

Social movements and pedagogical renewal in the twentieth century: thoughts, practices, and resistances

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In the last few decades, an interpretative shift has emerged regarding the concept of social movements. As it currently appears, a crucial sign has been the progressive abandonment by the literature of the singular «social movement» because it meant a one-sided point of view that only considered a schematic focus on the most explicit dimensions of the classic notion of class struggle.

Since the 1960s, the polysemy of the «social movements» category has embraced and incorporated other aspects of the reality labelled under the powerfully meaning word «conflict». The contemporary epistemic and political recognition of the intersectionality among social clashes (gender, age, class, race, and other angles) has enriched research agendas in social history and the history of education. A recent general overview of the field underlines the importance of these fields for the development of current research. For instance, regarding gender, Lucy E. Bayley and Karen Graves (2019, p.357) point out that «gendered analysis has enacted a radical intervention in the production of knowledge in educational history in recent decades through highlining women’s roles and experiences, exploring gendered educational forces, institutions, practices and policies and expanding the theories and methodologies through which the field produces meaning». A similar impact has been produced in the history of education as scholars follow ethnics or decolonial points of view.

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In a far-reaching perspective, social movements are «sustained, intentional efforts to foster or retard broad legal or social changes, primarily outside the normal institutional channels endorsed by authorities» (Jasper, 2014, p.10). Since they are intentional (therefore, they embed ideological, moral, and emotional expectations and agendas) and primarily run through informal flows, social movements go beyond the spectacularism of social clashes and violent upheaval (even though violence is among their repertoires of action). In the educational realm, social movements have been historically committed to fighting for recognition and development of the right to education as a fundamental demand. Urban and rural popular organisations, teachers' associations, students' movements, indigenous communities, and feminist groups have been the fulcrum from which movements have arisen and put their claims in the face of the State. In the articles of this dossier, since the early presence of brave anarchist women fighting for sexual self-education in Spain during the first decades of the twentieth century to the Chilean teachers' efforts to challenge neoliberalism by the 1980s, it is possible to notice the profile of social collectivities generally defying the power and constantly struggling to achieve their goals.

But recent social movements are not only different from old-fashioned categories (based exclusively on the economic cleavage) because now we recognise their plurality as carriers of diverse agendas. A good part of the new conceptions depends on the enormous transformations that global changes have brought to contemporary history. The horizon of social movements has become broader and more complex to the history of education scholars as, since the mid-twentieth century, we have witnessed an acceleration in the forms of internationalisation or trans-nationalization of education, a phenomenon which has received attention from a vast community of researchers (Caruso and Tenorth, 2011). Consistently with the technological changes, the emergence of global institutions with educational purposes at a planetary level and the recent models of globalisation with a neoliberal approach have given rise to fluxes of pedagogical ideas and politics that welcome and promote this new order, as well as others contesting alternatives are standing in front of them (ecological, anti-globalisation, anti-colonial, etc.). As Marcelo Caruso indicates, «the simultaneity of educationally relevant political and social processes such as decolonisation in Asia and Africa, insurgency in Latin America, youth and liberation movements in industrialised countries, and the rise of neoliberal reforms suggested the importance of transnational interconnectedness» (Caruso, 2019, p.569).

The articles within this dossier tackle different educational phenomena and several chronological and geographical realities, even though they all regard the twentieth century. The authors chose Russia, Spain, and Latin America (Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile) to deal with diverse agendas and issues (pedagogical thought, feminist struggles, teachers' practices, students' movements). Taking a chronological criterium to introduce the articles that give shape to this dossier, regardless of their actual distribution within this number of *Espacio Tiempo y Educación*, the contribution of Yelena Rogacheva leaves us to the first decades of the twentieth century. In her paper, she displays a comparative view on two highlights of modern education: John Dewey and Anton Makarenko. Even though the notorious differences that they had in terms of their national historical processes and their intellectual and political

backgrounds, Rogacheva concludes that, nevertheless, «both John Dewey and Anton Makarenko thought in the same direction and tried to combine learning with labour, play, communication».

