

## **Bologna System and Student Protests**

### **Croatian transcript:**

Bolonjski process je sustav visokog obrazovanja uveden u Hrvatsku prije nekih pet godina. Nekima mrzak, u biti mnogima mrzak, ali ima svojih prednosti. Osnovna razlika između starog sustava koji je prije vrijedio i Bolonjskog jest što je studentima veoma onemogućeno zapošljavanje, zato što je prisutnost na predavanjima skoro pa obavezna i broj rokova je puno manji, tako da... To je zapravo, Bolonjski sustav je u mojim očima barem, oblik sankcioniranja studenata koji su navikli na kampanjsko učenje. Inače, fraza „kampanjsko učenje“ znači, odnosi se na osobu koja dugo vremena ništa ne radi, i onda u zadnji tren pred rok napravi sve. Znači, dakle, Bolonjski sustav je oblik sankcioniranja takvih ljudi i...

Pa, uspješno ide; više ljudi prolazi, ali nažalost i više ljudi je, mora plaćati faks otkad je uveden Bolonjski sustav, uslijed čega je prethodnih godinu dana su u Hrvatskoj nastali nemiri takoreć na fakultetima, tj. bunt protiv plaćanja visokoškolskog obrazovanja pod parolom „Jedan svijet, jedna borba“. Suradivali smo sa drugim evropskim sveučilištima, i organizirana je dakle blokada sveučilišta, koja je najduže i najuspješnije zaživjela baš na Filozofskom fakultetu. U prvom navratu je trajala 34 dana, a u drugom 14. To je bilo zapravo jedno jako zanimljivo iskustvo, zato što je ispalo puno uspješnije nego što smo mislili da hoće. Bili smo svi jako složni, i onako željni da pokret uspije. Tijekom blokade sveučilišta, tj. tijekom blokade fakulteta profesori uopće nisu dolazili na fakultet, ali mi studenti smo skoro stalno bili tamo jer je bilo puno alternativnih predavanja. Profesori koji su nas podržavali su održavali predavanja najčešće na temu... Na onako političkim temama, na temu studentskih pobuna općenito, ili nekakvih povijesnih situacija koje se mogu s time povezati, ili primjera iz kulture itd. I tako, u međuvremenu nije baš puno toga riješeno, dobili smo neka obećanja, ali najavljuju se eto daljnji prosvjedi.

Kao što vjerovatno znate, evropski kulturni krugovi, a među njima i hrvatski, se bitno razlikuju od američkog, i jedna od bitnih razlika kulturoloških je upravo sustav obrazovanja. Naime, kod nas je ta činjenica da dio studenata mora plaćati obrazovanje veoma kontroverzna zato što se pobija sa Ustavom, a i sa statutom sveučilišta u Hrvatskoj. Naime, prema statutu sveučilišta, ne bi među studentima trebalo biti nikakve diskriminacije s obzirom na, i onda se nabroja: rasu, spol, šta još ima, vjeru, itd., sad su to osnovna, već ustanovljena prava, i između ostalog, navodi se i imovinu. Znači zbog te jedne kritične riječi je evidentno da se ta prava krše, jer neki studenti, odnosno mladi ljudi koji bi željeli studirati, a nemaju financijskih uvjeta za to, onda i ne mogu. Jer, kao što sam već spomenula, Bolonjski proces nam ostavlja malo vremena za posao i ovisni smo, znači, o tome da nam netko plaća fakultet, pa su usljed toga nastale sve te pobune.

Znači, cilj je zapravo, mnogim... Mislim, studenti koji su bili udruženi u tome su dolazili iz raznih, zbog različitih razloga, neki znači čisto praktičnih, sami su bili siromašni pa znaju kako je to, a neki baš onako zdravo-ideološki, koji se veoma protive tome da dođe

do toga da se obrazovanje komercijalizira, tojest da više se znači ne plaća iz državnog proračuna, nego da je u kontroli, tj. u rukama recimo nekakvih institucija ili tvrki koje imaju neku vlastitu dobit od toga da što više studenata studira na nekom faksu.

