

1960s and 1970s, a period with a much stronger overall interest in historical developments in *academia* and in particular in faculties of social sciences, is to try to convince our colleagues in educational sciences of the value of our research for the production of knowledge of educational issues and topics. We have to convince them time and again that our way of looking at educational issues, namely treating them as educational processes to be understood by putting them in time and in broader societal and cultural processes, and when necessary approaching them even from a *longue durée* perspective (Braudel 1958/1969), is not only an interesting way of research, but a valuable and in fact necessary contribution to educational knowledge and to the educational sciences.

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Marginal Comments on the Presence and Absence of Education

A comparison between two leading journals on history of education, including a comparison over a short time span, makes Edwin Keiner formulate the following interpretation: "History of education at present seems to turn into a rather presentistic mode of research and reflection". Indeed, for him one possible interpretation of these at once remarkable but also not surprising findings is that being too much attached to the present has an impact on long term memory. It seems that for historical research becoming too much engaged with (present manifestations of) its research object – that is, education, and its pressing problems today – actually reduces both time and space for true historical work. This observation, which is at the same time an evaluation, makes perfect sense and one could even argue – although I am not a trained historian (of education) – it is an obvious (methodo-)logical point in the case of *historical* research: some distance from the present, and its preferred past and future,

is required for history to emerge (see also Depaeppe 2010). Yet, perhaps there is also something else at stake, or at least, the short “historical journey” of Edwin Keiner provokes some additional thoughts. The first thought is on the particular ambivalent relation of historical research to ‘education’, and generally also noticeable in related research fields such as philosophy or sociology of education. The second thought is on the particular mode of presentism today, and the third one on educational space and time and the risk that putting education in space and time actually forgets or even neutralizes the (own) time-space of education. In my articulation of these thoughts, I prefer explorative commentary and tentative statements above theoretical, conceptual or empirical accuracy.

There is a certain ambivalence in how education is approached as a research domain. On the one hand, education and how we deal with the future generation is recognized as extremely important and valuable, and hence, of crucial importance to be studied. But on the other hand, there is a kind of reservation or even contempt, and hence a distance in order not to be associated too much with educational affairs. This ambivalent relation is probably not really different from the common social appreciation of teachers that in most countries is combined with limited recognition and status, at least compared to other or ‘real’ professional work. Another example of ambivalence is the often debated position and organization of teacher education within higher education in general and at universities in particular. The different appreciation of research and teaching (teachers) bears a similar mark: creating new knowledge versus passing given knowledge, productive adult life versus unproductive student life. In a similar vein, for a lot of scholars the academic disciplines of philosophy, history or sociology constitute the major point of reference, source of identification and aura of seriousness. Doing research in the theoretical and detached light of a few key philosophers or sociologists or well established theoretical frameworks seems to be preferred above scholarly and field work in the pragmatic and attached shadows of education, marginal educators, the teacher proletariat and minorities by age. Perhaps it comes close to a common tendency – also among those key authors – to contempt, if not forget, one’s own education (and educators) in celebrating one’s achievements. The emancipated are not fond of being reminded of the means of emancipation, and probably this has nothing to do with being ungrateful, but is the consequence of any successful emancipation.

This ambivalence plays a rather subtle role when on the one hand historians and philosophers of education resist any utilitarian or functional use of their work, and especially when it comes to ‘learning lessons’ from history or philosophy. While on the other hand, they seek to define their own standards of value and use, and hence as part of ‘higher learning’ and ‘true preparation’ of, for instance, future teachers. Exactly here one of the sources of the often observed ambivalences becomes clear: the use of a double standard when it comes to the usage of education. On the one hand, history or philosophy put or hold education at a distance, not just as a methodological requirement, but seemingly also as part of a kind of precautionary principle: to avoid complicity in what is historically or philosophically described, and ultimately to avoid that *history* of education becomes an *educational* history, or *philosophy* of education turns into an *educational* philosophy. On the other hand, history and philosophy of education explicitly and perhaps more often implicitly seek refuge to, celebrate the value of and hence use education to justify their meaning and role. This education is, however, of another kind than the politicized, normalized or instrumentalized one they have investigated: insights from history and philosophy not as utilitarian lessons, but as sources for cultivation and edification. If this thesis of a double standard holds true,

what is required is at least an attempt to articulate the presupposed conception of education, something to which I return later.

