are also a good source of comparison as they are standardised, strictly following guidelines that require the identification of research goals and questions; they describe sources, methodology, and concepts; and they present novel ideas as well as define cultural borders. And finally, dissertations examine “how a discipline defines itself over time”; thus, through the prism of dissertations, we can follow the conceptual development of education history in the Baltics over twenty-five years.

In order to determine our research questions, we compared the dissertations with current academic work written by internationally recognized Western scholars from various regions, who are considered experts in the History of Education. Their studies were selected also because the authors have especially focused on problems of education history as an academic research discipline. We assessed national and global trends in history through the work of researchers who specialized in East European historiography.

In this article, we will highlight the similarities between historical developments in the Baltic states rather than the differences. Yet, by critically evaluating the content of the doctoral theses and the defense processes, we acknowledge that pleasant exceptions are possible at all points of our critique.

Both authors have been involved in the processes of developing doctoral dissertations after 1990; therefore, we describe them from the insider position, which is both an advantage in deciphering the accumulation of different views, often accompanied by tensions and contradictions, but is also inevitably subjective. Nevertheless, as Etherington and others have noted, behind every piece of research, there is one or more individuals, who have chosen to design or undertake research for their own purposes, whether personal or professional.

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2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
I. Institutional context

Although Baltic people had dreamed of independence since their occupation in 1940, the collapse of the Soviet Union was unexpectedly rapid, and change in all areas of life, including in the academic community, took place almost overnight.

During the Soviet era, History of Education was the sub-discipline of education sciences referred to by the single word “Pedagogy” and even after regaining independence, dissertations in the History of Education were mostly defended for a degree in education, not in humanities or other social sciences. Therefore, we are focusing on transformations in the field of educational sciences, which traditionally served as a framework for research in the History of Education developed in the Baltic states.

In the Soviet Union, the system for obtaining a scientific degree was centralised and the same was true for all branches of academia, namely humanities, social, and natural sciences. There were two levels of scientific degrees: the first level was “candidate of sciences” and the second, the doctor’s degree. In education sciences, the first academic degree was called “a candidate of pedagogical sciences”, the second, “a doctor of pedagogical sciences”. The candidates’ dissertations were defended before Science Councils created for particular scientific fields in each of the Soviet republics. The establishment of Scientific Councils in the Soviet republics was possible only with Moscow’s permission. Dissertations defended in Republic Councils were sent to the Higher Attestation Commission at the Council of Ministers of the USSR where they were approved or rejected. If there were any doubts about the dissertation in Moscow, it was evaluated by a “black reviewer” (who was anonymous), and if the evaluation was negative, the dissertation was rejected and the Council of the Republic lost the right to accept dissertations for defence. Thus, each dissertation went through a double examination process through two institutions, the local Council and the Higher Attestation Commission in Moscow, whose decision was decisive and final.

This dependence on Moscow imposed a “second-class” seal on Baltic professorships. Yet, it must be noted that mediocrity did not work in Moscow: entry into the Soviet scientific elite was proof of high academic achievements (and, of course, trust from the Communist Party), and evaluation of dissertations defended in the “provinces” was strict.
After the restoration of Baltic independence, scholars were left without Moscow’s leadership; thus, they had no clear instructions and supervision on dissertation topics, sources, methodologies, and concepts, which until then had been strictly censored and developed solely within Soviet ideology and with restricted access to Western authors’ academic performance.

In the post-Soviet space, the course of future development was clear – of course, turn towards the West! Thus, an urgent task was to rank degrees according to the Western model.

In Estonia, dissertations that had been defended by 20 August 1991 were automatically equated with doctoral degrees, but in Latvia and Lithuania, a nostrification (equalization) process took place in the 1990s during which Soviet degree holders had to prove that their dissertations met actual research requirements. Decisions on nostrification were made by the same professors who had obtained their doctorates during the Soviet era, so the result was predictable: almost all those who had applied for the nostrification process obtained a new doctoral degree. Only those dissertations that were clearly politicized and merely praised the Soviet system were rejected.

