



## **Internationalism and the Third World (Photographs in the Hungarian Educational Press in the 1960's)**

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### **Abstract**

My researches are based upon the photographic corpus of the Hungarian periodical journals in the 1960's. I have been examined six journals: Family and School (Család és Iskola), Our Child (Gyermekünk), Public Education (Köznevelés), Education in Kindergarten (Óvodai Nevelés), The Elementary Teacher (A Tanító) and The Work of the Elementary Teacher (A Tanító Munkája). Combining various methods of history of education, iconography and anthropology, we can separate several sequences of pictures in the 5371 elements' corpus – one possible sequence is the subject about foreign countries in Africa, Asia and Latin-America (with 158 items). The presentation forms of the Non-European, Third World are stressful in this decade, according to the revolutionary-egalitarian rhetoric and libertarian tendencies of the socialist pedagogy. These pictures reshaped the dominant European point of view in the name of the solidarity and internationalism, we can interpret these visual sources as the instruments of ideological and political will.

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## **Introduction**

The photos transmit several worldviews; the visual meanings express and form the identities of individuals, social groups, nations or ideologies. Connections between mental and physical images are mutual: they affect and constitute each other, producing narratives to model our world. In these narratives an important role played by the Other, the Strange People. Dichotomy of 'Us and Them' has been fundamental in the human thought in every decade (Koselleck, 1997), these distinction gives coherence and strength to the community. This study tries to reflect the appearance of the Third World educational systems in the professional press of Hungary in the 1960's, a good example about otherness, multiculturalism and ideology, a specific form of the traditional dichotomy.

Current postcolonial tendencies are concerned with this topic, but they have not widely spread in the Hungarian Education Sciences, home scholars leave Non-European Education usually out of consideration (except the evidence based educational research, see: Halász, 2013; Kozma, 2006, or some researchers in the cultural history of education, for example: Kéri, 2010). Interrelated with the pictures we should rephrase the 'Us and Them' dichotomy: the internationalist ideology united the opposite sides, the liberating Asian, African and Latin-American nations incorporated in the socialist block, against colonialism and imperialism (the West). Struggle of the Oppressed created fraternity between 'Us and Them', as the dominant ideology suggested in the 1960's Hungary – the Marxist discourse will be exposed in details below.

## **Opening the educational view in the 1960's**

There are 351 photos representing foreign countries in the Hungarian educational press, between 1960 and 1970: 124 pictures shot in the Eastern, Socialist Block, 57 in the Western, Capitalist and 158 in the Third World. The rest 12 photos demonstrated international meetings like the International Festival of Youth and Students (in Hungary known Világifjúsági Találkozó, shortly VIT), Olympics, Congress of World Federation of Democratic Youth or events in the Pioneer Movement.

The visual emphasis was on the developing countries – I worked out three interpretations about possible causes of this overrepresentation. First of all, education in the 1960's can be characterized by the expansion of mass education: secondary and higher education in the Eastern and Western, elementary forms in the Third World (Kozma, 2006). Globalisation, demographic explosion and decolonisation led to the extension of the institutional education, which set a lot of problems (Coombs, 1971; Husén, 1994), and open the eyes of the public opinion and the profession to the Third World. Some unknown publicists called the processes as 'Detonation in the Educational System' or 'Revolution in the Pedagogy' (see: *Tanügyi robbanás. Család és Iskola, 1968/10, 18-20; Forradalom a pedagógiában. Család és Iskola, 1968/11, 6-7*).

The second answer could be the informative (some might say manipulative) aspect of the educational periodicals in Hungary: the slogan was 'Educate the educators!' (Jáki, 1962:84), transform their minds, broaden their knowledge – the latter is one of the main patterns nowadays multicultural education (Feischmidt, 1997). Official ideology and propaganda serviced the third explanation: Internationalism, fight against imperialism, the common (socialist) values illustrated by pictures in Vietnam, Korea, Cuba or Guinea. According to the bipolar logic every nations and countries classified as 'peaceful and progressive' or 'the dark powers of the war' (Kádár, 1977:63). I find two different aspects of the Third World's question in the Hungarian educational press: schooling the society and participation in the Pioneer Movement.

