

ROUTLEDGE RESEARCH IN INTERNATIONAL AND  
COMPARATIVE EDUCATION

# Education and the State

International perspectives on a changing  
relationship

Edited by  
Carla Aubry, Michael Geiss,  
Veronika Magyar-Haas and  
Jürgen Oelkers



---

# Education and the State

---

In most countries in the world, school education is the business of the state. Even if forms and functions differ, the imparting of elementary knowledge is universally regarded as a public function. Yet this is neither self-evident nor self-explanatory. The degree of involvement of state agencies in the supervision, financing and organization of the school system sometimes varies so much that the usual assumption of a common understanding of 'the state' seems to be an illusion.

Making international comparisons and focusing strongly on the historical conditions of the current form of state education, this volume paints a nuanced picture of how the relationship between 'education' and 'state' has been and is conceptualized. Insights into this relationship are gained by considering and analysing both specific processes such as financing and bureaucracy; and conceptual ideas, for example community, authority and political utopias. The book presents comparative studies and analyses of regional and local conditions, arguing that the history of each country or region is critical to educational success, and the relationship between the education and the state must be reconsidered, both internationally and historically, in order to be of actual conceptual value.

*Education and the State* presents a broad variety of approaches and examples that provide a significant contribution to the understanding of the relationship between education and the state. It will be of key value to academics and researchers in the fields of the history of education, the politics of education, and educational administration.

**Carla Aubry** is Lecturer in Education, Psychology and Didactics at Pädagogische Maturitätsschule in Kreuzlingen, Switzerland.

**Michael Geiss** is Researcher and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Vocational Education at the Institute of Education, University of Zurich, Switzerland.

**Veronika Magyar-Haas** is Researcher and Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Social Pedagogy at the Institute of Education, University of Zurich, Switzerland.

**Jürgen Oelkers** is Emeritus Professor of General Pedagogy at the Institute of Education, University of Zurich, Switzerland.

---

## Routledge Research in International and Comparative Education

---

This is a series that offers a global platform to engage scholars in continuous academic debate on key challenges and the latest thinking on issues in the fast-growing field of International and Comparative Education.

Books in the series include:

**Teaching in Primary Schools in China and India**

Contexts of learning

*Nirmala Rao, Emma Pearson and Kai-ming Cheng with Margaret Taplin*

**A History of Higher Education Exchange**

China and America

*Teresa Brawner Bevis*

**National Identity and Educational Reform**

Contested classrooms

*Elizabeth Anderson Worden*

**Citizenship Education around the World**

Local contexts and global possibilities

Edited by John E. Petrovic and Aaron M. Kuntz

**Children's Voices**

Studies of interethnic conflict and violence in European schools

*Edited by Mateja Sedmak, Zorana Medari and Sarah Walker*

**Culture, Transnational Education and Thinking**

Case studies in global schooling

*Niranjan Casinader*

**The Changing Landscape of International Schooling**

Implications for theory and practice

*Tristan Bunnell*

**Leading and Managing Indigenous Education in the Postcolonial World**

*Zane Ma Rhea*

**Multi-campus University Systems**

Africa and the Kenyan experience

*Ishmael I. Munene*

**Education and the State**

International perspectives on a changing relationship

*Edited by Carla Aubry, Michael Geiss, Veronika Magyar-Haas and Jürgen Oelkers*

---

# Education and the State

---

International perspectives on a  
changing relationship

Edited by  
Carla Aubry, Michael Geiss,  
Veronika Magyar-Haas and  
Jürgen Oelkers

First published 2015  
by Routledge  
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge  
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business*

© 2015 C. Aubry, M. Geiss, V. Magyar-Haas and J. Oelkers

The right of the editors to be identified as the authors of the editorial material, and of the authors for their individual chapters, has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilized in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

Education and the state: international perspectives on a changing relationship/edited by Carla Aubry, Michael Geiss, Veronika Magyar-Haas and Jürgen Oelkers.

pages cm – (Routledge research in international and comparative education)

1. Education and state – Cross-cultural studies. 2. Education and state – History – Cross-cultural studies. 3. Education – Economic aspects – Cross-cultural studies. 4. Comparative education. I. Aubry, Carla, 1967–

LC71.E2885 2014

379 – dc23

2014010288

ISBN: 978-1-138-77785-9 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-77238-7 (ebk)

Typeset in Bembo

by Florence Production Ltd, Stoodleigh, Devon, UK

---

# Contents

---

*List of contributors*

vii

## **PART I**

### **Introduction**

**I**

- 1 Bringing education back in: international perspectives on the relationship between state, culture and society 3  
CARLA AUBRY, MICHAEL GEISS, VERONIKA MAGYAR-HAAS  
AND JÜRGEN OELKERS

## **PART 2**

### **Comparing school systems**

**15**

- 2 The national state, the local and the growth of mass schooling: history lessons from England, France and the United States 17  
MIRIAM COHEN
- 3 State intervention in backward countries: some case studies of state education systems in Hispanic America (c.1870–1920) 39  
GABRIELA OSSENBACH

## **PART 3**

### **Financing education**

**59**

- 4 The provision of education and the state: from equity to more equality 61  
CARLA AUBRY
- 5 State education, crisis and austerity: a historical analysis through the lens of the Kondratiev cycles 78  
VINCENT CARPENTIER

**PART 4****Educational administration 103**

- 6 To write like a bureaucrat: educational administration as a cultural phenomenon 105  
MICHAEL GEISS
- 7 Bureaucratizing from the bottom up: the centralization of school discipline policy in the United States 121  
JUDITH KAFKA
- 8 The state of education in the States: the US Department of Education and the evolving federal role in American school policy 138  
PATRICK MCGUINN
- 9 'Governing by numbers': social work in the age of the regulatory state 159  
HOLGER ZIEGLER

