

2. Here I Stand

This chapter aims to design and propose a framework of reference around the most significant roots which transverse the thought and the curricular path of Michael Apple's work. It begins with a very brief analysis of the parallelism drawn by Michael Apple, in one of his most significant texts, *There is a River: James B. MacDonald and Curriculum Tradition*¹, with the historical narrative by Harding, *There is a River. The Black Struggle for Freedom in America*². Such parallelism (conferred to us by the 'river' metaphor, which is the expression of struggle and suffering for a better society), denounces the existence of a certain movement in the field of education, in general, and of the curriculum, in particular which, since the end of the last century, has intervened with determination in the attempt to build a more just and fair-for-all society and education. But it also points to Macdonald as an unavoidable element in the complex process of continuous construction of that 'river', thus opening the door to a better and more profound comprehension of Michael Apple's standing in the curricular field.

In this way, a swim will be undertaken through the use of the river metaphor. This metaphor allows us to point out the most significant shadows which, decisively, directly or indirectly, have come to interfere with the process of construction of the curricular thought of Michael Apple. Thus, not only will a map be sketched related to the four major and extremely complex and interrelated spheres of his thought: the curriculum, the new sociology of education, analytical philosophy and political science; but also the concept of reconceptualization will be disputed.

In closing this chapter, a text analysis will be resumed of *There is a River: James B. MacDonald and Curriculum Tradition* so that, with Michael Apple, homage to the life and work of MacDonald will be paid, sculpting in this space some of the more significant ideas of the important legacy he left us. In terminating the chapter this way, we will highlight the real existence of a weighty legacy of struggles and social compromises taken up by a group of individuals and by a number of complex events that have occurred from the end of the eighteenth century till now and which, as a

¹ Apple, Michael (1985) *There is a River: James B. MacDonald and Curriculum Tradition*. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 6, pp., 9-18.

² Harding, V. (1981) *There is a River. The Black Struggle for Freedom in America*. New York: Vintage Books.

question of justice, should not be ignored by all those who are concerned with a serious investigation into the curricular field.

It is in this context of intentions that we focus on the work of Robeson, *Here I stand*³, which, as we will have the opportunity to mention later, was central in the life of Michael Apple. By taking up Robeson's work, we will propose a possible interpretation of the most significant foundations of Michael Apple and establish a parallelism between the works (more than merely to confer a cataphoric title to the chapter).

2.1 There is a River

It was in 1772 when in Reading, Pennsylvania, a slave dealer issued a letter to the slave trading company complaining about his *product*:

I took your Negro George, some time ago home, thinking I might be better able to Sell him: who after being with me a night behaved himself in such an insolent manner I immediately remanded him back to the Gaol. About a week since I put him up at Public sale ... where there was a number of Persons who inclined to Purchase him. But he protested publicly that he would not be sold, and if any one should purchase him he would be the Death of him and words to the like purpose, which deter'd the people from bidding. I then sent him back with Directions to the Gouler to keep him at Hard Labor which he refuses to do & goes in such An Insolent Manner that's impossible to get a master to him there⁴.

When in 1981, Harding published *There is a River. The Black Struggle for Freedom in America*, he was far from imagining the impact that his work would have on North American society. Beyond his enormous contribution to the study of historical truth, centering around the cancer of social segregation in North American society, the origins of which are rooted in slavery, Harding's book served as the catalyst for the creation of one of the most significant texts in homage to MacDonald. This recognition of MacDonald granted the book a pivotal position in the study of the dynamics that interfere in the field of education, in general, and of curriculum, in particular.

³ Robeson, P. (1971) *Here I Stand*. Boston: Beacon Press.

⁴ Green, New England, and Wax Negro Resistance, *Apud*, Harding, V. (1981) *There is a River. The Black Struggle for Freedom in America*. New York: Vintage Books, pp., 40-41.

Drawing from some of the informal notes that we had the opportunity to gathering during our research⁵, one can conclude that the winter of 1983 would surely be engraved forever in the memory of the Apples. Between July and August of that year, Michael and Rima were in Melburne, Australia, working at the Universities of Monash and Melbourne as Visiting Distinguished Professor and Visiting Researcher respectively. Their longing for friends was, in some way, alleviated by the constant telephonic contact maintained between the couple and Selden, an intimate friend of the Apples. The friendship between Selden and Michael goes back to the mid-sixties, at Columbia Teachers College, when both were graduate students and had Huebner as major professor. In fact, it was while waiting outside Huebner's office door to meet with him that they met. Since then, they have discovered a number of common points between them. Both were offspring of working class parents, both were deeply involved in anti-war and anti-racist movements, and both had been teachers with a deep political commitment. From that day, the friendship has been strengthened, becoming more cohesive and more meaningful in the long periods of separation through regular contact by telephone when the Apples were in Australia, or by the weekly letters when Selden was in the People's Republic of China lecturing at the Beijing Normal University as Visiting Professor.

It was in one of the many telephone calls that the unsteady voice of Selden, at the the Universality of Pennsylvania at that time but about to be transferred to the University of Maryland where he remains till now, recounted the sudden death of MacDonald, then Distinguished Professor at University of North Caroline at Greensboro. Greensboro was (and still is) a complex and interesting place. It may be described, on the one hand, as very conservative area, with a very active Ku Klux Klan and longheld patterns of segregation, but on the other hand, it also boasts of many Maoist and Marxist movements that are deeply involved with the workers of the textile industry, an industry that is predominant in that area. MacDonald was an intimate friend of the Apple family and an inseparable companion of both Michael and Rima⁶ in their defense of a more just and equal society.

⁵ Paraskeva, J. *Field Notes*. Madison – University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁶ Although, here it is not relevant to develop the role played by Rima Apple in the life of Michael Apple, since it is not the objective of this chapter, or of our work, one cannot, nevertheless, ignore the impact and the predominance that Rima Apple has on the thinking and action of Michael Apple. It would be an error, which we will try to avoid.

Having returned to the United States of America in August of 1983, Michael was invited to participate in the Conference on Curriculum Theory and Practice at Bergamo that was to take place on November 2, 1984, a public ceremony in homage to MacDonald at which speakers like Grumet, Huebner, Molnar, Pinar, Spodek, Wolfson, Stinson and Burke, some closer than others to MacDonald, were present. At the time, Michael Apple was already working on the first chapters of his book *Teachers and Texts*. Despite never having participated by choice in the conferences at Bergamo, Michael Apple agreed to participate. Still profoundly shaken by the tragedy, he sat in his office, interrupted the writing of the book *Teachers and Texts* and wrote, non-stop, the article *There is a River: James B. MacDonald and Curriculum Tradition* with the aim of paying homage to Jim, his wife and son who attended the conference. After much thought, Michael Apple agreed to its publication in 1985, in the *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*⁷.

Even now, when the death of MacDonald is mentioned, immediately perceivable in Michael Apple's body language or facial expression is the emergence of a complex amalgam of anger, impotence, suffering, an uncertainty between silence and a scream, a cry and nothing—true and lively expressions of the flame of respect, friendship and solidarity he holds for his companion. In essence, although the text is the living example of a labor of pain—of someone profoundly hurt by some of the incomprehensible turns of destiny, by the impossibility of having been able to make a last gesture of farewell to the one person who had been a collaborator in so many battles in the trenches—the fact is that the text would have an extremely significant impact on the curricular field as we shall have the opportunity to verify throughout this chapter.

Despite its subjective traits (but then which text, oral or written, does not have them) the text ended up conquering objectivity by establishing a parallelism between the existence of a specific current in the curricular field, the origins of which date

⁷ As we will be able to verify, at the end of the second chapter, *Curriculum Inquiry* is highlighted as one of the most prominent journals of the 1970s and later decades in the field. This issue might raise some doubts around the publication of the article *There is a River: James B. MacDonald and Curriculum Tradition*, by Michael Apple in the *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*. However, the publication of all the texts related to the conference appeared in a special issue in the *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* on the basis of a decision made by the conference organization. Furthermore, the *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* manifested a positive tendency to alter its publication policy, by giving more space for some material that was conceptually, politically and culturally solid, which led Michael Apple to accept a position within its Editorial Board.

back to the end of the nineteenth century. This current had in its scope the difficult, unbalanced and complex struggle for the creation of a more just and equitable society, and with the successful historical narrative by Harding, centered around the true historical process of slavery in the United States of America and the struggle for freedom, the most basic of human rights and one that is so often intentionally distorted as one can see by the disturbing, explicit descriptions in Harding's⁸ narrative.

In fact, the article written by Michael Apple to pay homage to the life and work of MacDonald not only proves to be a fair option, but also is able to establish a fundamental parallelism for understanding the conflicts and dynamics which are at the core of the curricular field, which as with the broader history of the United States of America cannot ignore the (still latent) social conflicts caused by slavery. Although the United States is perceived as a nation that was embroiled in the fire of genocide between immigrants and Native Americans, it is nevertheless mandatory to stress that hundreds of thousands of those immigrants were blacks and were disembarked at American ports while chained from neck to foot.

By using the river metaphor, the reader is able to travel to the most remote corners of the African continent and accompany the journey of a race up to contemporary times, as Harding describes the sad story of the black race. It was a race that always struggled up to where it was humanly permitted to "resist the breaking of [their] nations, families, and the chain of [their] existence (...) to free [them]selves from the already obviously brutal captivity which was spreading over the people like some cloud of foreboding and death, to free [them]selves for the life that [their] forebears had willed to [them] and [their] children (...) to resist both the European captors and their African helpers, to challenge and seek to break their power to take [them] away from [their] homeland"⁹. Not only did they "den[y] the European right to hold [them], to rule [their] lives, to control [their] destiny" but also they "affirmed [their] own freedom, [their] own being"¹⁰.

⁸ Harding, V. (1981) *There is a River. The Black Struggle for Freedom in America*. New York: Vintage Books.

⁹ Op. Cit., p., 9. Parentheses mine

¹⁰ Op. Cit., p., 9. Parentheses mine.

Their words, acts, screams and suicides “were among the earliest forms of what we shall call the Great Tradition of Black Protest”¹¹. Many of them were butchered, many women were raped, and plenty of them committed suicide and killed their own children so as to not suffer the humiliation of slavery. Even though many of them “lost the battle to live and to be rid of their captors”¹², and even “though few of their words survive”¹³, not only have “they won the struggle to die and be free”¹⁴, but also the actions of “[their] fathers and mothers in those ships along the coasts declared that many of them were determined to carry on a relentless struggle for freedom (...) from the status of animals, the role of prisoners, the domination of white Europeans”¹⁵. Notwithstanding the continuous acts of resistance during thier captivity, the fact is that such acts were, in themselves, insufficient to break the agonizing bonds of slavery. It would still be necessary to “master the ship”¹⁶, which would come to happen later in the course of the river narrated by Harding. In essence, “these forerunners who fought and sang, who starved themselves to death in the darkness of the ships’ holds, have forced their way into the ever-flowing river of black struggle”¹⁷.

The historical tragedy of the black race is not only crossed over by the genocide of the Native American people (who have been largely ignored by researchers), but also by the dynamics of a primitive capitalism. For Harding, “the brutal connections between the vast, potentially profitable lands of the Western Hemisphere, and the apparently inexhaustible sources of captive labor in Africa, became the critical nexus in the minds of Europe’s ruling and commercial classes, as they anticipated the wealth and power these human and physical resources would bring to them”¹⁸, stressing furthermore that “the tie of the ships to European capitalism was evident. (...) To maximize profits, the ships had to herd as many Africans aboard as possible, and to exploit their own white crews”¹⁹. Subjacent to the forms of oppression of slavery, were “the demoniac forces of white racism and Euro-Capitalism”²⁰, which did not fail to express, throughout the process of exploitation, a series of paradoxes, translated not

¹¹ Op. Cit., p., 14

¹² Op. Cit., p., 18

¹³ Op. Cit., p., 11.

¹⁴ Op. Cit., p., 18

¹⁵ Op. Cit., p., 11

¹⁶ Op. Cit., p., 12.

¹⁷ Op. Cit., p., 19.

¹⁸ Op. Cit., p., 6.

¹⁹ Op. Cit., p., 11

²⁰ Op. Cit., p., 23.

only in the relation established between blacks and religion (“blacks could be at once Christians and slaves”²¹), but also in the actual colonial laws which, despite being considered “landmarks of early American liberty (...) shut the door in the face of black freedom”²². In other words, since the beginning, “European laws for African people meant black subjugation and repression, arbitrary advantages for whites, and racist distinctions among laboring forces”²³. Furthermore, “always behind the laws were whips, the scaffolds, and the guns, buttressed in turn by the ever deepening layers of fear and mistrust”²⁴.

In the midst of this whole sad voyage and one which should make us seriously ponder the varied forms of racism that, unfortunately, still permeate contemporary societies, and although slave resistance assumed different contours, practices and strategies, and in some cases, even contradictory ones throughout the years, the fact is that its struggle must be perceived as an act of revolt of a race that saw itself deprived of the more elementary of human rights—freedom. At the same time, it was and forever will be a message of hope and joint effort, the beginnings of which can be traced back to the moment in which the first slave revolted, and even though history, for various reasons, failed to register it thus, that moment propelled a whole series of subsequent events, thus being the source of the river—of struggle, of hope—through which many more would travel.

It is this metaphor, in all its possibility and connotative power, that Michael Apple transposes to the field of the curriculum by means of the article *There is River: James Macdonald and Curriculum Studies*. By paying homage to MacDonald, Michael Apple, more than placing him in the curricular river and implicitly professing himself as co-creator and user of that same river, demonstrated the existence of a long tradition in the field in which many have fought for a more just education that is able to work for transformations toward greater justice and equality for our society, ideas which were fundamental in the early work of Michael Apple, as we will have the opportunity to confirm in the next point.

²¹ Wood, pp., 37-62, *Apud* Harding, V. (1981) *There is a River. The Black Struggle for Freedom in America*. New York: Vintage Books p., 27.

²² Harding, V. (1981) *There is a River. The Black Struggle for Freedom in America*. New York: Vintage Books p., 27.

²³ *Op. Cit.*, p., 27.

²⁴ *Op. Cit.*, p., 28.

2.2 Here I Stand: Swimming in a Specific Curricular Progressive River

Every individual is an expression of a specific context with which s/he constantly maintains an interaction. More than merely existing, human beings co-exist dialectically with a set of contexts/spaces (institutions) and people that help them to (de)construct their own identities. Michael Apple is no exception to the rule and his work must be understood and considered both as the result of a multiplicity of influences—at the personal and professional level—which were assimilated by him throughout more than three decades, resulting in profound and complex political and intellectual influences on many others.

Thus, as the source and the mouth of a specific river and of a particular project of social identity, his extensive intellectual and political work reveals (and this is profoundly important) the vitality of a specific progressive curricular movement notwithstanding the complex difficulties that it had faced from the end of the nineteenth century and especially in the last three decades of the twentieth century, in which a new bloc of Conservative restoration—with the Neo-Liberals in the leadership—intends to determine the destiny of society. In order to do so, Conservative bloc attempts to refine and purify the social capitalist project with the support of certain institutions like schools.

However, personal or institutional influence in itself is not a unidirectional process. The dialectic interaction necessarily leads to transformations (some more profound than others) be it at the level of the individual or at the level of nature itself.

In fact, as will be verified in this chapter, Michael Apple manifests a variety of influences. Thus and in a first attempt to systematize these influences besides those of the family, which will be dealt with greater detail at the beginning of the third chapter, his influences may be traced at both the national and international level.

In this way, at the national level, the period in which Michael Apple was a graduate student at Teachers College, Columbia University, must not be ignored. It was here that he began to interact with some of the leading figures of the curricular and educational field. In his own words, in addition to some of his graduation colleagues,

and besides Soltis (whose powerful influence on Michael Apple's journey will be examined later on) six professors had considerable influence on him. Michael Apple comments on their influence:

Philip Phenix was my first adviser. His course was "Realms of meanings". A very tough course. We had to know the epistemological structure and the pedagogical structure that might come from fifteen disciplines. It was an impossible mission, but we had to do it. If I had to say who gave me, in a torturous way, all the stuff that I had not got until there, it was Phenix. He was a brilliant lecturer. Arno Bellack, Herb Kliebard's adviser and one of the leading figures in curriculum theory introduced the work of Wittgenstein to the field and did a lot of empirical work on Descriptive theory. (...) Alice Miel, a friend of Rugg and Counts, she was a middle-range theorist between people like Huebner and Bellack. She spent years doing democratic curriculum development. Her book *Changing the Curriculum* was very important in my thinking. It was a social democratic proposal. Bruce Joyce usually would not surface in our discussions but had a lot of influence on me in a puzzling way. He believes that with each form of knowledge there is a kind of pedagogy. He is a technocrat. A "Tyler", but the very best "Tyler" there is. He developed different models of teaching based on some of the work of major curriculum theorists. He was part of a larger movement that took the Bellack material [quite empirical descriptions of classrooms] and made it not descriptive theory but programmatic theory. He had a major research program and I was his research assistant and helped him write one of the models, the Taba's model. Although I refused then and now the idea that you can develop a concrete model of teaching, that covers all of the complexity of the act of teaching, he was very useful to me because he was deeply concerned with some of the material that I already had begun developing with Huebner, that is, thinking of the curriculum as an environment. George Fisher was also very important to me. I had a course with him and helped him to write "Ideology and Opinion Making". My task was the input of analytic material and helping him on the translation of Habermas, and he is the one who helped me open the door to see that we can combine analytic material with more Marxist theory. John Herman Randall was a very, very demanding professor, unbelievably demanding (...). I had a course "History of Philosophy" that we used to call, "From Plato to NATO". Although I didn't like his form of pedagogy, I understood with him increasingly whose shoulders I was standing on in philosophy. Reading Hegel was a torture, simply a torture, but allowed me to understand Marx more deeply; reading Spinoza led me to understand objectivity and the history of how we taught about knowledge²⁵.

²⁵ Apple, Michael *Tapes 9, 10 and 15*, recorded in office "e" of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Michael Apple was part of a notable period of the history of the Teachers College. As he himself states, “at that time TC was Mecca if you were involved in [...] political stuff”²⁶, (...) “it was a University in exile. All of the Germans and Jews that escaped from the Nazis went to the New School (...). [Separate from Teachers College], the New School in Columbia [was] the center for critical pedagogy in United States, giving courses on Marcuse, Habermas, some by Arendt and on Arendt, and on phenomenology. It was the only place outside Northwestern University that had this type of courses”²⁷. Despite this stimulating experience—he attended some of these courses—during his period at Teachers College and the impact that Soltis had on his professional trajectory, Michael Apple stresses his relationship with Maxine Greene. Although Greene was “considered not very important at that time in Teachers College, because analytic philosophy was a dominant perspective and people thought that we didn’t need the European stuff”²⁸, gradually, this tendency began to change very significantly. In his own words, Michael Apple comments:

Working with Huebner makes me know Maxine. They were close friends. [She] gave some lectures that I attended too. I found her poetic, but I didn’t find her arguments compelling, at first. Gradually, she and I began to talk about my dissertation. I was using phenomenological sociology of knowledge (...) and her influences on me, in some way, was like Randall. She let me see a poetic tradition, a tradition of literary theory²⁹.

At the national level, Michael Apple does not minimize in any way the powerful influence of Paul Robeson and the lyrics of the folk song movement from singers like (Josh) White, (Woody) Guthrie and his son Arlo and, especially (Pete) Seeger. According to Michael Apple, “Seeger was the troubadour, a singer of the people, with a very strong communist sympathy (...) and [his work] suffered a lot with the boycotts from the right wing movements”³⁰. With regards to Robeson, Michael Apple

²⁶ Marshall, J. Sears, J. & Schubert, W. (2000) *Turning Points in Curriculum. A Contemporary America Memoir*. New Jersey: Merrill, Prentice Hall, p., 85.

²⁷ Apple, Michael *Tape 15*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

²⁸ Op. Cit.

²⁹ Op. Cit.

³⁰ Op. Cit.

places him as a key political and intellectual figure in the family. Robeson was [also] from New Jersey, and, as will be observed in the next chapter, given his relationships and sympathies with the east European countries, especially the Soviet Union and East Germany, he soon became the embodied voice of the oppressed people and an inconvenient figure for the capitalist society.

In Michael Apple's words, Robeson "was an anti-racist leading activist, a member of the Communist Party, an actor, a persuasive preacher and a singer"³¹. Besides his famous patriotic song, "Ballad of Americans", there is a whole generation that does not forget events such as Peekskill in New York, where the police and right wing movements reacted with violence or the concert that he gave at the U.S./Canadian border, singing on U.S. side, because the authorities, at that time, confiscated his passport"³². Robeson and Seeger were so important in Michael Apple's life that the author decided—giving continuity to an old family tradition—to call his first son Paul and the second Peter.

Still within the national context, Michael Apple highlights his interactions with Selden, since at the time both were graduate students at Teachers College. Even though Selden is not a very prolific writer, Michael Apple stresses his work centered on the "early influences of eugenics on education", defending that "you cannot [ever] quantify how much your best friend teaches you"³³.

Before proceeding with an analysis of influences on Michael Apple in the international sphere, one must not ignore the powerful influence of his experiences as Vice-President and President of a Teachers Union and the Friday Seminar. The Friday Seminar started as a group in 1971 in a very informal way, with a small group of Michael Apple's doctoral students who used to rotate meeting at night in each other's houses. People wanted to read, for instance, Marx—the humanist work, Habermas, Rawls and other material together. It was so compelling, that the next year it became a standard space attached to a course, with the name Friday Seminar. According to Michael Apple, the Friday "group" provides him a dialectical environment, a place where he can interact in a dialogical perspective with his students and peers, where he

³¹ Op. Cit.

³² Op. Cit.

³³ Apple, Michael *Tape 9*, recorded in office "e" of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

feels the challenges that the students make upon him. In fact, it is one of the filters of his work and one of the major sources of his intellectual and political (re)construction. Moreover, the Friday group, besides the informal reputation that it still maintains, is a place characterized by an international dimension that allows Michael Apple to understand the complex issue of education in other countries and the impact of U.S. politics over the world. As he indicates:

You've been in the Friday group long enough to see that when I write something major it goes there before I publish (...). Many of the most clearly generative ideas I get are from my students criticizing my work and my positions. You've been there when this is happening and you know that sometimes this was done with love, but I am not defensive. If I feel strongly about something, I argue back and I challenge people. For example, you know that I have begun to incorporate some postmodern material in my work. It is no longer easy to call me simply a "neo-Marxist". I am a Gramscian, yes I am, but I am more. There is no heresy in this. And in doing this I am not losing my political principles in the process. So I am not a Leninist about this, certainly not a Stalinist, but there is a lot of Lenin in me. While you cannot take the Marx out of me and you cannot take Gramsci out of me—I can never imagine that possibility—that's not all that's in me. A lot of my students were influenced by postmodern material and cultural studies (...), bring that material in to the Friday group and challenge me. So some of my influences are not only from my writing or readings but the arguing that's going with my students, who sometimes in specific matters are more advanced than I am. The Friday group has, as well its international characteristic. (...) It is a very international group. This is profoundly important. So the fact that I know a lot about Brazil is both a cause and effect of having a lot of Brazilian students. Usually 40-45% of the people from the Friday group come from outside United States.

The Friday group in the best sense forces me to avoid the U.S. arrogance: 'We are the world'. Through the Friday group I always reflect on 'Who are we?' And in this exercise I reflect on Brazil, Colombia, Korea, England, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, Portugal, Spain, Taiwan and so on. Finally the Friday group (...) gives me a space to be me. I don't have to hide. I can be me. Being a leader and a follower enables me to do the kinds of things that are harder to do in a classroom. For example, we can organize around the Free Burma Coalition³⁴.

³⁴ Op. Cit.

With regards to his Teacher's Union experience in New Jersey, Michael Apple inserts it in the context of the family and social background in which he grew up: "I come from a union family. Being a worker and not being a member of the Union it seems absurd to me. Actually it wouldn't be absurd. It wouldn't ever happen. In my mind, the words are the same. Worker and union. Period. I came from a very strong union background. So my history includes coming from a working class family, with a communist father and mother that would never let you forget that. [Thus] I didn't see any differences between teachers and fabric workers"³⁵. As he stresses, such an experience was not the result of a well-planned act, but it provided him with very important tools for understanding, in a deeper fashion, the relations that are established between the teachers and the institution's power. It is this dimension, in fact, that Michael Apple recycles through his work. As he states:

I learned from the Teacher's Union how to organize. I did political activity before but organizing with teachers is very, very different than is organizing with oppressed people, that is overtly oppressed workers and poor black people, because, there, the oppression is in your face. It's the roots of my *Gramscian* strategy. Before I read Gramsci, I understood the strategy which is how do I made connections with the elements of good sense that they have, and convince them to leave the elements of bad sense behind. The hard part was to fight conservatism within the labor movement. "Education and Power" analyses teaching as a labor process. Trying to find sources of revenue, in a small, relatively poor community, and dealing with issues of money, made it very clear to me, how important that is, not just people's critical theory, but issues of materiality and money. So you can see echoes of the latter on my work that comments on the political economy of Marxist stuff that I grew up with, [i.e] the notion that we have more than two classes working here and the greatness of what it's like to bargain, to organize, to mobilize and then see how you can use those tactics to influence state regulation³⁶.

Also within the nation's 'milieu', Michael Apple not only refers to Zeichner as "a political ally (...) one he trusts totally in the field of teacher education (...) and who

³⁵ Apple, Michael *Tape 16*, recorded in office "e" of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison

³⁶ Op. Cit.

provides a model to think about teacher education”³⁷, but also to Wright and Willis. In relation to the latter two, according to Michael Apple, although the influences were mutual, both were very powerful in his intellectual and political construction.

