

Possibilities of Popularizing a Philosophy Course in High Schools: The Case of Croatia

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1. Introduction

Concerning sustainability in general, and specifically, sustainable education and lifestyles, philosophy largely cannot do much. However, it can teach, particularly in high schools, how to form individual and group rational justification of basic sustainability concepts and actions. In this view, it can initiate the formation of a rational sustainable worldview and lifestyle. In what follows, a way to achieve this by teaching popular philosophy will be described and, in contrast, a poor case of philosophy teaching in Croatia will be analyzed.

1.1. *The Motive*

After the 27 years of existence of the International Philosophy Olympiad, which is a “competition for high school students”, and after 12 years of participation, Croatia has a gold medalist at the competition. Namely, Viktor Mršić won the gold medal with his essay on the topic related to a quote of Donna J. Haraway’s 1991 book of essays *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (International Philosophy Olympiad 2019). Haraway’s book, in all of its essays, deals with the relation between humans and cyborgs on many levels, as well as with the relation of nature and technology. This great success goes along with the much more frequent success of Croatian high school students in fields of information sciences, invention, mathematics, physics, and other STEM fields in similar international competitions (STEM—Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics).

Opposed to this success, in an ironic manner, stands a series of facts about the Croatian high school educational system and its poor results, and the presumed quality of Croatian philosophy in general and of high school philosophy courses specifically. The first fact can be easily checked by various standings of Croatia’s educational system compared to other European countries or globally, such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) on math, science, and reading, in which Croatia is in 36th place out of 70 countries measured in the period 2015–2016 (PISA Worldwide Ranking—Average Score of Math, Science and Reading-FactsMaps 2019). This is not direct data on philosophy, but without any opposing fact, it points

to the standings of the education system in general and the philosophy course that is part of it. Without any particular evidence to the contrary, it can be presupposed that the standing of philosophy is the same (Krkač and Cerovsky 2012).

Concerning data on Croatian philosophy in general, there is a lack of data on the national and international level. We performed a preliminary review of 120 Croatian philosophers (the total number of citations and the number of citations for their most cited works via Google Scholar). The results indicated that two-thirds have less than 50 citations, one-third less than 20, and the most cited works of the first 30 philosophers have, on average, 35 citations, given that the majority of these works (papers and books) are published in Croatian journals and publishers, and only a minority in world known journals and publishing houses. As in the previous case, this is not direct data on the quality of work of Croatian high school philosophy teachers but, as these works are teaching the future high school teachers, it seems relevant.

It should be noted that in the fields of teaching, methods, didactic tools, and, more generally, in the pedagogy of high school philosophy, Croatian philosophers do not show results, which is insinuated by the previous notes (again, there is no hard data on this topic). This case can be researched indirectly by an analysis of the history of high school philosophy textbooks in Croatia (which will be conducted hereafter).

1.2. The Research Plan

In the following text, we will describe, analyze, and review the present standings of high school philosophy teaching and point to possible improvements which could make a high school philosophy course more connected to other courses and closer to students, their daily lives, and interests. This could point directly to a more sustainable education and only indirectly to a higher quality education in the case of high school philosophy. Shortly, hereafter, we will supply a research plan concerning the changes in high school philosophy courses. The mentioned description, analysis, review, and suggestions will be performed in the following way.

- First, we will supply a theoretical context for a different understanding of the high school philosophy course in gymnasium-based educational systems. This understanding is based on the inclusion of a series of topics in popular philosophy as the philosophy of popular phenomena and the inclusion of modern teaching methods and tools, such as philosophy in comic book format or philosophy through film.
- Second, we will suggest some principles of remodeling for high school philosophy courses based on previous descriptions of different understandings

of philosophy that are popular, but also with the inclusion of inter-course topics that overlap with two or more courses different from philosophy. Specifically, with courses that can and should form “topics” concerning issues of sustainable development (such as ethics, biology, chemistry and geography).

- Third, we will present the results of the primary research concerning high school philosophy course textbooks in Croatia in the period 1965 to 2019.

The overall idea of the text is to set parameters for future research including:

- conceptual research of popular philosophy and its place in the high school philosophy plan;
- remodeling of the plan for high school philosophy courses in accordance with the previous conceptual research;
- quantitative research of students’ opinions concerning the remodeled curriculum;
- possible testing of the remodeled curriculum in experimental education.

Therefore, the whole paper can be understood as a review of past and present situations in teaching philosophy in high school courses and as a plan for future research of possible improvements of the present model in terms of conceptual research, offering remodeling of the present curriculum of the philosophy course and testing the remodeled course in various ways, from gaging the opinions of students to experimental in-class testing.

1.3. Limitations of the Research Plan

There are various objective limitations of research designed in such a way. We cannot elaborate on all of them, but the most dominant should be mentioned.

First of all, *stricto sensu*, the research applies only to high school systems in which there is a philosophy course. Therefore, it applies to, for example, the German, Italian, Austrian, Portuguese, Croatian, and similar systems (Philosophy Education 2019). Some of these systems have already had various improvements in the overall high school curriculum and such improvements will be considered here. On the other hand, some have remained “classical” in their philosophy curriculum, plan, content, and practice. The present research plan can be applied much easier to the curricula that have only an overall course in Social Sciences or in Social Sciences and Humanities, because elements of philosophy, and especially of popular philosophy, could fit better.

Second, the research assumes the reality of philosophy in contemporary societies. The reality is that studies of philosophy at universities have been shut down or will be in the near future (based on highly dubious reasons, but this goes beyond the topic).

Additionally, the reality is that general high schools (or gymnasiums, especially classic gymnasiums) are becoming less and less popular compared to STEM and vocational high schools. On the other hand, three-subject university studies (A, B, C) in most cases include philosophy; the study of PPE (Philosophy, Politics, and Economics) seems to be quite popular and, if this is the case, high school philosophy courses should remain in one form or another (for examples of similar high school and college textbooks, see (Jalšenjak and Krkač 2012; Krkač and Jalšenjak 2015, 2016)).

Last but not least, the research proposed hereafter applies only to cases in which there is clear and applicable use of popular philosophy in the overall high school curriculum and in the philosophy course. However, there is no proof of that. The research assumes that the philosophy course is there and that it will remain there, but there is no reason whatsoever that this will be the case. There is much more evidence that one or a maximum of two courses throughout the whole high school education would be sufficient. They may be, as they are called in some systems, Social Sciences, Humanities, or Social Sciences and Humanities as one course all the way through high school. Concerning this point, it can be said that the proposed research, if performed properly and with positive results, could be applied to all forms of teaching philosophy in high schools, i.e., as an individual course or as a course within the Social Sciences and Humanities (Jalšenjak and Krkač 2018a, 2018b).

2. Popular Philosophy as Philosophy Popularized by New Media and as Philosophy of Popular Phenomena—A Theoretical Background

The general idea of popular philosophy and its major conceptual division will be described (in Section 2.1) and a series of examples will be supplied (in Section 2.2).