**PART 5****Power, myths of community and Utopia 169**

- 10 'Among School Children': the churches, politics and Irish schooling, 1830–1930 171  
DEIRDRE RAFTERY
- 11 Make the nation safe for mass society: debates about propaganda and education in the United States in the twentieth century 178  
NORBERT GRUBE
- 12 Conceptualizations of dignity and exposure in critiques of community: implications for ethics and educational theory in the work of Plessner and Nancy 196  
VERONIKA MAGYAR-HAAS
- 13 'Taking the path of least resistance': expulsions from Soviet schools in the Stalinist 1930s 219  
E. THOMAS EWING
- 14 Utopia, state and democracy 234  
JÜRGEN OELKERS
- Index* 258

---

# Contributors

---

**Carla Aubry** worked as Research Assistant at the Institute of Education at the University of Zurich, Switzerland from 2006 to 2012. She is currently Lecturer in Education, Psychology and Didactics at Pädagogische Maturitätsschule in Kreuzlingen, Switzerland.

**Vincent Carpentier** is Reader in History of Education at the Institute of Education, University of London, UK.

**Miriam Cohen**, Evalyn Clark Professor of History at Vassar College, USA, is completing a manuscript with Michael Hanagan on the comparative history of the welfare state in England, France and the United States, 1870–1950. She has published numerous articles dealing with various aspects of this work. She is also writing a biography of American social welfare activist Julia Lathrop for the ‘Lives of American Women’ biography series, edited by Carol Berkin, forthcoming from Westview Press.

**E. Thomas Ewing** is Professor of History and Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences at Virginia Tech, in Blacksburg, Virginia, USA.

**Michael Geiss** is currently Researcher and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Vocational Education and Economy at the Institute of Education, University of Zurich, Switzerland. From 2008 to 2012 he worked as a research assistant at the Institute of Education at the University of Zurich. In 2013 he was holder of a scholarship from the Forschungskredit of the University of Zurich.

**Norbert Grube** is Lecturer at the Centre for School History, Zurich University of Teacher Education, Switzerland.

**Judith Kafka** is an Associate Professor of Educational Policy and History of Education at Baruch College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), USA. She is the author of *The History of ‘Zero Tolerance’ in American Public Schooling* (2011) and her work has appeared in a range of journals, including *History of Education Quarterly* and *Teachers College Record*.



**Veronika Magyar-Haas** has been Researcher and Assistant Lecturer at the Institute of Education, University of Zurich, Switzerland since 2008, initially in the Department of General Education, currently (since August 2012) in the Department of Social Pedagogy. She had a research scholarship from the German Research Foundation (DFG) from 2005 to 2008.

**Patrick McGuinn** is Associate Professor of Political Science and Education and Chair of the Political Science Department at Drew University, USA. His first book, *No Child Left Behind and the Transformation of Federal Education Policy, 1965–2005* (2006) was honoured as a *Choice* outstanding academic title. He is also the editor (with Paul Manna) of *Education Governance for the 21st Century: Overcoming the Structural Barriers to School Reform* (2013).

**Jürgen Oelkers** is Professor Emeritus at the Institute of Education, University of Zurich, Switzerland. He held the Chair of General Education from 1999 to 2012.

**Gabriela Ossenbach** is Full Professor of Contemporary History of Education at the National University of Distance Education (UNED), Madrid, Spain. Her main research areas are the history of educational systems and school textbooks in Latin America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She is currently the Director of the MANES Research Centre, based in the UNED, dedicated to the study and preservation of textbooks of Spain, Portugal, and Latin America in the last two centuries.

**Deirdre Raftery**, based at University College Dublin, Ireland, is the author of, among others, *Gender Balance and Gender Bias in Education: International Perspectives* (2010); *History of Education: Themes and Perspectives* (2013); and *Educating Ireland: Schooling and Social Change, 1700–2000* (2014). She was also joint editor of *History of Education* (2008–2013), and has been Visiting Research Fellow, University of Oxford (2010) and Visiting Research Scholar, University of La Trobe, Australia (2014).

**Holger Ziegler** is currently Professor of Social Work at the Faculty of Education, Bielefeld University, Germany. He was Member of the Research Training Group Youth Welfare and Social Services in Transition of the German Research Foundation (2000–2003), Fellow at the Department of Criminology at Keele University, UK (2003) and Assistant Professor of Social Pedagogy at Westfälische Wilhelms University Münster, Germany.

## Part I

---

# Introduction

---

This page intentionally left blank

# Bringing education back in

## International perspectives on the relationship between state, culture and society

*Carla Aubry, Michael Geiss,  
Veronika Magyar-Haas and Jürgen Oelkers*

---

In the opinion of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) in Paris, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics in Montreal, and the World Bank in Washington, the nation state is the central organizational unit for modern education systems. State-organized education systems that display historically developed, regional characteristics can only be compared by abstracting their distinctive features in order to identify criteria that can serve as measurement variables. These parameters, used as the basis for reports about the performance of the corresponding systems, are established independently of national peculiarities (OECD/UNESCO, 2002). The assumption is that these international performance tests will provide information aimed at improving schools on a national level, as well as increasing the equality of opportunities, and encouraging more efficient utilization of available funds.

This, however, ignores what *state education* actually means. The concept of state organization of education provides an analytical backdrop, but the description of the relationship between education and the state still needs to be corroborated with both international and historical evidence in order to be of actual conceptual value. The goal must be to consider the distinctive features of the corresponding educational relationships both politically and theoretically. In other words, the diversities of education, rather than the state (Evans *et al.*, 1985), have to be brought back in.