Wright had a strong influence on me. His analysis of class is absolutely central to how I first thought about teachers in a contradictory class location. The influence was mutual, but I know very well where I get the method of thinking about class analysis in a more complicated way. There is no doubt in my mind that I owe it to Eric. (...) Paul was as influential on me as Eric. From Paul I understood class as a creative project, (...) the cultural theories of class. (...) From Eric I learned about positional analysis of class, the structural theories of class³⁸.

At the international level, Michael Apple’s influences must not be dissociated from the impact that his works and thoughts were beginning to have in the curriculum field at the national level. Michael Apple stresses the work of Rob Connell in Australia (“a very good theorist on masculinity, social theory”³⁹) as well as the rich experience obtained from Linda and Graham Smith in New Zealand, both Maori activists “fighting for the restoration of Maori language and culture”⁴⁰. In New Zealand, Michael Apple “worked with Maori groups [and is] a member of the Board of Directors of the International Research Institute on Maori and Indigenous Education”⁴¹. According to Michael Apple, while *Ideology and Curriculum* and *Education and Power* provides them theoretical support, [they] show me what that means in terms of concrete struggles”⁴².

Similarly, at the international level, Michael Apple highlights the interactions that he has established with other intellectuals. Thus, one must not ignore the experiences gathered on the basis of the works and ideas of Enguita, Torres Santomé and Gimeno.

³⁷ Apple, Michael *Tape 14*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

³⁸ Op. Cit.

³⁹ Apple, Michael *Tape 16*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison

⁴⁰ Op. Cit.

⁴¹ Op. Cit.

⁴² Op. Cit.

In fact, “Spain is not simply another country”⁴³ to him. Michael Apple has “always been curious about Spain given the fact that [he] had relatives who fought in the International Brigade (...) and in the battle of Madrid many of [his] relatives were there”⁴⁴. While Enguita has produced his work in Spain and Gimeno has, according to Michael Apple, interesting post-modern positions—although we disagree with him on the national curriculum, Torres Santomé, like Enguita, has transmitted to him a realistic picture of Spanish reality, in and out of Spain. As Michael Apple comments, “[Torres Santomé] allows me to see connections between the struggles in Spain and in United States; [he] lets me understand the real issues there about teacher’s unions, and the conflict of the Basque people”⁴⁵.

From Brazil one should mention the work and thought of Freire and Tadeu da Silva in the intellectual journey of Michael Apple. Through Tadeu da Silva, Michael Apple understood “his movement towards neo-Marxism and post-modern material and began to see why post-modern stuff in Latin America becomes more powerful given the Stalinist heritage of some members of the Communist Party”⁴⁶. With regards to Freire, Michael Apple expresses admiration for his way of acting and for his political strategy—“I watched what he was trying to do and worked with him with Teacher’s Unions, and saw how he was able to find resources in a time of conservative government in Sao Paulo, how he can use politics to get stuff going, how he can sustain himself and the movement amid the storms of criticism”⁴⁷. However, he notes that the influence of Freire on his work came late.

Obviously [there is] an influence from Freire. Much less than what people think. This was not influential on me, at all, until the 70’s. If you read in that book *Power Meaning and Identity*, my essays where I talk about my experiences as a teacher, it sounds pretty *Freirean* to me. However there was an indigenous movement in the United States of radical and socialist teachers who were doing with all these things anyway, working with working-class kids. We didn’t need Freire. When Freire starts to be known in United States we thought it was very

⁴³ Op. Cit.

⁴⁴ Op. Cit.

⁴⁵ Op. Cit.

⁴⁶ Op. Cit.

⁴⁷ Apple, Michael *Tape 10*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

good, intellectually sophisticated, but we were doing the practice already. This is not meant to be disrespectful. It is meant to be honest and about what are the degrees of influence⁴⁸.

Nevertheless, Michael Apple points to the public disagreements that both had: “I think there is a good deal of romanticism in Paulo Freire’s work, that somehow automatically by the use of a method people will be brought to a level of consciousness about the oppression [and also] sometimes I think his work is quite masculine in his very notion of emancipation: ‘I know what emancipation is, I’ll give it to you’. I think emancipation is a struggle”⁴⁹. Michael Apples argues that “teaching also needs telling”⁵⁰ and “you cannot reduce things down to one method”⁵¹ and criticizes a specific sphere of the field that uses Freire’s work for social mobility. Although he sees Freire as an intellectual and emotional leader, one of the best teachers that teaches by example, one that put his own body on the line to save other peoples’ lives and who provides a model of action, Michael Apple insists on not placing him ‘on a pedestal’. Michael Apple says that he sees himself as “a [totally] independent person”⁵², conscious of his affiliations but “never in the shadows of anybody”⁵³, making it perfectly clear that his “social mobility doesn’t depend on Paulo Freire’s work”.⁵⁴

We also cannot ignore the experience gathered by Michael Apple from his relationship with Moreira, also Brazilian. Michael Apple says, “I think he is the best person in the curriculum field [in Brazil] and although I spend less time with him, he let me know how curriculum theory affects Brazil”⁵⁵. About Garcia, Michael Apple comments, “although better known outside Brazil, she is deeply connected with teachers and teacher’s unions and especially with primary schools. Although some people don’t seem to trust her as much intellectually and politically (...), I know her quite well personally, so I trust her. Sometimes [...] I would prefer to be with

⁴⁸ Op. Cit.

⁴⁹ Apple, Michael *Tape 14*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁵⁰ Op. Cit.

⁵¹ Op. Cit.

⁵² Apple, Michael *Tape 10* recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁵³ Op. Cit.

⁵⁴ Op. Cit.

⁵⁵ Op. Cit.

someone who is principled and liberal than unprincipled and radical. I know where a liberal stands and I know where she stands”⁵⁶. On Saul, he says, “he is less well known but quite influential on what you can do on schools and very well connected with schools in the slums”⁵⁷.

In this international mapping of Michael Apple’s influences, and before dealing with his extensive and rich experience in Slovenia, we cannot minimize the influences that he received from Nagao, De Alba and Assen, from Japan, Mexico and Norway respectively. According to Michael Apple, while Nagao “introduced [him] to the Burakim and taught [him] about the [dimensions of] ethnicity and caste in Japan and was very helpful in showing [him] how power works in Japan”⁵⁸ and De Alba “allowed [him] to understand the political complexities in Mexico”⁵⁹, the experience he gets from Assen is no less important. As Michael Apple stresses “be[ing] in Norway and having conversations with people changed me. An example would be that I have a greater respect for social democracy”⁶⁰. In Norway, Michael Apple notes, “there are certain social benefits that even the right take for granted. His Norway experience was broader and Aasen is the one “who has written very important material on how the social democratic states mediate pressures from the right”⁶¹.

As we can see, Michael Apple’s experiences provided him with a wider comprehension of specific and delicate issues such as the political and social struggles and contradictions around race, class and gender. And his experience in Slovenia provides an outstanding example. During his stay in Ljubljana, Michael Apple lectured at the University of Ljubljana and worked together with the Minister of Education “trying to build a democratic school system, after the collapse of the Soviet model”⁶². However, the most exciting experience he extracted from the Balkans was somewhat accidental. Given the inconceivable and reproachable genocide that was happening, the people were running away, trying to cross the border, looking for

⁵⁶ Op. Cit.

⁵⁷ Op. Cit.

⁵⁸ Apple, *Michael Tape 14*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁵⁹ Op. Cit.

⁶⁰ Op. Cit.

⁶¹ Op. Cit.

⁶² Op. Cit.

shelter within the refugee camps in Slovenia. It was in one of these camps near Ljubljana, in “old Stalinist barracks, with no heat, no water, no electricity, old dirty barracks”⁶³, that Michael Apple spent a couple days providing humanitarian assistance to the refugees. The reality lived by him was disheartening and distressing: “twelve-year-old girls [four months pregnant] there were 1500 people in the camp, 1000 woman, 500 men and 100 of those ‘men’ were children”⁶⁴, and the real issue was the future of those people. Nevertheless, despite being faced by this shocking reality, something happened that had a profound effect on the vision of Michael Apple with regards to the importance of education and its fundamental complexities.

What was most influential on me there was, when I got in, before they established mechanisms for getting food and clothes, the very first day, they established a school [...]. I had a lot of talks with teachers there who looked like they were rich because they escaped from Bosnia only with the clothes that they were wearing. So they took their best clothes with them. When I asked then what they wanted, what is it that we can get for you [namely] books, chalk, anything, [and] after a long conversation back and forth, one of them that spoke English said, ‘Michael we would really like to become women again. Can you have people send us make up?’ That’s when I realized what gender means. For these woman, as teachers, to be restored to a sense of normality, to be teachers again was to look good, to be respected was to have a decent dress and to wear some make up so they could be a respectful woman who looks nice and who is proud of her image. That seems an odd story, but in terms of the feminist material I was reading, it was actually a very important story about how the body works, how certain things become so important⁶⁵.

Up to here, we have sketched some of the most significant influences on Michael Apple at the national and international levels. Nevertheless, and without intending to minimize the significance and the importance of such influences and in an attempt to systematize the influences of Michael Apple, we can identify five areas which form the basis and which transverse his intellectual formation and his work: the curriculum, the new sociology of education, neo-Marxism, critical theory and philosophy of two kinds—analytical philosophy and phenomenology. It is our understanding that these

⁶³ Op. Cit.

⁶⁴ Op. Cit.

⁶⁵ Op. Cit.

five spheres are amongst the most important and critical of Michael Apple's influences both at the national and international level. We will spend the rest of this chapter dealing with these spheres.

Influences within the Curriculum Sphere

Given the various conversations that we have had and in addition to the influences previously mentioned, without a shadow of a doubt there are five people in the curricular field who exerted a close, direct and profound influence on Michael Apple's life and work. Perhaps a little biographical information may help us to better understand this. During his first period at Teachers College, Michael Apple was interested in the more profound issues underpinning the field of education. For example, he did not feel the need to empirically understand what 53% of the school principals thought about the curriculum. That might be important, but only "in the context of larger questions"⁶⁶. Given the rich experience he had had in the leadership of the teachers' syndicate, he was "interested in the process of teaching"; that is to say, "curriculum was something that he was concerned about, but [he] had intentions to specialize on how we taught about teaching"⁶⁷.

However, this solid and steadfast desire was about to be shaken. In 1967, someone came to Teachers College to give a lecture. "A skinny guy and a chain smoker"⁶⁸ who had been a student of Bellack's at Teachers College. He was called Kliebard and he presented a first draft of his material on Tyler, Bobbitt and Charters⁶⁹. According to Michael Apple that day completely changed his view of the field; it was "a revolutionary moment"⁷⁰:

⁶⁶ Apple, Michael *Tape 9*, recorded in office "e" of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁶⁷ Op. Cit.

⁶⁸ Op. Cit.

⁶⁹ This paper was published a year later as chapter in a book. *Vide* Kliebard, H. (1968) *The Curriculum Field in Retrospect*. In P. Witt (ed). *Technology and Curriculum*. New York: Teachers College Press, pp., 69-84.

⁷⁰ Apple, Michael *Tape 9*, recorded in office "e" of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

We were very angry about the state of the schools (...). From that day on, and I can point to this moment, I couldn't look at the curriculum in the same way. Not only me [but] the entire generation at that time in Teachers College. We realized where this material comes from. We knew Bobbitt, and Charters from the readings of Bode; we had contact with some philosophical issues around Tyler⁷¹.

Thus, adds Michael Apple, "if I were to say who is the person whose shoulders I learnt to stand on in my understanding of what my task was, it is [Kliebard]"⁷². Although Kliebard had never been Michael Apple's professor, in many aspects he was, since it was Kliebard who brought Michael Apple in 1970 to the University of Wisconsin-Madison, to take over Herrick's position after his death⁷³, and he served as chair of his tenure committee. Notwithstanding the role played by Kliebard as his mentor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (which still gives him "this incredible warmth when I think about him"), Michael Apple, nevertheless, stresses that his own goal was also to go beyond Kliebard's descriptive approach:

My task was to go well beyond him, because, actually, he opened the door but he did not walk through it himself. So he talked about Taylorism, but he didn't do the anti-capitalist analysis that goes with it. And my task in *Ideology and Curriculum* was to say 'here is the rest of the story'. 'Here is what eugenics were doing'. 'Here is what Bobbitt and Charters and Snedden and Thorndike actually mean'⁷⁴.

However, while we cannot speak of the life of Michael Apple at the University of Wisconsin-Madison without mentioning Kliebard's name, it is nevertheless true that

⁷¹ Op. Cit.

⁷² Op. Cit.

⁷³ Huebner, D. *Tape 6* recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA . "My recollection of this is that Herb called me and asked if I would be interested in returning to Wisconsin to teach. I said no, but indicated that Mike would be an excellent candidate for the position. After he accepted the position, I notified Helen Herrick, Virgil's wife. They got together and as a result Helen gave Mike Virgil's desk".

⁷⁴ Apple, Michael *Tape 9*, recorded in office "e" of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

we also cannot ignore the relation he established with Macdonald⁷⁵ and, above all, his intellectual debt to Huebner.

Macdonald thought that the “schools must have both a pedagogically packaged cultural heritage and the means for bringing to life and for understanding the deeper meanings of individual and cultural existence which pervade learning in the experiences of persons”⁷⁶. This task is seen by him as extremely difficult not only because the “curriculum, all dressed up in its new suit may well appear to the child much like the emperor’s clothes”⁷⁷, in other words, “in public school people may perhaps have been seduced into thinking the emperor has a new suit”⁷⁸, but also by the “apparent lack of comprehension by the scholars of the history of curriculum in the twentieth century”⁷⁹. Naturally, Macdonald argues “there is “nothing in recent curriculum development which alters in any fundamental way the historically available thought in the field of curriculum”⁸⁰. He understood that there was something “terribly wrong about schooling”⁸¹ which was not exactly its “irrelevance per se”⁸² but “simply that living in school is an essentially inferior, vulgar, imitative, second-rate experience”⁸³.

In a field that is almost subjugated by the powerful *Tylerian* model⁸⁴, Macdonald criticized the behaviorist objectives model⁸⁵ and put forward an alternative model of schooling based on three dimensions: sociocultural, psychological and transactional,

⁷⁵ Huebner, D. *Tape 6* recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA. According to Huebner, “Jim Macdonald and he were doctoral students at the same time, and were close student colleagues. Both of them were research assistants of Herrick’s, and very close intellectually. They both minored in sociology, took courses together. They both stayed in touch throughout his career. In fact whenever they got together they found that they had been reading more or less the same material. Huebner’s first sabbatical at TC was taken back at Wisconsin, so Jim and he could work together. For a period of time, Jim was at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where he was either in charge of the elementary school there or responsible for research in the school. At a memorial service for Jim at one of the JCT conferences sponsored by Pinar, Michael Apple commented on his debt to Jim in a very moving essay”.

⁷⁶ Macdonald, J. (1966) *Language, Meaning and Motivation: An introduction*. In J. Macdonald & R. Leeper (eds.). *Language and Meaning*. Washington: ASCD, pp., 1-7, pp., 3-4.

⁷⁷ Op. Cit., p., 3.

⁷⁸ Op. Cit., p., 3.

⁷⁹ Op. Cit., p., 3.

⁸⁰ Op. Cit., p., 3.

⁸¹ Macdonald, J. (1969-70) *The School Environment as Learner Reality*. *Curriculum Theory Network*, 4, pp., 45-52, p., 45.

⁸² Op. Cit., pp., 45-52, p., 45.

⁸³ Op. Cit., pp., 45-52, p., 45.

⁸⁴ Macdonald, J., Wolfson, B. & Zaret, H. (1973) *Reschooling Society: A Conceptual Model*. Washington: ASCD., p., 2.

⁸⁵ Op. Cit., pp., 2-3.

profoundly articulated by means of an “increasing thrust for liberation, participation and pluralism of all participants”⁸⁶. Clearly for Macdonald, “the curriculum is the cultural environment which has been selected as a set of possibilities for learning transactions”⁸⁷. His major preoccupation was the defense of the school “as an environment for living, the nature of this environment, what this environment communicates to youngsters, and the role verbal communication may have in this environment”⁸⁸. This is a *Deweyan* position that makes him recognize the necessity of understanding a theory as a potential creation of reality, a process that should be seen as an act of creation and not only as a mere act of presentation. Thus, the theorization is much more than a rational process. More than a validation of practice, theorization implies a constant dialectical state. Theory is, to Macdonald, an act of faith, a religious act⁸⁹.

It is in this context and in a clear distancing from Tyler and from Schwab, but also in a denunciation of reductionism in the field of critical theory that Macdonald advanced the mythopoetic approach. He argued that theoretical bipolarization was harmful to the field. Despite recognizing the potentialities of the critical curricular approach, Macdonald was unable, in his opinion, to describe a set of moral, aesthetic and metaphysical dynamics⁹⁰. In his own words, “the focus of curriculum is not simply a context where a curriculum is a metaphor operation”⁹¹, a reality that is completely neglected by the technical approach and which the critical approach, as the key of the emancipatory and political approach, failed to explain in full. Thus, and because the curriculum should be understood as “the study of what constitute a world for learning, and how to go about making this world”⁹², it would be important to fight for a curricular debate which focused on theory and practice. In this way, it would be fundamental to problematize the actual debate in accordance with four fundamental questions: “What brackets surround curriculum talk?” “Curriculum theory is only talk about talk, or is it also talk about work and power?” “Is curriculum talk essentially

⁸⁶ Op. Cit., p., 17.

⁸⁷ Op. Cit., p., 17.

⁸⁸ Macdonald, J. (1969-70) The School Environment as Learner Reality. *Curriculum Theory Network*, 4, pp., 45-52, p., 46.

⁸⁹ Macdonald, J. (1982) How Literal is Curriculum Theory. *Theory into Practice*, 21 (1), pp., 55-61.

⁹⁰ Op. Cit., pp., 55-61.

⁹¹ Op. Cit., p., 60.

⁹² Macdonald, J. (1977) Values Bases and Issues for Curriculum. In A. Molnar & A. Zahorik (eds.) *Curriculum Theory*. Washington: ASCD, pp., 10-21, p., 11.

descriptive or is it talk about change?” and “What kinds of cultural tools are most appropriate for curriculum talk?”⁹³.

After this brief analysis, we can determine a number of common points in the works of Macdonald and Michael Apple. Although the work of Michael Apple should always be understood at a much more profound conceptual level, the fact is that, like Macdonald, in Michael Apple (as we will have the opportunity to verify in the third chapter) we also find a firm stance against the *status quo* in the field, an opposition to the reductionism and the dehumanization of fundamentalism proposed by the model centered on objectives, a criticism of the irrelevance of curricular content and of the lack of a historical sense of the field within the bosom of its own research. Michael Apple also struggled against the discrepancy between curricular theorization and practical issues in defending the curriculum as the ambience of learning. Equally important is the fact that in some of Michael Apple’s initial texts (as will be verified later on), the preoccupation with language and its influence on the construction of knowledge is also revealed. In fact, there are even nuances of Macdonald’s mythopoetic approach that are somewhat infused in some of the texts from Michael Apple’s initial phase. This affirmation is also explored by Holland, for whom a “close reading” of one of the Michael Apple’s more significant initial texts “reveals widespread use of powerfully evocative adjectives used to emphasize points in the discourse”⁹⁴. However, in Michael Apple’s own words, this aesthetic tendency came to him while young. According to Michael Apple, there was always a strong poetic tradition in the family—his middle name is Whitman—and from a very young age, he was interested in poetry and wrote poems. In this way, it is not surprising to find a critical reading tempered by aesthetic notions⁹⁵.

Along critical sociological lines identical to those of Macdonald’s, although in a more profound and elaborate conceptual formulation, is to be found the one that Michael Apple recognizes to be at the top of the list of influences, both at the personal and professional levels: Huebner. Born to a working-class family and with an infancy and youth lived during the difficulties caused by the economic depression, Huebner

⁹³ Op. Cit., pp., 13-15.

⁹⁴ Holland, P. (1992) Macdonald and the Mythopoetic. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 9 (4), pp., 45-69, p., 62.

⁹⁵ Apple, Michael *Tape 9*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

emerged in the field of education with a background in chemistry and physics. After joining the army, he studied electrical engineering, even though the interesting possibility of being able to combine this knowledge with the field of nuclear physics would not come to fruition. As is stressed by him, “only when I finished did I become more and more aware of education, as a field, and the importance of education and decided to study education and become a teacher”⁹⁶. In order to do so, he decided to attend the University of Chicago because “that’s where Dewey was, Hutchins was and the conflict between those two was significant for me”⁹⁷. His passage through Chicago coincides with the famous first conference of curriculum theory organized by Herrick and Tyler⁹⁸ and which will be more closely analyzed in the next chapter. He became an elementary school teacher and although he had Eberman as his major professor, “the most significant person [...] at that time was Virgil Herrick, because of Herrick’s leadership in the field of education”⁹⁹. This close relationship would become steadfast when Herrick went to UW-Madison “to build [...] an elementary program and try to tie [it] to the field of education, and more directly to empirical work”¹⁰⁰ taking with him a number of people, among them Eberman and Huebner. It was in Madison that Huebner established contact with Gerth¹⁰¹, Mannheim’s student who was part of the contingent of intellectuals from the “Institut für Sozialforschung” who had escaped from the Nazi regime in Germany and had found asylum in the United States.

Stimulated by Gerth, Huebner increasingly detached himself from the empiricist dimension of research and established contact with the works of Marx (*Das Kapital* was “the best book I have ever read, the best written book I have ever read”¹⁰²), Langer, Parson and Shils, Russell, and Cassirer, among others, deepening and widening his intellectual dimension, understanding thus that “part of the difficulty in the curriculum field was its narrow range of concepts and its heavy dependency upon

⁹⁶ Huebner, D. *Tape 1*, recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA.

⁹⁷ Op. Cit.

⁹⁸ Huebner is referring to the conference *Toward Improved Curriculum Theory* organized by V. Herrick & R. Tyler in 1947 at the University of Chicago.

⁹⁹ Huebner, D. *Tape 1*, recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA.

¹⁰⁰ Huebner, D. *Tape 1*, recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA.

¹⁰¹ Gerth was somehow a very polemical figure within the Frankfurt School. With this regard *vide*: Greffrath, M. (1982) As in the Book of Fairy Tales: All Alone... a Conversation with Hans Gerth. In J. Bensman, L. Vidich & N. Gerth (1982) *Politics, Character and Culture*. Westport: Greenwood Press, pp., 14-47; and also Arendt, H. (1951) *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt Brace.

¹⁰² Huebner, D. *Tape 2*, recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA.

behavioral sciences”¹⁰³. The constant search for a more complex intellectual tool took him to the domain of Existentialism, largely influenced by the work of Marcel, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre, and of theology, where the thought of Tillich—“the first German professor to be dismissed from his position [in Frankfurt] by Adolf Hitler”¹⁰⁴—can be highlighted¹⁰⁵.

In one of his more brilliant works, with has as its basis an article presented in an Elementary Guidance Workshop¹⁰⁶, Huebner upholds that curricular language is to be found immersed in two tyrannical myths: “one is that of learning—the other that of purpose, [...] almost magical elements the curricular worker is afraid to ignore, let alone question”¹⁰⁷. He argues that “learning is merely a postulated concept, not a reality and objectives are not always needed for educational planning”¹⁰⁸. In this way, for Huebner, the major problem in the world of education, which has been short-circuited by behavioral objectives sciences and learning theory, was the fact that we were not dealing with the autobiography, we were not dealing with life and inspiration”¹⁰⁹.

This excessive submission of the field to learning theory and to the model centered on objectives is the result of the language in which the curricular field has been constructed. It is a language that is full of “dangerous and non-recognized [and

¹⁰³ Op. Cit.

¹⁰⁴ Randall, J. (1969) The Philosophical Legacy of Paul Tillich. In J. Lyons (ed.). *The Intellectual Legacy of Paul Tillich*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, pp., 21-51, p., 22. Vide also Pauck, W. & Pauck M. (1967) *Paul Tillich: His Life and Thought*. London: Harper & Row. On page 82 of Chapter 4 he refers to “a letter signed by John Dewey (as temporary chairman of the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Germans Scholars) and other members of the faculty which ‘solicited opinion on the establishment of temporary fellowships at Columbia for refugee scholars, asking whether the faculty were willing to contribute toward funds for this purpose. The response was immediate. 125 faculty members made contributions ... As a result provision was made to add four displaced scholars as visiting professors without financial responsibility on the part of the University. This group included anthropologist Juluius Lips, the archeologist Magaret Bieber, the mathematician Stefan Warschawski, and the theologian Paul Tillich”.

¹⁰⁵ Huebner, D. *Tape 2*, recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA. According to Huebner “Tillich also had connections with the Frankfort School. It was many years later that I realized that Gerth, Tillich, and Fromm have that common background. A very important book for Jim and I, while working with Gerth, was the book he published with C. Wright Mills *Character and Social Structure: The Psychology of Social Institutions*.

¹⁰⁶ Huebner, D. (1964) Curriculum as a Guidance Strategy. *Paper delivered at Elementary Guidance Workshop*. Mimeographed.

¹⁰⁷ Huebner, D. (1966) Curricular Language and Classroom Meanings. In J. Macdonald & R. Leeper. (eds.). *Language and Meaning*. Washington: ASCD, pp., 8-26, p., 10.

¹⁰⁸ Op. Cit., p., 10.