2.1. Popular Philosophy

Concerning the concept and practice of popular philosophy, two factors instantly pop up: firstly, there is no single critically presented and analyzed description of what popular philosophy is, not to mention that there is practically no literature on this issue; second, there are only a series of various philosophical methods and contents that can be identified as popular. Both issues will be mentioned here, and a few directions of their future research will be explicated at the conceptual level. Concerning the basic relation between philosophy and popularity, there is no sharp demarcation. Philosophy is sometimes regarded as utterly difficult, unpopular, professional, rigorous, and academic. Therefore, there cannot be anything popular about it. Sometimes, even some proper philosophical disciplines are not regarded as pure philosophy, for example, disciplines in practical philosophy (ethics, philosophy

of politics, law, economy, and culture) vs. disciplines in theoretical philosophy (epistemology, ontology, philosophy of language, philosophical logic, philosophy of science, and philosophy of the mind). However, there are papers, books, and even book series (such as The Blackwell Philosophy and Pop Culture Series 2019 and Open Court Popular Culture and Philosophy Series 2019) that exclusively cover topics in popular philosophy (of telecommunications, internet, music, film, sports, etc.). There are various unpopular philosophical topics that are covered by the use of non-standard literary methods (philosophy by means of films, comic books, etc.). The reality suggests that there is certainly something popular in relation to philosophy and, in the absence of other suitable expressions, it is convenient to call it *popular philosophy*.

Popular philosophy is philosophy which is not non-popular and by non-popular, one can regard highly academic, technical, formal, and analytical philosophy in the scope of the hardest theoretical and most abstract philosophical issues (some of which certainly belong to disciplines such as ontology, epistemology, and metaethics). Such issues are rarely popularized (at best, some ideas from them can be presented in a popular manner). The difference between non-popular and popular philosophy is most visible in the case of ethics because the discipline has:

- highly non-popular subdisciplines (such as metaethics);
- semi-popular subdisciplines (such as major general ethical theories, i.e., virtue and duty or utilitarian ethics);
- disciplines that can be popularized because of the fields of application of general ethical theories (e.g., political, legal, economic, social, individual, and other ethics; ethics of technology, science, everyday items, and routines etc.).

Ontology and epistemology also have such issues (e.g., fictive and fiction entities or know-how), but lesser than ethics.

Given that the working description of popular philosophy is correct, the very concept and practice of popular philosophy has two clearly distinct types (perhaps a combined type as well). These are the following:

- popular philosophy as *popularizing philosophy*, meaning that a non-popular philosophical issue is popularized via some new pedagogical method, media, or didactic tool (in existing examples, there are hard non-popular issues popularized by means of film and comic books, given that films can be documentary, art, or in terms of a blockbuster).
- popular philosophy as the *philosophy of popular phenomena* (in most cases, interesting to the audience to which the philosophy is taught), such as phenomena

that are of some daily interest to high school students (in existing examples, philosophy of smart phones, internet, social networks, music, films, clothing, sports, and similar (Krkač 2010)).

Perhaps the type of popular philosophy that combines the first and the second type is in fact the most interesting type because it strives to substantially connect the second type with the first in a way that understanding the philosophy of some popular phenomenon or practice performed in a popularizing manner can contribute to the non-popular philosophy (e.g., ontology of film; for example, the film *The Matrix* conducted in a video debate can contribute to the non-popular ontological issue of appearance–reality or the realism–antirealism debate).

The proposed division of philosophy (as shown in Table 1) should be conceptually researched and justified. The goal of the proposed research plan is not to exclude or include popular philosophy into *philosophy proper* or to keep professional and academic philosophy *pure*, but rather to test the idea that popular philosophy, especially as a philosophy of popular phenomena, could contribute to understanding phenomena that no other field of philosophy can (e.g., philosophy of film can contribute not only to film and its theory but perhaps also to philosophy).

Table 1. The division of philosophy (non-popular and popular).

Philosophy			
Non-popular		Popular	
Professional, academic, theoretical, and abstract	Professional, academic, practical, and applied	Popularizing philosophy by various means	Philosophy of popular phenomena
General ontology, epistemology, philosophy of science, meta-ethics, etc.	General, practical, applied, and professional ethics, philosophy of art, culture, economics, law, politics, etc.	Philosophy by means of theatre, comics, strip, books, films, games, etc.	Philosophy of smart phones, internet, social networks, sports, music, fashion, etc.

All of these types of popular philosophy are completely absent from the *national curriculum philosophy course*. This issue will be tackled later on due to the fact that a new philosophy curriculum has been accepted (see (Ministry of Science and

Education, National Curriculum for the High-School Philosophy Course 2017)). The topic of changes in the high school philosophy course is not specific to Croatia but to the majority of similar European education systems, especially those with a gymnasium program, because they seem to be most resistant to change.

2.2. Examples of Popular Philosophy

Here, some examples of popular philosophy of the first and the second type (as previously differentiated) will be supplied. The goal is not to describe these examples in detail and make case studies out of them, but to point to them as possible case studies and experimental topics in the high school philosophy curriculum. It should be noted that although there are numerous examples of popular philosophy as the popularization of philosophy (by comic books, films, etc.) and as the philosophy of popular phenomena (even in a whole book series of various publishers), there is still no single book that theoretically researches the overall nature of popular philosophy and its relation to non-popular or academic philosophy.

2.2.1. Popular Philosophy as Popularizing Philosophy

Philosophy by Means of a Comic Book or Strip

The book series *For Beginners Books, Philosophy & For Beginners Books, Philosophy & Literature* (2019) is the most obvious example of popularizing philosophy in the form of a comic book. The range of topics is wide and it spans highly difficult philosophers to similarly difficult disciplines. *Wittgenstein for Beginners* (Heaton and Groves 2003) is one such example. The research question here could be: Given the amount of basic information in various popular online encyclopedias and in the book *Wittgenstein for Beginners*, is it possible to cover the same amount of information in the comic book as in the written entry on a popular online encyclopedia?

We believe that this research question is appropriate and that it indicates that philosophy by means of a comic book makes sense and is more available to 21st century high school students (McLaughlin 2005). The aim of the research would be to verify the hypothesis that popular philosophy as the popularization of philosophy can have a positive relation to subjects of unpopular philosophy through the example of comics. In other words, the aim would be to show that popular philosophy can help unpopular philosophy and make it correlative to the popularization of philosophy and philosophy itself, thus making it more understandable and accessible to high school students.

Philosophy by Means of Film

Compared to comic books, film is an even more accessible media for high school students, given the overall interest for films in the adolescent population. There are documentary films, art films, and even some blockbusters that mention major philosophers in history. Here, a distinction should be made. In terms of popularizing philosophy, films are taken as examples of the alternative method of transmission of knowledge about philosophy and not as examples of philosophy of film as popular phenomena (Krkač 2013).