However, the flattering results of Soviet era dissertations and the stability of the “old staff” in the field of education sciences should not be assessed too...
History of education PhDs in the Baltic states (1990-2015)

critically: Soviet-trained professors honestly tried to change over time, and many of them could now develop their full potential after Communist forms of censorship ended. They also supported the entry of the new generation into education history, as evidenced by the stable number of defended dissertations in consequential five-year periods after the restoration of independence: annually, young scholars defended from between 15 dissertations (the least in 1990-1995) to 19 dissertations (the most in 2005-2010). On average, 17 dissertations in the History of Education were developed per year.

The popularity of history in the field of education was inspired by the general enthusiasm of Baltic societies for reviewing their national past and freeing it from Soviet myths. The formation of nation-states is always accompanied by a new interest in history and national history writing. In periods of transformation “historians tried hard to restabilise traditional historical master narratives, as they strove to provide a sense of continuity and identity in the midst of chaos and destruction”. The situation in the 1990s in the Baltics was very reminiscent of the late 19th and early 20th centuries when education history celebrated the creation of European nation-states and teachers were mandated to become “moral agents in fostering their particular nation”. While education history was experiencing “hard times” in the West, it gained a stable place in Baltic teacher education programmes that wavered only in the second decade of the 21st century.

Education history instruction in universities provided a pool for the recruitment of new doctoral students in this field of research. The opening of archives,
which were difficult to access in the Soviet era, was also important as it offered researchers a collection of new topics and sources. As presentation of innovations is one of the strict requirements in doctoral research, it became quite easy to fulfill this by using virgin topics and sources. Prospective and serving teachers enthusiastically embarked on a “national turn” in historiography, a trend experienced throughout Eastern Europe\textsuperscript{16}. However, dissertations were less affected by public demand for a “new” national history as their readership was academically oriented and much narrower. Consequently, dissertations exhibited less national romanticism and patriotism than did articles in the press and popular culture\textsuperscript{17}.

In our study, we included those dissertations in which the subject “clearly has a historical component”\textsuperscript{18}. Seventy dissertations (83.3\%) were defended in education sciences (pedagogy) and 14 (16.7\%) in philology, history, and other social sciences. As no special degree in the History of Education is awarded in the Baltic states, virtually all dissertations were required to be interdisciplinary, thereby fulfilling the “obligation” to address at least two disciplines, in most cases education and history.

Interdisciplinarity, narratives of education history that flow across boundaries and borders\textsuperscript{19}, the movable and dynamic boundaries between fields of research or disciplines\textsuperscript{20}, and openness to different academic disciplines\textsuperscript{21}, as noted by today’s experts, is one of the current issues of research in the history of education. However, a clear attitude prevailed in Latvian dissertation defences – the primary field was education and history played a supporting role. Professors in education sciences often demanded ready-made recipes for solving modern education problems, which Depaepe describes as “the appetite of pedagogues for

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item Stefan Berger, \textit{The Past as History…}, op. cit., p. 326, 333.
\item Rita Hofstetter, Alexandre Fontaine, Solenn Huitric, Emmanuelle Picard, “Mapping the discipline…”, op. cit., p. 876.
\item Rita Hofstetter, Alexandre Fontaine, Solenn Huitric, Emmanuelle Picard, “Mapping the discipline…”, op. cit., p. 872.
\item Daniel Tröhler, “Tracking the Educationalization of the World…”, op. cit., p. 219.
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‘lessons’ from the History of Education”\textsuperscript{22} and McCulloch notes as the “usable past in the interests of contemporary institutions and policies”\textsuperscript{23}. However, the close connection between education history and pedagogy also had its positive aspects: at a time when Western social science theories and cultural history had just entered the Baltics, pedagogy at least offered some framework – a common ground related to theoretical concepts for the interpretation of historic facts. The utilitarianism imposed on the History of Education, which Depaepe\textsuperscript{24} and Tröhler\textsuperscript{25} had warned of, was only reduced by using the experience of the West as an argument and strengthening the authority of education history as an independent field of research. An important turning point was the writing and defence of dissertations in the national languages of the Baltic states, not in Russian. After 1990, only six dissertations in the History of Education were defended in foreign languages – three in Russian and three in English, namely, 7.1% of all dissertations. The change of language also changed the theoretical concepts used in dissertations. In the late 1990s, studies by local researchers were mostly cited instead of Soviet authors. Knowledge of the research of education history in the West entered the Baltics only gradually: in the 1990s, both foreign language knowledge and financial resources for access to Western literature were lacking. These obstacles had been overcome by the 21\textsuperscript{st} century and references to the work of Western scholars became academic etiquette. However, the choice of foreign research, based on language, paradoxically divided national academic communities: first, there was a gap between the younger generation and older researchers, who had spent their academic careers in the Russian-speaking world, and secondly, the young scientists themselves became part of different language communities – some read in English while others acquired knowledge from Germany, with which the Baltic states had had a long tradition of cultural communication. However, formally, English won this language “battle”: dissertations were required to include a multi-page

