



Hungarian Educational Research Journal
2016, Vol. 6(3) 124–126
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<http://herj.lib.unideb.hu>
Debrecen University Press



DOI: 10.14413/HERJ.2016.03.12.

Kozma Tamas (2016). The moment. Essay on education research. [A pillanat: essze az oktataskutatasrol.] Budapest: UMK-HTSTART.

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According to Gerhard Schulze’s theory of experience society, shared experience has the power to make us define social categories. Such a shared experience was the democratic transformation of Hungary for the generation of Tamas Kozma. At that time I was only a senior student at university, while the Author had already been researching education for three decades. He lived through World War II and the darkest period of the oppressing Communist regime, and then his career as a researcher started during the dawn of the Kadar era.

A significant fragment of his book consists of his reflections on the social and educational changes and processes of the century with an international outlook. From the point of view of the Author one can witness the slow reforms of the 60’s, the first academic contact with the “West”, the stop of the reforms in the 70’s, which was followed by the period called “expanding walls”, leading to the democratic transformation. Tamas Kozma was a professor of the university when the democratic transformation happened and he has been a witness and researcher of the attempt to find the democratic way for the twenty-five years that have passed since then.

Therefore, his book can be considered the story of his own development as he was both a participant and an observer of the academic life of the period. That affects the genre of book as the Author emphasizes that he is writing an essay which, while equally accurate, has a more personal tone than a scientific study. The book is based on 25 previous studies by Kozma, which he published from 1998 to 2016. He organizes these works into four chapters and completes them with recent data, therefore the book contains answers to current questions. The titles of the chapters are references to Kozma’s emblematic works such as: Whose is the democratic transformation?, Whose is the school?, Whose is the university?, Whose is knowledge?. The last three topics indicate

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Kozma's main research areas while the first one provides a framework for the content of the book. As he has been doing research on the sociological functions of school, higher education and knowledge, both education and sociology are discussed in the book, though he is seemingly more interested in the sociological side. His own series is titled *Education and Society*, in which this book is the twentieth item.

The title of the book is a reference to two ancient Greek concepts of time (Kronos and Karios). The Author is fascinated by the latter one, which is a special "moment of grace". In ancient Greek mythology Karios was a young man, bald at the back of his head and long-haired in the front. He was always running, which symbolized that one can either seize or miss him. A moment can equally be seized or missed by both a person and a whole society. In the life of Tamas Kozma such a moment was the seminar in Graenna, where he had the opportunity to learn a new technical language, which was actually English, but figuratively a language which was free from communist terminology and contained new ideas. For the Hungarians and the rest of Europe the moment of grace was the democratic transformation, when the economic, political and sociological transformation radically ended the isolation, put new political figures in power and created new identities.

In the first chapter the Author analyses the moment of the democratic transformation. He discusses the periods and the evaluation of the transformation. Those who consider the democratic transformation a process divide it into two periods, the first being the late Kadar era – the preparatory phase – and the second being the actual transformation from 1989-1990. This process was finished when Hungary joined the European Union in 2004. However, in Kozma's view, the democratic transformation consisted of three periods, and it is the turn or change feature he considers important, lasting from the fall of 1988 to the end of 1993 and accompanied by the rebirth of active communities.

Kozma witnessed how the initial euphoric climate turned suddenly to confusion and the weakening of social norms as the spontaneous democracy of the communities was confronted with the principles and institutional leaders of market economy. In his opinion, the third period started from 2004 as the new power fields within the EU created new rivalries while bureaucracy strengthened again. In the period of change education was fundamentally altered by new laws, among others the Act on Public Education in 1993, the regulation of the national curriculum, the regulation of local governments and the guarantee of religious freedom. Along with the change of education its research also changed, as besides scientific researchers and politicians, new professional experts appeared who earned their living from project markets.

In the second and the third chapter public education and higher education are examined. The different educational levels are discussed in separate chapters, yet they are not isolated from each other. The Author points out the special features of education during the three decades. Decade by decade he shows us the typical trends of education with their contemporary interpretations, therefore we can see with the eyes of the person

who witnessed the events and also with those of the researcher who relives them through research. Kozma finds the expansion of education, ethnic minority education, religious education and the education of the gypsy minority outstandingly important issues. He pays attention to the problems of centralization, decentralization and compulsory education as well as the need to comply with EU regulations before joining the European Union. He also describes the consequences of public and higher education institutions' rank lists patched up by some experts, which made it impossible for schools and universities to create a special personal image. The mechanisms of market economy are especially apparent in higher education due to attempts to create "university-businesses" and reach managerialism. Considerable confusion is caused by contradictory influences such as bureaucracy and market economy, state accreditation and the autonomy of universities, integration in higher education and the rivalry among universities, and the pressure of the labour market.

The last chapter of the book, which focuses on the social processes of learning, shows the different features of knowledge bought for money and democratically created free knowledge through the example of information technology systems. He proposes interesting questions: is knowledge personal or social property? Should learning be organized in a democratic or in an autocratic way? Before the democratic transformation Hungarians lived in a dictatorial system which tried to convince society of being egalitarian. In that system knowledge and learning were controlled by the communist party. After the democratic transformation Hungary became part of the global market economy, where property and individual interests had top priority. In that system knowledge could be bought and sold. In both systems education was mostly controlled in an autocratic way. However, in the last decades learning has been more and more significant, and the process of learning has been adjusted to the needs of the learner, therefore it is dominantly collective and democratic. In the light of this interpretation the case studies on the learning regions and cities in Hungary are outstandingly interesting. The case studies may indicate that social learning is the self-healing reaction of society to the uniformity of institutional education.

In this book the Author tries to find out if the once communist countries, where democratic transformation occurred, and the whole of Europe were able to seize the special moment – the period of the transformation – or were unable to do so and let it pass. According to the Author the results were lopsided. In the decades that followed the democratic transformation there were positive outcomes which were due to the search for a new way, but society paid the price for them. While some active communities profited from the transformation, many others were unable to react. This book provides the reader with new ways to approach the discourse on democratic transformation from the point of view of education.