The aim of this part of the research would be similar to the previous one, but considering the special features of film compared to comic books and strips. A rather convenient, and to some degree, comparable, example would be the art film *Wittgenstein*.¹

Here, the following steps are needed:

- an introduction to the film;
- a presentation of some elements of philosophical arguments and interpretation of Wittgenstein's philosophy in the film;
- a summary and discussion on a few opposing film reviews;
- the film's relationship to the popular and non-popular philosophy of Wittgenstein.

The second point can contain:

- a detailed analysis of a few important scenes in the film;
- their comparison to a comic book and to various textual introductions to Wittgenstein's philosophy in roughly the same period;
- a discussion on some actual quotes from his major books (Wittgenstein 1998).

Such research would answer the research question—Is it or is it not possible to introduce the philosophy of a particular philosopher, discipline, or topic via film in a way that nothing would be missing compared to the use of a purely textual introduction and lecturing ex cathedra? Our hypothesis is that this would be possible at the level of high school philosophy in cases where lecture topics include concepts (knowledge, reality, and good), disciplines (epistemology, ontology, and ethics), and philosophers (even those quite hard to understand, e.g., Wittgenstein's philosophy).

¹ Directed by Derek Jarman, 1993.

2.2.2. Popular Philosophy as Philosophy of Popular Phenomena

Social Networks and Philosophy

Philosophy of social networks is the first proposed case for future research that belongs to the philosophy of popular phenomena. Social networks are something that nowadays students use all the time for a range of different purposes from simple communication to quite complicated organization of various events, gatherings, and even public actions for various purposes. As such, social networks and the philosophy of them are obviously suitable for introduction to philosophical issues of language, meaning, speech, communication, artificial intelligence, social philosophy issues, etc. There seems to be an obvious positive correlation between the philosophy course and language, sociology, politics, biology, and other high school courses. Such a correlation cannot easily be obtained if the philosophy course is understood as solely a series of abstract, formal problems detached from daily life; philosophers; and philosophical schools and their basic ideas.

The basic research question concerning this and any other popular phenomenon and the philosophy of it would be quite simple—is there a positive correlation between issues in the philosophy of a popular phenomenon, A, and a series of classical philosophical issues, B, C, and D, as well as a positive correlation between the philosophy of A with a series of issues in a course different from the philosophy course?

The best candidate for such future research would be the book *Facebook and Philosophy: what's on my mind?* (Wittkower 2010), as well as some other papers that discuss other social networks and their philosophical implications. Here, the research would have to be different compared to popular philosophy as popularizing philosophy, since here, the issue is not just the method (didactic and pedagogical tools), but the content. Therefore, the following steps seem to be required:

- research the particular social network (here, *Facebook* is appropriate);
- present of some topics from the book (here, from *Facebook and Philosophy: what's on my mind?*);
- describe particular activities on the social network that students are engaged in;
- connect the second and the third point to some philosophical issues that naturally arise from discussing the use of a social network;
- connect the second and the third points to issues in other high school courses.

Film and Philosophy

Film as a phenomenon in terms of the philosophy of film, and opposed to the philosophy of social networks, is a highly developed discipline. It is a wonder, given

the popularity of film among adolescents, that at least a chapter on film did not find its way to standard high school philosophy textbooks.

The aim in this part of the research is to test the relationship of the philosophy of film and non-popular philosophy of film in a particular case study. Here, the convenient candidate is the TV series *House M. D.*²

Basic steps of the research would be the following:

- describe the philosophy of film (different schools) and a philosophical discipline (Jarvie 2003);
- describe the actual TV series;
- summarize the basic information on the TV series;
- describe selected topics from the book *House and philosophy: everybody lies* (Jacoby 2009), some of which should be:
 - the comparisons and similarities between House and Socrates;
 - the comparison of House and Nietzsche's concept of superman;
 - the connection of an example to unpopular philosophy, i.e., the Occam's razor (for example S1E3 from *House M. D.*, "Occam's Razor");
 - the connection of an example to methodology, i.e., the Socratic Method (for example, a short scene from *House M. D.*, "The Socratic Method" S1E6, The Story behind House's leg).

If results were positive, this case would show that the popular philosophy of a film and TV series (one which gained extreme popularity in recent years, e.g., *Game of Thrones* (2011–2019), that was started probably by D. Lynch's *Twin Peaks* (1990–1991, 2017)) is a proper part of philosophy and can be used for its own sake as well as for introducing more abstract issues ((Falzon 2002; Wartenberg and Freeland 1995) etc.), and that simply watching and discussing TV series can contribute to popular and non-popular philosophy by offering new analyses, arguments, and, perchance, insights.

Fashion and Philosophy

Opposed to social networks and films, fashion is a different issue. Fashion is physically, bodily, and publicly manifested, while films can be watched privately and

² Directed by David Shore, 2004–2012. Available online: <https://vimeo.com/57262156> (accessed on 9 June 2019).

the use of social networks is basically online. Therefore, this case or example supplies a new aspect of a popular phenomenon in philosophy, of which it manifests differently.

Here again, there are not many examples of the philosophy of fashion (the word philosophy in fashion is often used pejoratively, not even in terms sufficient to be considered popular philosophy). However, the book by H. Widdows *Perfect Me: Beauty as an Ethical Ideal* (Widdows 2018) is an excellent example.

The most important steps of this analysis include the following:

- description of fashion (Wolfendale and Kennett 2011);
- definition of the philosophy of fashion (Svendsen 2006);
- presentation and analysis of part of the book *Perfect me: Beauty as an Ethical Ideal*;
- summary of positive and negative reviews of the book;
- the importance of the philosophy of fashion in non-popular philosophy (philosophy of mind, social philosophy, ethics, freedom, etc.).

Music and Philosophy

Music is an excellent case study because adolescents use it to express their identity (*What you listen to is who you are*). However, the philosophy of music is not so present in the overall literature in non-popular philosophy (as a part of aesthetics and the philosophy of art). It is present in the literature in popular philosophy (for example (Gracyk and Kania 2011)) but not as a general topic, rather as a series of particular cases, mostly pop and rock bands.

Here, as examples, only books about the philosophy of globally recognized bands exist (such as The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd, Metallica, etc.), but then again, one should pay close attention to the attitudes and styles of students because this is, in most cases, culturally relative. Beyond globally popular singers, performers, and bands, there is not much uniformity and each group is relative to its further cultural features.

This case is also interesting since it is not wise to presuppose that students nowadays have substantial common knowledge of the genre of music they actually listen to, not even in cases of relatively new genres (it is probable that kids nowadays listening to hip-hop, dance, techno, and generally, pop electronic would not know much about, say, music from the film *Breakin'* from 1984 or about the band Kraftwerk in the early 1970s).

There is perhaps an even deeper objection to this case. Namely, humans are dominantly oculocentric, meaning that they rely on information they have gathered by sight, and not so much by hearing. Sounds are not a dominant source of our information. This has some consequences for the non-popular and popular

philosophy of music. However, this can be overcome by relating music to videos and live performances.