\textsuperscript{22} Marc Depaepe, “Why Even Today Educational Historiography is not an Unnecessary Luxury. Focusing on Four Themes from Forty-four Years of Research”, Espacio, Tiempo y Educación, no. 7 (1), 2020, p. 238.

\textsuperscript{23} Gary McCulloch, “New Directions…”, op. cit., p. 48.


\textsuperscript{25} Daniel Tröhler, “Tracking the Educationalization of the World…”, op. cit., p. 212.
summary in English, although in the early 21st century, some Lithuanian dissertations included a parallel summary in Russian. In any case, the winners in the academic field were English speakers.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the education sciences in the Baltic states were restructured and contacts across borders were intensified. New life was breathed into the Baltic Association of Historians of Pedagogy, which had been founded in the 1970s but was officially established as a public organisation in 2000 with branches in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. The International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE) became the “home” conference for Baltic education historians. It was first attended by Latvians in 2002, but in 2007 doctoral students from Latvia participated in ISCHE for the first time. Associations and conferences revitalized the field of research, influencing both the theoretical framework of dissertations and the defence process.

Education historians from the West began to be invited to consult and review dissertations in the Baltic states. However, such co-operation was rather limited, because there were no researchers specializing in the history of Baltic education in the West. It is also possible that supervisors of dissertations were not convinced that their joint efforts with doctoral students could withstand critical comparison with research in the West. Therefore, it could be argued that institutionally, the process of developing dissertations in the Baltic states was successfully restructured and vetted but developed mostly within each country’s national comfort zone.

II. Space, time, topics, and some methodological trends

The place and time chosen for dissertation topics confirmed an orientation towards national histories: 54.7% of dissertation titles mention one of the Baltic states and 30.9% mention the titular nation – for instance Latvian schools, Latvian literature, Latvian history, Latvian teacher education, Estonian-speaking

schools, Estonian comprehensive schools, Estonian music education, Lithuanian education societies, Lithuanian didactic prose, and Lithuanian primary schools; 8.3% of dissertation titles do not mention a specific place; and only three dissertations (3.5%) study the history of education abroad – comparisons with Poland, Denmark, and other European nations. Quite conspicuous is the lack of dissertations that address the Baltics as a common space in education history. This is clearly due to sources and literature written in the different national languages. Paradoxically, it was much easier for Baltic historians to access sources and literature in German, Russian, Swedish, Polish, or English rather than in Estonian, Latvian, or Lithuanian, if it was not the researcher’s native language.

Naming the titular nation in the title of dissertations sent two messages. First, it revealed the scope of the dissertation and sources used. The Baltic States are multinational, with strong ethnic traditions in education, and it is logical to indicate which ethnic community’s history is studied in the dissertation. Secondly, focus on the study of the past of the Baltic nations once again confirmed the topicality of national history, which was closely connected with the restoration of personal identity and the negation of the melting pot concept of Soviet nations.

Some dissertations are devoted to the education of national minorities, such as schools in Estonia with German or Russian as the language of instruction, the education of Jewish children in Lithuania, and national minority schools in Latvia or Lithuania. Research of various ethnic communities was a refutation of Soviet history in which national minority education was an uncomfortable topic: a well-developed minority school system in the interwar period in the Baltics was gradually abolished by the Soviet government, leaving only schools with instruction in the language of the titular nation (Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian) or in Russian.