### **Encounters of Cultures: Schooling the Society**

The diversity of the pictures homogenised in the point of Eastern European view: Asia (72 photos), Africa (57 photos), Latin America (25 photos), and Native Americans (4 pictures) showed in an integrated frame. Elements of the utterance are similar to the former colonizer countries: progression, alphabetisation (fight against illiteracy), importance of the education, modernisation and escalation of the knowledge monopoly are the heritage of the Western Enlightenment, which stigmatized the Non-European regions as an obscurant, needing help areas. Implement of formal educational spaces, institutions, mass education and technics of literacy followed European models and categories (which illustrated by 62 photos), emerge of local cultures is very rare in the discourse.

*Photo 1. Egy kubai iskolában (A school in Cuba)<sup>1</sup>*



*Photographer: Papp Jenő (MTI)*

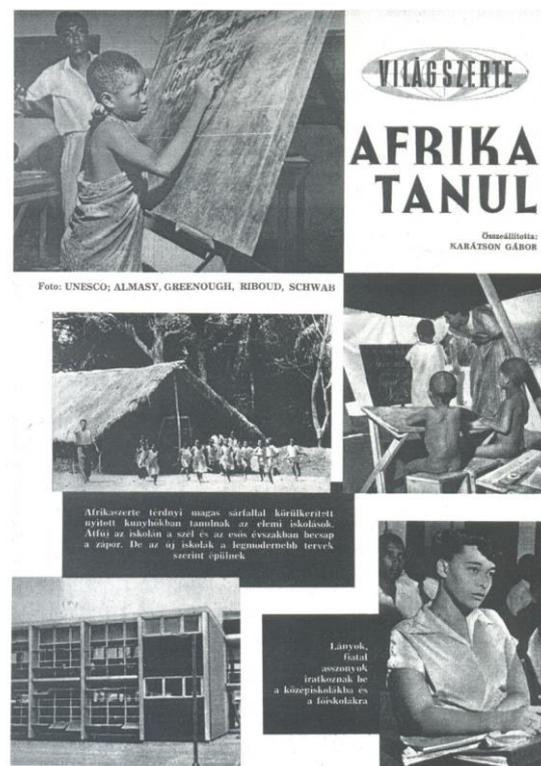
*Publication data: Köznevelés (Public Education), 1962/21, 645.*

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<sup>1</sup> Short description: The picture shows a classroom, where adults and students working in mixed groups. Every learning pair has a book, some read, some talk.

János Géczzi already analysed this photo (2006) in the context of adult learning – not accidentally, because concepts of the Learning Society, Lifelong Learning invented in this period (Fuchs, 1971; Husén, 1994). In the developing countries the adults sat back to the classroom desktops, began to learning (additional learning) to attain the techniques of literacy and reading. 1961 was the year of fight against analphabetism in Cuba, this picture was made in a fishing village–school in Manzanillo, where students and teachers were teaching illiterate workers to read and write. Instead of traditional frontal educational organization, we can see modern learning methods on the picture, like group working and mentoring, due to the necessities of this period in Cuba and the absence of qualified teachers. Quantitative approach was specific in the Marxist discourse (and also other educational experts): they thought that extension of schools, students and degrees could help to fill the gap between developing and advanced countries. We can read, for example, next to this picture, that 600.000 people learned to read and write in Cuba in the beginning year (1961), with the help of 104.000 students – but we can't see the quality of the acquired knowledge, behind the numbers. Some international organizations have helped this work, like UNESCO, as we can see below.

Photo - sequence 1. Afrika tanul (Africa is Learning)<sup>2</sup>



Photographer: UNESCO, Almasz, Greenough, Riboud, Schwab  
Publication data: *Család és Iskola (Family and School)*, 1965/1, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Short description: Five photographs constitute the sequence: from the elementary level of education to the high school. The students are naked, half-naked or dressed, the represented educational places are also various: outside, in a tent, or in a modern building. Some elements clearly refer to the learning: desktop, table, books and exercise books.