A second thought relates to the notion of presentism, and the idea that being too much involved in and with the present actually may disturb genuine historical work. I will not go into the methodological and epistemological debates on the value or risk of presentism, and whether it is avoidable or not. My focus instead is on the current condition which is probably less a condition of ‘enlightenment’ but more one of ‘globalization’, at least if we can use the shift from the problematization in terms of progress and (historical) orientation to the problematization in terms of innovation and (global) positioning as a useful indication of a transformation in modes of self-understanding. The Belgian case (Flemish community) is instructive: policy discourse is mainly about how Flemish education performs ‘here and now’ in relation to the educational system of other (EU, OECD) states. Practices of inspection, normalizing judgment and orientation in view of tradition and national culture are increasingly combined and even replaced by techniques of monitoring, permanently benchmarked feedback and positioning in view of increased performance. What is created, is a kind of ‘space of improvement’; a space that not only allows for permanent comparison in terms of performance, but at once opens up a horizon for permanent improvement or innovation. The prevailing message today is no longer ‘look back’ or ‘remember your history’, but ‘look around’ – both in order to know how you perform and to find examples for better performance; a development that Antonio Nóvoa and Tali Yariv-Mashal (2003) conceptualize as “governing through comparison”. An interesting thesis that could be explored is how this change in the conception of space and the meaning of comparison, is related to a changed understanding of time and a modified meaning of history. History, similar to culture, seems to become treated as a technique of ‘contextualization’ that is important as far as it helps to explain differences in performance, and hence, is useful in view of the design of examples of good (or bad) performance. The case of Finland as part of PISA 2003 is telling in that regard. What emerges is a kind of ‘governing through history’, or at least, the past is treated as an available resource in view of increased performance. This is less about a linear, chronological time conception and more about ‘instant time’ or the experience of resources that are here and now available (or not). What could support this thesis, is that ‘the future’ as well becomes part of governing; as a projection it is present and available in different shapes through, for instance, popular techniques of future scenarios. The past and future are no longer the horizons or objectives of governing, but instead they are reframed as available resources for governing the “eternal present” (Beck 1992).

There are two conclusions I would like to connect with this thesis. The first conclusion is that this very tentative outline could help to understand a kind of ‘spatial turn’ in educational research and perhaps, as suggested by Edwin Keiner, the growing importance of a particular sociological or cultural orientation with a focus on fields, contexts, social and cultural practices and combined with specific historical or comparative contextualization. In more general terms: the field of problematization is more about identity-difference, openness-closeness, potential-enactment, global-local and less about contingency-necessity, continuity-discontinuity, myth-history, conservative-progressive. This shift, however, says little about the meaning and value of sociologically oriented educational research, nor about the role or future of *history* of education. What it indicates, is that it is no longer self-evident to draw on long or short term history in order ‘to take a distance from’ or ‘destabilize’ the present (see also, Rose 2007); or on philosophy, for that matter. Secondly, governing the self and

others through comparison and through past or future includes – so to speak – a permanent mode of presentism or destabilization, but also a permanent mode of learning. Learning is suggested as the solution for change in view of optimal performance for each and all, that is, there is strong governmental appropriation of learning. One could even argue that the shift from (institutionalized) education to (flexible) learning is exactly about that appropriation. This means that the concept of learning, at least when used without any further qualification, is insufficient to describe what is at stake in the taking of distance and the paying of close attention that is assumed in historical or philosophical research. And this brings me back to the first thought: to avoid the risk of becoming mere learning tools (for instance, historical contextualization or conceptual clarification), it is not just important in my view to articulate the meaning and scope of the project of *history* or *philosophy* of education, but to try to articulate what is *educational* in this project. This of course is a long and heavily debated challenge – as the first thought already suggested – but perhaps it is more pressing today given the specific condition of presentism in our learning societies.

