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Connections between
School, Work and
Learning in the
Workplace*

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*Education and
Dictatorship in
Argentina,
1976-1983*

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We are pleased to
draw attention to
the fact that this
issue contains the
journal's first paper
from Latin America.

HISTORY OF EDUCATION REVIEW

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HISTORY OF EDUCATION REVIEW

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History of Education Review, which appears twice a year, is the official journal of the Australian and New Zealand History of Education Society.

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EDUCATION AND DICTATORSHIP IN ARGENTINA, 1976-1983

CAROLINA KAUFMANN¹

Translated and edited by Robert Austin

In the Argentine, during the 1990s, a substantial body of published works², detailed the different elements that closely defined the educational field in the Argentine during the last military dictatorship. In a previous investigation with John Thomas³ I have specified some characteristics of the general structure of the Argentinian educational system, in its more recent history, to the beginning of the 90s. We consider that it is impossible to understand the Argentinian educational system without taking into consideration the heavy inheritance of fluctuating authoritarianism, demagoguery and dictatorships which have interfered with Argentinian society during its history.

Emilio García Méndez has emphasised that, in contrast to the traditional authoritarianisms, the emergence of new authoritarian forms in Latin America has as its initial point of reference the Brazilian coup d'état of 1964, which delineated new forms of association between the state and civil society.⁴ Subsequent military dictatorships presented the armed forces as an alternative institution to civil disorder, and presenting an alternative project to the liberal-democratic regimes of the region. Their most important and novel transformations were in the economic realm, in institutional structure and in the techniques of social control.

The 'Process'⁵

On 24 March 1976 a new institutional group seized control of Argentina.

Table 1: Military Governments and Education Ministers in Argentina (1976-1983)

Military Government Presidents	Date	Education Ministers	Date
Jorge R. VIDELA	March 1976-March 1981	1. Ricardo P. BRUERA 2. Juan J. CATALÁN 3. Juan R. LLERENA	March 1976-May 1977 June 1977-August 1978 August 1978-March 1981
Roberto E. VIOLA	March 1981-December 1981	4. Carlos BURUNDARENA	March 1981-December 1981
Leopoldo F. GALTIERI	December 1981-June 1982	5. Cayetano LICCIARDO	December 1981-
Raimundo BIGNONE	July 1982-December 1983		December 1983

SOURCES: Personal elaboration based on dates of the Ministry of Education, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1988.

When the armed forces junta composed of General Jorge R. Videla, Admiral Emilio Massera and Brigadier Orlando R. Agosti appropriated constitutional power, which they determined to mean institutional power, they did so for an indefinite period. This became very clear when the officers who had executed the coup announced that: "The 'Process' has no

time limits, rather only objectives'.⁶ Referring to the dictatorship, Argentine Hugo Quiroga has observed that, of the six military interventions experienced by the country over forty-six years of institutional life – a cycle which was inaugurated with the coup of 1930 – the *coups d'état* of 1966 and 1976 can be considered among those termed 'the new style'.⁷

The 'Process of National Reorganisation' (also 'National Reorganisation') was an attempt at reorganising the entire productive structure of the Argentine economy, expressing a distinct project of capital accumulation. The proposed transformation, by which the state assumed a 'new protagonism', was left in the hands of the then Minister for the Economy, Alfredo Martínez de Hoz. In relation to this reordering which the hegemonic power set about producing, Martínez de Hoz affirmed that:

Argentina's trajectory has been modified since 24 March 1976. But this transition means a little more than a simple change of government: it constitutes the transformation of the political and socio-economic structure which the country has had for almost thirty years.⁸

The new dominant block, which encouraged this transformation of the political and socio-economic structure, can be characterised as an alliance between a military estate, transnational companies, and the most concentrated segment of the national bourgeoisie. The bureaucratic authoritarian state will refer to the institutional inclusion of the armed forces in the project of accumulation directed by technocrats, destined to favour the interests of the large bourgeoisie and the transnational corporations. As Silvia Sigal and Isabel Santi have suggested, the binomial armed forces-technocratic elite (despite their differences and internal conflicts) had a common project with regard to the country's economic chaos and the popular sector threat: the restructuring of the economy. This project had to destroy the old political and corporate identities, 'arguing the necessity to recreate the bases for a new individual liberty in accordance with the canons of neoconservatism'.⁹