¹⁰⁹ Huebner, D. *Tape 1*, recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA.

unchallenged] myths”¹¹⁰ that makes it impossible to question whether the “technologists maybe were going in the wrong direction”¹¹¹. This becomes much more complex and alarming in a society in which “the problem is no longer one of explaining change, but of explaining nonchange”¹¹² and faced by a human being that, by his transcendent condition, “has the capacity to transcend what he is to become, something that he is not”¹¹³. Huebner illustrates the reductionism of the learning theory in this superbly achieved example:

For centuries the poet has sung of his near infinitudes; the theologian has preached of his depravity and hinted of his participation in the divine; the philosopher has struggled to encompass him in his systems, only to have him repeatedly escape; the novelist and dramatist have captured his fleeting moments of pain and purity in never-to-be-forgotten aesthetic forms; and the [man] engaged in the curriculum has the temerity to reduce this being to a single term – learner¹¹⁴.

Thus, “learning seems inadequate as the key concept for curriculum and points to what must concern the educator, viz, the fact that man is above all else a being caught in succession and duration, or change and continuity”¹¹⁵. In this way, Huebner continues, “learning [...] concerns itself with only a part of this total phenomenon [...] it yanks man out of his world and freezes him at a stage in his own biographical evolution”¹¹⁶. As a reaction to this (insulting) reductionism, Huebner proposed five value systems that bear with them “forms of rationality which may be used to talk about classroom activity”¹¹⁷. These value systems include: technical (expressed almost completely in the “current curricular ideology”), political (“all educational

¹¹⁰ Huebner, D. (1966) Curricular Language and Classroom Meanings. In J. Macdonald & R. Leeper. (eds.). *Language and Meaning*. Washington: ASCD, pp., 8-26, p., 9

¹¹¹ Huebner, D. *Tape 1*, recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA.

¹¹² Huebner, D. (1967) Curriculum as Concern of Man’s Temporality. *Theory into Practice*, 6 (4), pp., 172-179, p., 174.

¹¹³ Op. Cit., p., 174.

¹¹⁴ Huebner, D. (1966) Curricular Language and Classroom Meanings. In J. Macdonald & R. Leeper. (eds.). *Language and Meaning*. Washington: ASCD, pp., 8-26, p., 10.

¹¹⁵ Huebner, D. (1967) Curriculum as Concern of Man’s Temporality. *Theory into Practice*, 6 (4), pp., 172-179, p., 175.

¹¹⁶ Op. Cit., p., 175.

¹¹⁷ Huebner, D. (1966) Curricular Language and Classroom Meanings. In J. Macdonald & R. Leeper. (eds.). *Language and Meaning*. Washington: ASCD, pp., 8-26, p., 20.

activity is valued politically; [...] the teacher or other educator, has a position of power and control”), scientific (“educational activity may be valued for the knowledge that it produces about that activity”), aesthetic (“educational activity would be viewed as having symbolic and esthetic meanings”) and ethical (“educational activity as an encounter between man and man”¹¹⁸). For Huebner, in fact, there is a difference between curricular languages which model the thought of the curricular specialist and the necessity of understanding the theorized educational act as a prayerful act such as that proposed by Macdonald, Wolfson and Zaret ¹¹⁹. Notwithstanding the fact that “curriculum as a guidance strategy demands that educational activity be valued primarily in terms of moral categories”, learning was seen as “the guiding concept in educational thought, [...] a major cornerstone in the [educational] ideology”¹²⁰. Based on this, Huebner later divided the actual usage of curricular language into six categories: “descriptive, explanatory, controlling, legitimating, prescriptive and the language of affiliation”¹²¹.

According to Huebner, his idea “was not to transform the world. What I was trying to transform was the language by which we speak of education which then leads to the transformation of the world”¹²². For Huebner “the crucial problem was and still is the way everyday people talk about education. They are not aware of how that is limiting them in their view and their actions, or their control”¹²³.

On the basis of Dewey's thought—the function of the educator is to determine the environment of the child¹²⁴—Huebner proposed a broad and humane concept for the curricular process which has in consideration that the “educator participates in the paradoxical structure of the universe”¹²⁵. In fact, “man and his language form a paradoxical relationship”¹²⁶ which places him in a constant dialectical relation with

¹¹⁸ Op. Cit., pp., 14-18.

¹¹⁹ Macdonald, J., Wolfson, B. & Zaret, H. (1973) *Reschooling Society: A Conceptual Model*. Washington: ASCD.

¹²⁰ Huebner, D. (1964) Curriculum as a Guidance Strategy. *Paper delivered at Elementary Guidance Workshop*, pp., 1-15.

¹²¹ Huebner, D. (1968) The Tasks of the Curricular Theorist. *Paper presented at ASCD*. Mimeographed, pp., 5-7.

¹²² Huebner, D. *Tape 2*, recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA.

¹²³ Op. Cit.

¹²⁴ Dewey, J. (1902) *The Child and the Curriculum*. Chicago. University of Chicago Press.

¹²⁵ Huebner, D. (1966) Curricular Language and Classroom Meanings. In J. Macdonald & R. Leeper. (eds.). *Language and Meaning*. Washington: ASCD, pp., 8-26, p., 8.

¹²⁶ Huebner, D. (1968) The Tasks of the Curricular Theorist. *Paper presented at ASCD*. Mimeographed, p., 4.

the world¹²⁷. In this way, for Huebner, the curriculum must be perceived as an environment “which would embody the dialectical forms valued by society”¹²⁸; such an environment as this “must include components which will call forth responses from the students [must] be reactive [and] must provide opportunities for the student to become aware of his temporality, to participate in a history which is one horizon of his present”¹²⁹. Thus, we are faced by the “curriculum as a form of human praxis, a shaping of a world [which means] that the responsible individuals are engaged in art and politics”¹³⁰. In essence, “education is not the all of life [...]; however, that part of the day spent in school is a portion of life; it is a part of life, not apart from life; [so] to speak of teaching [...] is to speak about life”¹³¹.

We are confronted with a curricular concept, the roots of which, in fact, had already emerged in Huebner’s doctoral thesis¹³², which is based on the individual, society and culture or tradition and which opposed (and still opposes) the existing curricular model based on a language that is “unconsciously furthered and developed by the scientific study of the child, a study that has ignored the place of the adult in the child’s world, the politics of adult-child relationships, the child’s participation in the building of public worlds, and the art of interpretation about the meaning of life as people, children, and adults live it together”¹³³.

It is in this conceptualization that Huebner defends education as a political act that that transmits strong dynamics of power¹³⁴. According to Huebner, “schooling is inherently political, it always has been, it always will be [since it] implies that someone or some social group has use of power as scarce resources to intervene in the

¹²⁷ Huebner, D. (1967) Curriculum as Concern of Man’s Temporality. *Theory into Practice*, 6 (4), pp., 172-179.

¹²⁸ Op. Cit., p., 177.

¹²⁹ Op. Cit., p., 177.

¹³⁰ Huebner, D. (1968) The Tasks of the Curricular Theorist. *Paper presented at ASCD*. Mimeographed, p., 16.

¹³¹ Huebner, D. (1962) *The Complexities in Teaching*. Unpublished paper, p.12.

¹³² In fact, in the third chapter of his doctoral thesis [*The Interaction between Individual and Environment*] Huebner, deals in a deep perspective with the relation between the human being and the environment. *Vide*, Huebner, D. (1959) *From Classroom Action to Educational Outcomes*. An *Exploration in Educational Theory*. Madison: University of Wisconsin-Madison, pp., 35-78.

¹³³ Huebner, D. (1974) The Remaking of Curriculum Language. In W. Pinar (ed) *Heightened Consciousness, Cultural Revolution and Curriculum Theory*. Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, pp., 36-53, p., 39.

¹³⁴ Huebner, D. (1968) *Teaching as Art and Politics*. Mimeographed; *Vide* also Huebner, D. (1974) The Remaking of Curriculum Language. In W. Pinar (ed) *Heightened Consciousness, Cultural Revolution and Curriculum Theory*. Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, pp., 36-53.

life of others”¹³⁵. Thus, the use of power to intervene in “the life of others is a political act”¹³⁶. Naturally, and given the political essence of education, Huebner defended the need to “destroy the prevailing myth that education can be conflict free, [a myth] that is reinforced by the so called objective methods of evaluation and the movement towards accountability in the USA”¹³⁷.

Along these lines, and in what is for us his best work, he proposes “dialectical materialism as a method of doing education”¹³⁸. Although “current methods of education impede the development of dialectical consciousness or dialectical method, and deprive students and teachers of his power to live temporally, to live educationally”¹³⁹, Huebner defends the need for a dialectical method. As he points out “the materialist base of the method of doing education is the acceptance of Marx’s claim that it is not consciousness of men that determines existence, but their social existence determines consciousness”.¹⁴⁰ In this way, for Huebner, educators should understand the dialectical materialistic foundation extensive to all human life “is not futural [...] nor is it past, but, rather, a present made up of a past and future brought into the moment”, in other words, “man is temporal [that is, he] is [a] historical [being]”¹⁴¹.

Huebner does not uphold schooling exactly as an art but as a “creative art”¹⁴², in which students and teachers interact “as in a jazz quartet, each one finds his own way of adding beauty to the Jazz form”¹⁴³. Thus, the classroom “is a busy place but not an unruly place”. Just like “the poet cannot write without controlling words, the artist cannot paint without knowing symbols”¹⁴⁴, so too in the “classroom studio part of the time is devoted to learning about the tools of the art and their limitation”¹⁴⁵. Huebner believed that “classroom action [was] the primary means of education” and that

¹³⁵ Huebner, D. (1974) Curriculum ... With Liberty and Justice for All. Unpublished paper, p. 1.

¹³⁶ Op. Cit., p. 1.

¹³⁷ Huebner, D. (1979) Perspectives for Viewing Curriculum. *Curriculum Symposium. British Columbia Teachers Federation*. Unpublished paper, p. 2

¹³⁸ Huebner, D. (1977) *Dialectical Materialism as a Method of Doing Education*. Mimeographed.

¹³⁹ Op. Cit., p., 4.

¹⁴⁰ Op. Cit., p., 5. Italics mine.

¹⁴¹ Huebner, D. (1967) Curriculum as Concern of Man’s Temporality. *Theory into Practice*, 6 (4), pp., 172-179, p., 176.

¹⁴² Huebner, D. (1961) *Creativity in Teaching*. Unpublished paper, p. 10

¹⁴³ Op. Cit., p.10

¹⁴⁴ Op. Cit., p. 11.

¹⁴⁵ Op. Cit., p. 11

interactions in the classroom “do not come into existence simply by placing children and the materials together”¹⁴⁶.

Clearly, the type of approach defended by Huebner interfered a good deal with the power instituted in the field. The belief in the ideas that he defended would prove to lead him into some heated (and unpleasant) confrontations during his final moments at Teachers College with some of his peers. In fact, from the beginning, the tensions had already begun to multiply. For the historical register there remain his deep differences with Passow (in which Huebner “kept arguing against the tightening up of the standards”¹⁴⁷) and with Foshay and Goldberg (he opposed the excessive dependency on the learning theory that both defended¹⁴⁸). However, the crisis is made more acute towards the end of the 1970s when “Cremin was president and brought Noah [...] an economist, to be his dean”¹⁴⁹. Huebner could not agree, in any way, with the political strategy of Cremin in transforming Teachers College “in a world leader in the development of human resources”. For Huebner it was totally incomprehensible and unacceptable that a historian of education “talked about human beings as human resources”¹⁵⁰ and that from that moment he felt he “no longer was a part of that institution”¹⁵¹.

Huebner felt that the field had surrendered to a dangerous demagogy (“don’t talk psychological individualism to me. Don’t preach Kant’s moral imperatives tinged with a religious doctrine of salvation. That is put-down language”¹⁵²) which explained the accentuated and alarming theoretical frailty. Having three important documents¹⁵³ as reference, Huebner stressed “the lack of organization of the ideas and efforts related to theorizing about curriculum and to the problem curriculumists have with their

¹⁴⁶ Op. Cit., p., 1.

¹⁴⁷ Huebner, D. *Tape 1*, recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA.

¹⁴⁸ Op. Cit.

¹⁴⁹ Op. Cit.

¹⁵⁰ Op. Cit.

¹⁵¹ Op. Cit.

¹⁵² Huebner, D. (1975) *Poetry and Power: the Politics of Curricular Development*. In W. Pinar (ed) *Curriculum Theorizing, The Reconceptualists*. Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Company, pp., 271-280, p., 276.

¹⁵³ 1967 edition of *Theory into Practice*. Johnson, M. (1968) *The Translation of Curriculum into Instruction. Paper prepared for an invitational pre-session on curriculum theory at AERA*, in February; and Mann, J. (1968) *Toward a Discipline of Curriculum Theory*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University, The Center for the Study of Social Organization of Schools.(Mimeographed).

own history of theorizing”¹⁵⁴. The curricular field followed a dangerous course at various levels:

I think that the major problem seems to me that both at a local school level and also at the school of education level there is no real understanding of what the real educational problem is. They are so busy solving problems almost positively, that they are not able to take a long stance in order to invite people in to talk with them about what may be happening at their own level, or to teachers and students. [...] The problem of school basically is a lack of respect for the individuality of the teachers and the student. When you build a system that ignores the human dimension of the interactions, that becomes the source of the problems. The school is not run for the benefit of the kids. The alienation that goes on in school is the source of the problems. It is the alienation of kids from themselves, kids from teachers, kids from their society. [Also] part of the difficulty is that investment in education has occurred at universities at the research level. And the money that has gone into building the superstructure of the study of education with thousands of people involved means that there is less money to put in local schools. School teachers have problems; they don't have time to solve them and the university people take these problems from the teachers, into their rarefied atmosphere, and use their empirical techniques to try to solve them. Clearly you have a theory-practice problem. The theory-practice problem is a political problem, in terms of who studies the problems of teaching. Teachers do not study their problems, and that's the problem. Underneath this [...] the continued attack on teachers, partially justified because the quality of Teacher Education is another major problem, and the assumption that you can improve teaching by undercutting the stamina and enthusiasm of teachers a profound mistake. The use of Henry Ford's production line in school [is] a complete nonsense ideology¹⁵⁵.

Rendered disbelieving by the course of events, Huebner lashed out and provided incisive criticism of the institutions with strong responsibilities in the field, as with ASCD. For Huebner, ASCD already was a caricature of the initial project of the 1940s. By renouncing the vision of the school as “a manifestation of public life”¹⁵⁶, thus not perceiving educators as “political activists who seek a more just public

¹⁵⁴ Huebner, D. (1968) The Tasks of the Curricular Theorist. *Paper presented at ASCD*. Mimeographed, p., 2.

¹⁵⁵ Huebner, D. *Tape 2* recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA.

¹⁵⁶ Huebner, D. (1975) Poetry and Power: The Politics of Curricular Development. In W. Pinar (ed) *Curriculum Theorizing, The Reconceptualists*. Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Company, pp., 271-280, p., 280.

world”¹⁵⁷, ASCD was an institution with an announced death. He declared the field to be dead, a vision that could not be understood given what had been proposed, in previous years, by Schwab¹⁵⁸. The future, however, would come to prove him right as may be proven by the following transcribed excerpt:

If the curriculum (1918) marked the early maturity of the curriculum field, then the past ten to fifteen years were its golden years. Now the end is here. Many individuals and groups with various intentions have gathered together around this now aged enterprise, ‘curriculum’. Let us acknowledge its demise, gather at the wake, celebrate joyously what our forebears made possible—and then disperse to do our work, because we are no longer members of one household¹⁵⁹.

Looking at the state in which the field is at the beginning of this century and which will be discussed later, we have to concur that Huebner was, in fact, an *avant la lettre* curricularist. Incisive-like, *Cicerian* and contemporary, Huebner “was writing in an idiom and using a language that [the *status quo* of the field] was not familiar with, because [he] was bringing under question the predominant structure, namely behavioral sciences”¹⁶⁰.

After denouncing the absence of a critical and historical dynamic (something that Schwab had also denounced but in a somewhat simplistic fashion), Huebner gradually moved away from the field of secular education to that of a religious education. After

¹⁵⁷ Op. Cit., p., 280.

¹⁵⁸ Huebner, D. *Tape 1*, recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA. Schwab was “not anti-Tyler at all. [...] I would not see him has a humanist. I would see him closer to Philip Phenix, in terms of focus in knowledge, [although] he was not influenced by Phenix at all. [...] He was also closely related to Jewish Theological Seminary [...], had a real impact on Jewish educators [and] a big influence on the development of the Israeli School System.[...] I was not influenced by Schwab when I wrote the article. I was more distressed by the nature of the curriculum field. [...] The only reason I refer to Schwab is that he was getting the same points that I was. He did it earlier than I did. But I was already feeling the frustration about what was happening in the field. It seems to me that his turn to the practical also did not adequately deal with the historical dimensions of the field”.

¹⁵⁹ Huebner, D. (1976) The Moribund Curriculum Field: It’s Wake and Our Work. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 6 (2) pp., 153-167, pp., 154-155.

¹⁶⁰ Huebner, D. *Tape 1* recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA.

all, “he resumes his readings in theology almost as soon as he left Wisconsin”¹⁶¹. Although this change was accelerated given the heated clash that he had with Cremin and Noah, which led him to conclude drastic changes at Teachers College were impossible, the option to study religious education aligned with his true social objective, to an “effort to understand myself and to understand society and it seems to me that education is a primary tool for that”¹⁶². Largely influenced, among others, by Tillich’s Protestant Principle (“that requires a constant protest against form, and that protest against form was absolutely crucial for the continuation of the creation, so to speak”¹⁶³), Huebner was able to perform a much more critical project within religious education. Such protest, “becomes one of the major vehicles for liberation, or recreation or creativity”¹⁶⁴, a language “that secular education didn’t like to hear”¹⁶⁵.

It was in the midst of this turmoil of events that Michael Apple arrived at Teachers College. Having concluded his Masters degree, he was advised by Miel to choose Huebner as the major advisor for his doctorate. At the national level, especially in an organization called ‘Professors of Curriculum’ that was formed after the 1947 Conference, Michael Apple was seen as a student of Huebner, a student that portrayed the master in the following manner:

Huebner was a very difficult person. A lovely person but tremendously difficult. Very very demanding. Let me give an example: “You’re not ready yet. Read these 100 books; when you’re finished read 50 more, then we can talk”. I was ‘hungry’ to be educated and Huebner took me in an intellectually serious way. [...] He opened the doors for me. He was the one that said: for you to understand schools you need to understand the ethical, political, aesthetic. His

¹⁶¹ Huebner, D. *Tape 1*. With regards to this issue, Huebner stresses that the “reading picked up when I moved to TC, for I had great access to a couple of fine bookstores with excellent philosophical and theological material. In the early sixties the person in the department of Curriculum and Teaching who had been the advisor of students in the joint program between our department and Union Theological Seminary stepped down and I offered to take his place. This was the beginning of my connection with religious education. Over the years I had probably more doctoral advisees in religious education—both Jewish and Christian—than I had in secular education and I became as well known in that field as I did in the secular field of curriculum. As things changed at TC, as our secular students became less intellectually curious, I turned more and more of my attention to that field. So when the frustration at TC became too great, and early retirement became possible, I took it. At about the same time, Yale was searching for someone in RE, and after my retirement was accepted, I agreed to try out the Yale possibility”.

¹⁶² Huebner, D. *Tape 1* Op. Cit.

¹⁶³ Op. Cit.

¹⁶⁴ Op. Cit.

¹⁶⁵ Op. Cit.

article “Curricular language and classroom meanings” was the most influential text I ever read. Huebner made me conscious that my glasses were no good. I needed other glasses. I was his teaching assistant. He is someone who was committed to reading the most difficult material. We had a seminar with him where we couldn't use the language of education. We could use political language, aesthetic language, but not the language of education. His intellectual model was extremely compelling and powerful¹⁶⁶.

For Huebner, who confesses to having been [and continuing to be] extremely demanding, personally and professionally [the reason for which many students preferred not to work with him¹⁶⁷], Michael Apple was, in fact, a notable scholar:

Michael was independent. He was a good writer. He had almost his own agenda. He was willing to work, he was willing to read the new kind of stuff, he was willing to play with new ideas, he was able to see the kind of relationship between the kind of more theoretical stuff that we were reading and the practical needs of the curriculum field. He was the only person that I had in the secular curriculum field who was able to bridge the gap between the philosophical and sociological stuff we were reading with the practical of the field. Michael was the only one who turned in a dissertation draft, which was complete on its submission. The only one. I looked at the draft and I said, “That's it”. It was really good. [...] Michael was always one of the most confident students, one of the strongest students [...] We were reading Schutz together [which] is a major source in Michael's work and thought¹⁶⁸.

After this brief analysis of some of Huebner's intellectual life and influence, we can outline some of the roots of what would come to be the thematic trajectory of Michael Apple's work. Thus, we can identify in his work a problematization centered around the conflict that exists in the field of science (“who knows, from such a chaos a science might emerge”¹⁶⁹), the implicit existence of a classroom language that is

¹⁶⁶ Apple, Michael *Tape 5*, recorded at office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

¹⁶⁷ Huebner, D. *Tape 1* recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA

¹⁶⁸ Huebner, D. *Tapes 1 and 2* recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA

¹⁶⁹ Huebner, D. (1966) *Curricular Language and Classroom Meanings*. In J. Macdonald & R. Leeper. (eds.). *Language and Meaning*. Washington: ASCD, pp., 8-26-p. 7

uncodified, the cancerous silencing of the historical component of the curriculum¹⁷⁰, the problematics of textbooks and the publishers¹⁷¹, the discrepancy between the school and the day-to-day, the political and economic dimension in curriculum analysis¹⁷², the problematics that underpin school knowledge¹⁷³, and even the assumption of the curriculum “as an environmental design”, a conceptualization that, as we have already mentioned is based on the thought of Dewey, as well as having been upheld by Macdonald and by Michael Apple. If we take into consideration the course the in Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, in Spring 2001, “Elementary School Curriculum” (C&I 662), given by Michael Apple, we are able to understand that at its basis may be found the works of Dewey and Huebner¹⁷⁴.

Michael Apple confirms Huebner’s personal and professional influence on him. As Michael Apple highlights:

The influences [from Huebner] were dispositional, [namely], the world is extremely contradictory; traditional Marxist-analysis has problems [... and] is reductive; the connection between knowledge and power without forgetting the density and the drama of the human

¹⁷⁰ Huebner, D. (1967) Curriculum as Concern of Man’s Temporality. *Theory into Practice*, 6 (4), pp., 172-179.

¹⁷¹ Huebner, D. (1968) *Teaching as Art and Politics*. Mimeographed; Huebner, D. (1970) Curriculum and the Accessibility of Knowledge. *Paper presented at the Curriculum Theory Study Group*, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Mimeographed; *Vide* also Huebner, D. (1974) The Remaking of Curriculum Language. In W. Pinar (ed) *Heightened Consciousness, Cultural Revolution and Curriculum Theory*. Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, pp., 36-53.

¹⁷² Huebner, D. (1974) The Remaking of Curriculum Language. In W. Pinar (ed) *Heightened Consciousness, Cultural Revolution and Curriculum Theory*. Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, pp., 36-53; Huebner, D. (1977) Toward a Political Economy of Curriculum and Human Development. In A. Molnar & A. Zahorik (eds.) *Curriculum Theory*. Washington: ASCD, pp., 92-107.

¹⁷³ Huebner, D. (1970) Curriculum and the Accessibility of Knowledge. *Paper presented at the Curriculum Theory Study Group*, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Mimeographed

¹⁷⁴ *Vide*: Apple Michael (2001) *662 Spring 2000-2001 Elementary School Curriculum*. Doctoral course. Department of Curriculum and Instruction at University of Wisconsin-Madison. According to the course description, *Elementary School Curriculum* is organized around a specific conception of curriculum. It asks us to think about the curriculum not only as the organized body of knowledge to be taught in elementary and middle schools. Rather, the curriculum is seen as a practical—and inherently political—process of environment and design, in which organized content is one element among many. This environment includes such things as the knowledge to be taught, the physical, material, and architectural aspects of the environment, the culture and background of the students, the ‘art’ and skills of teaching, what technology is available, bureaucracy, money and power, and what has come to be called the hidden curriculum. It also includes evaluation, the various ways we judge whether we are or are not successful. In dealing with this more complex but ultimately more real and honest conception of curriculum the course combines multiple modes of teaching: lecture, demonstration, mutual sharing, and co-teaching”.

condition; understanding the world requires multidisciplinary, political economy is insufficient to explain real society; human meanings are vast and complicated. Some of this I got [also] from my own family but, the intellectual discipline, the way of looking at the world as contradictory, fully human and contradictory, was from Huebner¹⁷⁵.

This analysis, besides allowing us to identify Michael Apple's major influence, also enables us to understand and to contextualize his work and his thought in the work that was about to be developed by Huebner. This, however, does not detract any merit from the originality of Michael Apple's proposal. As is noted by Huebner, "Michael took up one perspective of my thinking, pushed it and pushed it very very well. With his own integrity [he] picked up some of my perspectives and developed them in a very constructive way [although] he was already very articulate in the field of socio-politics"¹⁷⁶.

Master and disciple would end up following distinct paths (although with the same purpose). For Huebner, although the political dimension of the field was extremely important (he had after all placed it on the agenda of curricular debate), it explained only part of the problem since "it didn't speak to me to the heart of the problem in terms of my concerns which were much more existential, ontological and metaphysical"¹⁷⁷. Michael Apple, although recognizing that the debt he has with Huebner is vast, ("I owe more than I can ever say to Dwayne"¹⁷⁸), adds that he would explore and delve into the political, economic and cultural dimension of the curricular phenomenon, intercrossing them with the dynamics of race, gender and class. Before we close our analysis of Michael Apple's close influences within the curriculum sphere, it is important to highlight the relationship that he has developed with Beane and Brodhagen, especially in the last decade. Michael Apple's relationship with both scholars is very significant: "I respect both [Beane] and [Broadhagen] a lot for their ability to work in real schools and put in place, without the theory necessarily, without Freire, a real progressive environment and find out what works and what doesn't

¹⁷⁵ Apple, Michael *Tape 5* recorded in office "e" of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

¹⁷⁶ Huebner, D. *Tape 2*, recorded at 3718 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. Washington. USA.