The illustrative sequence gives us a narrative story. The story tells a progression in the education, climbing to the top from steps to steps, from the elementary school to the college. The old schools are in the jungle; their walls are plastered with mud, and covered with hay. Children are sitting naked at the desktops, the conditions are very poor (in the European point of view) - this is the past of the African Education, visible on the top of the sequence. Going down to the page (symbolically to the top of the education) we can see the future: a modern college, a young girl, dressed European clothes. The pictures exemplify the acculturation of the Third World, occupy by the first two Worlds (the capitalist and the socialist). Not surprisingly, Ivan Illich's favourite book (*Deschooling Society*) was published in Mexico in 1971 (in the same year some reprints followed), as a strong reaction to the dominant Anglo-Saxon and European educational systems, an answer and critique to the challenge (Illich, 1971). Another example to take possession in the Third World is the participation in youth, pioneer movement.

### Participation in the Pioneer-Movement

Photo 2. Úttörők menete a függetlenség ünnepén Conakryban, Guinea. (Independent Day Marching with Pioneers, in Guinea, Conakry)<sup>3</sup>



Photographer: Unknown

Publication data: *A Tanító Munkája (The Work of the Elementary Teacher)*, 1967/2, 8.

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<sup>3</sup> Short description: Young girls marching in celebrating clothes on the street. They wear skirts, white blouses and pioneer ties. They walk in lines; people on the side of the street watching them, a boy raise his hands in salute.

The actual political message (decolonisation) connected with the unity of the Movement on this picture, related to the internationalist ideology. The young African students assimilated to the Pioneers (in a broader sense to the Euro-American values) in their uniforms and cultural practices, the Celebration of the Independence Day. The children mediate the promise of the future on the occasion of a special event, when fraternity rules the world and equality of the people will come true. These students are externally same (see their clothes and acts!) everywhere in the World - in the Far East, in Africa, in Latin America and in Eastern Europe. Celebration is an extraordinary anthropological time, outside everyday' life, an originally sacral event (Köpping, 1997), which gives the opportunity to realization the utopia of socialism on the surface of the photographs.

Photo 3. Koreai gyermekek köszöntése (Greetings of Korean children)<sup>4</sup>



Photographer: MTI

Publication data: *Köznevelés* (Public Education), 1970/1.

Such photographs were published in the 1950's journal-covers too (Kéri, 2009) - they expressed the ideological content out from the socialist child- and young-perception. There was a series of photographs in 1970 in the *Köznevelés* (Public Education) –

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<sup>4</sup>Short description: In the centre of the picture an older girl kissing and hugging a Korean guest. The flowers and the pioneer uniform refer to a celebration, the girl on the right side is smiling, her represented emotions are positive.