'The chaos, the crisis, the disorder' into which the country appeared to have plunged by the time of the coup – economic chaos, a crisis of civil authority, seditious confrontations, the operation of the clandestine state organisation (the Argentine Anticommunist Alliance or Triple A), the action of revolutionary organisations – conceded legitimacy and, together with the mythical presence of the armed forces in the imagination of both civil and political society, created the conditions favourable to the acceptance of this latest *coup d'état*. In consequence, the legitimising force of this dictatorship emerged from the particular functioning of the political system of the country, in which the armed forces are a primordial element in the scheme of political power. However, it is erroneous to suppose that the use of force and violence alone sustained the military coup of 1976. The forced and continuous interruption of civil governments by the military, protected by important sectors of civil society, has constructed a *de facto* 'legitimated' acceptance of such interruptions in Argentina. Quiroga has suggested that this particular relation between civilians and the military continued sedimenting a political culture which accepted, in greater or lesser measure, the politicisation of the armed forces, and praetorianism (that is, military intervention in the political system).¹⁰

The dictatorship thought that it was 'natural' and necessary 'to reestablish order', and 'to reeducate' society. Popular mobilisation had to be controlled and suppressed, and society had to be disciplined to be able to carry forward the real political plan of the dictatorship, the

economic plan which provided the reason for the existence of the military-technocratic elite alliance. In this sense the military and those sectors of civil society addicted to the regime proposed the diagnosis that the 'society was ill'.¹¹ The metaphor of the sick society allowed such forces to conjure the proposed solution. Consequently they implemented an integrated plan of 'treatment' – *repression* – for Argentine society.

This coup accentuated the 'praetorianisation' of civil society, indiscriminately attacked society as a whole and took aim unerringly at the education system in its entirety.¹² One of its basic objectives was to shape an education system according to the needs of the country, which would effectively serve the objectives of the authoritarian state and consolidate the cultural values and aspirations of 'being Argentinian'. In other words, it pursued a system that would reinstate essential values; emphasise the sense of morality, integrity and efficiency typical of Argentine society; and which would return order and hierarchy to the education system. And it would contribute in this way to consolidate the *official myth* through ideological cleansing and indoctrination.¹³ There was a foundational past which had to be restored because in that past the above-mentioned values had been forged, values whose relevance remained beyond question.¹⁴ No effort was spared to carry forward the political plan of the dictatorship from the educational sphere.

Censorship and authoritarian imposition

As evidence of censorship and coercion one can distinguish the lists of 'approved, recommended and prohibited' books which were published in the *Boletines* [Bulletins] of the Ministry of Education and Culture in the province of Santa Fe. These 'bibliographic lists' facilitated a reconfirmation of the *registers of control* designed by authorities from the Ministry of Education.

It can be seen that in the month of December of the year 1982 the *Centro Provincial de Información Educativa* [Provincial Centre of Educational Information] elaborated a thematic guide that recovered information which had appeared in the *Boletines* published during the years 1980, 1981 and 1982. The information contained in those bulletins was stated in a guide structured around fifty-five descriptors presented alphabetically. By way of example, we find among them in this informative enumeration the categories 'Approved books', 'Prohibited books' and 'Recommended books'. The strict control over the bibliography circulated within educational boundaries does no more than make evident the profound process of indoctrination and ideologising to which the educational system was submitted.¹⁵ This bibliographic coercion was present in all levels of the education system, although it was emphasised with greater force at the primary and secondary levels.

The educational project thought out and designed by the authoritarian forces was expressed through a diversity of profoundly articulated dimensions, which produced consequences that mediated pedagogical discourses and practices, and which provoked what was conceptualised as *the militarisation of the education system*.¹⁶ This term refers to the process of dogmatic obstinacy and authoritarian verticalism installed in the womb of the education community from the constitutional interruption of 1976 until 1983. It signified not only the inclusion of military personnel in spaces traditionally occupied by civilians, but also the introjection of authoritarian attitudes in schooling and pedagogical practices. Simultaneously it included an academic model and extensive verticalist connection with all levels of the education system. The militarisation of education did not recognise frontiers or

levels: from the primary school to the university its multiple restrictive effects were suffered.¹⁷ Its most profound connotations managed to permeate and to fissure the fabric of Argentine society during and even after the collapse of the military dictatorship.

Some pronouncedly salient aspects which permitted and consolidated this militarisation were: the weakening and obstruction of contact between the community and its problems with the educational sphere; the restriction of the mechanisms of democratic participation among the subjects of the educative process; the institutional distancing and isolation which deepened the divisions between the schooling and extra-schooling cultures; and the transference by decree of the national primary education services to the provinces.¹⁸ This evidently divided and disconcerted the persecuted education workers even further, complicating integration and articulation capacities among those who worked in such services in the provincial primary education system, this being one among the many negative aspects of the transference of primary education services within the decentralisation program.