¹⁷⁷ Op. Cit.

¹⁷⁸ Apple, Michael (2000) *Apple and Curriculum Traditions*. In J. Marshall, J. Sears & W. Schubert. *Turning Points in Curriculum. A Contemporary American Memoir*. Merrill: Prentice Hall, p. 86.

work. [They were] influential in my understanding of what is possible in schools even in horrible conditions”. Michael Apple met Beane first when he came to Madison to do his sabbatical with him. As Michael Apple puts it:

Increasingly I wasn't the teacher. It was mutual. Jim, Barbara, and I were in a co-teaching environment. I was upset with the critical pedagogy literature. I thought it was arrogant, destructive, always rhetorical, dismissive of real teachers, didn't make the connections between the ongoing struggles in real schools. Jim and I are engaged in a continuing dialogue about schools. While I have a much more political position, he gives me access to a specific material and examples that I don't have. He is a leading figure in curricular integration in middle schools in United States¹⁷⁹.

Up to now we have been analyzing the more direct and the closest influences on Michael Apple in the curriculum field. However, and as we indicated already at the outset of the chapter, it is our objective to also understand the context of the work and thought of Michael Apple in a specific and progressive river, which began to develop in the field from the end of the nineteenth century. In order to do so, we need to backtrack quite far into history.

2.3 The Emergence of a [Specific Progressive] River

It was at the beginning of 1919¹⁸⁰, when approximately 100 people gathered at the Washington Public Library to attend a meeting of what would come to be known as the Association for the Advancement of Progressive Education (a catalyst for the Progressive Education Association), organized by Cobb and including the participation of Smith [“Headmaster of the Park School, Baltimore”], George [“principal of the Washington Montessori School”], Caldwell [“Director of the

¹⁷⁹ Apple, Michael *Tape 9*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

¹⁸⁰ *Vide* Graham, P. (1967) *Progressive Education: From Arcady to Academe*. New York: Teachers College Press. We think it prudent not to indicate a particular date with regards to the occurrence of this conference given the first footnote of Chapter II, in which the author compares three sources, thus calling attention to the disparity of the reported dates of this event, p. 17.

Lincoln School, Teachers College”] and Johnson [“founder of the Organic School, Fairhope, Alabama”]¹⁸¹.

Johnson, who in the summer of 1907 had accepted the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Comings to open a free school¹⁸² representing a model “based strictly on developmentalist principles”¹⁸³, had been insisting, for some time that Cobb create “a national association to support [her] principles”¹⁸⁴. However, such a task would prove to be very complex, given that “[Cobb] doubted the wisdom of a national organization committed to a single educational philosophy”¹⁸⁵. Johnson, besides expressing the influence received from the thinking of Dewey¹⁸⁶, set up her own project, which was profoundly influenced by the thinking of Oppenheim¹⁸⁷ (“the present methods *teach* too much and allow too little opportunity for development”¹⁸⁸) and Henderson (“the educational process by which the social purpose, the splendor of life, is realized, is an inner process; [in other words] if education is to be a practical process, is to succeed, it must act through the channels of the inner life, and must reach the mainspring of human action, the very source of power”¹⁸⁹).

Johnson was opposed to the existing model of teaching, criticizing the fact that the subject matter was still being considered as “the most important thing in education”¹⁹⁰, and adding that “since human power is the great objective of all study and instruction, why should we tolerate a system of grading and rewards that develops and emphasizes self-consciousness—definitely undermining human power”¹⁹¹. Thus, erroneously “even to this day, many people desire tangible measurable results [and]

¹⁸¹ Op. Cit., p. 17.

¹⁸² Johnson, M. (1974) *Thirty Years with an Idea*. Alabama: The University of Alabama Press.

¹⁸³ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p., 163.

¹⁸⁴ Graham, P. (1967) *Progressive Education: From Arcady Academe*. New York: Teachers College Press, p. 18.

¹⁸⁵ Op. Cit., p. 18.

¹⁸⁶ Johnson, M. (1974) *Thirty Years with an Idea*. Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, p., 13.

¹⁸⁷ We disagree with Graham when he highlights Henderson as having been a major influence for Johnson. Although Johnson refers to Henderson as one of her major influences, the fact is that she stresses Nathan Oppenheim’s development of the child as her “educational bible”. Vide, in this regard Johnson, M. (1974) *Thirty Years with an Idea*. Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, p., 8; and also Graham, P. (1967) *Progressive Education: From Arcady to Academe*. New York: Teachers College Press.

¹⁸⁸ Oppenheim, N. (1898) *The Development of the Child*. London. The MacMillan Company, p., 112.

¹⁸⁹ Henderson, C. (1902) *Education and the Larger Life*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, p., 69.

¹⁹⁰ Johnson, M. (1974) *Thirty Years with an Idea*. Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, p. 7.

¹⁹¹ Op. Cit., p. 4.

we are constantly measuring the child's work by some adult or near-adult standard. The inner standard is one that the school must meet, not one to be imposed on the children"¹⁹². To which Johnson adds, "we want growth, we want the finest physical development, the keenest mental activity, the most sincere and self conscious emotional life"¹⁹³ and this growth "does not require tests or measurements, examinations or quizzes or records"¹⁹⁴.

According to Johnson, "we do not claim to have a method—nor a system—but merely a different point of view—that of emphasizing the effects on the children of all activities and exercises of the school"¹⁹⁵. Her objective "was to try to find a way for children to learn as much as I thought they should learn without external pressure [...] to avoid arrest of development"¹⁹⁶. Thus, "instead of being taught facts, children should be helped to understand their experiences"¹⁹⁷. The purpose was "not what do they know but how do they grow [and] the school should provide conditions under which every child may flourish, none languish"¹⁹⁸.

In short, Johnson attempts to put into practice a theory according to which "education is life and that the school program, to be educational, must be life-giving!" Nevertheless she was conscious that "it will take a long time for the educational system to accept this standard"¹⁹⁹, especially since, quite strangely, "parents and teachers are still unable to recognize 'learning' except in the conscious effort of doing so"²⁰⁰.

However, and despite this noteworthy practical project and philosophy that opposed the existing *status quo*, (around that period, Johnson was already questioning the problematics of sex in the world of education²⁰¹), Cobb saw no motive for the creation of an association on the basis of Johnson's project. Furthermore, "Cobb did not

¹⁹² Op. Cit., p. 13.

¹⁹³ Johnson, M. (1929) *Youth in a World of Me, the Child, the Parent and the Teacher*. New York: The John Day Company, p. 274.

¹⁹⁴ Op. Cit., p. 303.

¹⁹⁵ Johnson, M. (1974) *Thirty Years with an Idea*. Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, p. 10.

¹⁹⁶ Op. Cit., pp. 9-13.

¹⁹⁷ Op. Cit., p. 10

¹⁹⁸ Op. Cit., p.15.

¹⁹⁹ Op. Cit., p. 14.

²⁰⁰ Op. Cit., p. 13.

²⁰¹ Johnson, M. (1929) *Youth in a World of Me, the Child, the Parent and the Teacher*. New York: The John Day Company, pp., 220-243.

remain a permanent disciple of Mrs. Johnson's"²⁰²; later on she described Johnson as "being on the radical edge, the fanatic fringe"²⁰³. It was only in the winter of 1919 that pressured and seduced by Smith and Johnson, Cobb conceded to the creation of an association. In this way, the Association for the Advancement of Experimental Schools emerged, which, after the convention of 1920 changed to the Progressive Education Association²⁰⁴. For Johnson it was the materialization of a dream.

Hence, as is stressed by Kliebard, "the Progressive Education Association was probably born in the mind of [...] Johnson"²⁰⁵. It had as its President, Morgan, and as its honorary President, Eliot, one of the leading figures of the curricular field at the end of the nineteenth-century and at the beginning of the twentieth-century, whose thinking and work will be more closely analyzed in the next chapter.

However, and according to Cobb, "the pioneer of this progressive movement in education in this century was Francis Parker"²⁰⁶ who, as Director of the Cook County Normal School of Chicago, put into practice a combination of educational theories, in which the influences of Pestalozzi and Froebel's thinking were remarkably evident. For Parker, "the working out of the design of a human being into character is education, [...] the realization of all the possibilities of human growth and development is education"²⁰⁷, adding that "education is the economizing of the energies of the human being". Besides defending education as an artistic manifestation, he stressed that "education is the generation of power"²⁰⁸, so that, even in his work, the problematization of language, of art, and of the means of expression, among other innovations, is likewise evident.

It is thus important to grasp that, although an Association for the Advancement of Experimental Schools, which attempted to break free of certain teaching methods that

²⁰² Vide Graham, P. (1967) *Progressive Education: From Arcady to Academe*. New York: Teachers College Press, footnote n. 6, p. 19.

²⁰³ Op. Cit., p. 19.

²⁰⁴ This name would later be altered to the American Education Fellowship in 1944. In 1953 the association would be renamed Progressive Education Association. Vide Graham, P. (1967) *Progressive Education: From Arcady to Academe*. New York: Teachers College Press, pp., 20-21.

²⁰⁵ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p., 163.

²⁰⁶ Cobb, S. (1928) *The New Leaven. Progressive Education and its Effect upon the Child and Society*. New York: The John Day Company, p. 10.

²⁰⁷ Parker, F. (1894) *Talks on Pedagogics*. New York: E. L. Kellogg & Co., p., 25.

²⁰⁸ Op. Cit., p. 303.

were practiced, was formed, the fact is that, given the state in which education was to be found, many educators began to strive for an alternative model. Cobb reported the “lay dissatisfaction with current methods of education is so widespread as to represent virtually a revolt of the intelligent parenthood of the nation against the general concept of education as inherited from the past and applied to the present”²⁰⁹. Furthermore, “the material and cultural environment of the child to-day is far different from what it was a generation or two ago, and equally changed are the demands which life will make upon the child”²¹⁰. Naturally, the Progressive Education Movement managed to obtain great support from “the progressive educative parents”²¹¹.

According to Lawson and Peters, “progressive education [...] has a rich pre-history” since its roots are to be found in the works of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel and even Fourier.²¹² In the Progressive Education Movement, Brameld also highlights European (Comenius, Rousseau, Herbart, Froebel) and American influences (Mann, Barnard, Parker)²¹³. One could say that the genesis of the progressive philosophy stems partly from two of Parker’s works although it was only later that it would become a movement. Nevertheless, and perhaps due to its fecund intellectual basis, the Progressive Education movement does not constitute a monolithic movement in any way. In fact, if the foundations of the movement reveal well-defined objectives and philosophies, the fact is that the multiplicity of perspectives that were to situate themselves throughout the last century in order to reach such objectives was so deeply accentuated that currently it is extremely difficult to find a univocal definition for the movement.

Kliebard identifies the movement as a “vague entity, essentially undefinable”, which may be translated into a mixture of distinct and frequently contradictory reforms and even of an historical fiction²¹⁴. This same difficulty in being able to describe the movement is also to be found in Cobb, for whom “in fact, it is difficult adequately to describe progressive education, because it is the achievement of many people of

²⁰⁹ Cobb, S. (1928) *The New Leaven. Progressive Education and its Effect upon the Child and Society*. New York: The John Day Company, p., 6.

²¹⁰ Op. Cit., p., 6.

²¹¹ Op. Cit., p., 9.

²¹² Lawson, M. & Peterson, R. (1972) *Progressive Education: An Introduction*. London: Angus and Robertson, p., 25.

²¹³ Brameld, Th. (1950) *Philosophies of Education*. New York: The Dryden Press.

²¹⁴ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge.

varying temperaments, ideas and practices”²¹⁵. Fundamentally, “progressive education began as part of a vast humanitarian effort to apply the promise of American life [...] to the puzzling new urban-industrial civilization that came into being during the latter of the nineteenth century”²¹⁶.

Nonetheless, and in disagreement with Cremin, this does not allow for the identification of the various transformations that would increasingly come to be identified in the curricular field from the end of the nineteenth-century (some of which are analyzed in detail in the next chapter) and which directly correspond with the distinct metamorphoses that the movement would experience. In fact the progressive movement extinguished itself at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth-century, but the struggle for the control of the field would go on. Michael Apple questions, although in another context, if it is possible to believe that the cause of the problems at school is “almost totally the result of the history of progressive education?”²¹⁷. We are thus confronted by a movement and here we agree with Cremin, which is unable (and will never be able) to fit a consensual definition, especially since “throughout its history progressive education meant different things to different people”²¹⁸. The complexity of the movement is very aptly described by Kliebard:

I was frankly puzzled by what was meant by the innumerable references I had seen to progressive education. The more I studied this the more it seemed to me that the term encompassed such a broad range, not just of different, but of contradictory, ideas on education as to be meaningless. In the end, I came to believe that the term was not only vacuous but mischievous. It was not just the word ‘progressive’ that I thought was inappropriate but the implication that something deserving a single name existed and that something could be

²¹⁵ Cobb, S. (1928) *The New Leaven. Progressive Education and its Effect upon the Child and Society*. New York: The John Day Company, p., 15.

²¹⁶ Cremin, L. (1962) *The Transformation of the School. Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, p. viii.

²¹⁷ Apple, Michael (2001) *Standards, Subject Matter and a Romantic Past: Left Back: A Century of Failed School Reforms*, by Diane Ravitch. New York: Simon and Schuster. Draft presented at the Friday Group, Mimeographed, p. 1.

²¹⁸ Cremin, L. (1962) *The Transformation of the School. Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, p. x.

identified and defined if we only tried. My initial puzzlement turned to skepticism, my skepticism to indignation and finally to bemusement²¹⁹.

Although Kliebard's position is understandable, because we also have observed contradictions and variation in the movement in this investigation, we still find it possible to detect, in the curricular field, the existence of a practical and theoretical movement that was not only opposed to the determinism and the dehumanism of an educational system modeled according to the rhythms and paces of the social efficiency doctrine, but also one dedicated to building a more just and equal society, always contextualized by political, economical and social spheres. The ones who were more prominent in this movement include Dewey, Kilpatrick, Du Bois, Bode, Rugg and Counts as well as Myles Horton, who was unjustly (and perhaps even intentionally) hidden and silenced by the great majority of curricular research. Nevertheless, the complexity inherent in a movement of this dimension creates some difficulties and pitfalls whenever we attempt to advance an all-encompassing description of the work of the previously mentioned thinkers.

Dewey was a profoundly complex figure, a problem faced by everyone who studies Dewey. He is broader than any label. Thus, trying to insert him into any movement raises serious problems. There are times in which his ideas seem to be that of a social democrat; other times, they seem more identifiable with liberal postulates and there are even times, in which they seem more identifiable with more radical positions.

For some, Dewey does not merit any particular notice in the educational field, as is the case with Davidson²²⁰, or his work is considered of no significant immediate impact on the field²²¹, or he is accused "of subverting American society"²²², but others classify him as a "philosopher, educator, and social activist whose thinking

²¹⁹ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p., xv.

²²⁰ Davidson, Th. (1901) *The History of Education*. New York: Scribner

²²¹ Meyer, A. (1961) *The Development of Education in the Twentieth Century*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall.

²²² Lawson, M. & Peterson, R. (1972) *Progressive Education: An Introduction*. London: Angus and Robertson, p., 28.

revolutionized America education”, as is the case with Berube²²³ or place him on par with Wittgenstein and Heidegger, among the three more important philosophers of the twentieth-century, as is the case with Rorty²²⁴. There is no consensus about who Dewey was. Thus, and in view of this, we may declare that Dewey brings together categories such as psychology, philosophy and sociology. The consensus is that there is no consensus in Dewey’s definition and maybe that is one of the reasons why he is so powerful. However, for the purposes of this dissertation, we will place him within the social reconstructionist tradition.

Dewey saw that education as a “mode of life, of action [and as] an act (...) is wider than science; [namely] education is by its very nature an endless circle or spiral. It is an activity which *includes* science within itself”²²⁵. Evoking a *Rousseauian* notion, Dewey argued that education is not something to be forced upon children and youth from without, but “should be based upon native capacities of those to be taught and upon the need of studying children in order to discover what these native powers are”²²⁶. The educational process was, according to Dewey, “a continuous process of growth, having as its aim at every stage an added capacity of growth [and if] education is growth, it must progressively realize present possibilities, and thus make individuals better able to cope with later requirements”²²⁷. In the end, Dewey perceived education as a reconstruction of experiences for “further education”²²⁸. Therefore, education includes “all the influences that go from the attitudes and dispositions of desire as well as of belief, which constitute dominant habits of mind and character”²²⁹. By defending education as a process of interests and efforts²³⁰, he not only assumed that the objective of education “has always been to everyone, in essence, the same—to give the young the things they need in order to develop in an orderly, sequential way into members of society [but also that] the human mind does not learn like a vacuum [and thus] the facts presented for learning, to be grasped, must

²²³ Berube, M. (2000) John Dewey: American Genius. In M. Berude. *Eminent Educators. Studies in Intellectual Influence*. London: Greenwood Press, pp. 33-45, p. 33.

²²⁴ Rorty, R. (1979) *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

²²⁵ Dewey, J. (1929) *The Sources of a Science of Education*. New York: Liveright, p., 75.

²²⁶ Dewey, J. & Dewey, E. (1915) *Schools of To-Morrow*. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co INC, p., 1.

²²⁷ Dewey, J. (1930) *Democracy and Education*. New York: The Macmillan Company, pp., 63-65.

²²⁸ Op. Cit., p. 75.

²²⁹ Dewey, J. (1935) *Liberalism and Social Action*. New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, p., 58.

²³⁰ Dewey, J. (1913) *Interest and Effort in Education*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

have some relation to previous experience of the individual or to his present needs”²³¹. Hence, in essence, education is a “continuous reconstruction of experience”²³².

One of the sacred values of Dewey’s philosophy is democracy. His whole intellectual life is built around democracy, with the individual as its guarantor and the school as the practical workshop of this social ideal. For Dewey “modern life means democracy, democracy means freeing intelligence for independent effectiveness—the emancipation of the mind as an individual organ to do its own work”²³³. Moreover, democracy must be understood as a totalizing, practical concept:

A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of a number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to breaking down those barriers of class, race, and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity. These more numerous and more varied points of contact denote a greater diversity of stimuli to which an individual has to respond; they consequently put a premium on variation in his action, as they must be in a group which in its exclusiveness shuts out many interests²³⁴.

Thus, for Dewey “democracy is much broader than a special political form, a method of conducting government, of making laws and carrying on government administration by means of popular suffrage and elected officers”²³⁵. Although he argued that the basis of democracy was to be found in the capacities of the human nature, the fact is that Dewey upheld that the school is the institution *par excellence* that secures the principles of a democratic society. Dewey believed that it was through school that equality, “an element of the democratic credo”²³⁶ would be achieved. He furthermore added that “the very fact of natural and psychologic inequality is all the more reason for establishment by law of equality of opportunity, since otherwise the

²³¹ Ratner, J. (1940) *Education Today by John Dewey*. New York. G. P. Putnam’s Sons, pp. 269-273

²³² Dewey, J. (1930) *Democracy and Education*. New York: The Macmillan Company, p. 93.

²³³ Ratner, J. (1940) *Education Today by John Dewey*. New York. G. P. Putnam’s Sons, p. 62.

²³⁴ Dewey, J. (1930) *Democracy and Education*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 101.

²³⁵ Dewey, J. (1946) *The Problems of Men*. New York: Philosophical Library, p. 57.

²³⁶ Op. Cit., p. 60.

former becomes a means of oppression of the less gifted”²³⁷. In essence, rather than proposing the school as the basis of democracy, rather than a democracy with a powerful social and political significance, rather than a democracy born on the freedom of mind, Dewey defends democracy as the method, the means by which the school proceeds with the transformation of society. As he himself further claims, “schools do have a role—an important one—in *production* of social change”²³⁸; they “have power to modify the social order”²³⁹. In Campbell’s view, Dewey believed “that enhancing the abilities of students to participate in and evaluate social life can be accomplished without indoctrination”²⁴⁰.

In order for the school to perform such a function, transformation within its very core had to be undertaken. Dewey criticized the educational concept that was “dominated almost entirely by the medieval conception of learning”²⁴¹, adding that such a concept impeded the development of an educational process based on natural development²⁴². It is in this context that Dewey defends the perspective of learning by doing, stressing that “learning, in a proper sense, is not learning things, but the meanings of things, and this process involves the uses of signs, or language in its generic sense”²⁴³. Dewey, furthermore, considered that the “absence of democratic methods [was] the greatest single cause of educational waste”²⁴⁴, and that “from the standpoint of the child, the great waste in school comes from his inability to utilize experiences he gets outside the school in any complete and free way within the school itself [...] he is unable to apply in daily life what he is learning in school”²⁴⁵. The school is thus isolated from the rest of society. By defending democracy as a method and education as the process through which such a method is consolidated and perfected, Dewey believed that the school still has a moral purpose of which it is part

²³⁷ Op. Cit., p. 60.

²³⁸ Ratner, J. (1940) *Education Today by John Dewey*. New York. G. P. Putnam’s Sons, p. 349.

²³⁹ Dewey, J. (1909) *The Moral Principles in Education*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, p., v.

²⁴⁰ Campbell, J. (1996) *Understanding John Dewey*. Chicago: Open Court, p. 220.

²⁴¹ Dewey, J. (1899) *The School and Society. Being Three Lectures by John Dewey*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p., 37.

²⁴² Dewey, J. & Dewey, E. (1943) *Schools of To-Morrow*. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co INC.

²⁴³ Dewey, J. (1910) *How we Think*. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. Publishers, p. 176.

²⁴⁴ Dewey, J. (1946) *The Problems of Men*. New York: Philosophical Library, p. 65.

²⁴⁵ Dewey, J. (1899) *The School and Society. Being Three Lectures by John Dewey*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p., 85.

and parcel, and should allow the child to experience the relation between moral behavior and larger social welfare²⁴⁶.

The necessity for transformation further meant, according to Dewey, the consciousness of habits. For Dewey, the force of habits is a “stronger and deeper part of human nature than is desire for change”²⁴⁷ especially since habits should be seen as the active means that project themselves vigorous and powerful forms of acting. In fact Dewey stresses that habit[s] “intellectual or volitional [mean] the connection of ideas or acts”²⁴⁸, a quite dynamic state that should not be dissociate from human interest. That is to say, “the teacher who always utilizes interest will never merely indulge it [since] interest in its reality is a moving thing, a thing of growth, of richer experience, and fuller power”²⁴⁹. To make the long sentence short, in fact, how “to use interest to secure growth in knowledge and in efficiency is what defines the master teacher”²⁵⁰.

Dewey saw the *National Herbart Sociey* (founded in 1895 which in addition to Dewey included some of the leading figures of the field of education, among them Parker, De Garmo, Rice, and Hall) as “the most promising in terms of effecting change in what has become a stagnant, often repressive, American School System”²⁵¹. It was above all this association with Herbartianism that enabled Dewey to further and more seriously involve himself in educational issues and develop his curricular theory, although he had some reservations with regards to the Herbartian movement.

In fact, Dewey, “was not a man who chose sides easily”²⁵². However, he was not exactly an observer. For example, in the quarrel that opposed the Herbartians, the Child Study advocates and the Developmentalists led by Hall, on the one hand, and the Conservative Humanists, led by, the powerful United States Commissioner of

²⁴⁶ Dewey, J. (1909) *The Moral Principles in Education*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

²⁴⁷ Dewey, J. (1935-1937) Authority and Social Change. In J. Boydston (Ed) John Dewey, *The Later Works, 1925-1953*. Carbonale: Southern Illinois University Press, Volume 11 (2), pp., 130-145, p., 133-134.

²⁴⁸ Dewey, J. (1887) Process of Knowledge. In J. Boydston (Ed) *John Dewey, The Early Works, 1882-1898*, Carbonale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2, pp., 75-136, p., 100.

²⁴⁹ Dewey, J. (1895) Interest as Related to Will. In J. Boydston (Ed) *John Dewey, The Early Works, 1882-1898*, Carbonale: Southern Illinois University Press, 5, pp., 113-150, p., 143.

²⁵⁰ Op. Cit., p., 143.

²⁵¹ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p., 16.

²⁵² Op. Cit., p., 44.

Education (which we will have the opportunity to analyze more closely in the next Chapter) on the other, Dewey was not opposed to the scientific study of the child, as defended by the Developmentalists, but thought that it should be conducted with great prudence and criticized the direct application of such a study to the demands of the classroom. Moreover, for Dewey, the child study movement seemed, at times, to be an atheoretical movement, deprived of speculation, removed from reality²⁵³. Dewey further criticized the segregationism of Hall who perceived the education of a child in accordance to what society would come to be. For Dewey, curricular differentiation based on the hypothetical role the young person would occupy in society, was simply a segregationist stance that should be renounced. For him, "it is impossible to prepare the child for any precise set of conditions"²⁵⁴.

On the other hand, Dewey believed that Harris's proposal, which argued for an education based on the development of the child's intellect, also presented some inadequacies. It was a proposal that revealed a lack of cohesion. Knowledge seemed more and more to be somewhat disorganized and disintegrated²⁵⁵. Hence, and because for Dewey education was always an expansion of life experiences and the school should create conditions in order for the individual to participate in the construction of the environment and in its control²⁵⁶, the fragmentation of knowledge that was at the basis of Harris's proposal, impeded the recognition of organized knowledge as something that was related to human experiences and needs. For Dewey, "the child's life is an integral, a total one [...] he passes quickly and readily from one topic to another, as from one spot to another, but is not a conscious of transition or break"²⁵⁷. Thus, know-how was much more than a mere sum of various knowledges. There was the necessity to relate them to each other and to the environment. Moreover, more important than knowledge, was self-realization. According to Kliebard, it is fundamentally on the basis of this conflict between Humanists and Developmentalists

²⁵³ Dewey, J. (1897) Criticisms Wise and Otherwise on Modern Child Study. *Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Thirty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the National Education Association*, pp., 867-868.