My third thought is actually a short attempt to take up this challenge, or at least to open a perspective in that direction. In line with Nóvoa and Yariv-Mashal (2003), Edwin Keiner explicitly uses the notion “historical journey” to describe his own study of history of education journals, and indeed to refer to the combination of time and space, of history and comparison. The image or metaphor of ‘the journey’ is often used to describe what education is about (perhaps using metaphoric language for education is another symptom of the ambivalence mentioned earlier). A journey can be planned, with a specific goal or destination in mind, with or without a map or compass, with or without specific transportation, but in leaving home there is always the element of the non-specified space and non-occupied time. One risks the unknown, either in what exactly one comes across, or in when and even whether one actually comes home (again). It suggests that education is something of an irreversible event – not just a learning process that broadens or extends one’s lifeworld, but a transformative event by leaving one’s lifeworld and confronting a (new) world. This is close to the idea or assumption that human beings are to be educated, that is, that there is no natural or supra-natural destiny, and hence that an educational experience is an experience of ‘to be able to’ (even if it is immediately followed by or neutralized with ‘to have to’ or ‘not to be able to’). In my view, terms such as ‘historical journey’ and similar elaborations are relevant for they try to grasp the time and space that is specific to education. These elaborations are part of an *educational* understanding, or even educational theory, and hence include a focus on educational time and educational space. Even if such educational understandings or claims are obviously bound to a particular space and time, they should not be marginalized. In my view, any research that claims the importance of locating and positioning education in time or space should elaborate on the specific time and space of education that it assumes in such a claim. And vice versa. In drawing attention to their importance, history and philosophy of education probably cannot but comment, at least indirectly, on actual and dominant practices of education. Perhaps today history and philosophy murmur in the margins that current pre-defined, outcome driven learning trajectories offer little room for historical or any other journeys, and hence for education as such.

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Christine Mayer Anmerkungen zum Verhältnis von „Short Timelines of History of Education“ und Disziplinentwicklung

Edwin Keiner unternimmt in seinem Beitrag eine *historical journey*, in dem er von einer theoretischen Rahmung ausgehend und anhand von internationalen Fachzeitschriften, der 1961 gegründeten *Paedagogica Historica* und der 1968 gegründeten *History of Education*, die disziplinäre Entwicklung der historischen Bildungsforschung in den Blick nimmt. Näher betrachtet werden die in den ausgewählten Artikeln untersuchten Zeiträume 1961-1963 bzw. 1969-1971 und 2008-2010 bzw. 2009-2011. Die dabei erkennbar werdenden Verschiebungstendenzen, insbesondere die Konzentration der historischen Bildungsforschung auf eine Zeitspanne von etwa 100 bis 200 Jahren mit Schwerpunkt auf einer *histoire contemporaine*, bilden die Grundlage der vorgetragenen Überlegungen. Dabei wird die Gefahr gesehen, dass die *history of education* dahin tendiert, sich zu einer „anamnesis or a case history of sociological or political sciences“ zu entwickeln. Dieser Interpretationsperspektive möchte ich einige Überlegungen gegenüberstellen, die den Befund zwar nicht generell in Frage stellen, aber von einer anderen Blickrichtung ausgehen.

Es ist sicherlich nicht von der Hand zu weisen, dass sich die historische Bildungsforschung in ihren Forschungen auf internationaler als auch nationaler Ebene auf das 19. und 20. Jahrhundert konzentriert und sich Forschungsdesiderata vor allem in der vormodernen und antiken Erziehungsgeschichte ausmachen lassen, wie dies auch schon für Teilbereiche der historischen Bildungsforschung analysiert worden ist (z.B. in der historisch-pädagogischen Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung). Es ist auch nicht verwunderlich, dass die Artikel in der *Paedagogica Historica* größere Zeiträume umspannen als in der *History of Education*, war die historische Pädagogik zu Beginn der 1960er-Jahre doch noch viel stärker von der Ideen-