In addition to the focus on the state education system, the major international comparative studies rely on numerous other assumptions, based on a supra-national catalogue of criteria. Therefore, the idea of global ‘governance’ follows a specific model of state-organized educational systems. Behind this is Max Weber’s bureaucracy theory, which has also attracted considerable attention in international debate (Holton and Turner, 1989; Lehmann and Roth, 1995; Swedberg, 1998; Turner, 2000). According to Weber (2005), ‘bureaucracy’ is tied to a hierarchy, functioning procedures, and the rational balancing of objectives (pp. 160, 721). The hierarchy stretches from the centre to the periphery, the procedures are respected, and the decrees have consequences. In other words, the system responds to the requirements of the top echelons of the hierarchy. National, regional or local specificities are not considered in

this approach. Although forms of administration other than bureaucracy were also considered by Weber for classification, these seem to have been lost on his readers. Thus the state aspect seems to be present as soon as bureaucratic procedures are implemented.

International comparative studies further assume that school education represents an investment in the human capital of a society. The lack of consideration given to national specifics was shown by the OECD's many years of criticism of what it considered insufficient tertiary education in Switzerland. It was only because of rampant youth unemployment in Southern Europe that the specificities of the Swiss vocational education system were increasingly acknowledged and its dual education system appreciated (UNESCO, 2012). The hegemonic norming of the various definitions of education can also be seen in state attempts at standardization during the nineteenth century (see, for example, Crotti, 2008; Binder and Boser, 2011). The concept of education is deconstructed into various factors and skills that can be measured and tested.

Even though attempts at standardization have a long history, national education systems have maintained their cultural specificities to a far greater extent than they have allowed themselves to be globalized (Aubry and Westberg, 2012). The first things to be globalized are the discourses and language of experts, from which no direct assumptions can be made about the various education systems. Standards can be seen as normative instruments of power, strengthening the inter- and intra-national competition between education systems. Programmes for the reform of national education systems on the basis of competition results are thus nothing more than guidelines, and cannot be implemented directly. Instead, historically developed levels of implementation must be observed, varying by country, federal state, canton or municipality. It should be noted that this is rarely a smooth process, and that it inevitably involves adaptations to national education systems. The objectives established at the outset have only been achieved in a limited number of cases. The less the specificities of an educational system are taken into consideration, the less likely it is that the reforms will achieve their goals.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many modern states developed an extensive educational monopoly in the form of *state schools*. While this occurred at varying speeds, and major local differences existed, certain similarities cannot be ignored. The basis of the metaphorical 'educational monopoly' was the *compulsory education* established by each state in the form of laws obliging all parents to send their children to school. A homogenizing view of various schools and school systems is helped by a public perception that the same service can be provided everywhere. This assumption is encouraged by international organizations. It is also aided by the concept of national curricula, which have thus far contained similar objectives and been comparable in their content and structure. The underlying premises here are that everyone should learn to read, and that understanding higher mathematical operations requires a basic comprehension of calculation.

Compulsory education and similar curricula do not mean, however, that education is a closed system. Schools do not escape the influence of globalization, but they are often the centres of a national or local community, underpinning local knowledge rather than simply following a general pedagogical or economic theory. They are culturally and historically specific, and are therefore far from being easily comparable units.

Now, however, the state organization of education is taken for granted not only in the current debate on educational policy, but also increasingly in pedagogical research. The genesis of a state education system between the French Revolution (Stübig, 1974; Julia, 1981; Harten, 1990; Herrmann and Oelkers, 1990), Prussian reforms (Heinemann, 1974) and the various European culture wars (Lamberti, 1986; Abels, 1996; Stadler, 1996; Maier, 2000), and in the period following the American Civil War (Van Overbeck, 2008), has always determined the classifications of educational history. Once a national education system had been established in the nineteenth century, there was virtually no further analysis of the form that the relationship between education and the state should take.

This is why, even though the development of a state education system is generally seen as the major caesura in the history of education, and educational policy debates treat the state organization of education systems as self-evident, paradoxically little can be said about the form and the development of the pedagogical aspects of this state monopoly. Even in more recent research, little is revealed about the development of the various state educational monopolies, their functionality and, in particular, their public acceptance.

National and local differences can only be explained historically. Future research must engage with the subject without prematurely attempting to find commonalities in cases where the differences are actually more significant. These differences can be seen in the research itself. German-speaking educational history, much like its French counterpart, overwhelmingly emphasizes the central role of the nation state, while American studies have a more regional focus.

The idea of the state, and of state organization of education, forms a common basis without actually explaining what it entails. What happens when education is publicly controlled? Which developments, issues and challenges can be traced, differentiated or even compared in the individual countries? It is difficult to form a general overview due to conceptual blind spots and the diverging interpretations of 'education', the 'state', and the relationship between them.

Historical structural analyses of the various educational systems also required conceptual considerations in order to be able to suitably describe and explain the long-term changes in the relationship between education, the state and society. The focus of this interest was the changing relationship between the educational system and the state, the object of much political dispute (Nique, 1990; Nique and Lelièvre, 1993), as well as the relationship between discipline

and mobilization through the education system (Müller, 1977; Jeismann, 1989; Kuhlemann, 1992). The specificity of the national and local development of educational systems was explained using concepts of system formation (Müller and Zymek, 1987), and this German concept was presented for international discussion (Müller *et al.*, 1987). Later, pedagogical and educational policy discussions were also brought into the analysis in Germany (Apel *et al.*, 2001) and the state perspective was expanded to include inter- and/or intra-national aspects (Fuchs, 2004; Zymek, 2009).

