INTRODUCTION

Changes in Mass Schooling: ‘school form’ and ‘grammar of schooling’ as reagents[1]

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ABSTRACT During the nineteenth century many European countries proclaimed sovereignty of the people and simultaneously founded their national educational systems. In order to provide public schooling, free and compulsory education was established. Political and sociocultural revolutions led to the rise of nation states, based on democratic or democratic-inspired aspirations, that then turned into ‘teacher states’. Mass schooling and the worldwide – and furthermore enforced – dissemination of this schooling model characterise the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. How can one best describe the concrete process of mass schooling? How should it be analysed, and what are the appropriate concepts to do so? How did nations contribute to its dissemination? By tackling these issues from a historical perspective and discussing, in particular, two concepts often addressed for understanding certain aspects of mass schooling – ‘school form’ and ‘grammar of schooling’ – the contributions of this volume shed a new light on the matter.

Mass Schooling, a Worldwide Phenomenon

Schooling is a historical long-time process (Rockwell, 1999). If the first forms of schools are undoubtedly contemporary to social divisions of labour, in particular between manual and intellectual labour (Akinnaso, 1992), in Europe, from the sixteenth century, a wide range of schools appeared embracing specific social institutions: humanitarian colleges, small charitable schools, technical and vocational schools. They ensured transmission of knowledge and norms according to frameworks that assigned precise mandates both to those in charge of teaching and to those supposed to learn (among many, see Chartier et al, 1976; Petitat, 1982; Fend, 2006). Various stakeholders, either religious or secular, governed them. Hamilton (1989) analyses several common features, such as classroom organisation and the curriculum.

What most theoreticians call ‘mass schooling’ is a more recent phenomenon. The term, which was used mostly in the Anglo-Saxon tradition and then spread further due to the work of the Stanford school (Ramirez & Boli, 1987), delineates integrating all youths in schools through an organised connection between the state – that then becomes a teacher state – and schooling.[2] It was mostly during the nineteenth century that the phenomenon of mass schooling grew, particularly in western countries in connection to the rise of nation states. ‘Nation form’ (Balibar, 1988) seems to have called for ‘school form’. The nation form that most states took on emerged simultaneously with what Braudel (1967) called an ‘economic world’ and Wallerstein (1974-2011) defined as a ‘world system’. It is characterised by unequal exchanges and power controlling between different regions of the world. Schooling is the tool that shaped both the nation and the people, and it is therefore endowed with many functions. As a result of several often contradictory clashes (Petitat, 1982, p. 229), schooling is massively enforced, leading to a wide range of features that theoreticians of mass schooling summarise as follows:

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(1) It focuses on the socialization of individuals for membership in society. (2) It aspires to extend membership to all individuals within the society. (3) It articulates a secular vision of progress, in which action and achievement take place in this world, not in some transcendental cosmos. (4) It sets forth an increasingly standardized curriculum. ... (5) And it putatively links mastery of the curriculum with personal development and the latter with the progress of the nation-state. (Meyer et al, 1992, p. 131)

The strong connection between state and school, and implementing mass schooling imply a thorough transformation of school organisation as it had developed over the previous centuries. As analysed by Caruso:

With the passing of the supremacy of individual tuition in a collective setting to modern teaching in classes of the same age, a huge change in teaching technology occurred that enabled reforms, such as those of Comenius, to become a reality, most of all in the Western world. (2010, p. 28; our translation)

Through comparative studies, many researches document the rise of this schooling model that occurred, more or less simultaneously, in several nations during the nineteenth century (see, for example, the following works for Europe: Archer, 1979; Frijhoff, 1983; Müller et al, 1987; Nóvoa, 2006). Furthermore, recently, Tröhler et al (2011) have linked mass schooling to the rise of the 'citizen', the 'citoyen' or the 'Bürger' by questioning how the classical idea of republicanism influenced the shaping of, and then the building of, modern schooling.

Two Concepts that Act as a Reactive

The current volume modestly contributes to analysing how mass schooling developed over time and space so as to highlight some of its features. Four contributions cross-examine two concepts that are of utmost importance in European debates for grasping these features: 'school form' and 'grammar of schooling'. The fifth contribution questions whether implementing and further developing mass schooling necessarily implies constituting a relatively unitary system.