Other salient aspects included the imposition of the personalist authoritarian educative model and a particular style of personalised education in teacher training and development. This model conceived the person as a being formed by eternal essences and a mere receptor of absolute truths. Further, the military bureaucratised the educative system in seeking to maintain rigid systems of control, translated into restrictive measures of permanent vigilance. Teachers saw themselves flooded with bureaucratic tasks which they were obliged to complete, with the tacit objective of documenting all their actions in writing. 'Order and control' were the supreme categorical imperatives. There was ideological and physical persecution of an infinite number of students and teachers, which translated into disappearances, prohibitions, and rigid norms for control of the body (like short hair, stockings of precise colours, and skirts of pre-determined length).

Military personnel were included in the education system by occupying positions of responsibility at all its levels and in all its modalities. By way of example one can cite Resolution No. 5 of 26 March 1976 by which the members of the National Council of Education and the National Council of Technical Education ceased their functions and were replaced by military personnel on active duty. There was an autocratisation of school practices through multiple channels: revaluation of hierarchical links, of order, and militarist discipline (compulsory use of uniform, short hair and obedience as cardinal virtues; school acts under specific rules). Finally, mechanisms for disciplinary regulation were activated institutionally in the schools through vigilance, control, castigation and punishment.¹⁹

This process – entirely endogenous to the educative system – was backed by the directives which emanated from the dictatorship, and was moulded into concrete educational policies and practices which germinated in a debilitated society with its 'defences lowered'. Gregorio Kaminsky maintains that authoritarianism in Argentina has not only descended from the state as a factor exogenous to society, but that 'civil society introjects and reproduces attitudes and values destined to strengthen the repressive order (through) passive adaptation to reality, the loss of critical sense, collective isolation of cadres and the reproduction or dissemination of authoritarianism in institutions and in daily life'.²⁰

Together with vigilance, control, censorship and persecution those mechanisms of ideologisation necessary to obtain 'order' were articulated. Among such mechanisms was the installation of a pedagogical theory – educational personalism – which would supposedly help in this task of social control and discipline. The school had to be sufficiently conservative

to generate teachers from this sphere of teacher development imbued with the task of returning the school to the values of Christian morality, national tradition and the dignity of being Argentine. Society should be 'reeducated', 'reorganised' and 'redisciplined'. To 'locate the lost river bed', 'rediscipline society' and 'liquidate the enemy' were explicit slogans. In all spheres the regime presented itself as *corrective* and *reorienting*, capable of not opposing the political, economic and ideological model. In this game of *discipline/ordering* and in the eurhythmic execution of the dictatorial mandate, a protagonistic role fell to the debilitated Argentine education system in all its level and modalities.

From the pedagogical sphere, the *philosophy of personalist education* and the *theory of personalist education* contributed to the consolidation of an educative style capable of imposing an ideological and pedagogical homogeneity rooted in a conservative and perennialist tradition, which would facilitate the concealment, even the denial of social conflict.

Authoritarian perennialism

The Víctor García Hoz version of personalised education was introduced, disseminated and incorporated in official pedagogical discourse during the military regime through multiple strategies.²¹ Among them, personal invitations to García Hoz – and other personalists aligned with him – to attend teacher training and professional development seminars, 'recycling' training courses, and bibliography imposed from the Ministries of Education verified how the military sought through official discourse to establish and privilege this pedagogical orientation within the theoretical-methodological framework of pedagogical currents in vogue at that time.

This orientation aspired to instrumentalise educational personalisation as a 'neutral theory and methodology'. This methodology would allow it to establish 'uniform strategies' which disregarded the individual and social heterogeneities of the complex Argentine social framework. Personalised education was arranged hierarchically at the highest point among pedagogical currents of the time, and adopted as the *official pedagogy* of the dictatorial regime. Many of its postulates were used as mediators in a regressive and repressive politics of education.

It should be noted that the a-historical vision of the perennialist postures implemented during this latest military era was complemented by an intentionality which aimed to interpret society without conflicts, without social inequalities or antagonistic relations. It implied 'community' which did not contemplate concrete educational practice, real and historically determined.²² Derived from this social perspective, and analysing it remote from any specific context or social process, 'education' could propose a pedagogical practice dissociated from the broader social practices. The concept of a community permanently sustained by dictatorial educational power was based on the idea of 'social harmony' which disguised the real dynamic of institutions, the diversity of each institution, and the daily struggles within them.