In contrast to the German-speaking history of education, the discussion of the relationship between the state and education has developed differently in the English-speaking world. This is partly the result of the relevant national characteristics. The American history of education has produced a number of detailed studies (Beadie, 2010; Goldin and Katz, 2008; Kaestle and Vinovskis, 1980; Lindert and Go, 2010; Margo, 1990; Shipps, 2006), but has also tried for several decades to follow new conceptual paths, in response to the poorly developed central state structures and excessive bureaucracy in the educational system. The social history of the administrators (Tyack, 1976), the historical relationship between competition and bureaucratization (Labaree, 1988), or the analysis of the failure of state-led education reforms (Tyack and Cuban, 1995), provide the analytical material needed to create a historical image of the relationship between education and the state, without assuming a strong central power.

Other attempts to elucidate the relationship between the state and education come from Great Britain. The history of education in that country has focused on the complex relationship between 'private and public education', whereby the generalized use of both terms requires caution due to their English specificity (Aldrich, 2004; Shroobree, 1988; West, 1975). West (1994) demonstrates that, following the Foster Act of 1870, the state system of education in Great Britain was superimposed over successful private efforts, thereby suppressing an emerging and increasingly robust structure of private, voluntary and competitive education funded by families, churches and charities. In contrast, Green (1990) undertook an international comparison of state education, focusing on the development and implementation of national education systems in England, France, Prussia and the United States. Even in this case, however, national specificities, which for England meant a significantly delayed nationalization process in comparison to the rest of Europe, determined the interest and focus of the study.

The importance attributed to the state in different research projects cannot be established solely according to national differences. If the state is seen as a welfare state and as a mutually supportive group (Castel, 2003), it takes on a certain importance in terms of the handling of social issues and therefore the education system. Consequently, the social state acts more as a guarantor, as both a structural opportunity and a challenge, charged with reducing social and material uncertainties and educational inequalities. With the propagation

of a neoliberal perspective, however, in which the (educational) market is to be freed from state influence, the state is seen as having an entirely different significance. As formulated by Sparke (2006), this approach is accompanied by the 'educational and cultural cultivation of a new kind of self-promoting and self-policing entrepreneurial individualism' (p. 154). In relation to these divergences, it seems essential to consider the political question of the 'us' as well as of the 'social' in a historically and internationally focused study of the relationship between education and the state. It is on the basis of this assessment of the 'us' – in the sense of the conceptualizations of community and society – that differences are established, allegiances are formulated, inclusion and exclusion are determined, and the legitimacy of access to education is negotiated or decided. It is therefore also necessary to ask who has been regarded as belonging or not belonging to the state.

The above critique of the tendency to homogenize nationally and locally differentiated school systems and their varied historical development is not intended as a call for traditional country comparison studies. Nor do we mean to give the impression that, by highlighting local specificities, we wish to disregard the local relevance of global tendencies. The above delineation of diverging national perspectives on the relationship between education and the state is more of a general means of orientation and/or a heuristic framework to be honed or deconstructed in the various contributions. The association of states with specific models would be a reduction that sets the state as an absolute, without considering any further criteria. It is precisely the various economic perspectives and theories of power, administration and community subsumed in this volume that help to encompass and reconstruct the terms 'education' and 'state', and their possible relationships, in all their variety and complexity.

This work is intended to juxtapose the various approaches to the relationship between education and the state found in current research. Only a multi-perspective historical approach can do justice to the heterogeneity, ambiguity and changing nature of this relationship. On the one hand, this uses theoretical concepts whose objectives can only be understood in the context of national, transnational and international political and scholarly debate on the form and function of a state education system. They cannot be considered independently of political and business interests, as they require the consideration of actors, structural necessities, mentalities and/or culture.

This cohesive collection of studies is intended as a *first step* towards a better understanding of the changing relationship between education and the state. Here the focus lies especially on (Western) Europe and America. Even if two contributions (Ossenbach and Rafferty) make reference to colonialism in their historical reconstructions, the book cannot – however necessary this seems – systematically consider the post-colonial states in its reflection on the relationship between education and the state. Individual studies in the context of post-colonial and historical research do engage with the profound changes and discontinuities in the political structures and systems in the colonies, and



reconstruct various forms of state (the ‘minority settler regime’, the ‘bureaucratic-patrimonial state’, and the ‘proconsular autocracy’, see Osterhammel, 1995, pp. 55–77; Mamdani, 1996, pp. 9–34) and modes of exercising power (‘direct’ and ‘indirect rule’; see Mamdani, 1996, pp. 9–34; Eckert, 2006) during colonial rule. The aspect of education, however, seldom attracts attention in this context. Exceptions include Bouche (1991, pp. 243–273) and Osterhammel (1995, pp. 100–111), who shows the extent to which (the withholding of) schooling functioned as an instrument of power, deployed in varying ways in the different colonies. Important issues in these conflicts were the language of instruction and ‘native tradition’ (Osterhammel, 1995, pp. 107ff.): in most colonies the ‘high-culture’ language of the colonizers was used, and the ‘indigenous cultures’ were disregarded in the area of education (Osterhammel, 1995, p. 109; Kerner, 2013, p. 27). In summary, the research does consider education in post-colonial states to some extent, but there has so far been no systematic analysis of the *relationship* between education and the state in this context.

The present book does not provide a complete, new analytical framework in the form of a consistent theory. But it helps us to ask better questions, and shows certain key starting points for a more complex, comprehensive approach, one which takes into account the ambiguities of the matter presented here. We contend that, if an adequate account is to be given of education and the state, *the history of education* as well as *its specific characteristics* in comparison to other state-related issues have to be kept in mind.

Historically, the creation and modification of state educational institutions can be seen as a transformation of state activity. In particular, this will be demonstrated from an administrative and financial point of view. New state responsibilities required regulatory organization and the provision of the corresponding resources. These newly acquired responsibilities and areas of activity led in turn to new problems that had to be dealt with in everyday organization. As a result, state education had to prove itself not only as an ideal, but also in practice.

