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Polyzoi, Eleoussa; Fullan, Michael & Anchan, John P. (Eds.). (2003). *Changing Forces in Post-Communist Eastern Europe: Education in Transition*. London: RoutledgeFalmer Taylor & Francis Group.

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This book seeks to accomplish the following two purposes: “to illuminate some important features of the forces that shape sudden and dramatic large-scale educational reform” in post-Communist countries and “to suggest new directions in the study of educational change” (p. xx). The addition of the second purpose, the theoretical approach to the discussion of post-totalitarian educational transition which has been mostly descriptive, makes this book unique. This book would be of interest to members of the educational reform research community, members of the international and comparative education community as well as those directly involved in planning and coordinating large-scale educational reforms.

The book is a product of fruitful collaboration of three Canadian scholars, who served as editors of the book and who brought their expertise in the areas of educational change and global and comparative education to this work, and six international intellectuals, who incorporated their own experiences as key players in educational reforms in their analysis of educational transition.

The structure of the book is clear and logical. It consists of three parts:

- Part 1 introduces readers to the “Triple I” model of educational change that will be used as a framework for analyzing educational transition in Part 2;
- Part 2 is a collection of case studies of nation-wide educational reforms at five post-Communist Eastern European countries (Russia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and East Germany);
- Part 3 attempts to develop a new conceptual framework for analyzing educational change.

In Part 1 of the book, Michael Fullan presents the “Triple I” model as a rather simplified model of a complex phenomenon that helps to “organize ideas to represent the flow of educational change”

(p.2). The model views change as a process rather than an event and comprises three broad phases: initiation – “process that leads up to and includes a decision to adopt or proceed with a change” (p. 3), implementation – “the first experiences of attempting to put an idea or reform into practice” (p.4), and institutionalization – process that determines “whether the change gets build in as an ongoing part of the system or disappears” (p.4). Fullan acknowledges the complexity of change and discussed various factors influencing each phase of the change process. Finally, he supplements this model with three additional problems that should be taken into account with respect to large-scale reforms: “the multiple innovations or coherence-making problem, the balance between and integration of pressure and support, and building new infrastructures” (p. 7). Though the initial model was developed to reflect change at the micro-level such as school and classroom, the authors believe it “may, to a certain degree, be applicable to the macro-level of comparative and international education” (p. xiv) and, to a less certain degree, to post-Communist Eastern Europe that had gone through revolutionary rather than evolutionary change.

Part 2 is a collection of case studies of nation-wide educational reforms at five post-Communist countries (Russia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and East Germany). These cases have several unique features:

- They relate to a major (radical) system change with implications for all elements of education;
- The change under analysis is not yet fully complete;
- The reforms were initiated during a period of overall social, political and economic transformation (p. 55).

Despite the fact that the five countries in the case studies share to some extent a common political past, they are very diverse nations with their own unique characteristics that have shaped the process of educational transformation in them. For example, in the case of Russia presented by Polizoï and Dneprov, over 70 years of communism rule made the change process “particularly chaotic and protracted in nature” (p. 14). For over a decade Russia has been staying at the initiation stage trying to bridge the old familiar (e.g. bureaucratic structures) and the new unknown (e.g. innovative school structures). At the same time, the Czech Republic (case presented by Polizoï and Černá), that had experienced communism regime as imposed rather than grown from within, got through the initiation stage “almost literally overnight” (p. 34). However, the change implementation phase proceeded “more slowly, hindered by the absence of a clear vision” and “the daunting task of reculturing an entire educational system” (p. 49). Hungary (case presented by Halász) started transforming its education sector years ahead of real political change. ‘Restoration’ tendencies towards re-establishment of ‘traditional European values’ were hindering ‘modernization’, the genuine transformation of the system (p. 56). The radical social and political changes caused by the fall of the communism system fuelled reform implementation by bringing additional external funding and turning uncertainty and risk-taking into a norm. These changes resulted in both positive and negative outcomes for the educational sector. In Romania (case presented by Bîrzea and Fartuşnic), enormous support of such foreign organizations as World Bank, Open Society Foundation and European Union speeded up the educational policy reform. As a result, the traditional (centralized) decision making structures and the national economic resources were not ready to support changes in policy and considerably hindered the educational transformation process. Only when these gaps got acknowledged and addressed, the reform continued to move forward. Arnhold, in her case of East German compared restructuring of the East German education system to ‘cloning’ (p. 105). The entire Western German model together with its textbooks, structures, teaching personnel and problems was exported. “Lack of money, the necessity to act quickly and the absence of well-developed alternatives” were the arguments against a thorough reform (p. 106).