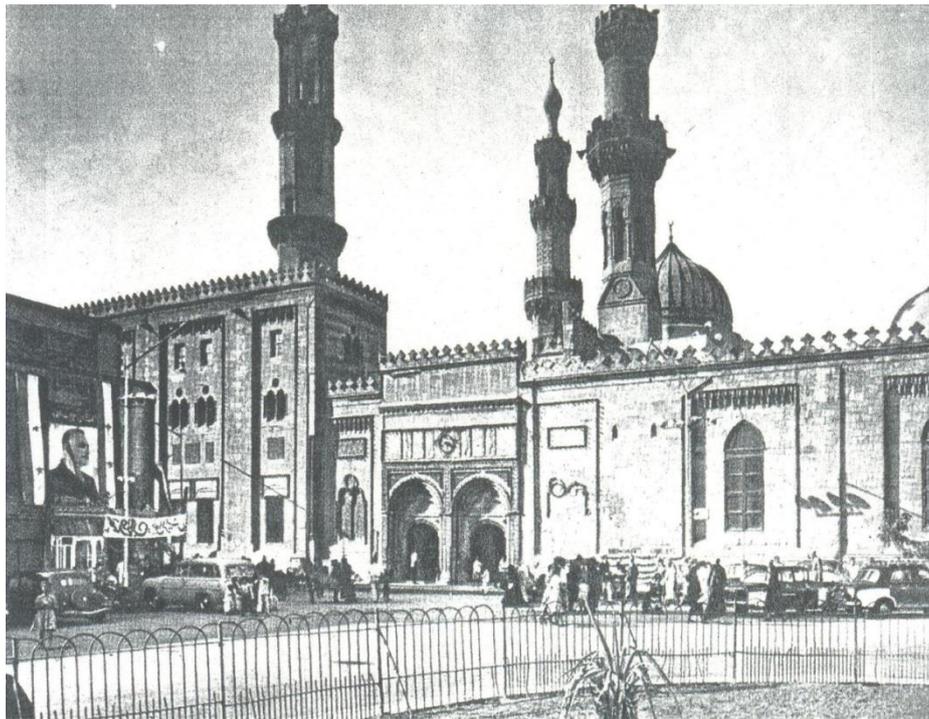
remembering the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the so-called liberation in 1945 (we called it in Hungary: felszabadulás) – its title was Political Education. As the Hungarian Nation liberated under the fascist regime after the Second World War, that was similar with the decolonisation movements, anti-imperialist fights, like in Korea and Vietnam. I have to mention at this point Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, came out in 1968 in Brazil (see: Freire, 2005), which declared battle against capitalism and imperialism, applied the Marxist idea of alienation to show its manifestations in the Third World educational-economical systems. The western/Anglo-Saxon Critical Pedagogy influenced by this work a lot: the goals to identify the inequalities in power and knowledge-distribution, fight against oppression (Gruenewald, 2003) remain partly to the socialist discourse of pedagogy. The Eastern Block accepted and supported this fight – in words and images, like this – in the name of Internationalism and Fraternity of manhood. This photograph suggests love and unity, the strength of the ideology, on the emphatic position of the cover of a journal.

### Summary

The notions of 'Third World', 'Latin-America' (or 'Ibero-America'), 'Black Africa' (the Sub-Saharan Region) are cultural constructions, summarizes political-ideological discourses, beliefs and worldviews, like the firstly analysed idea of 'Orientalism' (Said, 2000). They do not represent themselves, but our European point of view, as Spivak said: the Subalterns can't speak in their own voice (1994). This proposal raises a Foucauldian question (see for example: Foucault, 1995) about knowledge producing, connections between power and knowledge, the sociologically embedded discourses -the latter aspect leads to the range territory of the sociology of scientific knowledge (a bit old, but great synthesis to this issue: Farkas, 1994). The discourses and images about Asian, African and Latino people are located outside of these communities, created by cultural experts of Europe and North-America.

The knowledge and opinions about Third World usually dominated by the experts' situations and viewpoints (Cutajar, 2008), the Otherness assimilated to the socialist block (or to the Western) and losing its particularity. Sometimes there is an exception to this rule, like the last visual example. It represents the oldest university in the world, Al-Azhar, in Egypt – this picture emphasizes the contribution of the Islamic world to the western culture and sciences, although it interlocked with everyday politics and ideology too. On the left side of the photo one can explore the image of Nasser, Egypt's leader at this time, representative of the Arab Socialism. However, it is a unique photo in this corpus, because the institution performs of its own value and demonstrates its own culture – a not so common image in the European culture and a research direction, you may want to think further.

Photo 4. Azhár. A világ legrégebbi egyetemén. (Azhar. In the oldest University of the World)<sup>5</sup>



Publication data: *Család és Iskola (Family and School)*, 1965/4, 29.

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<sup>5</sup> Short description: We can see a mosque-like building on this picture, in front of it there are people and autos. On the left side there is the Egyptian flag and the image of Nasser, implied the photograph's location.

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