Laura Sánchez Blanco's article is situated in a virtuous and fruitful intersection between social history and the history of education. Her research sheds light on the ways that anarchist Spaniard women fought to develop birth control as an emancipatory tool. They pursued to spread Malthusianism and eugenics notions through the feminist working-class press carrying out a self-education practice. She concludes that «Mujeres Libres had undertaken a triple struggle to overcome the slavery of ignorance, work and sexual status. It is a very ambitious project since it was intended to achieve women's liberation with cultural and professional training. Female emancipation was also found in her decision to procreate because if she limited births, she would achieve liberation from sexual slavery».

In Spain as well, but a few decades later, took place the process which Carlos Menguiano-Rodríguez and María del Mar Del Pozo-Andrés study in their article. Beyond the confrontational dimension usually associated with teachers as a part of social movements, the axis of the research is to underline the tension between continuity and change in the school. Adopting new pedagogical theories and methods during the Second Republic (1931-1939), a critical period must be seen as a conflictive realm where traditional styles did not vanish without conflict. Menguiano- Rodríguez and Del Pozo-Andrés state that «the preeminent role that teachers themselves play in these processes of change, given that it is they who incorporate innovations into their professional practice, constantly interpreting and adapting ideas and educational reforms to the reality of the classroom.»

Crossing the Atlantic Ocean and yet in the second half of the century, the Argentinian scholar Álvaro Koc Muñoz drives us to a different scenario and actor: university students and their relationship with Peronism. The article focuses on the second government period of Juan Domingo Perón (1952-1955). It deals with a students' organisation that, against the usual, enthusiastically supported the regime due to its commitment to promoting third-level education as a social right. As Koc-Muñoz states, there was «a strong recognition of the students towards Peronism, in terms of the expansion of the educational horizons of the working class and its professionalisation within these frameworks.»

As mentioned above, transnational perspectives are growing in historical research on education. The contribution of Camile Gapenne about the Uruguayan university students' movement during the 1968 global cycle of activism is an example of this way of understanding local episodes in strong intertwining with global processes. In her research, Gapenne uses sources that allow her to identify both students' points of view on conflicts and the establishment opinion expressed through press media. Regarding the same cultural and political conflict, this latter issue has received attention in neighbouring countries, such as Brazil and Chile (Hernández Huerta, 2018; Toro-Blanco, 2021). Camile Gapenne concludes that «the local, the regional and the international are here closely articulated, confirming the need to think about the student protest taking into consideration different scales and the existence of extensive networks of transnational circulation of people, ideas and information.».

Chronologically last, Felipe Acuña's paper tackles the issue of teachers' professional identity in Chile dealing with two different situations. In the first place, the changes that Chilean education suffered through the experimentalist reforms during 1920 and 1930. The second regards the teachers' case under the Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1990). Based upon the philosophical statements of scholar Hugo Zemelman, Acuña argues that «the pedagogical experimentation of the 1920s and the pedagogical movement of the 1990s, are moments in which teachers stood up and faced their circumstances with autonomy, creating categories of thought capable of evoking, apprehending, and materialising, as Zemelman (2005) states, that surplus that is without shape, nameless (p. 90) that every present contains.»

Even though their differences, both in analytical focuses and chronological and geographical terms, this group of papers are tied to a common root: they share an interest in stressing how historical processes are hardly well understood if researchers pay attention only to the nation-state realm without considering the powerful flux of ideas that the twentieth century has facilitated. As seen in the comparative overview on Dewey and Makarenko, pedagogical thoughts circulate and are reinterpreted according to local conditions. Practices, such as those displayed by Spanish teachers during the Second Republic or the loyalty of Argentinian students to Juan Domingo Perón, show their sinuous development, which should lead researchers to avoid any teleological or lineal interpretation about how educational policies or juvenile political behaviour work in the daily reality. Resistances, expressed by anarchist workers women in Spain at the dawn of the century, Uruguayan university students within the 1968 cycle or by Chilean teachers confronting a dictatorship that would lead them to a professional pauperisation under neoliberalism rules, must be interpreted through a problematising conception of conflict which enriches our understanding of social movements.

1. References

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