²⁵⁴ Dewey, J. (1929) My Pedagogical Creed. *The Journal of the National Education Association*, 18 (9), pp., 291-295, p. 292.

²⁵⁵ Archambault, R. (1966) *John Dewey Lectures in the Philosophy of Education, 1899*. New York: Random House.

²⁵⁶ Dewey, J. (1930) *Democracy and Education*. New York: The MacMillan Company.

²⁵⁷ Dewey, J. (1902) *The Child and the Curriculum*. Chicago. University of Chicago Press, p. 5.

that Dewey formulated his curricular theory²⁵⁸ and which would be put into practice, when he founded his Laboratory School in Chicago in 1896.

The curricular theory proposed by Dewey stems, in essence, from the Herbartian concepts of correlation, concentration and culture-epochs and above all from the recapitulation theory²⁵⁹, a concept, which will be more profoundly analyzed in the next chapter. Dewey held the belief that “the social life of the child is the basis of concentration, or correlation, in all his training or growth”²⁶⁰, further adding that “the true center of correlation on the school subjects is not science, nor literature, nor history, nor geography, but the child’s own social activities”²⁶¹. For Dewey, the relation between the child and the curriculum was the relation between the “individual and the social culture”²⁶². Another concept central to the curricular theorization of Dewey was the so-called theory of the occupations, guarantor of the experimental approach. This theory “naturally follows from [his] belief that lessons should be at one with life itself”²⁶³. Dewey believed that the curriculum constructed on the basis of social occupations allowed for a bridge and for harmony between individual and social ends which, constituted, in his opinion, the central problem of curricular theory²⁶⁴.

Furthermore, the school could not be seen as distanced from cultural and political dynamics. For Dewey, culture is opposed to the raw and crude, it is something personal, it is the capacity of each one to be constantly able to expand the breadth of one’s perceptions about different meanings²⁶⁵. Moreover, culture was, for Dewey, a state of interaction which implied many factors, namely, politics, laws, industry, commerce, science, technology, the art of expression, and moral values²⁶⁶, namely,

²⁵⁸ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge.

²⁵⁹ Kliebard, H. (1992) Dewey and the Herbartians: The Genesis of a Theory of Curriculum. In H. Kliebard, *Forging the American Curriculum. Essays in Curriculum History and Theory*. New York: Routledge, pp. 68-82.

²⁶⁰ Dewey, J. (1929) My Pedagogical Creed. *The Journal of the National Education Association*, 18 (9), pp., 291-295, p. 293.

²⁶¹ Op. Cit., p. 293

²⁶² Dewey, J. (1902) *The Child and the Curriculum*. Chicago. University of Chicago Press, p. 5.

²⁶³ Lawson, M. & Peterson, R. (1972) *Progressive Education: An Introduction*. London: Angus and Robertson, p., 32.

²⁶⁴ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge

²⁶⁵ Dewey, J. (1930) *Democracy and Education*. New York: The MacMillan Company.

²⁶⁶ Dewey, J. (1939) *Freedom and Culture*. New York: Capricorn Books.

culture was something that was also built on a daily basis, in and through individuality.

The school was seen by Dewey as a microcosm of society. There was the need to eliminate the existing divorce between school and society. The relation between school and society would be guaranteed if the school were to become an embryo for society. Hence, the school would be a social space wherein the child would create and implement his own process of learning, a space that would allow the child to set his own course²⁶⁷. Furthermore, a school that was isolated from society was a space devoid of meaning. On the basis of this discrepancy between society and the school, there was the hiatus between the individual and the social culture, between the child and the curriculum, and between the world of the child and the world of the adult. It is in an attempt to annul this discrepancy that Dewey put forward the concept of experience, equally central to his curricular theorization. Dewey believed that an “education which does not occur through forms of life, forms that are worth living for their own sake, is always a poor substitute for the genuine reality, and tends to cram and to deaden”²⁶⁸.

Therefore, “what was being reconstructed in the curriculum was not the stages in the development of human history as the Herbartians advocated, but stages in the way human beings gained control of their world through the use of intelligence—stages in the development of knowledge”²⁶⁹. The mental development of an individual was, for Dewey, a social process and the curriculum should lead to the maximum intellectual development, leading man to react to adversity and to struggle for a better society. The capitalist system, according to Dewey, could be altered without a Civil War being needed, as was the case in Russia²⁷⁰.

For Dewey “all that society has accomplished for itself is put through the agency of the school, at the disposal of its future members [...] all its better thoughts of itself it hopes to realize through the new possibilities thus opened to its future itself. Here

²⁶⁷ Dewey, J. (1899) *The School and Society. Being Three Lectures by John Dewey*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

²⁶⁸ Dewey, J. (1929) My Pedagogical Creed. *The Journal of the National Education Association*, 18 (9), pp., 291-295, p. 292.

²⁶⁹ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p. 72.

²⁷⁰ Gonzalez, G. (1982) *Progressive Education: A Marxist Interpretation*. Minneapolis: Marxist Educational Press.

individualism and socialism are at one”²⁷¹. The school “is primarily a social institution [...], the school is simply that form of community life in which all those agencies are concentrated that will be most effective in bringing the child to share in the inherited resources of the race and to use his own powers for social ends; [therefore] education [...] is a process of living and not a preparation for future living [and] school[s] must represent present life”²⁷².

His curricular ideal would come to be strongly shaken by the progressive consolidation with the social efficiency movement, which began to inject into society and into the field of education the more refined techniques of control and accountability. As is stressed by Kliebard, “what Dewey did not anticipate [...] was the rise of standardized achievement tests in the twentieth century”²⁷³ which rapidly, and completely, subverted his theory by placing great value on the dynamics of learning based on the three R’s.

We are, in fact, confronted by a figure, who is extremely difficult to analyze, wherein any value estimate should be made prudently, especially if we aim to grasp a full comprehension of his thinking. He was a complex intellectual who adopted controversial positions—known for his strange support of the involvement of America during World War I, which, as is indicated by Zerby²⁷⁴, still lacks close investigation. Similarly noteworthy is the report prepared by Dewey on a Polish community “printed in 1918 as a confidential report entitled ‘Conditions among the Poles in United States and submitted, at the request of General Churchill, to the Military Intelligence Bureau of the Federal government’”²⁷⁵. As is documented by Feinberg, even more significant for a clarification of Dewey’s own values and priorities was his identification [...] with American military and commercial interests”²⁷⁶; his trip to Russia, reaching the conclusion that the schools were the “ideological arm of the

²⁷¹ Dewey, J. (1902) *The Child and the Curriculum*. Chicago. University of Chicago Press, p. 7.

²⁷² Dewey, J. (1929) My Pedagogical Creed. *The Journal of the National Education Association*, 18 (9), pp., 291-295, p. 292.

²⁷³ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p. 68.

²⁷⁴ Zerby, C. (1975) John Dewey and the Polish Question: A Response to the Revisionist Historians. *History of Education Quarterly*, XV (1), pp., 17-30.

²⁷⁵ Feinberg, W. (1975) *Reason & Rhetoric. The Intellectual Foundations of 20th Century Liberal Educational Policy*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, INC, p. 104.

²⁷⁶ Op. Cit., p. 105.

revolution”²⁷⁷, highlighted the fact that Russia had managed to set up an educational system in which the students and the methods were to be found in close relation with the social life. Nevertheless, Dewey “was a staunch opponent of communism”²⁷⁸; was involved in the “preliminary commission to inquire into the charges made against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow trials of August, 1936 and January, 1937 [...] in Mexico”²⁷⁹; took a trip to China²⁸⁰, in which the North-American internationalism, for which the U.S. strove, shone through; thus, his political stances make it difficult to attribute to him a label.

By way of example, despite renouncing the revolution as a political methodology of social transformation (“A revolution effected solely or chiefly by violence can in a modernized society like our own result only in chaos”²⁸¹), the fact is that he quite simply operated a curricular “revolution” in his Laboratory School in Chicago. For one who was categorically opposed to the dialectic materialism concept by which “the end justifies the means”²⁸², the Laboratory School is an example that speaks for itself. However, this complexity surrounding the figure of Dewey has not diminished interest in his work. Quite the opposite, such complexity acts as a profound stimulus to the investigation into his work, as is demonstrated by the book by Boydston and Poulos²⁸³. By understanding theory as the best practice for all things²⁸⁴, Dewey exposed a curricular theory that upheld education as a process of living²⁸⁵ and school as a field for the democratic theory and practice supported by experience²⁸⁶.

Nonetheless, the divorce between the educational system and society was increasingly augmented, forcing the school into a situation of crisis. The curriculum

²⁷⁷ Dewey, J. (1929) *Impressions of Soviet Russia and the Revolutionary World*. New York: New Republic, INC., p. 61.

²⁷⁸ Gonzalez, G. (1982) *Progressive Education: A Marxist Interpretation*. Minneapolis: Marxist Educational Press, p. 103

²⁷⁹ Dewey, J. (1937) First Session. *The Case of Leon Trotsky: Report of Hearings on the Charges Made against him in the Moscow Trials*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, p. 2.

²⁸⁰ Keenan, B. (1977) *The Dewey Experiment in China. Educational Reform and Political Power in the Early Republic*. London: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press.

²⁸¹ Dewey, J. (1934) Why I am Not a Communist. In B. Russel, J. Dewey, M. Cohen, S., Hook e S. Eddy. *The Meaning of Marx*. New York: Farrar & Rinehart Incorporated Publishers, pp., 86-90, p., 90.

²⁸² Dewey, J. (1966) Means and Ends. In L. Trotsky, J. Dewey & G. Novak, *Their Morals and Ours. Marxist Versus Liberal Views on Morality*. New York: Merit Publishers, pp.55-60, p. 55.

²⁸³ Boydston, J & Poulos, K. (1978) *Checklist of Writings about John Dewey, 1887-1977*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

²⁸⁴ Dewey, J. (1929) *The Sources of a Science of Education*. New York: Liveright.

²⁸⁵ Dewey, J. (1929) My Pedagogical Creed. *The Journal of the National Education Association*, 18 (9), pp., 291-295.

²⁸⁶ Dewey, J. (1930) *Democracy and Education*. New York: The MacMillan Company.

required urgent reform. By way of satisfying this necessity, in 1918, “The Project Method” formulated by Kilpatrick emerged. This new curricular concept considered education “as life itself and not as a mere preparation for later living”²⁸⁷. For Kilpatrick, times of change brought on by science²⁸⁸ were being experienced in which “a growing social integration with correlative increase in interdependence is one of the most obvious effects on our growing industrialization”²⁸⁹. This interdependence was further strengthened “by the growing division of labor”²⁹⁰.

Nevertheless, according to Kilpatrick, even when faced by this situation, inertia dominated schools especially because of three major tendencies, namely, “the inertia system itself, the natural tendency of an inbreeding institutionalism everywhere[;] the influence of outward signs of learning, which—stressing the sign—easily attaches itself to what has at length become merely conventional material; [...] the possibility of so using the school as to fix in the youth desired opinions and attitudes, a possibility which the ‘conservatives’ have generally succeed in preempting to themselves”²⁹¹. Erroneously, education “has been the process by which those at present in charge of affairs determined what the rising generation should think and do”²⁹². The educational system is inadequate since “it has not prepared for the present adult life, and it has altogether ignored the unknown future adult life”²⁹³. Kilpatrick thought it mandatory to fight for critical minds; in other words, education should “increase the ability to judge”²⁹⁴.

The advent of industrialization and its consequent demands (specialization, aggregation and integration) required the existence of open minds, to “prepare the rising generation to think that they can and will think for themselves, even ultimately, if they so decide, to the point of revising or rejecting what we now think”²⁹⁵. Technological progress placed pressure on the schools²⁹⁶, which, in turn, led to a

²⁸⁷ Kilpatrick, W. (1918) The Project Method. *Teachers College Record*, 19, pp. 319-335.

²⁸⁸ Kilpatrick, W. (1971) *Foundations of Method, Informal Talks on Teaching*. New York: Arno Press & The New York Times.

²⁸⁹ Kilpatrick, W. (1926) *Education for a Changing Civilization*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 21.

²⁹⁰ Op. Cit., p. 22.

²⁹¹ Op. Cit., p. 57.

²⁹² Op. Cit., p. 59.

²⁹³ Op. Cit., p. 61.

²⁹⁴ Op. Cit., p. 67.

²⁹⁵ Op. Cit., p. 60.

²⁹⁶ Kilpatrick, W. (1933) *The Educational Frontier*. New York: The Century Co.

segregationist tendency in the determination of aims or objectives²⁹⁷. Furthermore, Kilpatrick argued, “the whole traditional school process has in one way or another been thus largely anti-democratic”²⁹⁸. Kilpatrick criticized the old curricular conception that assumed “that education consists precisely of the acquisition of preformulated knowledge presented to the learner in textbooks or orally by teachers (or parents)”²⁹⁹, adding that such a conception “limits man and his educated life predominantly if not solely to intellect and counts memory as the primary means to intellect building”³⁰⁰.

By perceiving that the major objective of education “is to continue and enrich [the] life process by better thought and act”³⁰¹; [namely] education “is in life and for life [...] its goal is internal in the process [...] continued growing is its essence and end”³⁰², Kilpatrick defended a new curricular conception based on a “continuous reconstruction of experience”³⁰³. Here is a curriculum that consists of experiences. Although “it uses subject-matter [...] it does not consist of subject-matter”³⁰⁴. If the curriculum is something which is based on and materializes through experiences, “then it cannot be made exactly in advance”³⁰⁵. By means of the new curricular conception, the curriculum “becomes the total living of the child so far as the school can influence it or should take responsibility for developing it”³⁰⁶. Furthermore, the major curricular preoccupation was with the children and not with the subject matter³⁰⁷.

For Kilpatrick, the culture (“all the man-made parts and aspects of the human environment”³⁰⁸) and the language (“necessary to any significant cultural

²⁹⁷ Op. Cit.

²⁹⁸ Kilpatrick, W. (1926) *Education for a Changing Civilization*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 74.

²⁹⁹ Kilpatrick, W. (1951) *Philosophy of Education*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 312.

³⁰⁰ Op. Cit., p. 313.

³⁰¹ Kilpatrick, W. (1926) *Education for a Changing Civilization*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 134.

³⁰² Op. Cit., p. 134.

³⁰³ Op. Cit., p. 123.

³⁰⁴ Op. Cit., p. 125.

³⁰⁵ Op. Cit., p. 125.

³⁰⁶ Kilpatrick, W. (1951) *Philosophy of Education*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 314

³⁰⁷ Kilpatrick, W. (1971) *Foundations of Method, Informal Talks on Teaching*. New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, p. 253.

³⁰⁸ Kilpatrick, W. (1951) *Philosophy of Education*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 69.

accumulation”³⁰⁹) are essential platforms of democracy, which was understood as a way of life that should be based on six fundamental aspects, namely “sovereignty of the individual [...] the principal of equality [...] rights implies duties [...] cooperative effort for the common good [...] faith in free play of intelligence [...] freedom of discussion”³¹⁰.

It is within this context that Kilpatrick’s Project Method should be understood. As is remarked on by Kliebard, “the project method became the major alternative to scientific curriculum-making”³¹¹. We are confronted by a curricular proposal that was not only about subject matter³¹²; quite the opposite, the subject matter was to allow for the reconstruction of the children’s experiences. For Kliebard, Kilpatrick’s proposal was opposed to “the ‘cold storage’ view of knowledge , in which facts and skills were stored up for future use”³¹³, proposing a curricular project “that de-emphasized the acquisition of knowledge in favor of a curriculum that was synonymous with purposeful activity”³¹⁴.

Due to the enormous following of Kilpatrick’s *Project Method* (this project had changed drastically the terms of curricular³¹⁵ debate), criticism was not short in coming. Faced by the visible euphoria, Charters counseled prudence, especially because he saw many shortcomings in Kilpatrick’s proposal, among them, the fact that it was not a curriculum that prepared the students for what they would need to know in the future, suggesting a reinforced emphasis on the subject matter³¹⁶. In essence, Kilpatrick’s Project Method polarized even further the positions of the two groups that were more prominent at that time in the struggle for the dominion of the field: the social efficiency movement and the child centered movement. Besides, it was these movements that had, at the time, colonized the greater part of the curricular debate space. Nevertheless, a new vision was to emerge with the publication in 1927 of Bode’s *Modern Educational Theories*. Bode advanced an approach that tended to

³⁰⁹ Op. Cit., p. 70.

³¹⁰ Op. Cit., pp. 139-146.

³¹¹ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p. 141.

³¹² Kilpatrick, W. (1922) Subject Matter and the Educative Process, 1. *The Journal of Educational Method*, 2, pp. 95-101.

³¹³ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p. 143.

³¹⁴ Op. Cit., p. 143.

³¹⁵ Op. Cit.

³¹⁶ Charters, W. (1922) Regulating the Project. *Journal of Educational Research*, 5, pp. 245-246.

be more “cautious and reasoned if not more politically sophisticated in its persistent attention to the social implications of the various proposed reforms of the curriculum”³¹⁷.

Despite arguing that Progressive Education “has a unique opportunity of serving as a clearing house for the meaning of democracy and thus making a significant contribution toward bringing to fruition the great hope and promise of our American civilization”³¹⁸, Bode admitted to the contradictions within the bosom of the movement. The Progressive Education, Bode went on to say, “is confronted with the choice of becoming the avowed exponent of democracy or else of becoming a set of ingenious devices for tempering the wind to the shorn lamb”³¹⁹. Naturally, “the emphasis of progressive education on the individual [...] and on the necessity of securing free play for intelligence [...] is a reflection of the growing demand, outside of the school, for the recognition of the common man”³²⁰. The contradictions of Progressive Education as a movement emerge explicitly in the words of Bode:

It emphasizes freedom, yet it also attaches major importance to guidance and direction. It plays up method, but it is also critical of the content of the more conventional curriculum. It places the individual at the center of the stage; yet it perpetually criticizes the competitive character of the present social order, which indicates that it rejects the philosophy of individualism. It insists that intelligence must be permitted to operate freely; yet it seldom alarms its constituents, who, in the case of private schools, are generally the more prosperous element in society. It commonly regards the college as the citadel of its enemy; yet its chief business is often preparation for college. It holds that learning takes place through doing; yet physical activities taper off sharply as we go up the educational scale³²¹.

Similarly, for Bode, “the chasm between the school and the world has been widened by the changes that have taken place in modern life”³²². However, the transformations

³¹⁷ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p. 150.

³¹⁸ Bode, B. (1938) *Progressive Education at the Crossroads*. New York: Newson & Company, p. 61

³¹⁹ Op. Cit., p. 26.

³²⁰ Op. Cit., p. 11.

³²¹ Op. Cit., p.10.

³²² Op. Cit., p. 53.

emerging within society were drawing away “from compartmentalization of interests and fixity of standards”³²³. Bode was of the opinion that the definition of democracy included an educational system “which centers on the cultivation of intelligence, rather than submission to authority [which implies that] our educational theory thus inevitably becomes a theory of social relationships, or a theory of democracy”³²⁴. Furthermore, Bode argued that “if democracy is to have a deep and inclusive human meaning, it must have also a distinctive educational system”³²⁵. By perceiving progressive schools not so much as spaces of learning but rather as “a way of life”³²⁶, Bode resorted to Thorndike’s notion for whom ‘learning is analysis’, defending learning as “a process of selecting both the stimulus and the response; [a process] of substituting the part for the whole”³²⁷.

By considering that all learning is “a process of developing or training the mind, and it can be nothing else”³²⁸, Bode believed that education “should be made a process of self-development or self-cultivation. The security of the nation depended on the intelligence of its citizens”³²⁹. Furthermore, “the impetus in learning must come from the ‘inside’ and not from ‘outside’”³³⁰. Thus, one of the tools of intelligence was habit and “thinking means flexibility of habit, [...] it means a dominating purpose which achieves its realization by a reconstruction or reorganization of previous experience”³³¹.

Quite naturally, Bode perceived education as growth thus negating “the notion that the purpose of education is to perpetuate the cultural patterns which happen to prevail in a given community; [...] hence the test for growth becomes more growth; [...] education is for the sake of further education”.³³² Bode goes on to say, “the supreme task of education [...] is to organize its various resources and agencies in such a way that the development of civilization may be seen as a progressive liberation of

³²³ Bode, B. (1929) *Conflicting Psychologies of Learning*. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, p. 294.

³²⁴ Bode, B. (1938) *Progressive Education at the Crossroads*. New York: Newson & Company, p. 60.

³²⁵ Op. Cit., p. 26.

³²⁶ Op. Cit., p. 9.

³²⁷ Bode, B. (1929) *Conflicting Psychologies of Learning*. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, p. 267.

³²⁸ Bode, B. (1940) *How we Learn*. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, p. 35.

³²⁹ Bode, B. (1927) *Modern Educational Theories*. New York: The MacMillan Company.

³³⁰ Bode, B. (1938) *Progressive Education at the Crossroads*. New York: Newson & Company, p. 74.

³³¹ Bode, B. (1929) *Conflicting Psychologies of Learning*. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, p. 274.

³³² Bode, B. (1938) *Progressive Education at the Crossroads*. New York: Newson & Company, p. 73.

intelligence”³³³. Clearly, “continuous reinterpretation and reconstruction of beliefs and institutions becomes a recognized obligation”³³⁴.

Beyond criticizing Progressive Education as a movement, signaling that the movement lacked “the monopoly of thinking”³³⁵, Bode launched further criticism at the postulates formulated by Bobbitt (Bobbitt’s curricular conceptualization impeded a progressive social transformation), by Charters (it is impossible to apply the industry model to the school), by Snedden (for his reductive notion that the educational objectives were sociologically determined) and even by Kilpatrick, who, according to Bode, had presented a limited curricular model and a fundamentalist position on the basis of which “the key question to what to teach lay in the unfolding of natural forces within the child”³³⁶ was upheld. Moreover, for Bode “learning would be simply a means to an end and not an end in itself”³³⁷; in other words, “a method ordinarily means a relationship between means and ends; [...] that is, a way of doing something in contrast to the interest in or attitude”³³⁸. It was, according to Chambliss, “Kilpatrick’s emphasis on the latter at the expense of the former to which Bode (would) object”³³⁹.

Bode saw democracy as something complex, it “is a thing that expresses itself in many forms, but is not completely identified with any or all of them”³⁴⁰. However, as a way of living, the responsibility of its existence rested on the common man. There is in Bode a clear valuation of the human dimension in which the “reconstruction of experience is something that the individual must do for himself”³⁴¹. Hence, the consolidation of a democratic vision of education is important, one in which the school, by assuming itself as a totally democratic experience becomes the guarantor of a democratic society. Naturally, by basing himself on education as growth, on learning as a process which (de)constructs habits and on the curriculum as a plan of hypothesis, Bode placed the educational issue, in general, and the curricular issue, in

³³³ Bode, B. (1929) *Conflicting Psychologies of Learning*. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, p. 295.

³³⁴ Op. Cit., p. 295.

³³⁵ Bode, B. (1938) *Progressive Education at the Crossroads*. New York: Newson & Company, p. 77.

³³⁶ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p. 52.

³³⁷ Chambliss, J. (1963) *Boyd H. Bode’s Philosophy of Education*. Ohio: Ohio State University Press, p. 24

³³⁸ Op. Cit., p. 25

³³⁹ Op. Cit., p. 25.

³⁴⁰ Bode, B. (1927) *Modern Educational Theories*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 10.

³⁴¹ Bode, B. (1940) *How we Learn*. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, p. 297.

particular, on the political, cultural and economic level, levels at which “the chief defect in America education[:...] the lack of a program, or sense of direction”³⁴² could begin to be annulled. He felt the need to act quickly since “a new social order is in the making, which makes it necessary to develop a new system of education”³⁴³.

Hence, despite the divergences presented among them, the works of Dewey, Kilpatrick and Bode should be understood as an integral part of a very specific curriculum river within the bosom of the Progressive Education Movement that opposed the existing *status quo*. Nonetheless, and as is indicated by Lawson and Peterson, criticism of Dewey’s positions—to which we could very well add the ones of Kilpatrick and Bode—were “mild compared to that showered on his followers who accepted the viewpoint of social reconstruction, particularly on Harold Rugg, whose textbooks were accused of ‘twitting the Founding Fathers’, and on George Counts who was referred to as the “Red Russia Apostle”³⁴⁴ in some of the newspapers of the nineteen thirties.

In fact, the publication, in 1926, of two volumes of the National Society for the Study of Education’s Twenty-Sixth Yearbook, a signal of the drastic changes that the curricular field needed, marked the (re)emergence and the consolidation of yet another movement within the bosom of the Progressive Education Movement—the social reconstructionists—represented by Rugg and Counts. They readdressed some of the issues initiated already at the end of the nineteenth-century by Ward, which shall be more closely dealt with in the next chapter.

Rugg perceived the school as “an enterprise of [guided] living”³⁴⁵. Therefore, he claimed, “what was narrowly and forbiddingly called in the old education ‘the curriculum’ becomes, in the new education, ‘the life of the school’”³⁴⁶. Nevertheless, Rugg safeguards that this does not mean “fixing in advance a pattern of knowledge, skill or attitude to which we shall fit our young people”³⁴⁷. Thus, education should be perceived as a “design for living [which should stem] from the very life of American

³⁴² Bode, B. (1938) *Progressive Education at the Crossroads*. New York: Newson & Company, p. 100.