The educational theory of García Hoz clearly presents a strong humanist religious leaning which, as Alicia de Alba comments, 'assumes special importance because of the religiosity of (Latin American) peoples, and because of the political and ideological management derived from this religiosity with distinct ideological signs and diverse political and social ends'.²³ For that reason when García Hoz affirms the existence of a superior spiritual reality, independent and autonomous from material practice, he implicitly fails to recognise the socio-historic conditioning of knowledge: he absolutises and universalises its conditions of production, reproduction and/or transformation. Education is therefore situated in an area bordering

philosophy and theology, characterised by its assumption of metaphysical aspects as central to the educational process. From what we can make of the above, one of the basic postulates of this pedagogy would be explained as follows: education, like all phenomena and objects in the real world, has only one possible form.

Paciano Feroso Estébanez situates García Hoz's exposition within the perennialist pedagogical theories by which he is committed to limit his goals to the pure philosophy and theological doctrine of the Catholic church.²⁴ The particular aspects which structure contemporary pedagogical perennialisms can be synthesised as: an intolerant attitude opposed to all those theories and methodologies which do not support the doctrine of the Catholic church and scholastic and/or neo-scholastic philosophy; the indoctrinating and dogmatic tone in which they put forward their theory; and their transcendent sense of human existence.

This *pedagogical theory* attempted to present with a 'modernist' nuance those aspects which meant an advance with respect to tradition prior to the new school: consideration of the student as an active and autonomous being; non-directiveness; attention to the interests of the students, and to the determination of school objectives and activities. The forms of work proposed to achieve such objectives were quite varied. On the other hand, as Juan Sanz Adrados has affirmed: 'the pedagogical model denominated "personalised education" suffers from a lack of explicitness with respect to the political project which it serves'.²⁵

Pedagogical theory reduced to the rationality of the technological model at the instrumental level, and sustained ideologically by those eternal and immutable values which guide people towards the conquest of their life's personal project, towards the job well done, towards 'the' transcendence, can be located at the intersection of two pedagogical ideologies: traditionalist and reformist-modernising. From the first it would take the double function assigned to 'education as a unifying and homogenising process which would permit integration: that is, an adjustment to norms, values, and understandings consecrated by tradition'.²⁶ The second would conceal the institutional and social conditions of the pedagogical praxis.

Behind the pedagogical proposal which García Hoz offered lay fundamental issues which allow us to delimit with precision the universalist, conservative and restrictive position of his theory. These include the dissociation between educational means, objectives and ends; and the concretion of a strongly prescriptive curricular proposal structured around material practices which ensure that the schooling sphere is dissociated from social reality. This curricular proposal was thought out as a universal proposal, but a clear schism appears between those who think - that is, the specialists in education who elaborate the curriculum - and those who make the results concrete, namely the teachers who plan the final moment of the process.

Finally, the consequences which the perennialist pedagogical proposals hold for the pedagogical subject warrant noting.²⁷ I maintain that personalised education, as and how it has been shaped, intends *an unequal and authoritarian pedagogical bond*. Cohesion, consensus, renunciation, adaptation, indoctrination, order and discipline are the new categories which this pedagogical discourse indubitably incorporates, and to a certain point conceals. Such processes of incorporation and concealment would take place through a mechanism akin to invoking the recovery of universally shared a-historic-spiritualist and essential values through education.

The Pedagogy of Values

Ricardo P. Bruera was the first Minister for Education of the dictatorship (1976-1977). Previously, and also during a period of dictatorship (1970-1973), he had been Minister for Education in the province of Santa Fe, and secretary of the Federal Council of Education. Juan Carlos Tedesco has pointed out that 'his political career has been accompanied by the intention of developing a theoretical line in the sphere of pedagogical thought'.²⁸

During the first stage of the dictatorship Bruera coined the 'pedagogy of values' in a generalised context of 'dis-values' which, according to the dictatorship's proposal, had to be combated. In an educative system contaminated by 'dis-values' the theme of values had to be installed as a structural axis to 're-moralise' society. Not only was the retrieval of traditional values proposed (order, authority, discipline, respect), but also their re-establishment based on their diffusion and the simultaneous negation, abusing and censorship of democratic and pluralist values. Diversity came to be understood as negative and chaotic. Among the foundational education objectives of the dictatorship was the shaping of an educative system which would recover and consolidate the values essential to 'being Argentine', a-historically defined. The restitution of those values should emphasise the sense of conservative morality, religiosity and traditionalism on which the regime relied.