### **English translation:**

The Bologna Process<sup>1</sup> is a system of higher education implemented in Croatia about five years ago. Some hate it - basically most people hate it, but it does have its advantages. The basic difference between the old system which was there in place of Bologna and Bologna itself lies in the fact that students are limited in terms of employment, because presence at lectures is almost mandatory<sup>2</sup>, and there's a smaller number of exam dates<sup>3</sup>, so... Actually, as I see it, the Bologna Process is a form of sanctioning of those students who are used to campaign studying. The phrase "campaign studying" refers to those students who don't do any work for an extended period of time and then cram for their exams at the last minute. So, the Bologna Process is a way of sanctioning those people.

And it's going quite well: more people are passing their exams, but unfortunately more people have to pay for college<sup>4</sup> since the Bologna Process was implemented, which resulted in student uprisings at Croatian universities last year. It was a series of protests against paying for higher education that was called "One world, one struggle." We cooperated with other European universities, and we laid siege to our universities, which was at its longest and most successful at the Faculty of Philosophy. It lasted for 34 days the first time, and 14 the second. It was actually an interesting experience, because it turned out to be much more successful than we thought it would. We were all united in our desire for the movement to succeed. During the siege of the university... I mean, during the siege of the faculty, professors didn't come to lectures, but the students were all there because many teach-ins were held. Those professors who supported us held lectures mostly on the topic of... Politics in general, student uprisings in general, or certain historical situations which could be linked to that, examples from culture, etc. In

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<sup>1</sup> Bologna Process or Bologna Accord made academic degree standards compatible throughout Europe by creating a standard which is implemented by the European Higher Education Area. This accord was passed and implemented by the Croatian Parliament in 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Current system allows students to miss up to three lectures per semester. Previous system allowed students to enroll as part-time students, which meant that they were not required to be present at lectures at all, meaning that students would only have to be present at and pass his/her final exams.

<sup>3</sup> Final exams in Croatia take place during a two-week period at the end of each semester, and students are expected to pass all or most of his/her exams (up to eight at some departments) at one of two different dates during this period. Universities and faculties in Croatia used to have additional exam periods throughout the year under the old system, but these no longer exist due to the Bologna Process.

<sup>4</sup> In Croatia, as in most ex-Yugoslav countries, state universities are free, meaning that all students were guaranteed free education throughout their studies. The Bologna Process introduced a new category of students (so-called "parallel" students) which are equal to regular full-time students in their rights and responsibilities apart from the fact that they are required to pay a certain fee each semester in order to enroll. This sparked an outrage in Croatia in 2009, and was the main reason for the student protests that the speaker talks about in this segment.

any case, not much was resolved in the meantime; we were given some promises, but further protests are being announced.

As you might know, European cultural circles, Croatian included, are quite different than their American counterpart. One of the bigger cultural differences is the educational system. For instance, the fact that one portion of our student body has to pay for their education is considered controversial because it's unconstitutional, as well as contrary to statutes of academic regulations of Croatian universities. For example, according to the statutes of all universities, students should not be discriminated against based on their race, gender, what else? Faith, etc.; those are some basic, general rights, but one of the things listed is property. So, because of this one specific word, it is clear that rights are being violated, because some students, or young people who would like to study but have no financial means to, can't. Because, as I already have mentioned, the Bologna Process leaves us with little time to work, and we depend on someone to fund our studies, which is what has led to all those protests.

So, the main goal for many is to... I mean, students who were a part of this participated for different reasons; some for purely practical ones – they were poor themselves and know what it's like – and some for ideological reasons, because they are very much against the situation in which education becomes commercialized, meaning that it's no longer supported by government funds, but that it's under the control of certain institutions or companies, who would then have personal gain from having as many students as possible enrolled at their university.

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