

SUMMARIUM

EDUCATION – POLICIES – RESEARCH

The Spring 2001 issue of *Educatio* focuses on the relation between educational policies and educational research in Hungary ten years before and after the change in 1990. The articles describe several aspects of the period when educational research was launched in Hungary. These are the 80s and 90s, which indicate a period worth analysing in its own right. What we call educational research (Bildungsforschung, educational policy analysis) in Hungary, is a unique phenomenon in the region. Its framework was a political system, the so called “Kadar-regime”, which existed before the political change in 1989–90. This political system was self-confident enough to involve the groups of the opposition into policy-making (at least into special fields of policies such as educational policies). On the other hand, the system was not integrated enough to keep opposing opinions under complete control. As a consequence, the researchers had stronger and stronger influence on the political decision-making, and projected an alternative way of thinking, a kind of political democracy, where the decision-makers in educational policies formed the “governing party”, and educational researchers the “opposition”. A generation of educational researchers grew up in this political atmosphere.

After the change in 1989–90, Hungary turned into being political democracy, so critical educational research lost its original function. Former educational researchers gradually developed or undertook new social roles in the 90s. Some of them became experts for political parties; furthermore, alternating governing or opposing parties depending on the results of parliamentary elections (1990, 1994, 1998). Another group of researchers undertook positions as experts (counsellor for the Ministry of Education) for the field policies (educational policies): they researched the applicability and the possibilities of accomplishing governmental decisions in educational policies. The third group of researchers turned back to their original, academic profession and found occupation in other research institutes or universities. The present issue of *Educatio* describes all the three possible careers in the articles edited here.

János Setényi analyses in details the dilemma focused above (*Educational Policies and Educational Research*). The author shows several examples modelling the relation between educational policy-maker and educational researcher (Husén, Luhmann, Kogan, and for the first, Weiss), then he describes the development of a new role. This role followed the patterns of “business counselling” when it was formed in Hungary in the 90s. The author argues that this situation is more advanced in this respect in Hungary than in the other countries of the region. *Janos Setényi* even states that the network of relations between educational policy-makers, executives and counsellors developing in the 90s in Hungary is more developed compared with some other countries in Europe.

The first section of papers is written by authors who are not active as educational counsellors any more but returned to academic research. *Mihály Andor* received publicity with his sociological studies in the current situation in the 80s, when he analysed how governmental educational policies had not developed schools in compulsory education (primary schools) for decades. In his present paper the author describes how much more researchers know about social inequities in Hungary (*Social Inequities and School*). The author argues that the actual dilemma of educational policies on

the turn of the century is the choice between the principles of being truthful or free. Market economy and political democracy led to spectacular growth of equity problems on the basis of schooling. The educational policies of the next decade have to answer this question as well.

Zsuzsa Vajda has a critical attitude to the theory which argues that education can simply be grounded, can be substituted with psychological research or by applying the results of these researches (*Pedagogy and Psychology*). According to the author: “we cannot apply to these two fields of science the same framework of views. Pedagogy articulates the structure of aims for the children, or the educated, without which education would be impossible; on the other hand psychology has to research and secure ways of openness for the individuals, personal differences, and decisions based on these factors.”

András Semjén characterises the process through which educational economists – including himself – gradually learn to react to the educational challenges of the new economy after 1990 (*Meeting a Young Man*). Some economists had great expectations of the so called alternative educational financing model (the Norwegian model) in the 80s. The basis of this model is a welfare society that has never developed in East European countries, though the intellectuals had always proposed this model to the governmental and political leaders before 1990. However, real market economy has developed in the region since 1990 and this process has led to the abolishment of former illusions. Now we have to face the question of financing the public section followint the market mechanisms.

Iván Bajomi aims at applying the basic viewpoints of political science to education (*Some Remedies of Premature Educational Change*). The author uses Margaret Archer's typology of educational development, and analyses the history of Hungarian educational policy between 1980–2000. As a conclusion he raises the question if the educational reforms could be controlled better (if these are necessary at all). According to the author, the one solution is to understand educational policies as a so called “public affair”, i.e. applying educational policies is not a role of experts and educational policy-makers, but that of respected community, on the basis of the rules of political democracy.

The other section of papers reflect on the careers and social roles of researchers before and after the change in 1990. *Péter Lukács* analyses the history of the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research in Budapest, from ist foundation until the turn of the century (*The Example of a Research Institute*). The author actually describes the roles played by a group of intellectuals called “educational researchers”, before and after the change in 1990. He emphasises the importance of “think tank” institutes in a period of alternating political course in Central Europe where the layer of professional civil servants have not existed yet, and politicians are forced by circumstances to think from election to election. The professional interests of education are easily subordinated to the need of votes; new elections can entail the caesura of an educational policy. The author expects from “think tank” organisations to maintain necessary continuity.