'School form' is the first concept tackled. It is well used nowadays, mostly in French-speaking countries, and targets some essential dimensions of schooling. It has also been included in some Spanish works (e.g. Baquero et al, 2007). Introduced in the 1980s (Vincent, 1980), it became widespread in particular because of a book with a suggestive title: L'école, prisonnière de la forme scolaire [Are schools trapped by the school form?] (Vincent, 1994). It still remains widely discussed, even today, as shown in more recent publications (Troger, 1999; Maulini & Montandon, 2005; Lahire, 2008; Vincent et al, 2012). 'Grammar of schooling', suggested about twenty years ago (Tyack & Tobin, 1994), rose in the midst of the US debates related to the dynamics of school reforms. Whilst also permeating many European studies, its meaning has been transformed, drifting away from the significance intended by the original authors (see e.g. Martínez Arbelaiz & Correa Gorospe, 2009; Simons & Masschelein, 2009). Along the same lines, based on the limitations regarding didactical dimensions of schools, Depaepe (Depaepe et al, 2000; see also Depaepe & Smyers, 2008; Smyers & Depaepe, 2008) included the idea of 'grammar of educationalization'.

'School form' and 'grammar of schooling', as discussed in the literature, have been presented to the authors of this volume, who are all specialists in the history of schooling in Europe and Latin America, and who have been invited to address the issues from their expertise and points of view.[3] They have tackled them in a very contrasting manner. Some suggest a theoretical discussion. Others look at national history in the light of the concepts either through empirical studies, opening up new venues, or by emphasising how the concepts, as much as the related researches, rise from specific historical contexts.

This introduction encapsulates their reactions and is divided into two parts. The first focuses on the notions of 'school form' and 'grammar of schooling', and briefly presents and summarises the main comments, critiques and extensions suggested by the contributions. Whilst highlighting the strengths of each article, the second part emphasises how the contributions strive to open up new perspectives.
‘School Form’ and ‘Grammar of Schooling’ as Debated

‘School form’, which clearly serves a critical purpose, was first suggested in 1980 by Vincent, a sociologist of education, to then be reconsidered and itemised in several contributions. It aims at capturing the specificities of schooling, from its modern growth in European societies between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, whilst at the same time supporting its duration until today. In order to disclose school form, Vincent analysed J.B. Salle’s texts on the urban schools of the Brothers of Christian schools, as well as their buildings and the school furniture as they developed over time, and also the school textbooks in order to analyse the teaching contents. His conclusion is radical.

For the pupil, to abide by the rules, for the teacher to teach from the principles. This is what seems to characterise school activities and leads us to define a \textit{school form}, in other words a space separated from all others, including places of devotion; a space that is organised so that teachers and pupils can fulfil their duties according to J.B Salle’s words; time that is ruled by a time table that endows order more than efficiency; ... exercises where the conformity to principles is more important than the results; and finally means of maintaining this order. (Vincent, 1980, p. 263, our emphasis)

Later Vincent added that schooling established a written relationship with language and reality that would also be characteristic of school form (Vincent et al, 1994, pp. 32-36; see also Lahire, 2008, who developed this idea). In the theory of school form, transmitting knowledge and know-how are secondary to the question of abiding by the rules. What varied over time were the ways of submitting to the rules. Vincent identified three ways: as said, the first appeared during and sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, the second during the nineteenth, and the third during the twentieth century.

The rule can either be imposed through a form of dressage (hence the importance of signals, positions and gestures), either be justified and interiorised by calling upon the pupil’s ‘reason’ and senses, or furthermore established between peers (in which case it become in the strictest sense a norm). (Vincent, 1980, p. 264)

This enduring feature of school form, even with its variations, implies a vision where the institutional, social and even the economic context hardly interfere with the basic organisation of schools. School form is reduced to being an effect of urbanisation that leads to separating, domesticating and concealing children. Vincent’s conclusion is that schools prevent children ‘from wandering in the streets and ... meddlin with adult activities’ (Vincent et al, 2012, p. 112).

Three contributions discuss and critique the concept of ‘school form’. Rita Hofstetter and Bernard Schneuwly give evidence that the concept, as developed by Vincent, does not integrate dimensions related to the context of schooling, such as the legal basis and the infrastructure, and the strong relation with the state, and particularly with nation-based states. This probably explains why Vincent can talk of the same school form from the sixteenth century onwards, with indeed some variations, focusing on abiding by the rules as its main and almost only goal, in many ways a very restrictive way of describing schooling. On the other hand, bearing in mind that the concept could be an antidote to a romantic vision of schooling generated by some political discourses, supported at the end of their analyses of discourses by the International Bureau of Education (IBE), Hofstetter and Schneuwly maintain that it leads to toning down the idea that schools were places that, by their very essence, were emancipating for children.