Comparative presentations of the creation of various national education systems are accompanied by case studies of individual territories, cities and communities, in which processes of nationalization, standardization and centralization/decentralization are retraced in detail. These different approaches complement each other. On the one hand, the degree of abstraction required by a comparative study design may be criticized or called into question. On the other hand, studies on the emergence of national education systems are able to go into much greater detail in terms of source selection and the differentiation of interpretations – but such studies forego the possibilities offered by comparison. The volume includes discussions of the changing relationship between education and the state from the perspective of the history of ideas, as well as depictions stretching over entire periods and specific individual analyses. The historical projects also raise questions applicable to contemporary analyses. One concern here was not to reduce the ‘state’ to the nation state,

or education to schooling. In line with the assumption that theories of the state are barely conceivable without social theory, or that ideas of community, society, solidarity and cohesion are inherent in theories of the state, some contributions deal with concepts of the social, both in theoretical interpretations and in references to state utopias that were explicitly conceived as social utopias.

The contributions of Miriam Cohen and Gabriela Ossenbach take a comparative approach. Cohen (Chapter 2) addresses the relationship between the country, local traditions and mass education in a comparison between England, France and the United States. She identifies significant differences in relation to the centralization/decentralization of school organization and financial autonomy, observing that the ability of the majority to implement changes is always dependent on coalitions at various levels, and that local financing is not necessarily linked to greater inequality between communities. During periods of economic depression, the United States and France reacted by expanding the school system, which was not the case in England.

Ossenbach (Chapter 3) focuses on Latin America between 1870 and 1920, where governments assumed varying degrees of involvement in the creation and control of their national education systems as a result of their histories. Significant factors in this process of nationalization were their colonial past, their economic backwardness in comparison with Western countries, and the influence of the Catholic Church. The study identifies different developments in the individual countries, as well as similarities, such as a shortage of funding on the municipal level. This led to more state involvement and meant that mass schooling could expand as the state gradually took charge of the public school system.

The above contributions, comparative in structure, permit the examination of a few clear developments such as centralization/decentralization (Cohen) and nationalization (Ossenbach). The historical analysis can be even more precise when the focus is on a city or a municipality. Carla Aubry's contribution (Chapter 4) uses the example of the city of Winterthur in Switzerland to demonstrate how the financing of state schools changed during the nineteenth century. Initially still in the hands of the city's citizens, the schools were financed using the revenues from city assets. Not all citizens benefited equally under this system. Over time, the increasingly pronounced influence of the state and efforts to achieve democracy eventually led to equal access. The level of detail of the analysis allows the historical financial focus to be expanded to include the perspectives of political participation and citizenship, and shows how complex the process of centralization/decentralization is.

Vincent Carpentier (Chapter 5) addresses the impact of not only economic backwardness (see Ossenbach) but also economic crises on investments in the educational system. By applying Kondratiev's cyclical theory to comparative educational research, he succeeds in showing how, prior to 1945, crises led to increased state investment in education. It was hoped that this would overcome the said crises, as Cohen demonstrates for the United States and

France. After 1945, however, a change can be seen, especially with the rise of neo-liberalism in the 1970s. During this period, reduced tax revenues led to increasing tension between wealth and public welfare, and financial crises brought a desire for savings in the educational sector.

Michael Geiss (Chapter 6) describes how, in the Grand Duchy of Baden in the second half of the nineteenth century, the educational administration and teachers joined forces in a common ideological project. History does not bear out the dualism of education and administration. Educational bureaucrats acted as 'intellectual doers' who, in their official capacity, sought to implement their ideas on child-rearing, education and the state. Moreover, the teachers, beneficiaries of national standardization, supported the bureaucratization of schools.

Judith Kafka (Chapter 7) deals with local events, examining the bureaucratization of American schools in the twentieth century. Focusing on the creation of formal procedures for the application of school discipline in Los Angeles, she is able to use a wide body of references to demonstrate that the teachers themselves wanted to regulate part of their everyday school experience in a bureaucratic way. Different institutional solutions developed in various districts, and the state then sanctioned the existing concepts at a higher administrative level. This also has implications for the examination of other aspects of educational bureaucratization, which can no longer simply be described as a top-down arrangement.

Patrick McGuinn (Chapter 8) also examines the growth of administration during the twentieth century. The starting point of his analysis is George W. Bush's No Child Left Behind Act, which generated controversy even beyond the United States. McGuinn traces the history of the law and gives a nuanced presentation of the gradual shift towards national responsibilities in the educational system throughout the twentieth century. He demonstrates how surprising the new national responsibilities in the American educational system are, considering the long anti-centralist tradition in this country: for its first thirty years, the US Office of Education had no significant administrative responsibilities. The new educational policy situation created by the NCLB Act can only be accurately assessed in the light of this history.

The problem of evidence-based educational and social policies is addressed by Holger Ziegler (Chapter 9). Focusing on social work in the twentieth century, he reconstructs the changing significance of the state, leading to the birth of the 'regulatory state', which abandons all attempts to increase welfare and assumes purely regulatory functions. A comparison with the analysis of changes after 1970 (see Carpentier) is productive. In this process, as Ziegler points out, the managerial approach replaces trust in professionals with organizational forms of government, which can be subsumed in the term 'management by measurement'.

Deirdre Raftery (Chapter 10) examines the distinctive development of the Irish school system under the conditions of British foreign rule. The focus is

on the shifts towards pluralistic schooling in a country whose history has always been strongly marked by religious conflicts. Central structural frameworks in the educational system were determined by denominational differences for longer than in other countries. In the early twentieth century, the Catholic Church had the support of the population, as in Latin America (see Ossenbach), and had access to relevant personnel. Only now is the tendency towards a secular system gaining ground.