Katalin R. Forray and *István Polónyi* have participated both in governmental activities and in policy analysis. They ask on the basis of their experiences why experts are always on the other side (*Always on the Other Side*). In their opinion, governmental educational policy has not turned into a profession yet (it is not yet professionalised enough). That is the reason why policy-making that involves several electoral periods, has become harder and harder in this framework. The so called and often cited civil society is not capable of this policy-making either, as they cannot acquire the necessary knowledge and do not have the necessary apparatus. This “long term” planning necessarily opposes experts with the given government – whom they are supposed to co-operate with –, while they become valuable for those who are still in opposition but may come to power after the next election.

Mária Nagy reflects on the professionalisation of educational experts (*An Attempt of Self-definition*). The author tells the history of a unique institution, the HERA (Hungarian Educational Research Association), from the late 80s. She interviewed the founders of the “semi-legal” institution, which was launched before the change. She asked them to reflect back onto their role played then. But

this paper is not a simple collection of memories. It is rather the collection conclusions drawn by the former founders and members. These messages projected the problems that occurred in the field of education after the political change in 1990. Civil organisations forecast the political earthquake that was about to come. It is the reason why they have to be relied on as well, besides official experts.

Gábor Halász investigates the moral dilemmas of an expert through his own career (*Research, Policies, Expert*). “In the past 10–15 years we have often felt when talking with social researchers from West Europe: on the one hand, they envied us of the opportunity of the rare historic moment, the dream of a researcher, that we could experience the temporal co-existence of research and social practice; on the other hand they were threatened by the mere image of being in our shoes.” However, today “the role of a researcher or expert has more to do with communication. This role raises important moral dilemmas as well... The moral dilemmas originate from the case that a researcher doing political analysis – opposed to his colleague doing pure research – does not deal with narrow areas of social problems, but with complex social phenomenon which need holistic approach, and allow for only rough estimates of truth.”

The *Central Europe* column edits *T. Neville Postlethwaite's* paper on co-operation between expert and educational policy-maker – as it was seen and experienced by the “big generation” of international comparative studies emerging in the 60s.

(Text by Tamás Kozma, translated by Gabriella Zsigovits)

BILDUNG – POLITIK – FORSCHUNG

In unserer jetzigen Nummer findet der Leser Artikel, die das Verhältnis zwischen Bildungspolitik und Bildungsforschung vor und nach der Wende untersuchen. Die Autoren rufen in ihren Beiträgen jenen Zeitraum wach, in dem sich die Bildungsforschung in Ungarn etablierte. Es handelt sich um die 80er und 90er Jahre, die in sich schon wichtig genug sind, um analysiert zu werden. Was man in Ungarn unter Bildungsforschung (educational policy analysis) versteht, kann als eine relativ eigenartige Entwicklung in der Region genannt werden. Ihre Entsehung wurde durch das politische System (Kádár-Regierung) ermöglicht, das bis zur Wende bestand. Dieses System war noch selbstsicher genug, um oppositionelle Gruppen in die Gestaltung der Politik einzubeziehen – wenigstens was es die sog. Fachpolitiken (wie z. B. die Bildungspolitik) anbelangt. Auf der anderen Seite allerdings war das System zu wenig integriert, um oppositionelle Meinungen vollständig unter Kontrolle zu halten. Das hatte zur Folge, dass die Forscher immer häufiger ihre Ansichten zu Entscheidungen der Bildungspolitiker äußerten. Durch ihr alternatives Denken kam eine Art politisches “Mehrparteiensystem” zustande, wobei die Bildungspolitiker als “Regierungspartei”, die Forscher als “Opposition” wirkten. Eine ganze Generation der Bildungsforscher wuchs in diesem politischen Klima auf.

Nach der Wende von 1989/90 entstand in Ungarn ein richtiges Mehrparteiensystem, was die oben beschriebene kritische Bildungsforschung überflüssig machte. Die ehemaligen Bildungsforscher bildeten neue gesellschaftliche Rollen aus, bzw. übernahmen solche. Aus einigen wurden Experten politischer Parteien; und zwar sowohl der Regierungen – als auch der Oppositionsparteien – je nach Position, die die von ihnen gewählte Partei nach den verschiedenen Wahlen (1990, 1994, 1998) einnahm. Andere wurden zu Experten der jeweiligen Fachpolitik, also des Bildungsministeriums. Sie suchten nicht nach möglichen Alternativen der Regierungsentscheidungen, sondern beschäftigten sich mit deren Anwendbarkeit und Verwirklichbarkeit. Schließlich kehrte eine dritte Gruppe der Forscher zur akademischen Laufbahn zurück und fand an Hochschulen oder Forschungsinstituten Anstellung.