If correctly interpreted, this case could show both positive and negative results, given the amount of common knowledge, experience, and interest in music by students. It could show that music is or is not a good case study for proving that the philosophy of music can be, in its own right, an excellent topic in teaching Philosophy and an entrance into more fundamental issues such as the philosophy of hearing, sounds, singing, etc.

3. Remodeling of the Annual Plan and Program for Philosophy Courses in Croatian High Schools and in Similar Educational Systems

This part, compared to the previous part which dealt with the contents of popular philosophy, deals with the elements of the proposed research plan that are more technical, pedagogical, methodical, and didactical. The idea here is to research how the contents of popular philosophy can be incorporated into the new high school philosophy curriculum by means of changes in the *national curriculum philosophy course*.

In four subsections, four elements of this proposal will be described in their most critical elements, except for the first one (Section 3.1), which shortly describes high school philosophy curricula sufficiently similar to the Croatian curriculum because it is quite important that the Croatian example can be, if so wished, applied to other similar systems *mutatis mutandis*. In the other three subsections (Sections 3.2–3.4), the existing and newly proposed *national curriculum philosophy course* (with annual plan and program included) are described, analyzed, criticized, and reviewed, and some improvements are suggested.

3.1. Philosophy in High Schools around the World

Philosophy is taught mostly in secondary schools in one or more of the last three years of secondary education. In some countries, philosophy is included only in gymnasiums and in, for example, technical and vocational schools. Here are some examples from *Philosophy: a school of freedom. Teaching philosophy and learning to philosophize: Status and prospects* (UNESCO 2007) of how the philosophy course is applied around the world.

Africa, the Arab World, and the Middle East

In the Central African Republic, there is a course in *African philosophy* in which African and Western authors are studied. Meanwhile, in Egypt philosophy has been

taught at the secondary level since 1925 and the primary focus is *Islamic philosophy*. The philosophy course in Qatar is studied during the final three years of secondary school. Philosophy is part of the curriculum, for example, in Morocco and Tunisia. In Jordan and Sudan, as well as in the Russian Federation, philosophy is not included in school curricula.

Asia and the Pacific

In Japan, philosophy is taught in primary school and in lower secondary levels in the form of ethical institution and in the secondary level as an optional ethics course, within the general outline of civic education. In India, philosophy appears as *Ethical and Environmental Education* in the upper secondary level as part of classes in scientific methods, logic, and in history of philosophy courses. Philosophy exists in Thailand through seven years of secondary school but not as a separate course, nor in the context of other courses (including in general and technical schools). In Pakistan, philosophy is studied as an opinion in the *Literature, Economics and Social sciences* or in combination with other courses.

Americas

Philosophy has been studied in Brazil as an independent course since 2008. In Uruguay, philosophy is taught in the last three years of secondary school. Philosophy in Mexico is taught in the form of logic and ethics. In the United States, philosophy is not included in the high school system as an obligatory course. Some philosophical courses are offered in some secondary schools, but they are not prescribed by the national model. Additionally, in this report, some examples are given on how philosophy can be taught (in interaction) with other disciplines or courses such as: physics, mathematics, music, visual art, languages, psychology, pedagogy, biochemistry, and sciences.

Continental Europe

In many countries in Europe, philosophy is a part of the high school curriculum such as in France, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Bulgaria, Italy, Austria, and Germany (they are very similar to the Croatian curriculum). In Germany, philosophy is taught in the last two years of gymnasium, and some regions offer Philosophy as a substitute for students who do not wish to take any religion courses (in the majority of cases, Christianity). Philosophy courses are taught in Austria in economic real gymnasiums. Italian schools include philosophy in all secondary schools in the last three years, including gymnasium (i.e., *Liceo classico* which focuses on languages, literatures and

philosophy), business, vocational, and technical schools thanks to *Brocca Programmes* (reform of secondary curricula).

French students have a philosophy course in their final year of secondary education. In Portugal, the course *Introduction to Philosophy* is included in the general education group and all students take two years of philosophy (it is the second most important course in the curriculum). Finland offers the alternative course *Ethics and Philosophy of life* for students who are not members of a church or religion. In Estonia, philosophy appears under the name *Ethical Systems through History*, while Belgium offers a religious ethics courses. In Moldavia, philosophy is replaced by civics and law.

3.2. *Correlations and Overlaps of High School Philosophy with Other Courses*

The aim of this section is to propose a research plan for examining the correlations and overlaps of high school philosophy and other courses (arts, language and literature, physics, and politics and economics). This issue is highly culturally and educationally sensitive due to a diversity of overall high school curricula in different countries. However, some principle rules can be described and suggested for application and practical in-class experimental education.

The research plan here would include the examination of possible correlations of the philosophy course with other high school courses in the case of Croatia, and the results could be applied to other high school education systems *ceteris paribus*.

Particular research steps would include the following elements:

- review of the correlations between philosophy (in strip) and art, interviewing teachers and artists about the importance of art (Kivy 2004) and its relation to philosophy (Lorand 2003);
- review of the correlations between philosophy, the Croatian language and literature, presenting philosophers who won Nobel Prize awards for literature, and review the influence of philosophy on literature (Hagberg and Walter 2010);
- review of the correlations between philosophy and physics, and physics with philosophy (similar for mathematics and information sciences) (Butterfield and Earman 2007);
- review of the correlations between philosophy, politics and economics (McIntyre and Rosenberg 2017).

What is interesting here is that the *national curriculum philosophy course* (Ministry of Science and Education, National Curriculum for the High-School Philosophy Course 2017) recognizes almost all possible correlations of philosophy

with other groups of high school courses and with some inter-course topics such as *civic education* and *sustainable development* (2017: Section E), but one does not recognize them in major parts of the course, especially not in the obligatory sections. It seems that these correlations are just listed here, but that they play no actual part in the educational process. Students may learn, for example, about the ontological issue of appearance and reality or realism vs. antirealism debate, but they will never have to watch, say, the film *The Matrix* or discuss personal identity on social networks or discuss fake news in the media and enter into this debate from the point of view that seems to be natural to them.

3.3. *National Curriculum for Philosophy*

The aim of this part of the research would be an examination of the existing *national curriculum philosophy course* and of the newly proposed course. We have already mentioned its limitations in terms of listing correlations but without the real possibility that students could learn the united parts composed of different parts of different courses, at least at the same time, if not by different professors during the same classes (just imagine that the issue of life or human life is discussed in the same few weeks in all courses and that after the topic, students and professors have a big panel discussion and presentations of students' practical tasks).

None of this can happen in the present scope and limits of the Croatian *national curriculum philosophy course*. All this did was to separate the majority of already existing topics into major parts, three of which are obligatory while others are not (this will raise some problems concerning the State Matura (national exam), because if a student chooses philosophy as an additional course, all the topics would probably be there and not only those obligatory during the course); this issue applies to all countries that have State Matura (such as Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Liechtenstein, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Switzerland).