The 'pedagogy of values' sought to assume the transmissive dogmatic mandate inherited from the authoritarian political project. 'Moral values', considered and prioritised hierarchically, had to remain immune from all forms of debate. They had to be accepted unconditionally without the need for reference to any criteria of rationality or reflexivity. The heterogeneous valorative spheres – be they sociocultural, civic, ethical or otherwise – were left behind, buried. The guardians and 'preservers' of moral values²⁹ had to impose an efficient valorative scheme legitimised through the pedagogy of values and courage.

This pedagogy of values was complemented by a *pedagogy of the spirit* and a *pedagogy of renunciation*. The authoritarian discourse of the dictatorship found in the perennialist discourse of García Hoz – re-appropriated by Bruera, the first education minister of the dictatorship – the appropriate expression of a-historicity, universality and conservatism in matters pedagogical. It was expressed in categories like order, transcendence, educability, socialisation, adaptation, happiness, common good, individual good, asceticism, moral and religious values. Personalised Education offered an infinity of arguments for those who, as heads of the nation's Ministry of Culture and Education, or acting as educators from the *de-ideologised* universities:

constituted groups of *academic interest* concerned about curricular matters, letting research slide toward private institutes or those monopolised by groups linked to the governing regime, outside the universities, deepening the schism still not overcome between production and transmission of knowledge... who reintroduced pedagogy and the social sciences in philosophy, for example, and at the same time restricted the sciences to their technological applications.³⁰

'Teacher Training' under dictatorship, or The 'salvation' of the Fatherland

As is clear from pedagogical discourses emanating from the National Ministries of Education and the province of Santa Fe, the Argentine educative system had to reveal 'our true and

essential national reality', just as chaos had made obvious the 'dis-values and incongruencies' which the 'agents of Marxism', 'third worldism' and 'materialist eagerness' had poured into that system. In this sense Bruera's message of 11 September 1976 – the Day of the Teacher – delivered in the city of Corrientes, is indicative:

In certain measure, all educative systems translate the social reality of which they form a part because – more than any other social order – they manifest the positive creative forces of a nation but also its incongruencies and dis-values. For that reason the school represents, by condensation, the most defined image of the situation of a national society.³¹

A clear and precise educative policy would facilitate the 'reorganisation' of society. As one of the 'sacred institutions of the Fatherland', the school was singled out as a key site for progressing the 'reeducation of society'. In this instance, the duty of assuming their responsibility as citizens and *collaborating in the cure of the sick society* fell to teachers. The words which this Minister of Education would enunciate on the occasion of commemorating the Day of the Teacher are eloquent in relation to the place which it was hoped that education would take in the 'curing' of this 'sick society': 'If all schools reflect society, it is also the case that all teaching at the same time reflects the school'.³² 'Society, the school, the teacher' were considered as the same thing; 'the' society was reflected in 'the' school, 'the' school reflected 'the' teacher's work.

School/teacher, located ideologically in an especially reproductivist position, constituted the elements of the diad considered in terms of linearity, exclusion, abstraction and a-historicity. This was the diad in which was invested, at least in part, the possibility of recovering 'the order' which the country needed to 'cure the sick social body'. *Reordering* was projected onto the structuring axes of imposition and control. To achieve the goal sought, reordering articulated elements as diverse and as congruent in their finality as those which utilised exclusion, fear and persecution, and those which tried to generate within this group the imaginary state which would link them to the 'salvation' of the Fatherland.

Among these last items Personalised Education and the tendencies which it recreated – such as the 'pedagogy of values' – were utilised in the plans for teacher training and development with the objective of 'personalising/reordering' the educative system, and through it the sick society. This personalisation meant and articulated efficacy and order, via a *technocratic/moralising proposal*. The personalising proposal offered transcendence, religion and perennial values as the 'saviour element' offered to the social subjects. The motive for this proposal was the avoidance of outbreak of conflict within the structure of manifest state authoritarianism and terrorism which the regime installed. The teacher's profile – considered in terms of the professional, the model of dogmatic moral virtues – transformed educators into mere objects, the receptors of forms of instruction to which they were submitted and to which they presently had to submit their students. This instruction offered a strange articulation of metaphysical and technical aspects. This articulation had as its principal goal to keep teachers outside the decision-making realm and schooling institutions remote from the economic, political and cultural processes which took place in society at large.

While the regime attempted to construct in teaching a *foundational myth* – that which would keep teachers associated with the supposed progressivism which went hand in hand with the arrival of technocratic pedagogy in the classroom – the myth of the apostolic

vocation was recreated in parallel. As a consequence teachers were distanced from this merely *technical-vocational* place, from the possibility of autonomously and collectively debating and constructing the knowledge to teach, as well as the values to transmit. The obligatory slogan therefore was to submit oneself to the imposed discipline, to the given values and the national destiny. Those values were as equally singular, genuine, essential and a-historic as the knowledge that had to be taught. Taken together this implied that the condition upon which teaching was predicated was that one became a *social disciplinarian*.