³⁴³ Bode, B. (1927) *Modern Educational Theories*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 26.

³⁴⁴ Lawson, M. & Peterson, R. (1972) *Progressive Education: An Introduction*. London: Angus and Robertson, p., 36.

³⁴⁵ Rugg, H. (1939) *Democracy and the Curriculum*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, p. 3.

³⁴⁶ Op. Cit., p. 3.

³⁴⁷ Op. Cit., p. 4.

children as they live with the rest of the American people [from] the culture”³⁴⁸. According to him, the design of education “must start with a theory of man living in society, and molded by his culture. Hence it starts with the great concepts which are the keys to the life of that culture”³⁴⁹. In a volume co-authored with Withers, Rugg stresses that, “if school is to be of real value to the people, it must be fashioned directly from their culture and by scientific methods”³⁵⁰.

For Rugg, the crises at the end of the 1920s and at the beginning of the 1930s brought on drastic social changes. The whole machinery apparatus, which the nation possessed, was impotent in dealing with the crisis³⁵¹. Such change necessarily passed through education, which should be constructed on the basis of certain concepts, among them the concepts of “growth, self-balancing, generalization, self and personality, habit and creative act”³⁵². Rugg determined that the changes that society so badly needed could not be attained within the existing school model. In other words, “it is no longer conceivable that memorizing and reciting the facts of encyclopedic text-books [...] will produce informed critical students of our industrial civilization [...] that writing ‘themes’ to order, dissecting European classics, reciting the lines of standard drama [...] will teach you to portray the meaning of life appreciatively and creatively”³⁵³. Furthermore, the school completely neglected five extremely important areas, namely “real work, personally and socially useful [environment] sex and home life, [...] inferiority and the intimate problems of personal living, [...] the insistent controversial issues of the social system—Property and the struggle for power, Race Conflict and control of Public Opinion [...] Religion”³⁵⁴. Education should, among other things, “promote the assimilation of minority groups and a belief in justice to minorities [and] foster vigorous and abiding interest in the discussion of public affairs”³⁵⁵.

³⁴⁸ Op. Cit., pp. 4-5.

³⁴⁹ Rugg, H. (1952) *The Teacher of Teachers. Frontiers of Theory and Practice in Teacher Education*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, p. 152.

³⁵⁰ Rugg, H. & Withers, W. (1955) *Social Foundations of Education*. New York: Prentice Hall, INC, p. 726.

³⁵¹ Rugg, H. (1933) *The Great Technology*. New York: The John Day Company.

³⁵² Rugg, H. (1939) *Democracy and the Curriculum*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, pp. 527-529.

³⁵³ Rugg, H. (1933) *The Great Technology*. New York: The John Day Company, pp. 257-258.

³⁵⁴ Rugg, H. (1943) *Foundations for America Education*. New York: World Book Company, p. 674.

³⁵⁵ Rugg, H. & Withers, W. (1955) *Social Foundations of Education*. New York: Prentice Hall, INC, p. 144.

It was imperative to initiate a new reconstructionist philosophy of education, based on three axioms: “school as including all of the educative activities of community life, [...] school age [is] the entire life of men, from infancy to old age, [and...] education for a whole life”³⁵⁶. Given this new approach to education, Rugg went on, the curriculum would no longer represent a reductive space but construct itself around six major platforms: “the life of the school as a whole, [...] introduction to changing civilizations and cultures, [...] introduction to creative and appreciative arts, [...] body education, [...] introduction to the physical and natural world, [and] to human behavior”³⁵⁷. Obviously, all this requires the “reconstruction of our teachers’ colleges in which future teachers will be trained”³⁵⁸.

Rugg, after comparing the North American school with that of the Philippines, established a further parallel with the schools of Italy and China, stressing that all of these, just like factories, were “an aggregation of standardized units”³⁵⁹. In truth, Rugg wondered if current schools, despite teaching how to read, to write and to do calculations, do not in fact do much more than that. Rugg wondered if such schools, in fact, educate people³⁶⁰. On the basis of Locke’s thinking, Rugg believed that democracy, as a fundamental human value, depended on such concepts as “understanding” and “intelligence”, which are educational concepts. Thus, the vitality of democracy, which was so much more than a form of government, depended on education; in other words, “in a truly democratic society government is education, and education on the social side is the practice of government”³⁶¹. Moreover, for Rugg, thirty years after Dewey had appointed school, society, child and the curriculum as the zones *par excellence* of the curricular field, such zones continued being crucial to social and educational phenomena. The teacher should be perceived within these zones as one who, according to Rugg & Brooks, functioned primarily as a guide and only incidentally as a monitor and a judge³⁶².

³⁵⁶ Rugg, H. (1933) *The Great Technology*. New York: The John Day Company, p. 261.

³⁵⁷ Op. Cit., pp. 266-267.

³⁵⁸ Op. Cit., p. 278.

³⁵⁹ Rugg, H. (1936) *American Life and the School Curriculum. Next Steps Toward Schools of Living*. Boston: Ginn and Company, p. 7.

³⁶⁰ Op. Cit.

³⁶¹ Op. Cit., p. 15.

³⁶² Rugg, H. & Brooks, D. (1950) *The Teacher in School and Society*. New York: World Book Company.

The curriculum—"the great intermediary between the child and society, [...] an ugly, awkward, academic word, but fastened upon us by technical custom"—is really the entire program of school's work"³⁶³. Faced by this scenario, the curriculum assumed a new significance: "much more than an outline of reading and writing assignments, [the curriculum] becomes The Life and Program of School [and] the school does, indeed, become a School of living"³⁶⁴. In this way, for Rugg, the fundamental curricular issue was not represented by Spencer's old maxim of "what knowledge is of most worth", but rather by "what experience can be used most educatively"³⁶⁵. For Rugg, the curriculum, should furthermore be constructed with the participation of "parents, children and the youths, the teachers and the director and administration"³⁶⁶.

Rugg demonstrated an unshakeable belief in social reconstruction through educational reconstruction. For him, the first "task of social reconstruction is essentially 'educational reconstruction' [and] the school must become an agency of social regeneration"³⁶⁷. Naturally, "the rebuilding of society could be consummated only through long-time educational reconstruction [which] implies the total rebuilding of theories of life and education and the construction of creative school programs of action"³⁶⁸. On the basis of Dewey's thinking, Rugg stressed 'experience' as the key-word of the new education; such experience was made up of two aspects: "on the one hand, maximum growth in creative self-expression, on the other, tolerant understanding of self and society"³⁶⁹. Rugg, after a chronological analysis of the curricular field³⁷⁰, further noted conceptual precepts for such curricular reconstruction from which we highlight "the radical reconstruction of the entire school curriculum [and] a new synthesis of knowledge and a re-departmentalization of the activities and materials of the school curriculum [indicating that] curriculum-making will be based

³⁶³ Rugg, H. (1936) *American Life and the School Curriculum. Next Steps Toward Schools of Living*. Boston: Ginn and Company, pp. 17-18.

³⁶⁴ Op. Cit., pp. 333-334.

³⁶⁵ Op. Cit., p. 334.

³⁶⁶ Rugg, H. (1943) *Foundations for America Education*. New York: World Book Company, p. 659.

³⁶⁷ Rugg, H. (1931) *Culture and Education in America*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, p. 256.

³⁶⁸ Op. Cit., p. 398.

³⁶⁹ Rugg, H. & Shumaker, A. (1969) *The Child-Centered School*. New York: Arno Press & N. Y. Times, p., 6.

³⁷⁰ Rugg, H. (1926) Curriculum Making, Points of Emphasis. In G. Whipple (ed) *The Twenty-Sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, The Foundations and Technique of Curriculum-Construction*, Part I, Curriculum-Making, Past and Present, pp. 67-116.

upon the synthesis of the keenest insights [...] concerning the trends of modern society and the reconstruction of its institutional life”³⁷¹.

Rugg thus separated himself from the positions defended by the child-centered curriculum movement, since he felt it did not satisfy the needs of society. Nonetheless, for Rugg, the “scientific approach to curriculum development advocated by the social efficiency educators was (also) clearly out of question”³⁷² since it contributed to the maintenance of the existing *status quo*. As a faithful expression of his socio-political project, Rugg and his team of researchers produced a series of social studies textbooks, which, fundamentally, bear witness to the importance that Rugg conferred to social studies. The curriculum, for Rugg, had to have social value. Rugg, in fact, created a magnificent project. For example, he collected data on three thousand problems by mining the educational field. His project was based on what Rugg called the Frontier Thinkers. According to Lawson and Peterson, “the sources for much of Rugg’s material came from what he called the ‘frontier thinkers’ [which he] divided into three brilliant brigades: first, an exploration of the interrelationships of economic and political life; second, a mixed company of psychological students of society; third, a two-fold group of ‘critics of American culture and creative singers of American life’”³⁷³. For Rugg, such frontier thinkers—Dewey was one of them—were “a few clear-minded” individuals [who] in France, England, Germany, America, and other countries, began to apply their minds to the solution of the difficult social problems”³⁷⁴.

This series of social studies textbooks undoubtedly represents “the single greatest victory in the attempt by the social reconstructionists to reform the school curriculum in line with their social ideas”³⁷⁵. However, the anti-capitalist and revolutionary approach that was adopted by such textbooks would lead to many attacks by the more conservative groups. At the forefront of these attacks was Armstrong, for whom the

³⁷¹ Rugg, H. (1926) Curriculum Making, Points of Emphasis. In G. Whipple (ed) *The Twenty-Sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, The Foundations and Technique of Curriculum-Construction*, Part II, The Foundations of Curriculum-Making, pp. 147-162, pp. 147-161.

³⁷² Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p., 174.

³⁷³ Lawson, M. & Peterson, R. (1972) *Progressive Education: An Introduction*. London: Angus and Robertson, p., 38.

³⁷⁴ Rugg, H. (1932) *Changing Governments and Changing Cultures*. Boston: Ginn and Company, p. 187.

³⁷⁵ Kliebard, H. (1995) *The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958*. New York: Routledge, p., 175.

textbooks placed at risk the purest social values of the nation³⁷⁶, and at the beginning of the 1940s, the textbooks would be banned in many states.

Nevertheless, Rugg had shaken some of the pillars of the instituted power, but in 1932, Counts “troubled the waters of educational [even more] with the publication [...] of his manifesto ‘Dare the school build a new social order?’”³⁷⁷, thus reinforcing the positions and perspectives of social reconstructionism. Counts and his colleagues, for whom “the highest and most characteristic ethical expression of the genius of the American people is the ideal of democracy”³⁷⁸, argued that “the perpetuation of any human society is dependent on the process of education”³⁷⁹. Moreover, for them, “the extension of equal education opportunities to the children of all the people, regardless of the accidents of birth or fortune, has been a cherished ideal of the American people for generations”³⁸⁰. However, only an “uncritical examination of the statistics of school attendance would suggest that the ideal has been realized. [In fact], the principle of equality of educational opportunity is not applied to certain racial and cultural minorities”³⁸¹.

Counts and his colleagues described the curriculum as a field of struggles. By understanding society as being “divided into sects, parties, classes, and special interests, each of which, in proportion to its strength, strives to incorporate its viewpoint into the curriculum”³⁸², they defined the curriculum as “a resultant of the play of these battling forces upon the school”³⁸³. To attest to this position, Counts and his colleagues, furthermore, adds that “for more than a generation the Chicago system of public education has been the victim of political manipulation”³⁸⁴.

The school, in conjunction with other social institutions, had before it the great challenge of the reconstruction of society. Hence, Counts claimed that “all human

³⁷⁶ Armstrong, O. (1940) Treason in the Textbooks. *The America Legion Magazine*.

³⁷⁷ Lawson, M. & Peterson, R. (1972) *Progressive Education: An Introduction*. London: Angus and Robertson, p., 41.

³⁷⁸ Counts, G., Kimmel, W., Kelley, T. (1934) *The Social Foundations of Education. Part IX: Report of the Commission on the Social Studies – American Historical Association*. (A. Krey – Chairman Director of the Investigation). New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, p. 9

³⁷⁹ Op. Cit., p. 252.

³⁸⁰ Op. Cit., p. 262.

³⁸¹ Op. Cit., pp. 262-264.

³⁸² Op. Cit., p. 272.

³⁸³ Op. Cit., p. 272.

³⁸⁴ Counts, G. (1928) *School and Society in Chicago*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, p. 11.

experience demonstrates that education in any living society is never neutral [so] it is not enough [...] to say we need more and more education as if it were an autonomous process governed by its own laws and dedicated to human freedom”³⁸⁵. Counts further insisted on the necessity of completely abandoning “the naïve faith that the school automatically liberates the mind and serves the cause of human progress”³⁸⁶.

By defending this perspective, Counts upheld education as “a force of great power”³⁸⁷, and the school was “the American road to culture”³⁸⁸. A good or bad process of learning does not depend on the laws of learning, but instead, on the “conception of life and civilization which gives it substance and direction”³⁸⁹. In essence, education is the means of a certain human commitment. It was thus, for Counts, that “education is always a function of some particular civilization at some particular time in history; [...] it can never be an autonomous process, independent of time and place and conducted according to its own laws”³⁹⁰. Counts criticized the stigma of social inequality, remarking that North American society possessed millions of citizens who “by reason of race, economic condition, or cultural deprivation, remain ‘second class’ citizens in this land on liberty and plenty”³⁹¹.

Counts’s criticism of the segregation of the North American educational system was revealed in a study published in 1922 on American secondary education. For Counts, “secondary education is not education for adolescence, as elementary education is education for childhood, but rather education for a selected group of adolescents”³⁹². Also, with regards to another study conducted two years later on senior high school curriculum, Counts indicated that although some alterations were to be found, in

³⁸⁵ Counts, G. (1962) *Education and the Foundations of Human Education*. Pittsburgh. University of Pittsburgh Press, pp. 53-54.

³⁸⁶ Op. Cit., p. 54.

³⁸⁷ Op. Cit., p. 54.

³⁸⁸ Counts, G. (1930) *The American Road to Culture. A Social Interpretation of Education in the United States*. New York: The John Day Company, p.17.

³⁸⁹ Counts, G. (1962) *Education and the Foundations of Human Education*. Pittsburgh. University of Pittsburgh Press, p. 54.

³⁹⁰ Counts, G. (1945) *Education and the Promise of America*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 23.

³⁹¹ Counts, G. (1962) *Education and the Foundations of Human Education*. Pittsburgh. University of Pittsburgh Press, p. 61.

³⁹² Counts, G. (1922) *The Selective Character of American Secondary Education*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p., 141

general, the curriculum still failed to reflect the needs of the majority of the North American citizens³⁹³.

Every educational program should, according to Counts, “endeavor to rear the young in the spirit and practice of equality”³⁹⁴. The great social issue for Counts was to ascertain “whether the ordinary voter [was] equipped with the knowledge, the wisdom, and the dedication to freedom essential to the exercise of his sacred right to shape the destinies of the republic”³⁹⁵. For Counts, power revealed itself in diverse forms and was not reduced to the dynamics of ownership and property. The school, nevertheless, could “do much to improve the condition through the equal and loving treatment of every child regardless of family, race, or creed, and by the encouragement of the pupil to live according to our political and ethical professions”³⁹⁶.

For Counts, “a particular educational form gives expression to a particular theory of life”³⁹⁷. Such a theory could not in any way support itself on segregationist and racial values. Counts thus criticized the “intolerance of cultural and racial diversity”³⁹⁸. Such a socially lethal approach turned the schools into “an instrument for the perpetuation of the existing social order rather than a creative force in society”³⁹⁹. Given that industrialization “has given birth to a society of enormous complexity”⁴⁰⁰, education “must come to terms with industrial civilization and discover its tasks in the new age”⁴⁰¹. However, Counts believed that “if education [...] is to be effective in modifying practice, it must keep close to society; [...] school cannot build a utopia [...] and cannot become socially progressive by mere resolve”⁴⁰². Given the complexity of the dynamics of industrial society, Counts thought that education—vital

³⁹³ Counts, G. (1926) *The Senior High School Curriculum*. Chicago; The University of Chicago Press.

³⁹⁴ Counts, G. (1945) *Education and the Promise of America*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 124.

³⁹⁵ Counts, G. (1962) *Education and the Foundations of Human Education*. Pittsburgh. University of Pittsburgh Press, p. 62.

³⁹⁶ Op. Cit., p. 79.

³⁹⁷ Counts, G. (1930) *The American Road to Culture. A Social Interpretation of Education in the United States*. New York: The John Day Company, p.5.

³⁹⁸ Op. Cit., p.104.

³⁹⁹ Op. Cit., p.126.

⁴⁰⁰ Counts, G. (1929) *Secondary Education and Industrialism*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 31

⁴⁰¹ Op. Cit., p. 12.

⁴⁰² Op. Cit., pp. 67-68.

for “acquiring new powers, for making adjustments to novel situations”⁴⁰³—should be something which encompassed one’s whole life.

Profoundly influenced by the then Soviet model⁴⁰⁴ (“the total Soviet educational program, as we have noted, has played a critical role in the transformation of the former Russian Empire and the advancement of the Soviet Union to the position of the second industrial power in the world”⁴⁰⁵), Counts, as did Rugg, believed that the North American educational system could lead to social transformation. On the basis of this crucial principle, Counts directed violent criticism at the Progressive Education Movement. For Counts, “the weakness of Progressive education [...] lies in the fact that it has elaborated no theory of social welfare”⁴⁰⁶, stressing that “if Progressive Education is to be genuinely progressive, it must [...] face squarely and courageously every social issue, come to grips with life in all of its stark reality, establish an organic relation with the community, develop a realistic and comprehensive theory of welfare, fashion a compelling and challenging vision of human destiny, and become less frightened than it is today at the bodies of imposition and indoctrination”. In other words, “Progressive Education cannot place its trust in a child-centered school”⁴⁰⁷. Clearly, for Counts, education was surrounded by fallacies: “the fallacy that man is born free, [...] the fallacy that the child is good by nature, [...] the fallacy that the child lives in a separate world of his own, [...] the fallacy that education is some pure and mystical essence that remains unchanged from everlasting to everlasting, [...] the fallacy that the school should be impartial in its emphasis, that no bias should be given instruction, [...] the fallacy that the great object of education is to produce the college professor”⁴⁰⁸. Either education was transformed or democracy would surely die. One does not transform society without transforming the school⁴⁰⁹. Counts still professed the certainty that social transformation entailed a revolution, especially since the rich classes would never peacefully surrender their privileges. However, the

⁴⁰³ Counts, G. (1945) *Education and the Promise of America*. New York: The MacMillan Company, p. 109.

⁴⁰⁴ This influence would be reduced especially at the end of the 1930s. In this regard *vide* Lawson, M. & Peterson, R. (1972) *Progressive Education: An Introduction*. London: Angus and Robertson, p., 44.

⁴⁰⁵ Counts, G. (1959) *Khrushchev and the Central Committee Speak on Education*. Thesis of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Council of Ministers of the USSR. Dr. George S. Counts’ commentary and analysis. Pittsburgh: The University of Pittsburgh Press, p. 19

⁴⁰⁶ Counts, G. (1932) *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* New York: The John Day Company, p. 7.

⁴⁰⁷ *Op. Cit.*, p. 9.

⁴⁰⁸ *Op. Cit.*, pp. 13-21.

⁴⁰⁹ Counts, G. (1931) *The Soviet Challenge to America*. New York: The John Day Company.

school would perform a prominent role in this revolutionary process, especially since “the failure of revolutions is a record of the failure to bring education into the service of the revolutionary cause”⁴¹⁰.

Education proved to be a totalizer and “as a force of social regeneration must march hand in hand with the living and creative forces of the social order”⁴¹¹. The vitality of the schools necessarily passed through the transformation of the latter into “centers for the building [of society] and not merely for contemplation of our civilization”⁴¹². By defending this principle, Counts sought to reinforce “the pillars of democratic society, a concept which is crucial to the North-American society—if America should lose her honest devotion to democracy, or if she should lose her revolutionary temper, she will no longer be America”⁴¹³. From among the many objectives of a truly democratic society, Counts highlighted the necessity of combat against “all forces tending to produce social distinctions and classes [and] repress[ing] every form of privilege and economic parasitism”⁴¹⁴.

Moreover, Counts understood capitalism as a wasteful, inhuman, cruel model that led to the exploitation of natural resources without taking into account the future social needs, that made technology into a weapon for the most privileged, and that constantly multiplied social inequality. Consequently, Counts denounced the benefits of industrialization, adding that “if the machine is to serve all, and serve all equally, it cannot be the property of the few”⁴¹⁵. For Counts, to avoid problematizing society and education in these dimensions, “is to evade the most crucial, difficult, and important educational task”⁴¹⁶.

Counts’s name will forever be associated with the emergence of *The Social Frontier* in 1934. This entailed an explicit reinforcement of the social reconstructionist position on the child-centered movement and social efficiency. On the first page, two text extracts are highlighted, taken from *The Declaration of Independence* [“we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their

⁴¹⁰ Op. Cit., p. 66.

⁴¹¹ Counts, G. (1932) *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* New York: The John Day Company, pp. 30-31.

⁴¹² Op. Cit., p. 37.

⁴¹³ Op. Cit., p. 40.

⁴¹⁴ Op. Cit., p. 41.

⁴¹⁵ Op. Cit., p. 44.

⁴¹⁶ Op. Cit., p. 55.

creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”⁴¹⁷] and from the *Report of the Commission on Social Studies of the American Historical Association* [“The age of individualism and laissez-faire in economy and government is closing and a new age of collectivism is emerging”⁴¹⁸]. In the (editorial) Orientation, Counts stressed that “American society, along with world society, is passing through an age of profound transition”⁴¹⁹. *The Social Frontier*, by the hand of Counts, upheld that “the age of individualism in economy is closing and that an aged market by close integration of social life and by collective planning and control is opening”⁴²⁰, stressing that, as a political project, it “acknowledges allegiance to no narrow conception of education; [that is to say] while recognizing the school as society’s central educational agency, it refuses to limit itself to a consideration of the work of this institution”⁴²¹, a position which is similarly expressed by Dewey⁴²².

It is in the body of work by Rugg and Counts that the work of another figure would come to be prominent in the social reconstructionist movement, namely Brameld. For Brameld, although “pressure groups, some of them classified by official sources as pro-fascist, litter the desks of principals and schools boards with ‘proofs’ that the Deweys and Ruggs of education are Bolsheviks disguised”⁴²³, the fact was that “no other theory [like Progressive Education] was so brilliant, convincingly expounded in the schools”⁴²⁴. Brameld argued that the hate for and opposition to the Progressive Movement was supported not only by an economic reason, but also by the “widespread confusion and sheer ignorance, which confront any departure from routinized practices”⁴²⁵. Brameld stressed that Progressivism was based on a deep belief in the mind, “man’s most unique function”⁴²⁶, and that it interpreted reality as a

⁴¹⁷ Excerpt of The Declaration of Independence. In *The Social Frontier* (1934) A Journal of Educational Criticism and Reconstruction, 1 (1) p., 1.

⁴¹⁸ Report of the Commission on Social Studies of the American Historical Association Op. Cit, p., 1.

⁴¹⁹ Counts, G. (1934) (Editorial) Orientation. *The Social Frontier*, 1, pp., 3-10, p., 3.

⁴²⁰ Op. Cit., p., 4.

⁴²¹ Op. Cit., p., 4.

⁴²² Dewey, J. (1934) Can Education Share in Social Reconstruction? *The Social Frontier*, 1, pp. 11-12.

⁴²³ Brameld, Th. (1950) *Ends and Means in Education: A Mid-Century Appraisal*. New York: Harper & Brothers, p. 33.

⁴²⁴ Op. Cit., p. 32.

⁴²⁵ Op. Cit., p. 35.

⁴²⁶ Brameld, Th. (1950) *Philosophies of Education in Cultural Perspective*. New York: The Dryden Press, p. 102.

construct that was based on experience, understood as something “dynamic, temporal, spatial, pluralistic”⁴²⁷.

Faced by this, the Progressive Education Movement, he argued, should construct not only a theoretical framework that would stress “new goals for American and world democracy”, but it also should be “encouraging the kind of free self-expression which alone guarantees that the new America can be built out of the experiences and wants of the peoples themselves”⁴²⁸.

For Brameld, “education in its totality encompasses the fullest possible consideration of evidence, the most thorough effort at clear communication, and the most scrupulous respect for disagreements as well as agreements”⁴²⁹. Brameld further declared that “if American education is ever to emerge from the confusion and disagreement in which it is now floundering it will have to admit that it is incapable of doing so under its own steam”⁴³⁰.

Therefore, only the development of a critical habit can avoid the indoctrination and allow the teacher to be more than a mere professor, but rather “a democratic leader and expert in the precise sense of these terms”⁴³¹. These are the educational principles that guarantee a social democratic framework, since democracy “is that form of society in which all physical and spiritual resources of life are in fact available to and under the control of the majority of people; and in which the minority is always free to criticize while obedient to policies authorized by the majority”⁴³².

Education, thus, has a decisive role in social transformation. Brameld is of the belief that education “has aided *both* reinforcement *and* change, depending upon the specific culture of which it is part”⁴³³. Faced by the social vitality that the school revealed, “the indifference of too many of us to what goes on in schools and colleges is the

⁴²⁷ Op. Cit., p. 103.

⁴²⁸ Brameld, Th. (1950) *Ends and Means in Education: A Mid-Century Appraisal*. New York: Harper & Brothers, p. 38.

⁴²⁹ Op. Cit., p. 90.

⁴³⁰ Brameld, Th. (1957) *Cultural Foundations of Education. An Interdisciplinary Exploration*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, p. 3.