The first period of Baltic independence from 1918 to 1940 was the most studied in dissertations: 2% of dissertations are dedicated to this period, 23.8% include this period in their research, and 21.4% of dissertations give an overview. In order to explain the popularity of the interwar period, it is necessary to turn again to Soviet historiography for which the independence of the Baltic States was a particularly sensitive topic. This, like other periods of history before incorporation into the Soviet Union, was allowed to be presented only in an exaggeratedly critical manner: “Communist historians were instructed to develop new Marxist-Leninist historical national master narratives. They did so by merging the Marxist class paradigm with traditional forms of national history writing”\(^ {32}\). The task of the education historian was to prove and continuously remind the reader of the class inequality that existed in the pre-war education system, from which the Soviet people saved the Baltic nations. In this way, history became a weapon of Soviet propaganda\(^ {33}\): its purpose was to denigrate the years of independence of the Baltic States in contrast to the “happy” but, in fact, violent incorporation into the Soviet Union in 1940.

Soviet public censorship and flourishing myths in the private space about the period of independence of the Baltic States from 1918 to 1940\(^ {34}\) logically aroused increased interest among historians in this period, forcing them to look for new facts and interpretations in order to “demythologise” the past – the endless task of a historian\(^ {35}\).

In the context of Hofstetter et al.’s framework\(^ {36}\), the 84 dissertations defended in the Baltic states can be divided into the following thematic groups: 1) history of education institutions that discuss education policies, school history, and history of the teaching profession (39.3%); 2) history of education practices, curriculum, and methods (28.6%); 3) the relationship between education and

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society – activism, organisations, and minority history (17.8%); and 4) the history and philosophy of pedagogical ideas (14.3%).

The fifth thematic group mentioned by Hofstetter et al. is the circulation of knowledge, education transfers, and internationalisation. We did not address this group separately as no dissertations were dedicated specifically to this topic. It should be noted, however, that the Baltic states experienced cross-cultural transmissions in all periods of history, and foreign education ideas were naturally adopted or imposed, translated, and adapted in the local context, influencing every process of education. Cultural transfers, including borrowings from one or more cultures and the import of ideas and practices from other countries, which are considered topical in modern research, are an integral part of education in the Baltic States. In the history of Baltic education, the question is more about where education innovations came from and not whether they are borrowings from abroad.

Thus, dissertations that study individual institutions, education practices, or the history of ideas are inevitably linked to the international roots of these phenomena. Links between Latvian and Estonian education can be found in the German and Swedish cultural space while the Lithuanian experience is in close connection with Poland and, undeniably, the influence of Russia. Therefore, the local history of education in the Baltic states can be understood and explained only from an international perspective. However, after 1990, as already mentioned, the focus was on national history, through which global historical processes were also viewed.

Placing national histories in a global context has ideological connotations because the question is inevitable – in what context? The goal of the “new” history of the Baltics, while not an explicitly declared goal but also not hidden, was to reveal that the Baltic states belonged within Europe through a common past, and to rid themselves of the status as republics of the Soviet Union: “Claims to belong to an imaginary ‘West’ were widespread in post-Soviet nation states as a means to distance themselves from Russia.”

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37 Ibid., p. 878-879.
38 Ibid., p. 879.
ties with Russia, then after the restoration of independence, Baltic historians, with strong public support, sought their roots in Europe: in the words of Tamm, new borders between nations were constructed in which the border fences with Russia became even tighter, higher and more closed, but elsewhere they were increasingly open to the West.

In their study of education institutions, Baltic doctoral students have focused on those marginalized, excluded groups or “lost voices” during the Soviet era – ethnic minorities, immigrant groups, and the disabled, which are relevant topics in current studies on the history of education and for whom specific fields of research have been created, such as inclusive education and inter-cultural education studies.

Analyses grounded in the reality of the education practices of the past are yet another topic where 37.5% of the dissertations focused on the pedagogical experience of the mother tongue and history. This is closely related to the professional background of doctoral students who were mostly teachers and felt comfortable researching the history of their subject.

The history of the teaching profession, a well-developed field of research in the Soviet tradition, had new life breathed into it immediately after the political changes of the 1990s. Doctoral students expanded the boundaries of education institutions and the teaching profession, which in the West had already begun in the 1960s when the history of education was called upon to become aware of the plurality of education institutions and not limit research on education to within the walls of schools. Dissertations examined the history of music education, civic education of soldiers, and the culture of reading.