The influence of education inspired by the pedagogy of values would be decisive to achieve the imposition of a homogeneous, transparent and dull society. According to official voices, that influence would restore, and give meaning and values to the disjointed society. Therefore one could conclude that the latent intentionality was that individuals would acquire through educative personalisation the moral-religious habits which would preserve and protect order in an occidental and Christian society. For this, educators had to firstly take a hold of those habits to be able to reflect them as a model for their students. This led therefore to 'a situation of unique truth and meaning, in which there are not interpretations, only interpretation, to the end that the plurality and even the ambiguity of the social senses yield to the truth present in the discourse of origin'.³³ Thus it did not appear unusual to affirm that teacher training was a 'question of national security' when the proposed end was to 'order' and 'modernise' the educative system as 'it is/was intended in truth to create a new educational order'.³⁴

Teachers were objects of this presumed 'personalising/moralising training' to acquire 'professionalism'. Moreover, in a society where the dictatorship had cut off the plurality of meanings, those who did not possess the mythical-political fundamentals which sustained the regime could only constitute themselves as subjects with difficulty.³⁵ It can thus be affirmed that teachers were intentionally and systematically de-professionalised through their supposed professionalisation, through the canon of *moralisation/personalisation* imposed. This 'professionalism/de-professionalisation' was thought in terms of human duty, and model situations which could be resolved through an identical pattern and, fundamentally, if teachers were committed to the remoralisation/disciplining of society.

Teacher training, as much initial as in-service, was conceived of as a key site for the indoctrination which would presently have to be 'transmitted' to students (teachers were educated in the way that they would presently be asked to educate): such was, we believe, the conductive nerve of the training plan. For that reason, I concur with Giles Ferry when he asserts that:

the training of teachers is the site of greatest ideological concentration. The decisions which can be taken within that terrain have profound and long-term consequences for the orientation and functioning of the entire education system. These decisions are only secondarily technical and organisational decisions. They are from the outset political, in the dual sense of a policy on education which consists of promoting a set of organised measures with their own educative goals, and a general policy which seeks to shape a certain type of society in relation to a certain conjuncture of forces.³⁶

This conception measured the genesis and origins of the Argentine teacher training system.³⁷ It is a problematic which, although falling outside the scope of this article, we cannot ignore if we want to imagine the utilisation of teachers as disciplinary agents.³⁸

Conclusions

The dictatorship, then, converted education into one more apparatus of repression and social pauperisation. It utilised education to disseminate its dismal project, and to generate an individualist sectarian conscience which it called 'occidental and Christian'. The educative apparatus was utilised to reproduce and augment the inequalities typical of class society. During the regime, the articulation of the traditional positions of the Catholic Church with different sectors of the armed forces and neoliberalism in the economic sphere impregnated the social relations generated throughout the totality of Argentine society. Simultaneously education was languishing through the processes of recurrent re-sacralization and militarisation, manifest in a striking private sector hegemony. These processes were protected by the subsidiary role which the national State had come to fulfil in relation to one of its principal social obligations.

In relation to prior articulations between education and the state, it should be added that pedagogical neoconservatism left a deep impression on the discursive practices of the time: in particular, the de-politicisation of educative policy translated in the concealment and distortion of the extant relations between politics and education. The neoconservative political model denies politics as a constitutive element of relations between people.³⁹ It denies politics as terrain for the constitution of subjects, simultaneously exalting the competent and efficacious figure of the 'individual', resorting to the most retrograde, traditionalist and moralist practices to achieve this. Those components were exalted during the dictatorial regime by the generation of authoritarian prototypes, archetypal representatives of the autocratic culture which impregnated Argentine society to the point of satiation.⁴⁰

Authoritarian ideology and the economic scheme of neoliberalism required that teachers and students acted as 'obedient' elements of the economic, political, ideological and social normativity implemented by the dominant groups in power. In this situation, and through the theory of the subsidiarity of the state, the role played by groups and sectors linked to the Church contributed to the loss of the centrality and legitimacy of the traditional education system in the field of the production and reproduction of knowledge. That loss intervened decisively in the imposition of the model of disciplining/moralisation-personalisation imposed, and in this 'colonisation' of the conduct of education.⁴¹

The 'nation under threat', the 'national being with a sword held over its head', subsumed under the supposed crisis of values, allowed the Church to break out again and display the ideological moralising tones tailored to the military regime. These permitted the ideologues in the ambit of education to see in pedagogical perennialism 'the remedy' which could be offered to teachers as 'custodians of national sovereignty'. This transpired when the concretion of the 'new educative order' unequivocally signified, in part, the restructuring movement that the hegemonic block was effecting as a consequence of the crisis in the regime of capital accumulation which took place in the decade of the seventies.