This part of the proposed research plan includes a detailed analysis of the present and near future Croatian *national curriculum philosophy course*. There are a series of essential documents that need to be reviewed, from the most general strategies to particular plans for the philosophy course and its parts. Why this was not done during the ongoing reform of the system of high school education is completely unknown to the present authors (the previous leaders of the reform claimed that problem-based and topic-based education, or something similar to the Finnish model, is impossible in Croatia; the present leaders claim that it is possible, but as we can see in the case of philosophy, this does not take place either in plans or in practice, given the fact that the present authors have substantial experience in teaching, from

primary and secondary schools to university undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral studies and we should be able to see it if it is there).

On the margin, the new manuals and ideas for new textbooks in philosophy should also be examined. However, nothing special, spectacular, or revolutionary should be expected from the new curriculum, textbooks, or practice. All that was done was a simple rearrangement of the existing topics, methods, and didactical tools. There is nothing on philosophy by comic books, films, or even various games and nothing on the philosophy of popular phenomena (popular to kids, of course) that could at least be used for an easier introduction into hard, theoretical, and abstract philosophical issues (say, of ontology, epistemology, or metaethics).

In the *national curriculum philosophy course* (2017) that will be implemented from the school year 2021/2022, the philosophy course is placed in the 5th cycle (4th grade of high school), and a total of eight domains are created, of which three are obligatory (*Existence and the World*, *Cognition and Knowledge*, *Activity*, and *Orientation*), while four domains are selected by a teacher (Ministry of Science and Education, National Curriculum for the High-School Philosophy Course 2017). The negative side of the new curriculum proposal is the obligation to process only three, i.e., four domains out of a total of eight, so it is not defined how the material will fit into all the content required for passing the exam for the State Matura of philosophy. Therefore, in that case, it is necessary to change the content of the State Matura exam and write a new tutorial for philosophy. Since the new curriculum for philosophy only applies to gymnasiums, the way of teaching philosophy in vocational schools, where it is declared as an elective course in certain occupational directions, remains to be seen.

For example, the mandatory domain *Existence and the World* deals with the questions of metaphysics and ontology through which an opinion on nature, God, and man is formed. Students are expected to differentiate between different scientific approaches to the problem (laws and regulations of the world, the issue of movement, the essence of things, etc.) and philosophy as a universal science.

By dealing with these issues, the student experiences the difficulty of consistent thinking about man and the world, recognizes the importance of basic attitudes for all other considerations, and develops the ability to view problems from different perspectives, regardless of their own beliefs, as well as consistency involving the commitment to the consequences of general attitudes man and the world we accept. (Ministry of Science and Education, National Curriculum for the High-School Philosophy Course 2017)

On the other hand, the negative side is that the *national curriculum for gymnasium education* (see (Ministry of Science and Education, National Curriculum

for Gymnasium Education 2017)) has reduced philosophy from an obligatory two hours per week to an obligatory one hour, unless the student chooses a particular elective module that has from one to two hours of teaching, but it is impossible to predict how many students will choose the module (according to the students' interest in philosophy courses so far, it is possible to assume that it will be a minority, but no research on this issue has been conducted among students). In the classical gymnasium school programs, everything remains the same, with the possibility of another two hours if the student chooses a specific module.

3.4. *The Proposal for the Improvement of the Existing Philosophy Curriculum*

Overall Proposal

With a small addition to the given curriculum for philosophy, in terms of a single note on freedom of use of contemporary available popularizing tools in philosophy (say strip and film), contemporary literature on philosophy of popular phenomena (some famous books are even translated into Croatian, say, on philosophy, and *The Simpsons*, *Star Trek*, etc.), and the creation of actual correlations in terms of projects for the student that would result from grades in different courses depending on the included correlations, this situation could improve.

However, given the practice of high school philosophy in Croatia, on which the present authors have limited objective data, and only personal professional experience, this would hardly be regarded as an improvement to the course—most likely, as the failure to follow the *national curriculum philosophy course*.

This part of the proposed research plan would have to summarize conclusions of any of the previous parts and apply them to the improvement of the existing curriculum. It also has to set the method of testing the improved curriculum essentially among the students themselves and to provide at least a short plan for the experimental application and implementation of the curriculum (this would certainly include parallel teaching in accordance with the official and the improved and to test students at the end of the course in order to have at least some objective data).

The proposed plan includes the following steps:

- conclusions on the conducted research on popular philosophy, popularized philosophy, and the philosophy of popular phenomena;
- conclusions of the study of the correlations of philosophy with other courses;
- reference to limitations in the creation of a new version of the annual plan and program for the course of philosophy;

- overview of the possible new version of the annual plan and program for philosophy based on the new curriculum for philosophy with new changes in the teaching content.

Proposal Distinctively Related to the Promotion of Sustainable Development: The Case of Sustainable Lifestyles

The overall proposal in its basic ideas deals with concepts that are related to many important, practical, and daily issues of 21st century adolescents, among which an example of education for sustainable development will be presented here as the possible “topic” crossing the boundaries of the philosophy course.

Philosophy, as a theoretical and practical discipline, among other rational and critical elements, supplies clear concepts and overviews of phenomena and by doing this, helps understanding of sometimes quite different approaches to the same topic.

Concerning the issue of sustainable lifestyles philosophy as described in terms of non-popular and popular philosophy should contribute by correlating different issues and creating an independent trans-course topic in the manner that is most natural to it. Here, we will take an example of life and living beings.

The issue of life is generally studied in philosophy within the limits of philosophical anthropology, in most cases completely unrelated to other clearly close philosophical topics and non-philosophical topics in other courses. The study of the nature of human action, freedom and responsibility, and similar is evidently related to ethics and similar courses (that exist in some high school systems), and to topics in other courses, most important of which seem to be chemistry, biology, sociology (or a social sciences course), and geography. The philosophy of sustainable development under various aspects was justified in the literature, and here, we follow these ideas (see (Papuziński and Pawłowski 2007; Painter-Morland et al. 2017)).

The general issue of sustainable lifestyle should be taught as a unified general topic that revolves around basic concepts of sustainability applied in the daily lives of students. In imagined rotating sub-issues, there should be the applied concepts in different courses, e.g., the concept of living beings in biology and psychology, the concept of environment and sustainability in biology and geography (demography). Issues rotating at the borders of the topic should be related to sustainable practices by schools, teachers, and students in their student, teacher, and private lives. In this way, philosophical insights and conceptual clarity could serve not only as an end in itself, but also as a natural glue for various issues in most cases studied separately (sometimes, even in different years of study in high schools).

It is naïve to set a goal of full understanding of human life and its place among other living and non-living creatures in the world, but to set a goal of initiating such

understanding by studying philosophy in its non-popular, popular, theoretical and practical aspects, related to similar issues in other courses, is a realistic objective. Philosophy, as described, offers on the one hand a conceptual and analytical rigor and on the other a synthetic overview of the topic and of practice.