⁴³¹ Brameld, Th. (1950) *Ends and Means in Education: A Mid-Century Appraisal*. New York: Harper & Brothers, p. 94.

⁴³² Op. Cit., p. 96.

⁴³³ Op. Cit., p. 123.

strongest weapon of those economic-political rings whose tactics press us closer and closer to the edge of a home-grown totalitarian counter-revolution”⁴³⁴.

So that schools could survive as good schools, and assuming education as “a mighty agency through which ordinary folk in an evolving democratic order actually determined together what they most want and how they can get it”⁴³⁵, Brameld proposed an agenda with four items: “[t]he community must be brought into the life of the school and the school into that of the community at every vital point; [t]he teaching profession must unite in a strong and independent organization; [f]inancial support for American schools must be doubled or, more reasonably in terms of needs and capacity to pay, tripled; [and] [i]nstead of retreating, the school system of America must take the offensive in advocating and testing new designs for education”⁴³⁶.

By understanding culture as a social reality and the school as a cultural agent, Brameld viewed the curriculum “in relation to cultural order, teaching-learning in terms of cultural process, and the control of education in view of cultural goals”⁴³⁷, further adding that “we need to think of the curriculum of general education not only in terms of the present relationships of people, but in terms both of their roots in the past and their directions toward the future”⁴³⁸. It is in this sense that Brameld argued that “learning involves active and critical transactions with the cultural and physical environment”⁴³⁹.

Further stressed by Brameld is that the “conventional curriculum intends primarily to develop in young people an attitude of acceptance toward the out-there-ness and completeness of historical events [and...] culturally, such an attitude is likely to encourage a conservative frame of mind toward the social heritage”⁴⁴⁰. Brameld thus proposed a curriculum based on a “concept of learning as social-self-realization”⁴⁴¹.

⁴³⁴ Brameld, Th. (1951) *The Battle for Free Schools*. Boston: The Beacon Press, p. 71.

⁴³⁵ Op. Cit., p. 71.

⁴³⁶ Op. Cit., pp. 71- 79

⁴³⁷ Brameld, Th. (1965) *The Use of Explosive Ideas in Education. Culture, Class and Revolution*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, p. 75.

⁴³⁸ Op. Cit., p. 77.

⁴³⁹ Op. Cit., p. 82.

⁴⁴⁰ Op. Cit., p. 79.

⁴⁴¹ Brameld, Th (1956) *Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education*. New York: The Dryden Press Publishers, p. 211.

He put forward a curriculum design for the schools of the people a “program, which is focused upon the purposes of American and world culture”⁴⁴². The major imperative of education for Brameld was “to engage in a radical shift away from both traditional investigations of the rich history of the past and exclusive concentration upon contemporary experience. The shift that is now required is, above all, toward the *future*”⁴⁴³.

However, we cannot understand this radical tradition within the curriculum field and education, in general, unless we understand the counter-hegemonic traditions both within curriculum and outside in informal educational struggles with regards to unions, civil rights, etc. Thus, the works of Dewey, Bode, Rugg, Counts, and Brameld should also be contextualized within the bosom of the deeply influential and powerful tradition of counter-hegemonic educational work outside of education.

In fact, there is a history of an indigenous radical education community in the United States. Michael Apple and others have not turned to Freire’s work or that of other world-famous educational figures because there are powerful internal traditions for linking education to larger struggles over civil rights, over-exploitation and domination. These struggles were not simply found within the form of the curriculum field, or in the formal sphere of education, but, just as importantly, in informal social movements that established their own schools. Thus, and as was previously referred to at the beginning of this section, Michael Apple’s work needs to be seen as emerging out of not just the internal political history of curriculum but out of experiments such as the Highlander Folk School, the early Mechanics Institutes (the early worker’s college), and the Rand School. In fact, some of Michael Apple’s family went to these worker-oriented high schools and labor training colleges. His father and uncle come out of this tradition. Moreover, it is necessary to remark upon the existence of important figures such as Du Bois, Robeson, and Luther King Jr. in the midst of African-American struggles, who were similarly prominent in the leadership of these counter-hegemonic movements and who helped to politicize the field of education.

⁴⁴² Brameld, Th. (1950) *Ends and Means in Education: A Mid-Century Appraisal*. New York: Harper & Brothers, p. 259

⁴⁴³ Brameld, Th. (1970) *The Climactic Decades. Mandate to Education*. New York: Praeger Publishers, p. 23.

The Highlander Folk School is associated with the name of Horton. In fact, “in large part, the Highlander Folk School was the product of a personal and intellectual odyssey by its cofounder, Myles Fall Horton”⁴⁴⁴, a person who, according to MacLean, “American education needs to know [...] better for he is perhaps America’s best creative and effective adult educator”⁴⁴⁵. Besides Nightingale and Niebuhr’s influence, he was profoundly influenced by, among others, the works of Marx, Ward, Dewey and Counts⁴⁴⁶. At the beginning of the 1930s, he set off for Denmark establishing contact with Danish folk high schools, through which Horton conceptualized his school model which was tried out near the end of the 1930s in Ozone, Tennessee. In fact, it was here that Horton, by organizing “vacation Bible schools”, concluded that “the Church and other organizations were not helping people deal with their problems of poverty, unemployment, and living with a countryside devastated by logging and mining practice”⁴⁴⁷. Given this, Horton, despite not having a formal plan, “asked parents of Bible school students to come to the church to talk about their concerns”⁴⁴⁸ having remarked that the adults managed to voice articulate answers on the basis of their actual experiences. He returned to the United States and on November 1, 1932, with the support of Hiebuhr, he founded his school, “in one of the eleven poorest counties in the United States”⁴⁴⁹, with the following slogan: “learn from the people; start their education where they are”⁴⁵⁰.

Meanwhile in the summer of 1932, as a consequence of the depression, a coal miners’ strike at nearby Wilder burst on the scene and the social impact of Highlander was soon felt. In fact, by assuming its objective as active participation in the transformation of the North American society, the Highlander Folk School would forever be remembered in history for the role it played in eastern Tennessee helping “unionized southern textile workers” and even helping “some 100,000 blacks become

⁴⁴⁴ Glen, J. (1988) *Highlander, No Ordinary School, 1932-1962*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, p. 6.

⁴⁴⁵ MacLean, K. (1966) Myles Horton and the Highlander Folk School, *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLVII, pp. 487-497, p. 487.

⁴⁴⁶ Parker, F. & Parker, B. (s/d) *Myles Horton (1905-90) of Highlander; Adult Educator and Southern Activist. School of Education and Psychology*, Western Carolina University. Mimeographed. Vide also: Adams, F. & Horton, M. (1975) *Unearthing Seeds of Fire: The Idea of Highlander*. North Carolina: John F. Blair Publisher.

⁴⁴⁷ Jarvis, P. (1987) *Twentieth Century Thinkers in Adult Education*. London: Croom Helm, p. 246.

⁴⁴⁸ Op. Cit., p. 246.

⁴⁴⁹ Adams, F. & Horton, M. (1975) *Unearthing Seeds of Fire: The Idea of Highlander*. North Carolina: John F. Blair Publisher, p. 30.

⁴⁵⁰ Op. Cit., p. 206.

literate and thus qualified to vote”⁴⁵¹. Horton rapidly saw the strike as an instrument of learning. The strike, besides confirming “the power structure’s determination in the 1930s and 1940s to cripple labor unions”⁴⁵², permitted Horton to develop the Highlander Labor Program.

Towards the end of the 1950s and the beginnings of the 1960s, the Highlander Folk School developed an educational program in the Black community, which “significantly increased black voter registration, black political awareness and involvement, [and] helped elect black mayors, sheriffs and other officials in the 1970s and 1980s”⁴⁵³. The impact of the project emerged in the words of Rosa Parks: “the only reason I don’t hate every white man alive is Highlander and Myles Horton. He’s the only white man the Negroes fully trust”⁴⁵⁴. Horton perceived social activism as being intimately connected to education and as the platform to transform society. However, he assumed, much like many leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, a pacifist methodology since he was of the opinion that “education *per se* is non violent. It is a means of helping people to understand, of enabling people to change their own minds voluntarily on the basis of information and illumination”⁴⁵⁵. For Horton, education was a “continuous process of action and reflection [so] Highlander praxis [was] praxis oriented”⁴⁵⁶.

The Highlander Folk School was, for Horton, an idea that stemmed from the students’ perceptions and it was through these perceptions that the educational program was developed, keeping it as much as possible “informal, non-structured, nonacademic and nonjudgmental”⁴⁵⁷. For Horton, it was “essential [to] start where people are”⁴⁵⁸.

⁴⁵¹ Parker, F. & Parker, B. (s/d) *Myles Horton (1905-90) of Highlander; Adult Educator and Southern Activist. School of Education and Psychology*, Western Carolina University. Mimeographed.

⁴⁵² Op. Cit., pp. 5-6.

⁴⁵³ Op. Cit., p. 7.

⁴⁵⁴ Parks, *Apud* MacLean, K. (1966) Myles Horton and the Highlander Folk School, *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLVII, pp. 487-497, pp. 487-491.

⁴⁵⁵ MacLean, K. (1966) Myles Horton and the Highlander Folk School, *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLVII, pp. 487-497, p. 490.

⁴⁵⁶ Kennedy, W. (1981) Highlander Praxis: Learning with Myles Horton. *Teachers College Record*, 83 (1), pp., 105-119, p. 116-119.

⁴⁵⁷ Op. Cit., pp., 105-106.

⁴⁵⁸ Bell, B., Gaventa, J. & Peters, J. (1990) *Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, We Make the Road by Walking. Conversations on Education and Social Change*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, p. 99.

As its political power developed, especially in relation to the Civil Rights Movement, The Highlander Folk School “became the target of a series of attacks spearheaded by southern segregationists”⁴⁵⁹. According to Glen, the fear of Communism and the Supreme Court’s Brown decision—which will be studied more closely in the next chapter—would precipitate hostilities against the Highlander Folk School and Horton. The so-called Communist school would come to endure strong attacks and accusations of serving the interests of Communism and of endangering the nation’s sovereignty. In 1962, the legislative power of the United States capitulated when faced by the pressure of more conservative groups and legislated the closure of the school. Horton, despite immediately opening another school remarked on “how powerless the courts are to deal with something like Highlander, because it’s in the minds and hearts of people and there’s really nothing you can do”⁴⁶⁰. Above all, Horton and the idea of Highlander, despite working in the area of adult education, demonstrated the potential and the impact of education as an instrument of social transformation.

It is within this context that the work and thinking of Michael Apple must be understood. Although having been aware that the work developed by him readdressed and delved more closely into certain issues raised by the work of Dewey, Bode, Rugg, Counts, and Brameld, the fact is that the work of Michael Apple gains intellectual momentum and historical and political significance when inserted into this progressive curricular river that we have just addressed. Thus, we are in perfect accordance with Michael Apple, Huebner and Kliebard, for whom there is no logical significance in the term reconceptualization ‘advanced’ by Pinar.

I totally reject any language that talks about curriculum reconceptualists: I have never been one; I don’t think there ever have been any in the field; and I think it’s a total misreading of history. Certainly, [...] Kliebard, myself and many others who were included in that tradition

⁴⁵⁹ Glen, J. (1988) *Highlander, No Ordinary School, 1932-1962*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, p. 173.

⁴⁶⁰ MacLean, K. (1966) Myles Horton and the Highlander Folk School, *Phi Delta Kappan*, XLVII, pp. 487-497, p. 496.

never saw ourselves as reconceptualizing anything. We are simply standing on the shoulders of a very, very long tradition that has its roots in the very beginning of the curriculum field⁴⁶¹.

In order to better understand this political and pedagogical position, we need to examine some of the points presented by Pinar in his Manifesto on reconceptualization and which, according to us, raises some problems. Firstly, Pinar appears to propose a new curricular concept fundamentally only, on the basis of the thinking of authors that may be found in a book⁴⁶², which confers a profound fragility to the concept. The work of the authors included in this book is part of a whole history in the field of education and the curriculum, which must not be analyzed in an isolated manner. We consider, for example, the work of Greene, Macdonald, Mann, Michael Apple and even Pinar, to be directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, related to certain historical perspectives in the heart of the field.

Second, and as consequence of the first, Pinar completely silences a historically significant part of the curriculum, in which, paradoxically the actual work of Pinar himself must be understood, as one of its more expressive figures. By silencing the historical curricular significance, Pinar furthermore neglected the important relations of complicity that the field of the curriculum had come to maintain with society, influencing it as well as being influenced by it. Thus, Pinar makes a great contribution to the fact that “The curriculum theory field has forgotten what existence is [and] it will remain moribund until it remembers”⁴⁶³.

Thirdly, the name Pinar used to identify the movement needs more explanation. According to Pinar, the term “reconceptualization derives from [...] Macdonald and his much quoted 1971 piece on research in curriculum”, adding that it only “contributed to its popularization using the idea to sketch a picture of where the field had been, where it is now, and where it might be going”⁴⁶⁴. However, if we carefully

⁴⁶¹ Apple, Michael (2000) On the shoulders of Giants: Michael Apple. In J. Marshall, J. Sears & W. Schubert (eds). *Turning Points in Curriculum. A Contemporary American Memoir*. Merrill: Prentice Hall., pp. 103-242.

⁴⁶² Pinar, W. (1975) *Curriculum Theorizing. The Reconceptualists*. Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Corporation.

⁴⁶³ Op. Cit., p. 396.

⁴⁶⁴ Pinar, W. (1994) *Autobiography, Politics and Sexuality*. New York: Peter Lang, p. 63.

consider Macdonald's text⁴⁶⁵, nowhere does the author refer to the term reconceptualists. Quite the contrary, and Pinar himself admitted to his confusing use of the term: "it is appropriate to note a confusion illustrated by the frequent use of the term 'reconceptualism' rather than 'reconceptualization'. I suppose I contribute to this misunderstanding by subtitling the 1975 book of essays *Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists*⁴⁶⁶".

Fourthly, by basing his 'new' curricular concept on the etymology of the Latin word *currere*, Pinar created for himself a complex trap. Although we accept, in essence, the way he supports the term 'curriculum' etymologically, the fact is that that such support clearly requires another explanation. In fact, one might accept that "the study of *currere*, as the Latin infinitive suggests, involves the investigation of the nature of the individual experience of the public: artifacts, actors, operations, of the educational journey, or pilgrimage". Nevertheless, the modest experience we have had with the many translations we have undertaken in the last five years of graduate students of Greek and Latin (among others, Homer, Aristophenes, Aristoteles, Plato, Ovid, Catulo, Cicero, Virgil) allows us to declare that Pinar should also respect the semantic sense of *currere*. In this way, *currere* really has the meaning (more connotative than denotative) of trajectory, journey, path⁴⁶⁷, a notion implying certain objectives, which, within the dominion of education and of the curriculum from the end of the nineteenth-century have been debated and which have political, cultural, ideological and economic elements, and which are transversed by the dynamics of race, class and gender. Thus, Pinar not only contributed to "the danger of borrowing concepts and methods from other traditions"⁴⁶⁸, but, by ignoring the history of the field, has also created a concept that is disconnected "from their historical and intellectual contexts and plac[es] [it] in alien ambiances"⁴⁶⁹.

⁴⁶⁵ Macdonald, J. (1971) Curriculum Theory. *Journal of Educational Research*, 64 (5), pp. 196-200.

⁴⁶⁶ Pinar, W. (1994) *Autobiography, Politics and Sexuality*. New York: Peter Lang, p. 70. *Vide* also Pinar, W. (1988) The Reconceptualization of Curriculum Studies, 1987: A Personal Retrospective. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 3 (2), pp., 157-167, p., 160.

⁴⁶⁷ *Vide* among others Oxford Latin Dictionary (1968) Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. Simpson, D. (1959) Cassell's New Latin Dictionary. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company; Smaller, A. (1968) Latin-English Dictionary. London: John Murray Publishers.

⁴⁶⁸ Pinar, W. (1975) *Curriculum Theorizing. The Reconceptualists*. Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, p. 401.

⁴⁶⁹ *Op. Cit.*, p. 401.

In the fifth place, and this is profoundly important, the *Pinarian* [re]conceptualization of the field completely capitulates when he wrote that “the field is not only an environment-producing discipline, involving the formulation of objectives, design, even criticism [but] it is a knowledge-producing discipline, with its own method of inquiry and its own area of investigation”⁴⁷⁰. For Pinar, “the questions of *currere* are not Tyler’s”⁴⁷¹. Apparently, the curriculum is territorialized on a phenomological basis. The explanation “not only” which also implies a “but also”, does not reap conceptual solidness. Moreover, it could be that a Tylerian curriculum perspective was not in any way a knowledge-producing discipline, not to talk of the perspectives of Rugg and Counts.

Could it be that the *currere* that Pinar proposed is free of objectives, selection of activities, and evaluation? If it is (and we do not believe it to be so) then, it is not original and, once again, it silences a specific faction in the bosom of the Romantic critics movement. In the whole history of the North American curriculum, especially at the heart of the true Progressive tradition, no one deliberately opposed the objective(s) of education and of the curriculum. Overcoming the common assumption that not having objectives is, in essence, to have objectives, even those who assumed more radical positions (Rugg, Counts, Mann, and Michael Apple) did not desecrate the notion of objectives or of evaluation. Purely by way of example, Spencer and Michael Apple (although obviously in diametrically opposed positions), when they problematized the knowledge transmitted in schools, were implicitly placing in a position of debate the true objective—political, economic, cultural, ideological—of education and the curriculum. In other words, what is still unfortunately at stake is by whom and how such objectives are determined.

In the sixth place, the dimension of *currere* or of the curriculum “as experience in educational contexts”⁴⁷² sounds more like a Parker, Dewey or even Johnson. In fact, Huebner had mentioned the necessity of another language for the field. If one reaches the conclusion that the construction of that language must follow the revitalization of a specific curricular past, then this past must be accepted and not silenced. And, there is still another issue: to reconceptualize what? What should the referent of this

⁴⁷⁰ Op. Cit., p. 400.

⁴⁷¹ Op. Cit., p. 401.

⁴⁷² Op. Cit., p. 413.

'pseudo' movement be? We think that Pinar wants nearly everything as a referent for this movement. If, in fact, it is about everything, it clearly annuls itself in itself. It is then about nothing. And this is achieved by the loss of collective memory of the condition out of which it actually emerges.

In seventh place, the structure that Pinar projects of the Reconceptualist movement of is greatly polemical. By dividing the book into four (controversial) parts, Pinar sunk his theory into an enormous contradiction. Not only does his division lack a good explanation, but it also allows for the legitimacy of some doubts. For example, in discussing Cremin in the section regarding the state of the field, Pinar's explanation renders the choice itself fragile by claiming, "he cannot be called a reconceptualist"⁴⁷³. How is it possible, for example, to comprehend the inclusion of Mann and Michael Apple in a group said to entail 'political and methodological criticism', and relegate Huebner or Greene to the exterior, placing them in a post-critical dimension? As far as we are concerned, the politicization of the field led by Mann and Michael Apple can be found in the works of Huebner and Macdonald. Moreover, how can we explain the inclusion of Phenix in this group of post-critics? Could the article by Phenix "Transcendence and the curriculum" define his position in the field? Quite sincerely, we think not. Rather, what logic exists in the 1973 Rochester Conference in the book of 1975 *Curriculum Theorizing. The Reconceptualists*? If it exists, only Pinar could explain it.

In eighth place, and conferring a Euro-phobic stamp to the movement, Pinar ignored not only that the history of North American education, of which Pinar himself was part, has many European roots, but he also neglected how Huebner, Greene, Mann and Michael Apple are profoundly influenced by European lines of thought. If the term "reconceptualization—not reconceptualism—accurately describes what is underway in the curriculum in 1970's"⁴⁷⁴ then, there is all the more reason not to dissociate the work of Huebner, Greene, Mann, Macdonald, Michael Apple and of Pinar himself from its historical context. It nevertheless remains curious that Pinar by including himself in the group of the reconceptualists *avant la lettre*, himself annuls the historical significance of his own work in which the contributions, for example, of

⁴⁷³ Op. Cit., p. xii.

⁴⁷⁴ Pinar, W. (1994) *Autobiography, Politics and Sexuality*. New York: Peter Lang, p. 71.

Johnson, must not be forgotten. We can say straightforwardly that we find paradoxes and fragility in his theory.

By way of conclusion, we think that his line of thought is incapable of emerging through the mere junction of a number of projects. Thus, it is meaningless to talk of this movement as described by Pinar. What is at stake here is not who chose the term first or not. Science is not a short-distance race. What is at stake here is that a line of thought is so much more than a combination of ascribed texts, juxtaposed to one another, without any historical significance. Pinar's book is of utmost importance, but not for the reasons invoked by Klohr⁴⁷⁵. It is important, because if everyone was already gathered at a wake for the moribund state of the field, Pinar ended up giving it the final blessing.

Quite naturally, by pondering the work of Michael Apple and other curricularists, one must not ignore that such works are part and parcel of a specific progressive curriculum river, which has, since the end of the nineteenth-century, positioned itself for dominion in the field. In this manner, it is surely imprudent to insert the work of Michael Apple and other curricularists in a movement, which is constructed so as to negate a whole historical tradition.

However, and in what concerns Michael Apple, the understanding that his work was to be included in the continuity of a specific tradition in the field, was only reached during the 1970s. The comprehension of this tardy awareness grew out of a number of experiences and influences during the period when Michael Apple was a graduate student at Teachers College, which will be dealt with next.

Philosophical Influences

It was during the Fall of 1966 that Michael Apple enrolled as a graduate student at Teachers College, Columbia, concluding his doctorate in 1970. At the time, the Department of Philosophy was dominated by analytic philosophy. In contrast to some countries in Europe (for example, Spain) that embraced a programmatic philosophy,

⁴⁷⁵ Klohr, P. (1976) A Return to Greece. Reconceptualizing curriculum. *The Review of Education*, 2 (4), pp.353-357.

the United States and United Kingdom were dominated by analytic philosophy. It was in this phase that Michael Apple felt the influence of Soltis, who at the time was writing *An Introduction to the Analysis of Educational Concepts*. For Soltis “the world is to be analyzed”⁴⁷⁶:

You’re inside a bottle of assumptions, you don’t know that there’s glass, you’re flying inside this thing. You think you see the world, but the bottle is in between you and the world, so you’re captured, and you’re captured. That bottle is made up of your assumptions, so the task is to rigorously analyze the logic of your assumptions, to show that you really don’t know what you’re talking about. It’s a form of what might be called language therapy. The language you use is polluted. Clean it up so you see the world more clearly⁴⁷⁷.

It was, in fact, this perspective which was opposed to the dogmatic bases of the social efficiency movement that insisted on the motto ‘teach the disciplines of knowledge’. However, for the analytic philosophers, the crucial issue was not whether we should teach the disciplines of knowledge”⁴⁷⁸ but rather “what counts as a discipline?”

During the 1960s there was a major debate that said, “Teach the disciplines of knowledge”. So Bruner, for instance, and all these famous individuals were saying, “We’re at war with the Soviet Union; we must engage in building new technologies”. The scientists like Rickover and Bruner said we need to change the schools. So let’s teach the disciplines. An analytic philosopher would say, “What counts as a discipline?” Let me give an example. This was fun. I actually did some of this stuff. Let’s compare physics, which you and I would agree is a discipline, right, and cooking. So let’s understand what your assumptions are because you’re making no sense when you say physics is a discipline and cooking isn’t. What’s a discipline? What are the characteristics of it? They both have a history of inquiry, right? In physics we can trace out the history of it, and examine the new books and articles. Does cooking as well have new books of recipes where people try them out and then publish them? Yes. Does physics have forms of experimentation with rules? Yes. Cooking had forms of

⁴⁷⁶ Apple, Michael *Tape 7*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

⁴⁷⁷ Op. Cit.

⁴⁷⁸ Op. Cit.

experimentation with rules. Are there people who have high status when they're called physicists? Yes. Are there people who have high status and are cooks? Yes. They're in four-star restaurants. They're called chefs⁴⁷⁹.

It is still in this context that Phenix—who, as we have already mentioned, was Michael Apple's first professor at Teachers College—and was “partly an analytic philosopher but [with] a degree in theology from Princeton Theological Seminary, a degree in philosophy, and a degree in theoretical physics”⁴⁸⁰ proposed the epistemological structure of the disciplines. That is to say, it is important to analyze what makes physics, physics, what makes music, music, what makes philosophy, philosophy. In fact, as is indicated by Michael Apple, the thinking and work of Dewey would add nothing to this debate⁴⁸¹. Thus, at the time, there were no courses on Dewey. In essence, it was really the social context that determined the educational and curricular debate and it was even the preponderance of analytic philosophy that led the work of Dewey to be marginal in the construction of Michael Apple's thinking. Furthermore, as Michael Apple further remarked, “philosophy of education was considered so bad, so poor analytically, so weak, it was simply sets of assertions”⁴⁸², adding that “our task was to trim the underbrush; [in other words, we] couldn't have recognized the trees because there was so much garbage there; [we need to] get to the key issues”⁴⁸³. He adds, we took “an axe, cut out everything that wasn't logical. It was quite vicious, but very, very powerful, and very alienating because there was no place for values other than to talk about how one could make a value statement and how values were hidden in what seemed like a neutral statement, like teaching the disciplines”⁴⁸⁴.

Nevertheless, early on, Michael Apple realized that analytic philosophy, as an intellectual tool, was insufficient for the development of a specific and more profound political project. Although very powerful in problematizing the issue of knowledge, it

⁴⁷⁹ Op. Cit.

⁴⁸⁰ Op. Cit.

⁴⁸¹ Op. Cit.

⁴⁸² Op. Cit.