‘School form’ is deeply rooted in its original French context, Inés Dussel remarks when she adopts a resolutely international outlook: the methodological approach is set in structuralism, as supported by the dominant French sociological theories. Structure is enforced on people. Dussel also notes that the importance given to writing (‘the basic trait of school form is reliance on writing’) is more a trait of the French school organisation than a basic feature of schooling in general. She thereby highlights what she considers a weak point in the theory of school form.

It is therefore not surprising that André Robert, who analyses the history of French schooling, mentions ‘Vincent’s partially relevant analysis’. He insists on the fact that the theory ‘brings its own contribution to the study of guardianship of the masses in a period when it was no longer possible to exclude them from all forms of slightly formal knowledge’. But by limiting his views to the
procedures (i.e. the rules), Vincent radicalises a Foucauldian perspective. He only takes into
consideration control and guardianship, Robert observes, completely neglecting the other
dimension that Foucault shed light on:

\[\text{The disciplines ... should be taken as making it possible to adjust ... the multiplicity of men and}
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multiplication of production equipment (and thus it means not only 'production' itself, but
\[\text{knowledge and skills production at school, health production in hospitals ... }) \text{(Foucault, 1975,}
\]
p. 221)

As mentioned previously, the metaphor of 'grammar of schooling' was first introduced to explain
why numerous educational reforms in the United States failed. It was further developed in a book
with an emblematic title – *Tinkering towards Utopia. A Century of Public School Reform* (Tyack &
Cuban, 1995). The work suggests that the principles guiding schooling – the notorious grammar of
schooling – are recognisable, and they organise the actors’ behaviour without them having to, or
even being able to, think. The outcome of this is a well-balanced economy for carrying out daily
tasks both for the teachers and for the students. Tyack and Cuban define only a few rules for
grammar of schooling:

\[\text{The basic grammar of schooling, like the shape of classrooms, has remained remarkably stable}
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over the decades. Little has changed in the ways that schools divide time and space, classify
students and allocate them to classrooms, splinter knowledge into 'subjects' and award grades
and 'credits' as evidence of learning. (Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p. 85; see also Tyack & Tobin, 1994,
p. 454)

These rules are thought to have organised schools for the past 150 years. They define not what
actually happens in the classroom, but rather the framework from which teachers and pupils
interact. This framework in turn is the result of deep changes that lead to big shifts within the
system: differentiation in secondary schooling, transformation of contents. However, schools have
survived reforms that tackled the fundamentals described by grammar of schooling despite
numerous attempts to achieve substantial changes based, according to Tyack and Cuban, on an
ahistorical view of schooling:

\[\text{Better schooling will result in the future – as it has in the past and does now – chiefly from the}
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steady, reflective efforts of practitioners who work in the schools and from the contributions of
parents and citizens who support (while they criticize) public education ... The hold of traditional
practices on teachers and students is strong, often with good reasons. (1995, p. 134)

Grammar of schooling therefore does not reveal the impossibility of achieving reforms; rather, it
shows the need to progressively transform schooling through the actors themselves. Reforming
schools 'is much more difficult and gradual than many reformers suspect, particularly those who
believe it is possible – even necessary – to change everything at once, so interconnected are the
strands of schooling' (Tyack & Tobin, 1994, p. 478). Schooling is considered as a 'cultural
construction' in which everything holds together and forms what is considered 'a real school'
(1994, p. 478). They thereby follow conceptions of schooling that assert that schools fashion a
genuine culture that is relatively independent, and that is not functionally connected to society
(Julia, 1995; Chervel, 1998). 'Schools as institutions have structures, cultures, and history. David
Tyack and I called these patterns grammar of schooling,' Cuban (2013, p. 14) adds in his most recent
book.

Readings of grammar of schooling by the contributors of this volume differ. On one side,
there is an understanding of this theory as a long-standing form of implementation of public
education for all with its obstacles, difficulties and contradictions. On the other hand, there is an
interpretation of grammar of schooling as a means of stressing disciplining procedures of
submission.

Hofstetter and Schneuwly emphasise that the theory of grammar of schooling does indeed
define the workplace of teachers and the activities of students, but it does appear barely connected
to the social and, more largely still, to the political context.[4] Describing the pragmatic approach
to school reforms adopted by the actors of the IBE, Hofstetter and Schneuwly highlight an
implementation, before its time, of the idea of 'tinkering' contained in grammar of schooling. This
particular grammar, as repeatedly stated by the theoreticians, offers numerous possibilities for
transformation, albeit slow, but nevertheless continuous and real.