Dissertation sources were mainly archive materials. One reason for this has already been addressed: archives offered treasures hidden during the Soviet era, but after the restoration of Baltic independence, they were revealed and

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42 Barbara Finkelstein, “Teaching Outside the Lines...”, op. cit., p. 128; see also Kevin Myres, Ian Grosvenor, “Collaborative Research...”, op. cit.
43 Gary McCulloch, “New Directions...”, op. cit., p. 52.
46 77.2% of the authors of dissertations defended in Latvia, have worked as teachers.
re-discovered along with education press, literature, and fiction banned during the Soviet era. Additionally, “[t]he grid of principles assembled in historicism becomes the imputed reality and the archive, [...] given romantic and magic qualities in the quest of the knowledge of history”48. Borrowing the words of Tröhler, Baltic education historians continued “worshipping the archive”49 and the acquisition of written sources became proof of weighty and significant efforts by historians, which were, of course, also expected from doctoral students.

Time and resources were needed to master sociology, political, ethnography, and anthropology theories popular among Western historians50 as well as concepts of modernisation, colonisation, globalisation, migration, mobility, diaspora, and travelling51. Failure to master modern theories led research in education history to encyclopaedic recitations of facts found in archives; education history was “summarised in a single, flat development line,” something Depaepe warned against52 However, encyclopedic accounts of history were received quite well by the Baltic community because these dissertations presented new, unknown facts. At the time, they were impeccably innovative, and the volume of new historical facts was so great that the lack of broader and deeper interpretation was forgiven.

III. The National and the Global

After breaking away from the Soviet Union, in the 1990s Baltic education historians entered the Western “public marketplace” that demanded the unbinding of education history from its moorings in single nation-states and localities and the introduction of comparative and transnational dimension in studies53. Entry into the global community required “international, transnational and

comparative agendas”\(^{54}\) global and transnational narratives with transnational actors, and phenomena and processes involving the dynamics of the “nation” and “national”\(^{55}\). National histories were certainly not in fashion and post-Soviet historians were openly (or silently) revealed to be supporters of “historiographical nationalism” – in post-Communist countries, “nationalist history-writing often rose to new heights”\(^{56}\). Criticism of nationally oriented history, including the history of education, was closely linked to lessons that Europe should learn from the disastrous history of the first half of the century and today’s resurgence of nationalism\(^{57}\) – the “re-emergence of nationalist politics and mentalities”\(^{58}\).

Truly, if we do not search for an explanation for the popularity and even glorification of the nation and its history in the research of education historians of the Baltic states, including that of doctoral students, then only condemnation remains. But the most challenging question in historical research is – why? If we ignore the context and causes, it is impossible to claim a critical and multi-perspective interpretation of history, which appeals to modern global researchers.

There were several reasons for the focus on national histories of education.

First, dissertations in the History of Education in the Baltic States had a specific target audience: dissertations were defended mainly in the national languages in local doctoral councils. New facts about national history were welcomed, and they clearly confirmed the novelty of dissertations. Moreover, national histories were the object of interest and discussion in all of Baltic society, especially among the academic intelligentsia. Doctoral students created narratives of history that were less intended for an external audience, but most definitely for internal consumption.

Secondly, before trying to tell the story of their history to the world, the Balts themselves had to understand it, as did other nations in the post-communist

\(^{54}\) Gary McCulloch, “New Directions...”, op. cit., p. 53.


\(^{56}\) Ibid., p. 333, 326.


space: “we try to explain [our differences and peculiarities] to ourselves while explaining them to everybody else”\(^59\). History, which over the course of fifty years had been redacted in the spirit of Soviet ideology, had to be reviewed and cleansed of historical falsification, propaganda, and blatant lies.

Finally, there was a belief in Baltic society that it was a sense of community based on national culture and history that helped endure the years of Soviet dictatorship, exactly as described by Berger: “The nation had become the victim of foreign aggression, and the nation’s history, that shaped its national character, allowed the people to withstand the occupiers”\(^60\). Master narratives of historical background serve not only academic but also ideological goals: by giving people a common past, history develops a common identity and strengthens patriotism, a “need for belonging” became a response to threats from the “others”\(^61\).