There are some differences in research methods utilized by authors in their case studies. Eleoussa Polizoï, the first author of the first two cases was a Canadian scholar who conducted interviews with various key players of the educational reform and co-authored the chapters with one of his

interviewees. The authors of other chapters represent the countries they analyzed and base their analysis on their personal and their colleague's experiences and studies. Though some readers may criticize such analysis for lacking objectivity, others may find it as the one offering more power and depth. The acknowledgement of this subjectivity of analysis by Anchan, one of the editors, and presenting it as "strength of this book" adds validity to the book (p. xvi).

The "Triple I" model is used as a framework in all the studies which adds clarity and consistency to the book. Though the model is proved to be useful, it does not completely reflect factors specific to societies in transition. The authors offer various additions and adjustments to the model. Polizoi and Dneprov suggest complimenting Fullan's 'Triple I' model with Bîrzea's model of change that reflects non-linear relationship of the educational transformation process and accounts for the unique preconditions that precipitated large-scale change in former Communist countries. When the models are applied together, "a dynamic and interactive picture of change" emerges, "one that is much more complex and multivariate than either model could offer alone" (p. 31). Polizoi and Černá find Fullan's schema incomplete because of failing to address the revolutionary nature of change. The authors believe that the field of organizational theory can offer some answers, particularly Venda's model of transformation which constitutes four basic principles: systems in transition are typically characterized by the coexistence of old and new structures; the emergent new "state" may have few common elements with the old, and the wider apart the two states are initially, the more difficult the transition process; if, as the old state begins to transform, its initial drop in efficiency is too steep, the system may enter a chaotic state and collapse; the transformation process is not unidimensional but affected by multiple factors simultaneously (pp. 49-53). Developed for understanding change within stable environments like Canada and the USA, the 'Triple I' framework fails to recognize characteristics attributable to societies in transition such as complexity and importance of context and non-linearity of the change process, Halász believes. He advocates for a new framework within which, "change must be understood not only as a goal, but also as the outcome of an open process; and the focus of analysis must be "shifted away from the original goals of change and towards the environment, which not only determines whether or not those goals will be achieved but also serves continuously to modify them" (p. 72). Bîrzea and Fartușnic integrate the three stages of the 'Triple I' model (initiation, implementation, and institutionalization) into the four phases of their own framework (deconstruction, stabilization, transformation, and coordination) that help to explain educational transition in Romania (p. 76-77). The new framework also emphasizes foreign assistance and broader environment as crucial factors in change sustainability. In her analysis of Eastern German, Arnhold uses a combination of three conceptual frameworks: Fullan's 'Triple I', Bîrzea's (1994) model of transition and Oxford Groups' (1998) model of change based on Bîrzea's notion of transition. She concludes that all three models may be applied to educational change in the former GDR and that each model has utility in explaining different aspects of the process: while the Oxford Group's and Bîrzea's models focus on macro-level transition, Fullan's framework can be applied to both macro and micro levels of change (p. 106).

The comprehensive critique of Fullan's model and its modifications suggested in Part 2 makes the last chapter (Part 3) titled 'The Emergence of a Conceptual Framework' particularly wanted. After summarizing the suggestions for the 'Triple I' framework, Michael Fullan presents a new conceptual framework emerging from these case studies and recent conceptual developments in complexity theory. The scholar claims that "specifically, the combination of Venda's four principles of transition, the 'Triple I' model, and Wallace and Pocklington's [2003] four-change management themes, results in a more dynamic model better suited to helping us understand societal transformation" (p. 113). However, he does not state the reasons for selecting Venda's four principles out of all suggestions provided by the case studies as well as Wallace and Pocklington's four-change management themes out of all complexity theory frameworks. Though there is an entire page allocated to visual presentation of the new framework, only one sentence is devoted to indicating the role of each of the three models in the framework. Lack of proper introduction and justification of the components of the new framework and relationship among them makes this framework look like emerging out of the blue rather than thoughtfully developed.

In spite of these limitations, the topic of the book is important and the findings of the researchers' deserve attention.

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