As for Dussel, she considers that the founders of grammar of schooling have not drawn on all
the consequences of their metaphor: grammar should not only describe the rules that shape the
framework of the actors' actions, but should also contain explicit rules explaining the production of
these actions. She challenges the fact that grammar of schooling helps understand the necessary
adaptations of school organisation to the different local contexts, which constitutes in her eyes a
serious limitation. Furthermore, she affirms that focusing only on school contents leads to
neglecting the educational dimension, which, referring to Ferdinand Buisson, the French school
reformer, Dussel sees as the heart of the school enterprise. Robert puts forward a similar
observation when stating that all efforts to reform the educational system aiming for more
democracy are counteracted by the 'traditional grammar of schooling', thereby also ascribing a
mainly conservative purpose to the concept.

Based on previous works carried out within their research team, Marc Depaepe and Karen
Hulstaert instantly isolate two grammars: grammar of schooling and grammar of
educationalisation. They support the idea that 'colonial educational historiography, even more
sharply than western educational historiography, exposes the systemic faults and paradoxes of
western modernisation and the associated educationalisation'. Through several examples provided
by the analysis of schools in the Belgian colonies, they demonstrate that the same grammar of
schooling is used in the Belgian context and in the Belgian colonies – 'the almost uniform complex
of actions with the objective of forming and disciplining the students or pupils' – completed by a
grammar of educationalisation – 'the progressive institutionalisation, structuring, and isolation of
the life world of the child' – that aims at moralising children and making them submissive.

Schooling is therefore described as an educational device guided by the two grammars, which is
furthermore reinforced by the colonial context: 'What was central, inevitably, was submission by
means of discipline and regimentation, often on the verge of blind drill.'

Stepping Beyond in Order to Grasp the Evolution of Mass Schooling

After discussing 'school form' and 'grammar of schooling', the authors of the current volume open
up theoretical and empirical horizons that help capture other dimensions of mass schooling. They
do so by setting off on different tracks.

Grounded in a theoretical approach illustrated by empirical evidence, Dussel observes what
she considers to be the weaknesses of the theoretical propositions supported by 'school form' and
'grammar of schooling'. According to her, these propositions do not take into consideration three
essential dimensions: (1) the actors of schooling; (2) the diversity of educational systems; (3) the
educational dimensions. As a starter, Dussel suggests a theoretical alternative with the concept of
'educational culture', with particular reference to Julia (1995; see also Rockwell, 2009). This concept
includes the dimensions that it considers to be crucial – of actors, diversity and education. Dussel,
however, considers that the concept is not sufficiently operational to concretely grasp educational
structures and their transformations. She therefore suggests turning to an approach that sets actors
(that can be objects) within their networks – in other words, Latour's actor-network theory.
According to her, this will help understand schooling as connectedness, as an 'organisation of
disparate artefacts and subjects'. Dussel gives an example of an inquiry set in this theoretical
framework: the analysis of 'school desks': how were they introduced into schools? As a result of
what actions? Who decided to implement them? What are they actually? How do they evolve?
Which actors decide their shape and use? Through what means? Schooling is thereby described as a
set of disparate connections which are continually renovated, and that take on different meanings
according to the context (as evidence of possible different meanings, she also gives the example of
school uniforms). In her approach, a global perspective, contrary to what is sustained in certain
theories, does not structure schooling in itself, in the same way that universalism is not inherent to
schooling although the actors can mention it.

Universalism is precisely at the heart of Robert's considerations elaborated from a
presentation of the French history of mass schooling. He distinguishes three phases. The first, from
1870 to 1940, corresponds to the teacher state and conquering schooling. Universalism plays a
dominant role as an ideology and a metanarrative referring to the revolution, to enlightenment and to democracy. It is in the name of universalism that schools first follow the purpose of educating the people – and civilising the colonies – according to moral and civic values. The second phase, from 1945 to 1975, is characterised by the instrumentation of schooling by economy. At the same time, the non-equalitarian feature of schooling is more and more questioned and the Universalist ideology is strongly contested with the emancipation of the colonies and large protest movements in society. During the third phase, from 1980 to 2000, schooling falls under the control of a managerial ideology, and becomes more and more unaware of the direction it should follow.