- There are many possible practical applications of these ideas related only to the concept of sustainable lifestyles, but we can offer just one that can set if not new contents, then at least some justification and authenticity of a teacher and student. Namely, the most obvious starting point concerning this topic would be to research—how much the overall activity (in-class and outside of it) by students and by a teacher is sustainable? For instance, how much energy is spent—time, effort, physical resources, spaces, etc.—and how the teaching process itself could be made more sustainable. It does not mean much, but it seems to offer a kind of basic authenticity and sincerity if students and teachers are confronted with facts about their energy consumption during classes (say, by heating, light, use of computers, tablets, and smart phones for practical tasks), how much they use sustainable resources (say, recycled paper, pencils, etc.), how much do they contribute in their private lives, etc.

Such cross-course topics and specific issues cannot be taught separately by courses of philosophy, ethics, chemistry, ethics, geography, etc. They should be taught as unified topics that cover many different aspects of the same phenomenon and what is more important to the life of a student. Here, the course of philosophy as practical and popular philosophy can help considerably because first of all, it is at the same time quite strict and rational and on the other hand, open to many different worldviews and creative applications in daily lives. Therefore, the high school philosophy course textbooks should be written in an entirely different manner than they actually are nowadays, in the majority of cases.

4. Primary Research: Croatian High School Philosophy Textbooks Content 1965–2019

In this section, since the practice of teaching philosophy cannot be objectively evaluated in the Republic of Croatia, the only possible way to obtain some results and lessons for the future is to conduct indirect research—in this case, the examination of the form and contents of the high school philosophy course textbooks. This will be done for Croatia, but it could apply to any sufficiently similar systems with sufficiently similar textbooks (again, the change in the Italian reform is quite illustrative).

In the two following subsections, two important features of philosophy textbooks will be described and evaluated, namely, the history of philosophy textbooks in

Croatia from 1965 to 2019 (in the 1st subsection hereafter), and the content of major textbooks from 1973 until 2019 (in the 2nd subsection). This particular period concerning the content is chosen because the official philosophy textbook in 1973 in its many new editions is still used in teaching philosophy in high schools in Croatia.

We are completely aware that this indirect method will supply quite a small amount of data, on which only a few sound conclusions can be drawn, but this is, methodically speaking, all we have available. Any other source would be of even lesser evidential weight. Perhaps various national curricula and annual plans and programs could be additionally researched, but these documents are hard to access and research.

4.1. *The History of High School Philosophy Textbooks in Croatia*

In his book, *The Colonizer's Model of the World* (1993), J. M. Blaut, concerning textbooks generally, writes the following:

Textbooks are an important window into a culture; more than just books, they are semiofficial statements of exactly what the opinion forming elite of the culture want the educated youth of that culture to believe to be true about the past and present world. A school textbook is truly a key social document, a kind of modern stele. In the typical case, a book becomes accepted as a high school (or lower-level) textbook only after it has been reviewed very carefully by the publisher, school boards, and administrators, all of whom are intensely sensitive to the need to print acceptable doctrine; they are concerned to make it certain that children will read only those facts in their textbook which are considered to be acceptable as facts by the opinion-forming elite of the culture. The resulting textbook is, therefore, less an ordinary authored book than a vetted social statement of what is considered valid and acceptable for entry into the mind of the child. For this reason, research on textbooks (including college textbooks, in which the same process is at work, though more subtly) is, in fact, ethnographic research. It tells us about the belief system of the opinion-forming elite of the culture as a whole. (Blaut 1993, p. 6, footnote 5:46)

This applies to all textbooks, perhaps more to humanities, and especially, high school philosophy textbooks that are open to various methodic and didactic styles and approaches connected to sometimes quite different philosophical schools.

Philosophy textbooks in Croatia have a bit of a strange history. In the following table, some reliable but incomplete data will be presented (Table 2). In Table 2, textbooks are given in the columns in accordance to relevant periods and in the rows,

there are three major approaches, namely the historical, historical–problem, and problem-based approach.

Table 2. Major Croatian high school philosophy textbooks in the period 1940–2019.

Time Type	Before 1945	From 1945 to 1990			From 1990 to 2019
Historical approach	History of philosophy Bazala (1906, 1909, 1912) I–III	Anthology of philosophical texts Bošnjak et al. (1954), up to 1965 as a textbook	History of Philosophy Vejnović (1965), up to 1973 as a textbook	History of Philosophy Kalin (1973), 1990 and later as a textbook	Short History of Philosophy Hirschberger (1995), trans., from 1995. as a textbook
		History of Philosophy Windelband (1956) trans., as an additional textbook			
Historical and problem approach	—	—	—	History of Philosophy Kalin (1995)	Philosophy Reškovic (2008)
Problem approach	There were books, but not used as textbooks.	—	—	Introduction to Philosophy Anzenbacher (1995), trans.	Philosophy Čehok and Grgić (2001)

Our primary source is philosophy textbooks in Croatia written by Croatian authors, not translations of non-Croatian authors. These are excluded because they do not relate to the contents, the method of exposition, and the use of textbooks by Croatian authors (or at least, there is no proof of that). They are mentioned in Table 2 in the second column, second row, and in the first and fourth rows.

It is not completely known when the first philosophy textbook was written as a textbook in Croatia. Certainly, some histories of philosophy were used as textbooks, but it is not certain if they were written for that purpose. It is also interesting that there were quite high quality introductions to philosophy before 1945 (as well as to logic) but these books were never used as high school textbooks as far as we know (for example, books written by S. Zimmermann and other

philosophers from that period). It is interesting that the first introduction to philosophy in the history of Croatian philosophy was written by Fran Trankvil Andreis (Tranquillus Andronicus Parthenius) in 1545, that is, *Dialogue on should one philosophize?* (*Dialogus philosophandumne sit*).

It is unknown to us what was used as a philosophy textbook in the period from 1945 to 1954, before Bošnjak et al. and his *Anthology of philosophical texts*. From 1954 to 1990, the situation was clear. The majority of textbooks were of a purely historical approach grounded in continental philosophy, with rare mention of some analytic philosophical schools and philosophers. Concerning the content of the major textbook in this period, *History of philosophy with philosophical texts* by B. Kalin, some remarks will be made hereafter. Consequently, the complete lack of the problem-based approach was obvious. The high school philosophy course was reduced to knowing by heart some major names, titles, quotes, and basic ideas.

In the 1990s, some changes were made. The historical approach continued to exist in newly translated textbooks (by (Hirschberger 1995)), and partly in new editions of Kalin. In his new editions, a short section on problems of philosophy was added to the still majority of the history of philosophy. The textbook by T. Reškovic *Philosophy* (Reškovic 2008) is generally recognized as a problem-based textbook, but the fact is that 90% of the book is texts of philosophers ordered in particular units to cover a particular topic. Therefore, formally speaking, this is a highly opinionated anthology of philosophical texts that perhaps, in practice, can be used for a problem-based approach, but the textbook itself is not such.