Norbert Grube's contribution (Chapter 11) considers the relationship between political propaganda and education. Using the opinions and approaches of scholars in communication studies, intellectuals and politicians in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century, he casts light on the construction of national homogeneity. In the historical context of the perceived threats of mass society, the two world wars, economic and social crises and uncertainty, he sees government propaganda as important for the creation of national coherence. Using a wealth of material, Grube demonstrates the extent to which propaganda must be seen as a means of educating mass society, and shows how American experts both discuss public opinion from a pedagogical perspective and make use of statistical data.

The relationship between the state and education is expanded to include a utopian aspect in the contribution of Jürgen Oelkers (Chapter 14). From the perspective of the history of ideas, covering different eras and using a wide range of sources, he shows how the genre of utopian narrative can be overwhelmingly broad if the classic Morus–Campanella–Bacon construction is not used as a limiting criterion. By means of utopian ideas from the philosophy of Ancient Greece, the Middle Ages and the modern era, Oelkers reconstructs the way in which the various utopias were linked to ideas of improved education. Democracy is seen not as a utopia, but rather as an experienced reality capable of convincing even its harshest critics.

However, as argued by Veronika Magyar-Haas (Chapter 12), state utopias can also be linked with community utopias, which leave little room for differences and the establishment of (inter)personal boundaries. Beginning with the social theory and community critique of Helmuth Plessner in the 1920s, and considering the 'left-Heideggerian' deconstructivist community theories of Jean-Luc Nancy, she demonstrates the possibility of theoretically and analytically reconsidering the 'limits of the community' beyond the context of Plessner's and Nancy's time. She discusses critiques of community and their implications for educational theory, going beyond the scholastic aspect of the term 'education' to include the notion of dignity as an objective of educational theory – but one which does not necessarily have explicitly normative connotations.

The fact that utopias do not simply become reality is hardly surprising. Nonetheless, E. Thomas Ewing (Chapter 13) demonstrates that the grim realities – for example, those of the communist social vision in Stalinist education – are not so easy to assess either. Using the example of the debates about exclusions from school, he reconstructs how, under Stalinism, dictatorial power

led to the disciplining of students and teachers. 'Inclusive' discipline, as he explains, proved a successful alternative to exclusions.

This book presents a variety of elements, approaches and theses that provide a significant contribution to the understanding of the relationship between education and the state. The various scholarly cultures, experiential backgrounds, disciplinary contexts and objects of research allow readers to examine their own academic perspectives and reflect on individual approaches in the light of research on related topics. There is ample potential here for further research on the changing relationship between education and the state: on the one hand, these perspectives can be compared, in order to identify the differences and similarities between them, and on the other hand, their areas of focus can be considered across different time periods, objects of examination and theoretical contexts. Financing, bureaucracy, community, authority and utopia can be shown to be related fields that may be used to further examine and research the relationship between the state and education.

## References

- Abels, K., 1996. Lesebuch und nationale Bildung im Badischen Kulturkampf. *Rottenburger Jahrbuch für Kirchengeschichte*, 15, pp. 43–64.
- Aldrich, R. (ed.), 2004. *Public or Private Education? Lessons from History*. London, Portland, OR: Woburn Press.
- Apel, H.J., Kemnitz, H. and Sandfuchs, U. (eds), 2001. *Das Öffentliche Bildungswesen. Historische Entwicklung, Gesellschaftliche Funktionen, Pädagogischer Streit*. Bad Heilbrunn: Klinkhardt.
- Aubry, C. and Westberg, J. (eds), 2012. *History of Schooling. Politics and Local Practice*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.
- Beadie, N., 2010. *Education and the Creation of Capital in the Early American Republic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Binder, U. and Boser, L., 2011. Die Metrisierung der Pädagogik und die Pädagogisierung des Meters. Wie Pädagogik modernisiert wird. *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, 57(1), pp. 19–36.
- Bouche, D., 1991. *Histoire de la Colonisation Française*, Bd. 2. Paris: Fayard.
- Castel, R., 2003. *From Manual Workers to Wage Laborers: Transformation of the Social Question*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.
- Crotti, C., 2008. Bildungspolitische Steuerungsversuche zwischen 1875 und 1931. Die pädagogischen Rekrutenprüfungen. In: L. Criblez (ed.) *Bildungsraum Schweiz. Historische Entwicklungen und aktuelle Herausforderungen*. Bern, Stuttgart: Haupt, pp. 131–154.
- Eckert, A., 2006. *Kolonialismus*. Frankfurt: Fischer.
- Evans, P.B., Rueschemeyer, D. and Skocpol, T. (eds), 1985. *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fuchs, E., 2004. Internationalisierung als Gegenstand der Historischen Bildungsforschung: zu Institutionalisierungsprozessen der edukativen Kultur um 1900. In: M. Liedtke, E. Matthes and G. Miller-Kipp (eds) *Erfolg oder Misserfolg? Urteile und Bilanzen in der Historiographie der Erziehung*. Bad Heilbrunn: Klinkhardt, pp. 231–249.