Nationalism cultivated through a common history and culture as a unifier against Soviet dictatorship is difficult to explain to the Western academic community because historians in Western and Eastern Europe lack shared memories on this point, unlike, for example, the history of the Second World War and its interpretation, which is not globally uniform, but still comparable. Eastern Europe’s passion for national history is interpreted according to Western notions of nationalism\(^62\).

Clearly, the nation-state and the titular nation were the central narrative in the history of education dissertations in the first 25 years of development in the Baltic states. The study of local history was a starting point which could not be dispensed with at that time and place: first of all, we have to understand where we have come from, and to understand change, we must also recognise continuity\(^63\) —“paradoxically historicism organizes the past to speak about the future”\(^64\). Before being able “to overcome national tunnel visions”\(^65\), national

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60 Stefan Berger, The Past as History..., op. cit., p.354.


63 Gary McCulloch, “New Directions...”, op. cit., p.47.


65 Stefan Berger, The Past as History..., op. cit., p.338.
history must be processed, mastered, and understood. This is self-evident in Western democracies, but Eastern Europe, with its interrupted continuity of historiography, needed a period of transformation with all its accompanying exaltation and national romanticism. It would be undesirable to get stuck in the “tunnel” of national history, which would mean halting the development of the history of education.

Conclusion

Global trends in the History of Education converge on several points: 1) research on global cross-border education phenomena; 2) interdisciplinarity – the search for topics and methodologies beyond the boundaries of education history; and 3) fresh topics and new sources inside and outside archives.

Quite paradoxically, Baltic education historians began their journey towards the global (Western) community of historians of education by researching their national histories in the “old-fashioned” way, which was also reflected in defended dissertations. This transitory stage was necessary to free their narratives of the history of education from layers of Soviet ideology and propaganda, dispel myths, and celebrate the opportunity to choose one’s own past.

Cross-border concepts such as ethnic minorities, immigrant groups, disabilities, and religion were reviewed through a national prism, as were global processes – mainly the circulation of ideas, without which education in small countries located at the crossroads of political processes is inconceivable. The context of the education history of the Baltic states was shifted from Russia to the European space. It was commissioned history, demanded by both academia and society as a whole in response to fifty years of imprisonment in the Soviet Union with Russia at the heart of the history narrative. The History of Education was mostly explained in the context of political, rather than global education processes.

As dissertations in the History of Education were defended under the umbrella of education sciences, the requirement for connections to theories of education sciences and contributions to pedagogical practice was inescapable. This utilitarianism was overcome only over time by mastering the modern concepts of other social sciences. In the academic space, where only one theory – trivialized Marxism– had prevailed for so long, learning new, current concepts did not occur quickly, for either dissertation supervisors or doctoral students.
The demand for “freshness” in the field of history in the Baltics was met in their/our own way – during the Soviet era, secret archives and libraries offered a continuously elusive collection of new sources that needed to see the light of day. Silenced and lost voices, particularly those of ethnic groups and the disabled, became heard through doctoral works. New facts, although often without proper interpretation, were enthusiastically received by the academic community as sure proof of innovation in doctoral dissertations. Obsession with facts and neglecting their interpretation sometimes transformed education history into “the home of rather dry, smug texts that charted the national systems of schooling”\textsuperscript{66}.

The 25-year-long road travelled by education historians in the Baltic States is also a story about the ideologisation of the History of Education. The first part is about education history as a weapon of state propaganda under Soviet dictatorship, followed by liberation from the influence of the superpower, but with demands by the renewed nation-state society to supply a new national history that would strengthen Baltic identity in the European context. The final chapter of this story is a new external order for history that is not limited by national borders, not only to make history meaningful and understandable for a global audience, but also to use history as a weapon against the booming nationalism and extremism in the world of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. However, “when history is hitched to one extrinsic goal or another, political, ideological as well as theoretical and/or programmatic, then it ceases to be history”\textsuperscript{67} but is converted into an ideology.

\textbf{Iveta Kestere}

University of Latvia, Faculty of Education, Psychology and Art, Latvia
iveta.kestere@lu.lv

\textbf{Irena Stonkuviene}

University of Vilnius, Institute of Educational Sciences, Lithuania
irena.stonkuviene@fsf.vu.lt

\textsuperscript{66} Gary McCulloch, “New Directions…”, op. cit., p. 54.