The purely problem-based approach textbooks are by A. Anzenbacher *Introduction to philosophy* (Anzenbacher 1995) and by I. Čehok and F. Grgić *Philosophy* (Čehok and Grgić 2001), although the first is a somewhat strange problem-based half-continental introduction, while the second is much more analytic approach-based. This is also the present situation.

Some major changes were made in the overall high school curriculum in Croatia and this will result in new philosophy textbooks, but it remains to be seen in which way these will be written. If one judges by analogy, say, with the high school *Ethics* textbook, there is not much to be hoped for. Namely, in the case of 16 authors of Ethics textbooks for high schools, only 3 had the minimal scientific qualifications to be authors, while 13 did not have any qualifications to be authors of textbooks (by qualifications, we mean internationally recognized conditions in terms of profession, experience, and scientific and pedagogical (methodical and didactical) results in terms of papers and books in respectable international journals and by such publishers).

What is utterly strange is that, at the same time, the small Croatian philosophical community has internationally recognized authors of papers and books, that are extremely experienced and professional, but none of them are the author of any high school ethics textbook. By this analogy with ethics, one should be extremely optimistic in order to expect that the new textbooks will be of comparable international worth and quality (but let us give ourselves the opportunity to be completely astonished and shocked by the new philosophy textbooks). Therefore, this much on textbooks is sufficient for our present purpose.

4.2. *The Content of High School Textbooks in Croatia*

In this short section, we will present the results of our primary research on the Croatian high school philosophy textbooks content in the period 1965–2019 (as shown in Figure 1). Before 1945, there was no official textbook, but A. Bazala's *History of Philosophy I–III* (Bazala 1906, 1909, 1912) was used as a textbook.

After 1945, namely from 1954, there was one book (Bošnjak et al. 1954); there was no official textbook until 1965—*History of philosophy with philosophical texts* by N. Vejnović (Vejnović 1965)—which was replaced by *History of philosophy with philosophical texts* by B. Kalin in 1973 (Kalin 1973) and which is still used as a textbook in many new editions.

As mentioned, currently and in accordance with the new *national curriculum philosophy course*, new textbooks are being prepared.

It is remarkable how high school philosophy changed in only a few years (this stands not only for Croatia, but for all Eastern European countries from 1945 to 1990), namely that in a few years, the dominant philosophy even in high school became Marxist philosophy. In Table 3, in *History of Philosophy*, there was no substantial mention of Marxist philosophy, and in *Anthology of philosophical texts* (from 1954), there are 160 pages out of a total 537 on Marxist philosophy.

In Figure 1, only Croatian authors are given, because other textbooks are translations from previously published textbooks by international authors (as mentioned in Table 2, i.e., Windelband, Hirschberger, and Anzenbacher). Table 3 goes a bit more deeply into the textbooks by Croatian authors. It separates topics given in two major approaches in Croatian high school philosophy textbook traditions, namely historical and problem-based approaches. Therefore, in the columns, major authors are given and in the rows, the historical and problem parts of the listed textbooks.

Used as high-school (Gymnasium) Philosophy textbook (there was no official textbook) until 1945

Albert Bazala (Bazala 1912), History of Philosophy I-III.

Philosophical Interregnum

From 1945 to 1954

Used as a high-school (Gymnasium) Philosophy textbook from 1955 to 1965, i.e. to Vejnović, N. (1965–1973) and later on Kalin, B. (1973 – until nowadays)

Bošnjak et al. (1954), Anthology of Philosophical Texts.

Figure 1. Comparison of contents between Bazala used as a philosophy course textbook until 1945 and Bošnjak et al. used after 1954.

The textbook by Kalin, which is still the longest approved textbook in the history of Croatian high school philosophy education, is given in five editions in order to show how it was changed, perhaps due to political, educational, and philosophical changes in Croatia and in Croatian philosophy before and after 1990—that is, the Croatian transition from a Yugoslav republic to an independent state and from a communist to a capitalist economy (it at least proclaimed to have done the latter).

Concerning Table 3, abbreviations are the following:

- VEJ—Nevenka Vejnović (Vejnović 1965) *History of philosophy with philosophical texts*;
- KAL—Boris Kalin (Kalin 1973, 1995, 2001, 2008, 2015) *History of philosophy with philosophical texts*;
- ČEH–GRG—Ivan Čehok and Filip Grgić (Čehok and Grgić 2001) *Philosophy*;
- REŠ—Tomislav Reškovic (Reškovic 2008) *Philosophy*;
- +/-—referring to whether the textbook has a chapter or a section on the mentioned topic;
- pp.—means number of pages of the topic (as shown in Table 3).

These abbreviations will be used in the interpretations of the results of the present research in order to make the interpretation shorter and clearer. All textbooks are written only in Croatian and by Croatian authors.

Interpretations of the results in Table 3 are quite limited, but they show some important features and tendencies, some of which are the following:

- There is an obvious difference between the historical- and problem-based approach between VEJ 1965 and KAL 1973 (and this approach lasted until the early 1990s concerning KAL) and ČEH–GRG 2001 and REŠ 2008 (although as previously said, formally speaking, REŠ 2008 is mostly an anthology of texts, but ordered in a way to be lectured in a problem-based manner).
- KAL, in its own series of editions, marked this change from a purely historical approach as in KAL 1973 to a mixed approach or historical- and problem-based approach from KAL 1995 until 2019. We can only speculate why this was done. It is possible that since the overall curriculum and plan and program of philosophy courses for high schools changed at the beginning of 1990s in terms of introducing the problem-based approach besides the purely historical approach, he wanted to cover the problem-based approach as well.
- There is also an obvious difference between the sections on Marxist philosophy which existed in VEJ 1965 and in KAL 1973, all the way until KAL 1995, when it miraculously vanishes. After almost 40 years, it was not so important to teach that Marxism is the only true philosophy in history (Kalin even wrote a textbook *Marxism and socialist self-management* in 1986 for students of non-gymnasium high schools).
- It is also significant how the size of the section on medieval philosophy expanded in KAL after the 1990s, since it dealt mostly with Christian philosophy that was regarded as overcome by Marxist philosophy.

- Further on, some of the most prolific philosophical disciplines and problems of 20th century philosophy, such as the philosophy of language and philosophy of the mind, were not present at all in KAL before and after the 1990s, while they are present in ČEH–GRG and REŠ.
- Last but not least, a section on the history of Croatian philosophy was not there in KAL editions before 1990 and was present from editions from 1995 and later. This is not a minor objection, because Croatian philosophy spans almost to the Middle ages given that the first internationally recognized Croatian philosopher was Herman of Dalmatia (or Carinthia) (1100–1060), famous among many of his translations and astronomy works, and also for his ontological masterpiece *On essences (De essentiis)*.