- Goldin, C. and Katz, L.F., 2008. *The Race Between Education and Technology*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University.
- Green, A., 1990. *Education and State Formation. The Rise of Education Systems in England, France and the USA*. Houndmills: Macmillan.
- Harten, H.-C., 1990. *Elementarschule und Pädagogik in der Französischen Revolution*. Munich: Oldenbourg.
- Heinemann, M., 1974. *Schule im Vorfeld der Verwaltung: Die Entwicklung der Preussischen Unterrichtsverwaltung von 1771–1800*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Herrmann, U. and Oelkers, J. (eds), 1990. *Französische Revolution und Pädagogik der Moderne. Aufklärung, Revolution und Menschenbildung im Übergang vom Ancien Régime zur Bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*. Weinheim: Beltz.
- Holton, R.J. and Turner, B.S., 1989. *Max Weber on Economy and Society*. London: Routledge.
- Jeismann, K.-E. (ed.), 1989. *Bildung, Staat, Gesellschaft im 19. Jahrhundert. Mobilisierung und Disziplinierung*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.
- Julia, D., 1981. *Les Trois Couleurs du Tableau Noir: La Revolution*. Paris: Belin.
- Kaestle, C.F. and Vinovskis, M.A., 1980. *Education and Social Change in Nineteenth-century Massachusetts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kerner, I., 2013. *Postkoloniale Theorien zur Einführung*. Hamburg: Junius.
- Kuhlemann, F.-M., 1992. *Modernisierung und Disziplinierung. Sozialgeschichte des Preussischen Volksschulwesens, 1794–1872*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Labaree, D.F., 1988. *The Making of an American High School. The Credentials Market and the Central High School of Philadelphia, 1838–1939*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Lamberti, M., 1986. State, church, and the politics of school reform during the Kulturkampf. *Central European History*, 19(1), pp. 63–81.
- Lehmann, H. and Roth, G. (eds), 1995. *Weber's Protestant Ethic: Origins, Evidence, Contexts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lindert, P. and Go, S., 2010. The uneven rise of American public schools to 1850. *The Journal of Economic History*, 70, pp. 1–26.
- Maier, J., 2000. Kirche und Schule. Auseinandersetzung um Schulform und geistliche Schulaufsicht in konfessionell gemischten Staaten. In: H. Ammerich and J. Gut (eds) *Zwischen 'Staatsanstalt' und Selbstbestimmung. Kirche und Staat in Südwestdeutschland vom Ausgang des Alten Reiches bis 1870*. Stuttgart: Thorbecke, pp. 269–293.
- Mamdani, M., 1996. *Citizen and Subject. Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Margo, R.A., 1990. *Race and Schooling in the South, 1880–1950: An Economic History*. London, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Müller, D.K., 1977. *Sozialstruktur und Schulsystem. Aspekte zum Strukturwandel des Schulwesens im 19. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Müller, D.K. and Zymek, B., 1987. *Datenhandbuch zur Deutschen Bildungsgeschichte. 2. Höhere und Mittlere Schulen. 1. Sozialgeschichte und Statistik des Schulsystems in den Staaten des Deutschen Reiches 1800–1945*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Müller, D.K., Ringer, F. and Brian, S. (eds), 1987. *The Rise of the Modern Educational System. Structural Change and Social Reproduction (1879–1920)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nique, C., 1990. *Comment l'École Devint une Affaire d'État (1815–1840)*. Paris: Nathan.

- Nique, C. and Lelièvre, C., 1993. *La République n'éduquera plus. La fin du mythe Ferry*. Paris: Plon.
- OECD/UNESCO, 2002. *Financing Education – Investments and Returns. Analysis of the World Education Indicators. Executive Summary*. Montreal: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.
- Osterhammel, J., 1995. *Kolonialismus. Geschichte – Formen – Folgen*. Munich: Beck.
- Shippo, D., 2006. *School Reform, Corporate Style. Chicago, 1880–2000*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.
- Shrobbree, C., 1988. *Public Schools and Private Education. The Clarendon Commission, 1861–64, and the Public School Act*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Sparke, M.B., 2006. A neoliberal nexus: economy, security, and the biopolitics of citizenship on the border. *Political Geography*, 2, pp. 151–180.
- Stadler, P., 1996. Kulturkampf und Kulturkämpfe im mittleren Europa des 19 Jahrhunderts. Versuch einer vergleichenden Orientierung. *Rottenburger Jahrbuch für Kirchengeschichte*, 15, pp. 13–25.
- Stübig, F., 1974. *Erziehung zur Gleichheit: Die konzepte der 'éducation commune' in der Französischen Revolution*. Ravensburg: Maier.
- Swedberg, R., 1998. *Max Weber and the Idea of Economic Sociology*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Turner, S. (ed.), 2000. *The Cambridge Companion to Weber*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tyack, D., 1976. Pilgrim's progress: toward a social history of the school superintendency, 1860–1960. *History of Education Quarterly*, 16(3), pp. 257–300.
- Tyack, D. and Cuban, L., 1995. *Tinkering Toward Utopia*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- UNESCO, 2012. *Youth and Skills: Putting Education to Work*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Van Overbeck, M.A., 2008. *The Standardization of American Schooling*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Weber, M., 2005. *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriss der Verstehenden Soziologie*. Frankfurt: Zweitausendeins.
- West, E.G., 1975. Educational slowdown and public intervention in nineteenth century England: a study on the economics of bureaucracy. *Explorations in Economic History*, 12(1), pp. 61–87.
- West, E.G., 1994. *Education and the State: A Study in Political Economy*. Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund.
- Zymek, B., 2009. Prozesse der Internationalisierung und Hierarchisierung im Bildungssystem. Von der Beharrungskraft und Auflösung nationaler Strukturen und Mentalitäten. *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, 55(2), pp. 175–193.

# Comparing school systems

---



This page intentionally left blank

# **The national state, the local and the growth of mass schooling**

## **History lessons from England, France and the United States<sup>1</sup>**

*Miriam Cohen*

---

More than twenty-five years ago, political scientists Ira Katznelson and Margaret Weir argued that, since public schools have been partially:

the guardian and cultivator of a democratic and egalitarian political culture in the US . . . [their history] cannot be excised from the treatments of the American welfare-state and more generally, from social democratic attempts by government to protect ordinary people from the ravages of the unfettered markets.