The *militarisation of the educative system* permitted the regime to empower and re-value order, discipline, verticalist hierarchies and obedience as cardinal virtues. Fear, silence, foreign and internal exile pervaded academic spaces on all levels. The endeavour of 'aseptic training' – disguised as an apparent apolitical-ness – helped to establish a totalitarian political order which, through the tutelage of the disciplinarian and authoritarian state, mutated popular sovereignty.

During the first years of the Process, perennialist personalism constituted the clear philosophical-ideological guarantee which flowered within ideas capable of articulating a moralising-authoritarian pedagogical proposal. The 'pedagogy of values' was the primitive appendix which assumed the mandate of 'moralising to the sick society' from the terrain of education. The spiritualist components of the personalist philosophy of education and the theory of personalised education contributed to consolidate an 'educative style' capable of imposing an ideological y pedagogical homogeneity anchored in a conservative and perennialist tradition capable of concealing social conflicts. Through the dissemination of this pedagogical plan, the regime attempted to have the teaching fraternity facilitate the reproduction of the prevailing order and the re-accommodation of the hegemonic block, through teachers' participation in the creation of a 'new educational order'.

Notes and references

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- 4 Emilio García Méndez, *Autoritarismo y control social: Argentina, Uruguay, Chile*, Buenos Aires, Hammurabi, 1987, p. 23; cf. Marcelo Cavarozzi, *Autoritarismo y democracia (1955-1983)*, Buenos Aires, CEAL, 1992; Gustavo Roca, *Las dictaduras militares en el cono sur*, Buenos Aires, Cid Editor, 1984.
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- 6 These were Brigadier-General Agosti's words at the time of his retirement, cited in Oscar Troncoso, *El proceso de reorganización nacional*, Tomo 3, No. 242, Buenos Aires, CEAL, 1988, p. 7.
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- 8 Alfredo Martínez de Hoz, cited in *Diario La Nación* [daily newspaper], Buenos Aires, Argentina, 23 May 1997, p. 12.
- 9 Silvia Sigal & Isabel Santi, 'El discurso en el régimen autoritario: un estudio comparativo', in Isidoro Cheresky & Jacques Chonchol (eds), *Crisis y transformación de los regímenes autoritarios*, Buenos Aires, EUDEBA, 1985, p. 145.
- 10 Hugo Quiroga et al. (eds), *A veinte años del golpe: con memoria democrática*, Rosario, Homo Sapiens, 1996, p. 8.
- 11 On the 'sick society', see Fernando Delich, *Metáforas de la sociedad argentina*, Buenos Aires, Sudamericana, 1986, p. 29.
- 12 Quiroga, *El tiempo*, pp. 25-26, 30.
- 13 'Discursive practices comprise the formulation of an official myth by those who have power, and the manipulation of normative power through campaigns of indoctrination, and control of the means of communication and education, *inter alia*'. See Juan Corradi, 'El método de destrucción: El terror en la Argentina', in Quiroga et al. (eds), *A veinte años del golpe*, p. 90.
- 14 Beatriz Sarlo, 'Política, ideología y figuración literaria', in Daniel Balderston et al. (eds), *Ficción y política: la narrativa argentina durante el proceso militar*, Buenos Aires, Alianza Estudio, 1987, p. 39.
- 15 Here I apply Moore's concept: 'indoctrination is a form of teaching by which one intends that certain beliefs are accepted without question, because they are important and unquestionable truths or because, for various reasons, it is thought that independently of whether they are truths or falsehoods they should not be questioned... indoctrination is of a style typically irrational, in the sense that it requires that certain conclusions remain outside of the reach of critical questioning'. See T. Moore, *Introducción a la Filosofía de la Educación*, México, Trillas, 1992, p. 64.
- 16 See Carolina Kaufmann, 'De libertades arrebatadas. Del discurso pedagógico en la Argentina del "Proceso"', *Propuesta Educativa*, Buenos Aires, FLACSO, Año 8, no. 16, [1997], pp. 64-69.
- 17 Although militarisation in the university sphere was solidified during this historic conjuncture, we find antecedents of the same type during the Ivanisevich government (1974-1975), an administration under which careers also 'disappeared' and police and military officers were posted in distinct buildings of the university. In parallel fashion, 'literally all the offices which belonged to distinct clubs were destroyed and the offices belonging to the Student Centres of each faculty [of the University of Buenos Aires - UBA] were closed and sometimes walled up. There were cases such as Engineering where an armoured vehicle was placed in the central hall of the faculty'. See A. Gómez, *No nos han vencido: Historia del Centro de Estudiantes de Derecho, UBA*, Buenos Aires, EUDEBA, 1995, p. 125.
- 18 In the sphere of the Assemblies of the Federal Council of Education between 1976 and 1978, the provinces continued with the tonic of ensuring certain minimum conditions for the realisation of the transfers, a process which had been initiated in 1955 and told of the many tensions which had constituted and constitute the debate between centralism and federalism, as well as the new