Robert describes two possible attitudes regarding the current situation. The first is the one sustained by supporters of the theory of school form, and is close to that of postmodernists (Lyotard, 1979). They stress that schools control students, that adults have a relationship of power over children, and that a Universalist ideological metanarrative is still present. As a matter of fact they recommend, as a last resort, the perspective of de-schooling as supported by Illich (1971). The other attitude is supported by actors who, while admitting certain critiques, suggest an alternative pathway: ‘coherent pluralism’ (Fabre, 2003) or a ‘new open universalism’ (Forquin, 1991). And, within the Foucauldian framework and school form, Robert indicates that Foucault himself suggests for schools ‘possible encounters which “affect students without alienating them”, evoking something like a true “knowledge eroticism”’.

Depaepe and Hulstaert use colonial domination in order to observe beyond it, like looking through a magnifying mirror at power games inside schools and how they are reinforced in society. Within the context of the Belgian colonialism, transferring grammar of schooling and grammar of educationalisation takes on a specific form in as much as schooling takes place exclusively at primary level, by missionaries, whilst shutting the colonised population in its own culture and in its own country. From the 1950s, this restrictive policy was questioned. Parsimoniously, with strict control over people, opportunities of further education were offered to the ‘évolués’ [the more ‘evolved’], which, according to the authors, nevertheless ‘could not prevent the emergence of some non-intended side effects, like critical knowledge (e.g. by gaining a better insight into the mystification and mythologising processes that covered the rhetoric and hypocrisy of the colonial and postcolonial educational policies)’. The analysis of Belgian schooling during the colonial period provides evidence that the effects went well beyond the post-colonial period, since the country’s elite was tainted by a deep hybrid culture. This involves a new research methodology. Depaepe and Hulstaert therefore suggest undertaking case studies focusing on the locations where the contact between colonial and indigenous cultures is at its peak, leading to research based on archives complemented by an anthropological inquiry. The authors assert that this will consequentially show that concepts such as grammar of schooling are too limited to capture phenomena, since schooling is addressed from a hybrid cultural context that prevents grasping the grammar of schooling. Depaepe and Hulstaert then address the issue of the relationship between historical researchers and conceptual tools.

Hofstetter and Schneuwly adopt a more empirical approach when addressing mass schooling and thereby put the concepts discussed in this volume into perspective. They observe through a magnifying glass the place, between many, where generalisation, differentiation and adaptation of the principles of mass schooling were discussed and conceptualised from 1925 until 1968 – namely, the International Bureau of Education (IBE). Representatives of numerous countries – almost a hundred in the 1960s, including by that time decolonised countries from the South – carried out comparative studies to collectively elaborate what was called a ‘chart of worldwide aspirations for education’. The chart is comprised of recommendations that the signatories committed themselves to implementing; it indicates how the diffusion of mass schooling became a common worldwide enterprise, encouraged by what can be qualified as humanist values, to take on the shape of schooling as it emerged at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, whilst continually developing and adapting from the point of view of structures and contents. The originality of the IBE’s work is that it seems to have brought about conciliation between what could seem as paradoxical needs, at the same time local and global, involving the State and aiming at individuals, scientific and activist, national and international. Hofstetter and Schneuwly’s study highlights the necessity of arriving at a definition of schooling that includes, from the beginning, the legal and administrative context, and infrastructures that deeply determine the organisation of schooling described by grammar of schooling and school form.
The contributions come to a close with Martin Lawn’s analysis that tackles, by using the notion of ‘system’, the issue of the relationships between mass schooling and the state that were in the background of all the previous contributions. Does the English educational system represent a system clearly connected to the state? In order to answer this question, Lawn pays attention to the discourse of acknowledged English political actors and educational administrative personnel. He shows how, during the first phase, before World War II, these protagonists do indeed mention the existence of a system while at the same time insisting on the wide range of situations and the necessary freedom of local authorities. Comprehensiveness is not guaranteed by common rules and norms, but by inspectors controlling and giving accounts of the schools’ results. The actors themselves ask whether this can qualify as a system. The second phase starts with the democratic reform just after World War II. The protagonists of this reform observe the absence of a true system, leading them to affirm that the English education was disorganised, chaotic and unjust: a ‘systemless system of education’, one of them claims. And for the first time, the ‘system’ is put under the control of the ministry without questioning, however, local authorities or the importance of teachers’ unions. As Lawn states, ‘Now service, partnership, decentralisation and democratic appeared as descriptive and analytical terms’ (p. 236). The concern with establishing a unified system is nevertheless marginal. This helps understand the last phase of the evolution of the educational ‘system’ that Lawn qualifies as ‘virtual’. It is governed by masses of data that enable the performances of 8 million students in 21,000 schools to be controlled. ‘Local authorities have become clearinghouses, nodal points in the flow of data to and from the centre and local schools,’ Lawn concludes. The ‘systemless system’ is organised not through administrative responsibilities clearly defined according to rules and procedures, but by ‘change levers and drivers’, thereby prolonging on a general level what was going on at a local level. ‘The system has become a business experiment.’