(Katznelson and Weir, 1988, p. 5)

As an American historian working on the comparative history of the welfare state in England, France, and the United States from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, I am struck that, while the United States had little tradition of state spending for a great number of social welfare initiatives, few countries share its history of public expenditures on education. Yet Katznelson and Weir's call to integrate the history of public education with the broader history of the welfare states largely remains unheeded. While new approaches to the history of American state-making have been accumulating over the last two decades, because it is usually seen as an alternative to traditional programs of entitlement, outside of the field of educational history, few have paid much attention to schooling. This is beginning to change. Works by Lindert (2004) and Garfinkel *et al.* (2010) comparing American and European welfare states have included public expenditures on schooling. Kantor and Lowe (1995) have also addressed changing American education policy and its relationship to social welfare. Moreover, Katz (2010a, 2010b) is now integrating an analysis of public education into a history of the American welfare state. In our comparative study of the history of the welfare state in the United States, England, and France, my co-author, Michael Hanagan, and I are studying some of the usual features of the welfare state, which include entitlement programs, such as social insurance and protective labor legislation, but we are also focusing on the development of mass schooling.<sup>2</sup> Based on some of this work, and focusing on the years 1870 through World War II, this chapter shows that placing schools

into the context of a comparative history of social welfare enables us to better understand the history of social welfare and state-making in two respects.

First, the commitment to schooling can be an important aspect of enhancing state capacity, which has implications for other aspects of social welfare. This is particularly true for the United States, where, because public education expenditures are social transfers, the American consensus about public education has been critical. In a country with a weak sense of public responsibility, the American attitude surrounding the importance of public education has stood out as a long-standing exception. Since the role of government in providing education was already an established tradition by the end of the nineteenth century, US reformers intent on enhancing state capacity have effectively used education to redefine the boundaries between state and family.<sup>3</sup> By connecting the history of education and history of the welfare state, we can recognize that state-sponsored education has been an important aspect of state-making in the United States. Its growth has, at some critical moments, not acted as a substitute for such social welfare approaches, as others have argued, but has contributed to the extension of other social welfare benefits, such as income support programs and workplace regulations (Flora and Heidenheimer, 1981; Patterson, 1994).

Second, paying attention to the history of mass schooling forces us to think carefully about the issues of centralization and decentralization in the making of the welfare state. Scholars of the welfare state have generally assumed that the growing centralization of democratic governments – which proceeded much more rapidly in Europe in comparison to the United States – meant advances in social benefits. Concentrating on the town of Winterthur in the Canton of Zurich, Carla Aubry's work in this volume, on the growth of public schooling in nineteenth-century Switzerland, shows that the increase in centralization of schools at the canton level increased equitable access to public schooling. Yet, the decentralized structure of the American and German school system, as Peter Lindert argued, in comparison to England and France, enhanced the reach of public schooling in the United States (Lindert, 2004).

My focus on both the local and the national in comparing the history of schooling picks up on Katz's recent call for a historical approach to evaluating the role of government in social policy, which "stresses the importance of time, place, context, the particular policy objective, the different levels of government and the different metrics that often separated their evaluation" (Katz, 2011, p. 337). Throughout the era between 1870 and World War II, the United States, with its more decentralized system of public education, remained the leader among the three countries in spreading access to public education. While central control and central funding of schools in the United States remained very limited, during the Depression, important New Deal initiatives provided critical support for the expansion of public schooling. In the case of England, growing centralization actually meant the limitation of equitable access with respect to public schooling. French education was subject to central control

throughout this period, but it was only during the Great Depression that central state initiatives expanded the reach of schooling.

In all three countries, between 1870 and World War II, the inability to build lasting national coalitions favoring egalitarian expansion limited the potential of public schooling in the period between 1870 and World War II. As the United States begins to move closer to its European counterparts in the twenty-first century, with greater national mandates regarding public schooling, we see another example of growing centralization unaccompanied by growing equity.

### **Public education and state capacity: the United States in comparative perspective**

In my earlier work on education and the American welfare state, I stressed the extent to which political activists appealed to widespread collective norms about the importance of schooling in order to make the case for a number of other social benefits. One of the best examples comes from the early twentieth century, when mostly women reformers promoted mothers' pensions, also called widows' pensions – that is, state-wide programs of income support for poor widowed mothers, so that they could keep their children at home rather than placing them in orphanages. In the second decade of the twentieth century, mothers' pension leagues campaigning throughout the country were remarkably successful. By 1920, the vast majority of states had enacted some sort of mothers' pension program. These government-funded initiatives were the precursors to the Aid to Dependent Children Program, which became federal law during the New Deal as part of the Social Security Act. Many historians have emphasized the extent to which campaigners on behalf of mothers' pensions had effectively practiced maternalist politics; reformers focused on issues that appealed to women as wives and mothers, and promoted the idea that women were particularly good at addressing such concerns (Ladd-Taylor, 1994; Muncy, 1991). I argued that the appeal to American values regarding the importance of education was also critical. Thus, advocates for mothers' pensions contended that, with the income provided to poor widowed mothers, children who might otherwise have worked could be kept in school (Cohen, 2005).

Thanks to recent work by Steffes (2012) and Provasnik (2006), we can now appreciate that these American activists were doing more than appealing to collective norms. In the United States, unlike England or France, legislation on both the state and national levels is legitimated not only because it represents the majority will of legislatures; laws also have to pass constitutional muster as determined by American courts. At the turn of the twentieth century, American reformers pushing to build the welfare state looked to an emerging American jurisprudence on the enforcement of school attendance laws, in order to build the case for the constitutionality of a whole host of social legislation, such as income support programs and workplace regulations. Thus, in 1914,