- subsidiary role which the state was going to assume in relation to education in Argentina. The handover was finally realised in unilateral form and acquired decisive force when the measure was impelled from the Ministry of the Economy. The national government imposed the transference and formalised it by means of obligatory agreements. Instead of the gradualism recommended by the Federal Council, the transference was carried out drastically and obliged the provinces to take exclusive charge of the financing of the 6,000 national schools. Although the explicit argument had centred on achieving decentralisation and quality of service, the concrete reality was the diminution of the importance that the national budget played in sustaining primary and pre-primary public education, as the regime was in charge of the transfers. Thus it was established by Laws No. 21.809 and No. 21.810 on transference of pre-primary and primary services to the provinces and to the Municipality of the City of Buenos Aires and the National Territory of Tierra del Fuego; and by Laws No. 22.367 and No. 22.368 on transference of the educational establishments and units of adult primary level to identical jurisdictions to those mentioned. See Norma Paviglianitti, *Neoconservadurismo y educación: un debate silenciado en la Argentina del 90*, Buenos Aires, Coquena Grupo Editor, 1990, p. 46.
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 20. Gregorio Kaminsky, Chapter 3.3, 'La potencia del enano', in *Dispositivos institucionales, democracia y autoritarismo en los problemas institucionales*, Buenos Aires, Lugar Editorial, 1990, p. 139.
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 24. Paciano Feroso Estébanez, *Teoría de la educación*, México, Trillas, 1987, p. 94.
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 26. Sobrino, *Las ideologías pedagógicas*, p. 68.
 27. Adriana Puiggrós, *Imaginación y crisis en la pedagogía latinoamericana*, México, Alianza Editorial Mexicana, 1990, p. 43. The author uses the category 'pedagogical subject' to characterise the link established between educator and educated, both complex social subjects who figure in the educative situation. See A. Puiggrós, *Sujetos, Disciplina y Curriculum en los orígenes del sistema educativo*, tomo 1, Galerna, Buenos Aires, 1990, p. 30.
 28. Juan Carlos Tedesco, 'Elementos para una sociología del currículum', in Juan Carlos Tedesco et al., *El proyecto educativo autoritario: Argentina, 1976-1982*, Buenos Aires, FLACSO, p. 27.
 29. Agnes Heller, *Historia y vida cotidiana*, México, Grijalbo, p.35.
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 37. See Andrea Alliaud, *Los maestros y su historia: los orígenes del magisterio argentino*, (Vol. 1), Buenos Aires, CEAL, 1993, p. 18; Adriana Puiggrós, *Sujetos. Disciplina y Curriculum en los orígenes del sistema educativo*, Buenos Aires, Galerna, 1990, pp. 30-32.
 38. As María Cristina Davini observes in Chapter 1, María Cristina Davini, *La formación docente en cuestión: política y pedagogía*, Buenos Aires, Paidós, 1995, p. 22: 'In Argentina, the State was in charge of creating the conditions of 'homogeneity' to which civil society would conform'.
 39. Norma Paviglianitti, *Neoconservadurismo y educación: Un debate silenciado en la Argentina del 90*, Buenos Aires, Coquena Grupo Editor, 1990.
 40. Kaminsky notes that the authoritarian prototype adopts many of the following behaviours: he/she rigidly accepts conventional values; does not take autonomous moral decisions; rejects all difference through violence; thinks in fixed and stereotyped terms; prefers immutable characteristics (race, blood, fatherland) to social values; thinks in hierarchic terms; praises the maintenance of the status quo; accepts authority for its own sake; rejects critical thought; forbids personal and group conflicts; adheres to the values of tradition, family and land; is 'beyond the mountains' in religious matters; and is obsessed with order. See *Dispositivos institucionales*, pp. 103-104.
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