⁴⁸³ Op. Cit.

⁴⁸⁴ Op. Cit.

was, in itself, insufficient for a more profound political problematization of education and of the curriculum. As Michael Apple points out:

I was beginning to get alienated from analytic philosophy because it had no place for my politics because politics was a problem. We were on the balcony, we were therapists, we were standing above the key people's positions putting them through our logical screen and only keeping the stuff that was logical. Everything else was simply an assertion, a stipulative form and written out. The rigor was really powerful. I really did appreciate that and I think that the dispositions that go with that are still with me, so there is a hidden curriculum with that [...] There is no place for me as a political and ethical being and it was disconnected from classrooms, alright, so this was simply the most rigorous philosophical tools applied to problems in education. It wasn't about education. There were logical problems in educational talk. We had to expunge the bad logic and that was just alienating⁴⁸⁵.

For Michael Apple, there was a political dimension to the educational phenomenon that could never be minimized and education could not be understood on the basis of the exclusion of wider social issues. It was around this time that Michael Apple was already “deeply involved in political work, in the anti-war movement and anti-racist material, and anti-corporate informal and formal mobilizations. My politics, which was always there, now was brought home to real struggles”⁴⁸⁶ and he began working with Huebner “who also had a strong historical sense”⁴⁸⁷. As we have previously indicated, Michael Apple attended a course with Huebner in which they were “forbidden to use any discourse that's usual in education.” He notes that they were instructed to “Throw it out, start over using phenomenological methods. Look without preconceptions at what you are seeing. How do you do that? You put on different kinds of glasses, aesthetic glasses, political glasses, scientific glasses, psychological glasses...”⁴⁸⁸. It was also Huebner who introduced him, among others,

⁴⁸⁵ Op. Cit.

⁴⁸⁶ Op. Cit.

⁴⁸⁷ Op. Cit.

⁴⁸⁸ Op. Cit.

to the thinking of Schutz. Michael Apple “was the American [person] in education who had mastered Schutz”⁴⁸⁹, who would be one of the great pillars of his thinking.

Thus, in the ambit of philosophy, we must stress two kinds of influences on Michael Apple. On the one hand, there was the influence of Soltis on the dominion of analytic philosophy; and on the other, the influence of Shutz on the field of phenomenology. It was furthermore from the close relation established with Huebner, that Michael Apple had contact with the thinking of Habermas, Marcuse, Williams and Gramsci, influences which will be discussed next. Although we have grouped them in the under political science, the first two may be inserted in the dominion of critical theory and the last two in the dominion of neo-Marxism.

Influences from Political Science

The end of the 1960s undoubtedly left indelible marks on the history of the United States. North American society was like a keg of gunpowder with multiple inflammatory ends which lit up daily in the face of a marked social discontentment. In an increasingly unequal society, in which economic and cultural imbalances were becoming more acute, popular insurrection was the most faithful and natural expression of such dissatisfaction. The educational institutions were not totally insensitive to this evident discontentment and, particularly, Teachers College would come to stand out, in conjunction with other institutions, in the struggle against the social *status quo* that was sedimenting social and economic segregation. As Michael Apple highlights:

You knew there was insurrection in the United States. The police were on campus, there were people being arrested. There was tear gas, it was just like it was all over the world and even more powerful at [Teachers College] Columbia, which was a center for all of this because it was in Harlem. You can't ignore oppression, right? The buildings were occupied, we didn't like the new stuff in the curriculum, the discipline-centered curriculum, the efficiency and sort of soft multiculturalism that was going on, and at the same time there were anti-war

⁴⁸⁹ Apple, Michael *Tape 6*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

mobilizations at Columbia. Buildings were occupied, and we occupied Columbia [...] literally. There was some horrible 'stuff' that went on. Whole research projects were burned. Papers were destroyed. We threatened to occupy [Teachers College], to shut it down until they supported the anti-war mobilizations and [Teachers College] is very different. It's a progressive place, so the department of curriculum and teaching formed a committee where it was jointly governed by students and faculty. Four students, four faculties, and the chair would vote in the case of a tie. So we were becoming quite friendly and sometimes antagonistic to the faculty, but the faculty who were appointed to the committee were quite progressive and historically important figures, and they did certain things to make student life better, some of which we asked for. We asked for courses to be taught by students for doctoral level work, and we won a victory. There would be one course [...] that students could offer to each other and the only thing was that a faculty member had to sign her or his name showing they approved it, and we could teach it. And there were other gains that were made.

We were concerned that [Teachers College] had lost its past because we were taking courses in philosophy, we were taking courses in efficiency about behavioral objectives, we were taking courses in educational administration, because the curriculum doctoral program had courses that you had to take in each of these various areas so you had to take a course in principalship. I mean education administration. How could you be a curriculum worker without knowing administration? I still remember some of the answers. I don't know whether I've ever told you this; it's still in my memory. One of the questions on a final examination in my principalship course was "What is the color and type of paint that should be painted on the floor of the boys' bathroom?" It's true. The answer by the way is gray non-porous, so when the acid in your pee hits the floor, it doesn't go through to the concrete and rot it. It's true. So we were in open revolt, [...] and we wanted a return to what made [Teachers College, Teachers College]. That's why we had come to [Teachers College], because of its reputation for progressive arguments and political. So we said we wanted to do a course in Fall history. They funded us to do a course and that was the [...] research project, interviewing the people who were still there who had been part of progressive education. So we interviewed [for example] Alice Miel. We asked the archives to show movies. They had historical films of Dewey teaching, of Kilpatrick and Hopkins running their classrooms, showing how the project method was actually done at [Teachers College], at the laboratory school. So we started a film festival and every week there would be one other film shown to reawaken the institution to its past and they began to tell stories about Dewey and Rugg and Counts and at the same time we were taking a course that had some historical work in it from Kliebard's major professor, and that's Arno Bellack, who was the scientist but also a historian of curriculum. And slowly we started reading Dewey and we went back and read the other texts; there the school was

creating a new social order with Rugg, Kilpatrick, Bode. Bode was very, very important to me. Very important. Reading that was like a light going off⁴⁹⁰.

Parallel to this, Huebner introduced Michael Apple to the work of Habermas and Marcuse. Consequently, according to Michael Apple, some of his roots can be found in critical theory. As he puts it, “remember I’m the one who introduced Habermas *et al.* into education in the United States [...] and then other people took it much further. [...] I was strongly influenced by Habermas and Marcuse; those two in particular were quite influential”⁴⁹¹. Michael Apple further stresses that “even when they don’t appear, well Marcuse doesn’t appear a lot in the footnotes”⁴⁹², it is definitely in Marcuse that we find one of his deepest foundations. Habermas, according to Michael Apple, “is now one of the world’s greatest figures [...] and remember I was present as a doctoral student in a post-doctoral seminar by people who were translating Habermas [so] I was involved [...] in this seminar in the Sociology department reading on the question of ideology, with Habermas being the last two-thirds of the course. The first third was on how we think about ideology, knowledge and opinion. That’s the history”⁴⁹³. If, on the one hand, Marcuse’s *One Dimensional Man* allowed Michael Apple a comprehension of a certain “sense of loss” that was being felt at the end of the 1960s, stressing that “we were becoming one-dimensional”⁴⁹⁴, on the other, the thinking of Habermas allowed Michael Apple to understand with real depth the “purpose of rational action patterns, [that...] the sciences are becoming the only logics we employ [and] the world is becoming so rational we’re forgetting past moments of liberatory form, so we’re losing our collective [memory]”⁴⁹⁵.

If on the one hand, it was on the basis of the very close and deep ties he maintained with Huebner that Michael Apple established contact with critical theory and with the

⁴⁹⁰ Apple, Michael *Tape 7*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁴⁹¹ Apple, Michael *Tape 6*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁴⁹² Op. Cit.

⁴⁹³ Apple, Michael *Tape 8*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁴⁹⁴ Apple, Michael *Tape 7*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁴⁹⁵ Op. Cit.

work of some of the more significant figures of the Frankfurt School, namely Habermas and Marcuse, on the other, it was also around this time that, with Huebner, Michael Apple intensified his methodological study of the neo-Marxist approach, especially the works of Williams and Gramsci. Early on, he had understood *Stalinism* as one of the irreversible cancers of the socialist practice, and saw that *Trotskyism* had significantly contributed to the division of the socialist family, and while still young, he had been initiated into the works of Marx (largely by way of family influence), and the works of Williams and Gramsci would come to be seen as the cherry on the top.

Up to now, we have tried to highlight the influences (there are others, for example, Adorno, Manheim, Harding, Berger and Luckman, C.Wright Mills, Mead, James, Merleau-Ponty, and Peters) that seem to be more significant in the course set by Michael Apple. It is, in fact, in this context of influences that the relation that Michael Apple would come to establish with the New Sociology of Education in the United Kingdom must be understood and later, with the works of Bourdieu, which we next describe.

Influences from the New Sociology of Education

Already endowed with all these intellectual tools, Michael Apple came into contact with some of the work of his peers connected to the Open University in the United Kingdom. As he highlights:

I was doing all this and I heard about this book called *Knowledge and Control*. I picked it up, I ordered it and it's like [wow]. I read *Knowledge and Control*, especially originally Michael Young's material, and I said [wow], they're doing exactly what I'm doing. Also I read Noel Keddy, *Classroom Knowledge*, which was basically about how knowledge constructs identities for kids. I read Bernstein. I don't quite understand it yet and I have to go back and re-read Durkheim to understand it. I read Bourdieu and didn't totally understand it either, but

knew again that this is where I had to go because they were more structural than I was at the time⁴⁹⁶.

Nonetheless, Michael Apple had already read “a paper by Roger Dale on the state”, that led him to begin establishing contacts with Dale and other students of Young and Bernstein. Although Michael Apple did not know them personally, he perceived in their work common interests and similarities. It was on the basis of these contacts, which became increasingly closer, that Michael Apple sent Dale a rough draft of the paper “Commonsense categories and curriculum thought”⁴⁹⁷. Without him knowing, “the paper got circulated. [...] I didn’t know it was getting circulated and it created a major debate as people saw that there was somebody here not only doing the same work but who was more sophisticated about curriculum, because there was no such thing as curriculum studies in England at this time”⁴⁹⁸. This paper would be included in a publication edited by Dale, Esland and Macdonald⁴⁹⁹ that would serve as the basis for the graduate courses at the Open University. This paper, which would also be included in the 1975 ASCD yearbook, is described by Dale, Esland and Macdonald as a document that “shows [...] how difficult it is to break out ‘of conventional’ ways of thinking about the curriculum and [shows] that those who have attempted curriculum reform have failed to do so”⁵⁰⁰.

Parallel to this, and as a result of these contacts, Michael Apple was invited to give a series of conferences in the United Kingdom. It was in one of these conferences that Michael Apple deepened his relationship with Bernstein:

When I went to give lectures to England, one of the people who was driving me around and setting up some lectures for me was Whitty. He and I realized that he was working on similar

⁴⁹⁶ Apple, Michael *Tape 6*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁴⁹⁷ Apple, Michael (1976) *Commonsense Categories and Curriculum Thought*. In R. Dale, G. Esland, & M. Macdonald (1976) *Schooling and Capitalism*. London: Open University Press, pp. 174-184.

⁴⁹⁸ Apple, Michael *Tape 6*, recorded in office “e” of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁴⁹⁹ Dale, R., Esland, G. & Macdonald, M. (1976) *Schooling and Capitalism*. London: Open University Press.

⁵⁰⁰ *Op. Cit.*, p. 6.

kinds of things. At the same time I began to read more Bourdieu. During the time I gave the lecture at the University of London, it was actually quite a profound experience. When I went there I was young, and I started teaching; I became an assistant professor here at the age of 27 so I was very young and here I was 31, almost ready to be promoted to full professorship. I hold the record at University [of Wisconsin – Madison]. I got an associate professorship 2.5 years after getting here, and full, full professorship 5.5 years after getting here. It was even before *Ideology and Curriculum* came out, and obviously I was very nervous. I had never been outside the United States before. I went to give a lecture at the Institute [of] London; the book *Knowledge and Control* had been out, and [*Ideology and Curriculum*] had just come out. The amphitheater was filled to capacity, and I was tired and exhilarated, and Doctor Bernstein was sitting in the front row. Bernstein took me aside; I'd now read some of his stuff. He took me out to dinner and 'adopted me'. He began to be extremely influential on me because of this friendship and also there was this thing about here's Bernstein and he was saying, 'You are like me'. Here is the professor at the Institute and I'm a working class kid for my first time outside of the United State⁵⁰¹.

It was on the basis of the relation established by Michael Apple with the intellectuals of the New Sociology of education that he dove even deeper into the works of other European intellectuals, namely Bourdieu and Durkheim (who, until then, had been completely invisible). Although the relationship with Bernstein was profoundly intense, Michael Apple further highlights his relations with Dale ("in particular to get me to think about this state. You know he's the one who introduced me to Althusser"⁵⁰²), with Whitty (who "influenced me in ways that are hard to determine because he hadn't written his major stuff on curriculum yet, but he was the one who was also beginning to put together sort of the overview of what was going on about curriculum and reproduction"⁵⁰³) and MacDonald, now Arnot (who "did this book on curriculum and cultural reproduction before, it was a course book for the [Open University] that reprinted a couple of sections of some of my work and she was the one who actually synthesized the Bourdieu, Bernstein, and Young stuff into a coherent course package"⁵⁰⁴).

⁵⁰¹ Apple, Michael *Tape 6*, recorded in office "e" of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁵⁰² Op. Cit.

⁵⁰³ Op. Cit.

⁵⁰⁴ Op. Cit.

Nevertheless, quite curiously, the story of the relation between Michael Apple and some of the intellectuals of the New Sociology of education group in the United Kingdom was not entirely divorced from the publication of the Jackson's book *Life in Classrooms*. In fact, when, in 1968, the said book "came out, those of us who were doing serious political work in curriculum felt that it was a popularization, it wasn't real scholarship, because we'd been doing stuff on the hidden curriculum for a number of years. We didn't use that term"⁵⁰⁵. Nonetheless, according to Michael Apple, the people in the United Kingdom did not share this perception and Jackson was invited to the United Kingdom for a series of conferences. While in the United Kingdom, Jackson was violently attacked, especially by the Open University contingent "which was the center for radical inter-actionist work"⁵⁰⁶. Evidently, in the United Kingdom the work of Jackson had been misinterpreted and he was labeled an educator of the radical Left, when, in absolute contradiction, he was one of the most conservative in the United States⁵⁰⁷. According to Michael Apple, Jackson's work is "somehow functionalist, its styles are very abrasive"⁵⁰⁸ and it translates quite well the conservatism, the formality of the institution to which it belongs, the University of Chicago, "which is one of the most conservative school of education in the United States"⁵⁰⁹.

⁵⁰⁵ Op. Cit.

⁵⁰⁶ Op. Cit.

⁵⁰⁷ At the end of the second chapter, we analyze a heated debate brought about between Jackson and Michael Apple during the Geneseo Conference and which helps us to better understand the difference that separates these two educators. This distance is aptly explained by the words of Michael Apple:

If you wanted to look at the exact opposite of the styles [at UW – Madison], you'd go to Chicago. Here we're known by politics and humor, so everyone has an edge, [...], but it's an informal place. Chicago is extremely formal. You wear a tie and [...] there's not a lot of humor and everyone is called [...] you don't call people by their first names. It's Professor Jackson and then it would be Mr. Paraskeva if you were a student there. Now at [the Geneseo conference], he was brought in. I was the respondent and there were already tensions. Now he had been publicly trashing Bowles and Gintis, whom I had publicly disagreed with, as well with anybody on the Left and it was already well-known that he was doing that. In fact he was [...] saying some quite nasty things [...] so this was a time where there was to be serious interaction. [...] I did not totally trust him and I don't think he totally trusted me. I mean he still feels that much of the Left is too ideological. I think that Jackson has a vision of [for example] Bowles and Gintis and myself like this.

Apple, Michael *Tape 6*, recorded in office "e" of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁵⁰⁸ Apple, Michael *Tape 6*, recorded in office "e" of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

⁵⁰⁹ Op. Cit.

The analysis we have conducted had as its objective the need to understand the multiplicity of influences that serve as the motivation for Michael Apple's intellectual work. Thus, it becomes increasingly important to insert his thinking and work in the heart of a specific progressive curricular river, to which the work of Macdonald has also greatly contributed. In essence, there is actually a certain progressive river in the field of the curriculum that ought to be proclaimed, a fact that is at the basis of the paper *There is a River: James B. MacDonald and Curriculum Tradition*, written by Michael Apple⁵¹⁰ and which we will next analyze.

2.4 There [Really] Was a River

If there was ever any doubt as to the existence of a whole past in the field of the curriculum that is to be found on the basis of certain contours that the field has undertaken at present, such doubts were completely dissipated by the contradictions inherent to the actual concept of reconceptualization, and by the testimony borne by Michael Apple in *There is a River: James B. MacDonald and Curriculum Tradition*⁵¹¹. According to Michael Apple, "curriculum theory is by necessity not only a conversation with oneself and one's peers, but in a very real way a continuing dialogue with one's predecessors"⁵¹². He adds,

it would not have been possible for us to engage in the kind of curriculum work we do if past members of the field had not struggled mightily to keep alive certain traditions. This may seem to be a relatively trite statement, but its implications are striking. It implies that there can never be the solitary curriculum theorist, pursuing 'meaningful questions' by her or himself⁵¹³.

We are thus faced by the importance of a whole historical past, of which Macdonald is part, but according to Michael Apple, "we do not need hagiographic treatises on

⁵¹⁰ Apple, Michael (1985) *There is a River: James B. MacDonald and Curriculum Tradition*. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 6, pp., 9-18.

⁵¹¹ Op. Cit., pp., 9-18.

⁵¹² Op. Cit., p., 9.

⁵¹³ Op. Cit., p., 9.

[him] though just thinking about his influence on us may lead to that”⁵¹⁴. However this historical significance can in no way be interpreted as a sign of dependency or fragility, but should rather be seen as a symbol of strength and respect. Thus, conscious of his profound historical significance, Michael Apple pays homage to Macdonald, noting that the best way to maintain the ideals of the flame of a certain [progressive] tradition in the field “is to continue to take that tradition as seriously as it demands”⁵¹⁵.

Generally, it is these ideas that open and close the tribute Michael Apple gives to Macdonald, while also calling attention to the important role that the Progressive movement has played in the field. And it is on the basis of this textual strategy that Michael Apple bases one of the central ideas [if not the principal one] that structures the document: “There is no reconceptualization of the field”⁵¹⁶. Rather, “we are the successors of an exceptionally long line of people, from Dewey, Bode, Counts and Rugg to a larger number of lesser known people” whose thinking and work kept alive that which Harding, in another context, called the “vast river of hope and struggle”⁵¹⁷.

With the purpose of reinforcing his convictions, Michael Apple used autobiographical data. Naturally, by placing himself at the heart of a certain [progressive] curricular rive and, simultaneously, [re]affirming that he stands on the shoulders of the work developed, among others, by Huebner and Macdonald, Michael Apple, names and places Macdonald [and also Huebner] within the heart of that same tradition. The manner in which he does so does not leave margin for doubt:

Given where I am, it is impossible for me not to recognize the utter importance of past figures in the field. I write this sitting in a chair in which Virgil Herrick sat, at a desk on which Virgil Herrick wrote, illuminated by the lamp that had always been on that desk. Herrick was Macdonald’s and Huebner’s major professor, their ‘mentor’ when they did their doctoral work at the University of Wisconsin [Madison], a position I now hold but whose shoes I can never

⁵¹⁴ Op. Cit., p. , 17.

⁵¹⁵ Op. Cit., p., 17.

⁵¹⁶ Op. Cit., p., 10.

⁵¹⁷ Op. Cit., p.,10.

totally fill. Thus Macdonald and Huebner stood on Herrick's shoulder. I stand on [Macdonald's] and [Huebner's]⁵¹⁸.

Before going on to a more concrete example of the manner in which Macdonald influenced him and many others (i.e. the way the 1975 ASCD's Yearbook grew and which we will analyze in greater depth at the end of the next chapter), Michael Apple backtracks slightly in history, highlighting the thinking of Herrick and also that of Huebner and Mann. Thus, if, in Herrick, we perceive a powerful combination of empirical research with a recognition of the restrictions of old classical concepts of scientific method, in Macdonald we can also determine "a continual research for better theoretical awareness, always grounded in a concern for values, the mind that found important insights in the entire range of people's knowledge, and a commitment to the concrete practices of teachers and students"⁵¹⁹.

For Michael Apple, Macdonald, "when so many educators and curriculum developers were standing on the sidelines"⁵²⁰, questioned the dogma of the disciplines, criticized the "anonymization and technicization of curricular language"⁵²¹, opposing human engineering that "attempts to rationalize and systematize all human interaction, all in the service of 'efficiency'"⁵²². An analysis of the language surrounding the field (also found in Huebner) prevents us from establishing relations with certain past movements in the field, which had a predominant role in the struggle against this dehumanizing perspective, but which failed to reduce injustice and social inequality. In Macdonald, there is a constant attempt to emphasize the role of the individual in the educational process.

In the end, for Michael Apple, when Macdonald defended seeing the individual as the subject and not the object in the process of curricular development, the 'self' became more valuable in that same process, thereby anticipating some of the notions that would later be readdressed by Grundy and Freire. In fact, and as is suggested by Michael Apple, Macdonald "actually prefigured the theories of resistance to

⁵¹⁸ Op Cit., p., 10.

⁵¹⁹ Op. Cit., p., 12.

⁵²⁰ Op. Cit., p., 12.

⁵²¹ Op. Cit., p., 13.

⁵²² Op. Cit., p., 13.

domination now so popular today”⁵²³. For those who felt that the dominant value in education was a moral value and the concept of person a moral concept, schooling contributed decisively to the process of de-humanizing, which was a process of oppression. This idea was one of the structural ideas of the 1975 ASCD Yearbook project.

With the pretext of paying homage to Macdonald, Michael Apple makes an apology for a specific river in the field of the curriculum, situating the thinking of Macdonald as co-constructing that same river. This river expresses a tradition that is predominant in the field. Such a tradition, which is not transmitted by Bobbitt, Charters and Snedden (but should be understood in relation to the results of the interactions which are established with it) “worked through Macdonald and it works through us here [...]. It is what we reconstruct as it construct us, [...] it helps provide us with a sense of meaning and purpose, of being part of a long line of real people who fought real battles to enable us all to take positions we wish to avow today”⁵²⁴.

This apology becomes transdimensional when Michael Apple creates a parallelism with the historical tragedy proclaimed by Harding. The struggle undertaken by a specific progressive movement that, since the end of the nineteenth century has become more prominent in the struggle for more just schooling and an economically and culturally empowered society, confirms to us that there really was a specific progressive river within the heart of the field that always opposed the curricular movements dominated by the dynamics of social efficiency.

As far as we are concerned, Michael Apple’s work is able to do more than pay homage to Macdonald as it also places the reader in a specific river of struggles and serious social compromises. In fact, it expresses the crucial role that this movement developed—and still develops—in relation to the millions and millions of exploited and dehumanized “individuals who stood alone but insisted on public protest, on refusal to co-operate lightly with the system of their slavery—individuals who in their splendid isolation were willing to take the worst the system could offer in return for

⁵²³ Op. Cit., p., 16.

⁵²⁴ Op. Cit., 17.

relentless personal resistance [and] were unlikely to be mastered except in death”⁵²⁵. This particular progressive curriculum river, which in fact should be understood within a “growing tradition of struggle”⁵²⁶, did (and still) play a central role in continuously challenging an unjust and dehumanized secular system that makes the lives of millions and millions of people so miserable that their daily lives can be so aptly portrayed by Munch’s *The Scream*. As Michael Apple adds, “the river continues”⁵²⁷, especially since the injustice is still shamefully real, and this is shown in one of the most expressive poems by Langston Hughes, parts of which are included below:

Children, I come back today
To tell you a story of the long dark way
That I had to climb, that I had to know
In order that the race might live and grow.
(...)
Three hundred years ago in Africa’s land.
I am the dark girl who crossed the wide sea
Carrying in my body the seed of the free
I am the woman who worked in the field
Bringing the cotton and the corn to yield.
I am the one who labored as a slave,
Beaten and mistreated for the work that I gave –
Children sold away from me, husband sold, too.
No safety, no love, no respect was I due.
(...)
Now, through my children, young and free,
I realize the blessings denied to me.
I couldn’t read then. I couldn’t write.
I had nothing, back there in the night.
Sometimes, the valley was filled with tears,
But I kept trudging on through the lonely years.
Sometimes, the road was hot with sun,
But I had to keep on till my work was done:

⁵²⁵ Harding, V. (1981) *There is a River. The Black Struggle for Freedom in America*. New York: Vintage Books, p., 41.

⁵²⁶ Op. Cit., p., 41.

⁵²⁷ Apple, Michael (1985) There is a River: James B. MacDonald and Curriculum Tradition. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 6, pp., 9-18, p. 17.

I *had* to keep on! No stopping for me –
I was the seed of the coming Free.
(...)
Remember my sweat, my pain, my despair.
Remember my years, heavy with sorrow –
(...)
Remember the whip and the slaver's track.
Remember how the strong in struggle and strife
Still bar you the way, and deny you life –
But march ever forward, breaking down bars.
Look ever upward at the sun and the stars.
Oh, my dark children, may my dreams and my prayers
Impel you forever up the great stairs –
For I will be with you till no white brother
Dares keep down the children of the Negro mother⁵²⁸

⁵²⁸ Hughes, L. (1959) *The Negro Mother. Select poems of Langston Hughes*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, p. 288. I am in great debt my friend and college Grace Livingstone for the critical insights and inputs over the content of this poem and this chapter.