

BOOK REVIEWS:

REGION AND EDUCATION III: *Education and Church in Central-and Eastern-Europe at First Glance* and REGION AND EDUCATION IV: *Religion and Values in Education in Central and Eastern Europe* both edited by Gabriella Pusztai. Debrecen: Center for Higher Education Research and Development, University of Debrecen, Hungary, 2008. Paperback, 220 and 455 pp respectively. *Reviewed by: Nóra Veronika Németh and Tímea Ceglédi*

RELIGION AND EDUCATION is a publication series which exemplifies the role of sociology as it came into existence at the meeting point of public education and society. Considering the different branches of knowledge and geographical borders this young science forms a bridge between different sciences and tries to build cooperation among people of different nations. There were two prior research projects (between 2002-2006), called Regional Universities at the University of Debrecen in Hungary, both led by Professor Tamas Kozma, supported by the help of Ph.D. students of the Department of Educational Studies.

Religion and education – A network project in Central and Eastern Europe

The third volume of the series – *Region and Education* - published in English, is titled *Education and Church in Central- and Eastern-Europe at First Glance*. This publication is a shared effort of the members of a Hungarian research institute (CHERD – Center for Higher Education Research and Development) and other colleagues of the REVACERN research project and it summarizes East European specialist research.

This edition is an attachment to the other two previous volumes of the *Region and Education* series, published in Hungarian, based along two main research lines: education and region. The fact that the authors approached the above mentioned two topics through the role of the church offers a new approach. This collection of essays is useful as in post-socialist countries churches got back their leading roles after the political transformation of the 1990s. Research in the field of the sociology of religion educational sociology in the segments of church-maintained schools is considered a new area in these countries. Colleagues of CHERD collected the experts in religion from different European countries for the first time in this publication. Several studies were written in their mother tongues only, so the research institute's colleagues translated their work.

The articles were compiled and organized by Gabriella Pusztai around two main topics. In the first part the denominational schools, while in the second part the religious instruction (religious education) are the collective terms to which the research of the different nationality authors are included. The reader can find interesting approaches about social segregation or status of denominational school in Romania, Slovakia and in the Ukraine.

Almost all post-socialist countries are represented in the twelve English and one German studies. In the second part of the volume one can read about the newest surveys of religious instruction in the East European region, primarily from Romanian, Czech, Bulgarian, Slovene and Croatian areas.

Religion and values in education

The latest publication of the *Religion and Education* series has the following title: *Religion and Values in Education in Central and Eastern Europe*. It is a conference volume which contains research papers of the REVACERN research project and it was published in November 2008. The main issue of the research is to find the right framework and primary hypotheses for describing religion and values in the field of education. Researchers working in this Central and Eastern Europe project

made an attempt to find answers and publish them in this publication. The second task was to examine the role of churches in new challenges in connection with the educational system, like segregation, atomization and the integration of deviant students. For those who are interested in the religion and values in education this edition can be useful and thought-provoking as well. School atmosphere, school policies and social capital were also among the examined topics. Religious issues in multicultural education are frequently encountered in several writings.

The authors of the studies carried out intensive and thorough research, while the reader may encounter complex approaches related to the original topics as well. The editor grouped the studies of the volume into four subsections. We may read about the appearance of religion and values in compulsory education, higher education, adult education and in connection with social capital. One cannot undertake reviews of the whole book since the volume offers nearly forty studies. But the readers' attention should be called to the monumental work presenting a new international perspective in the field of education and religion in the Central and Eastern European region. The significance of the publication is based on the coherent regional work providing a wider view for those interested in the topic. At the same time it must not be forgotten that this publication is the latest achievement of a research center in the fields of education, religion and values. We hope that this cooperation which began in this research network will continue in the future and will give a distinguished opportunity for surveys on the broader fields of church roles in education in Central and Eastern Europe.

Reviewed by: Nóra Veronika Németh and Tímea Ceglédi.