Openings

The contributions have traced the evolution of mass schooling from different perspectives: by critically discussing various approaches that describe the phenomenon; by tracking the main phases of this evolution in one country in particular – France; by observing in detail the founding of schooling in a colonial context – Congo; by analysing the policy of disseminating and developing educational systems at a global level through an international organisation – the IBE; and by capturing the evolution of schooling through the tensions occurring between local authorities and state-centred approaches such as in England. All the contributions address the issues of school form and grammar of schooling, indicating their potential and at the same time their limitations. Because these concepts emphasise internal features of schooling – and this is one of their strengths – they might also make it more difficult to grasp the numerous semantic spin-offs according to chronological and cultural contexts, the adaptations made as a result of local and regional implementations, the interpretations and adjustments suggested by actors in the field of education. As a result, schooling stands out as a machine for ruling, controlling and monitoring. The concept of school form is built on this idea. Grammar of schooling, although the authors initially suggested it with a differentiated purpose, is in a certain way a victim of the metaphor of ‘grammar’ that suggests a rigid, unalterable, homogeneous understanding. This is strengthened when the concepts are naturalised and used, as is often the case, out of the historical context that bestowed their original meaning.

These are precisely the risks that the contributions of the current volume highlight while, at the same time, they address them from a historical perspective. They emphasise national, regional and local adaptations. They question homogeneous-like constitutive metanarratives with cutting protestations. They insist on hybrid devices where contrasted cultures confront each other. They show the opportunities for the development of systems from the point of view of organisation and contents. They put forward the complex dialogic continuity and change of a systemless system. Actually, all this could even lead to questioning whether the term ‘mass schooling’ does not deeply participate in itself in homogenising what is deeply diversified (Schriewer, 2004).

The contributions of this volume take a perspective that at times suggests controlling and monitoring, and at other times suggests the opportunities of transformation and adjustment.
operated by the actors in the schooling business. Admitting himself that he had favoured the view of schooling as a means for controlling and regulating, Hamilton comes back to the dialectic in *Towards a Theory of Schooling* (1989), and suggests the following conclusion, that we take on board:

Schooling is simultaneously a site of social regulation and a site of social redefinition. ... I have tried to show that this apparent contradiction can be resolved if teachers and learners are acknowledge to be, at one and the same time, both the social target of schooling and the active medium through which that target can be reached. If a curriculum is to be effective, the active engagement of teachers and learners is required. Yet, in their activity, teachers and learners also have a reactive effect upon the curriculum (and beyond). Regulation and redefinition are not, therefore, mutually exclusive outcomes. They are inseparable aspects of the same social process.

(Hamilton, 1989, p. 154)

Notes

[1] Nicole Rege Colet-Johnson translated this introduction. Translating means always mediating between different cultures. We thank Nicole for having efficiently mediated between French and English.

[2] Sometimes authors use the term ‘mass education’ without distinction. Although descriptive, this term encompasses important theoretical assumptions that stand out clearly when translating the wording into other languages. It would not be appropriate to talk about ‘scolarisations des masses’, and the translation criterion is even trickier in German. We will stick to the term ‘mass schooling’, bearing in mind the descriptive meaning we have just suggested.

[3] Two symposia were organised by the authors of this introduction so as to put the authors in contact with each other. The first was organised during the 33rd conference of the International Standing Conference for the History of Education in 2011 at San Luis de Potosí, and the second during the European Conference for Educational Research of the European Educational Research Association in 2012 at Cadiz.

[4] Plank, in one of the first reviews of Tyack and Cuban’s (1995) book, makes a similar remark: ‘At the same time, however, those engaged in the debate must acknowledge that public education in the United States involves not only “helping students to learn better” but also the allocation of billions of dollars, the distribution of opportunities and rewards across individual and groups, the respective “rights” of parents and professionals, and the definition and affirmation of legitimate knowledge’ (Plank, 1996, p. 484).

References


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**Introduction**


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