The general conclusion of Table 3 can be that Croatian high school philosophy textbooks throughout the period of 1965 to 2019 suffered a substantial change from purely historical-based approaches to mixed and purely problem-based approaches. Topics of practical philosophy (different from ethics), i.e., philosophy of technology, culture, and similar, as well as topics in popular philosophy that would be much more interesting to students (such as the philosophy of mobile phones, artificial intelligence, social networks, film, music, sports, etc.) are as well still waiting to enter textbooks (here, it is also interesting as in a few previous examples, among contemporary Croatian philosophers, there are experts for some fields of practical and popular philosophy, but they are, as far as we know, never invited to write something for such textbooks).

Here, perhaps similar to the conclusion from the Table 2 data, it could be concluded that we will have to wait and see how much the new textbooks will come closer to international standards, not only in terms of content and approach, but also in terms of topics of contemporary practical and popular philosophy.

- These textbooks seem to be completely useless concerning their applicability to many popular and cross-course topics, among which sustainable development is important. There is no useful relation of e.g., philosophical anthropology to biology, chemistry, geography, environment, climate, or sustainability.

Table 3. High school philosophy textbooks in Croatia in the period 1965–2019.

Textbook Topic	VEJ 1966	KAL 1973	KAL 1995	KAL 2001	KAL 2008	KAL 2015	ČEH-GRG 2001	REŠ 2008
+/- Number of pp.								
Intro.	+ 7-10	+ 6-23	+ 8-75	+ 1-72	+ 1-74	+ 9-77	+ 11-22	+ 10-42
History	1	+ 24-198	+ 76-230	+ 75-250	+ 75-250	+ 78-353	+ 22-31	+ 43-45
• Greece and Ro.		+ 26-59	+ 78-112	+ 75-108	+ 75-108	+ 78-135	+ 26-28	+ 43-44
• Medieval		+ 60-79	+ 113-133	+ 110-130	+ 110-132	+ 137-169	+ 28-29	+ 44, 107-113
• Modern		+ 80-143	+ 134-197	+ 113-193	+ 133-194	+ 170-259	+ 30	+ 44-45
• Contemporary	+ 95-112	+ 144-198	+ 198-230, 401-403	+ 195-250	+ 195-250	+ 260-353	+ 31	+ 45
○ Marxist	+ 85-94, 112-119	+ 147-162, 183-198	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ontology	-	-	+ 22-30	+ 16-23	+ 16-23	+ 21-27	+ 92-129	+ 46-79
Epistemology	-	-	+ 42-51	+ 37-46	+ 37-46	+ 39-47	+ 43-70	+ 118-193
Ethics	-	-	+ 52-58	+ 47-55	+ 47-55	+ 48-56	+ 144-173	+ 222-293
Phil. of science	-	-	+ 16-21	+ 8-13	+ 8-13	+ 16-18	-	+ 38-40
Anthropology	-	-	+ 31-41	+ 24-36	+ 24-36	+ 28-35	+ 32-43	+ 396-421
Phil. of religion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+ 40
Phil. of language	-	-	-	-	-	-	+ 72-91	-
Phil. of mind	-	-	-	-	-	-	+ 130-143	+ 194-221
Political phil.	-	-	+ 66-70	+ 63-68	+ 56-61	+ 57-65	+ 174-188	+ 294-355
Phil. of art	-	-	+ 59-65	+ 56-62	+ 62-68	+ 66-73	+ 220-238	+ 356-395
Other topics	phil. texts: 123-314	phil. texts: 203-387	overview of Cro phil.: 397-400	overview of Cro phil.: 253-271	overview of Cro phil.: 253-271	overview of Cro phil.: 358-370	theology: 190-219	theology: 80-117
			phil.texts: 237-394	phil.texts: 273-400	phil.texts: 273-400			

5. Conclusions and Further Research

As said in the introduction, the basic goal of this text was to present the general directions for substantial changes in high school philosophy courses or courses in terms of the future research plan.

5.1. Conclusions

Let us start with a few modest and quite limited conclusions that can be drawn from the previous sections.

- In the 1st part, it was shown that there is a theoretical or particularly philosophical background and justification for the substantial changes in high school philosophy courses via the introduction of methods and topics of popular philosophy.
- In the 2nd part, it was shown that principle guidelines for remodeling the existing curriculum or the slightly improved one are possible and useful.
- In the 3rd part, it was shown that no substantial change in the level of high school philosophy textbooks was made. The only change in last three decades of the history of philosophy textbooks in Croatia was the gradual change from the historical- to the problem-based approach (similar to the results that were made in the Italian reform in the early 2000s).

The overall idea of the text, i.e., to set some parameters for future research, was set at least in terms of basic guidelines that made it possible to formulate the starting research questions and hypothesis for future research and possible implementation if the research ends successfully. Concerning implementation, something that was not performed properly by officials in Croatia, all the elements of the research even before the plan for experimental implementation should be tested among high school students and this is also included in this research plan.

- *An application for sustainable development education:* Philosophy courses in high school can and should serve as a self-created axis of rotation that can glue together many important issues of today's youth around the world, one of which is surely the topic of sustainable development. Teaching sustainable development from the philosophical perspective, as theoretical clarity of concepts and clear and reasonable actions in practical daily lives, could serve the purpose of sustainable development. The philosophy would not lose any of its mysteriousness and it would become, at the same time, quite useful to students, given alongside the tools for rational, critical, and tolerant dialogue and for reaching reasonable

consensus on issues of collective actions, especially related to the issues of sustainable living and development.

In terms of the research questions of the future research, as a result of the analysis conducted here, some are evidently immensely important if one has the interest and well-being of students and their future education after they have finished high school (it does not matter for the present purposes if this education will be formal or informal).

The research questions would be the following:

- (1) What is popular philosophy, how does it relate to non-popular philosophy, does it have substantially different subtypes, and how does it reflect the interests of high school students?
- (2) If question (1) is affirmatively and applicably answered, is it possible to remodel the possible curriculum of the high school philosophy course in order to include popular philosophy?
- (3) If questions (1) and (2) are affirmatively answered, is it possible to research the students' perceptions of the proposed changes in the teaching of the philosophy course (say, by a survey) and how important would the results of such research be for the implementation of the remodeled high school curriculum of philosophy?

5.2. Further Research

Given that this whole text is the proposal of a future research plan, the research is the next step; however, in a much stricter and more detailed manner than it was presented here. Additionally, two aspects need to be achieved in the future. First, a close examination of all relevant scientific, pedagogical, methodical, and didactic research relevant to this topic is required. Second, results of the practical application of existing curricula in Croatia and in sufficiently similar educational high school systems (especially in the EU) is needed. After all, the basic idea of this future research proposal is to connect the high school philosophy course with popular phenomena interesting to students, and to connect it to other courses as much as possible in order to point to the fact that philosophical problems, clearly being abstract, can be and are specific and connected with the daily interests and routines of students. No philosophy course is an island. At best, they are peninsulas, naturally more or less substantially connected not just to other high school courses, but to students' daily life as well. It is time to show this.

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