The Double History of Schooling: The History of a Practice and the History of an Institution

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We have asserted that education has a double purpose. On the one side, it is about the formation of persons. On the other side, it is about the formation of communities, societies and our shared world. It has both an individual purpose and a collective purpose. It aims to produce reasoning persons and a reasonable society. It aims to form people who are able to live well, and a world worth living in.

The permanent tension between education and schooling

There is a permanent tension between schooling and education. Schooling expresses a society's ideas and hopes about education in institutionalised form. Schools are intended to protect and nurture the pursuit and the practice of education. But it is always possible to ask whether particular forms or practices of schooling really *are* educational—it is always reasonable to ask whether schools actually deny the very educational values and purposes they aim to nurture. When we ask this question, we discover that part of what goes on in the real world of schooling turns out to be **non-educational**—irrelevant to the educational purposes and values we aim to pursue through education. (Think, for example, of those activities like detentions and the policing of students' conformity to codes of dress or personal appearance, whose principal aim is to domesticate children and young people to the rituals of a school.) Worse still, some of the activities of schooling turn out to be profoundly **anti-educational**—they are contrary to our educational views and values. (Think, for example, of the educational value of freedom of speech or freedom of association, and how these might be contradicted by some practices of classroom control and behaviour management—to what extent is the restraint a teacher imposes on free speech really justified in the common interests of the class, and to what extent is it the exercise of unjustifiable control?) A critical and self-critical approach to the study of education aims to reveal where and how current forms of schooling are non-educational or anti-educational and to create the changes necessary to reform schooling—to make it more educational.

Examples of arguments that schools are anti-educational

So, it is always a legitimate question to ask whether schools are educational, or anti-educational, or non-educational. In 1980, for example, Trevor Pateman made a strong argument that schools could not educate, for three reasons. First, because school attendance is compulsory, students could not enter educational relationships voluntarily, a condition that Pateman thought essential to an education in rationality. Second, because schools group pupils by age, Pateman believed that they create competitive relationships that are hostile to students' development. Third, because the

role of 'teacher' is necessarily hierarchical, Pateman believed that schools model and sustain a kind of social order that is antithetical to democratic relationships between human beings. Pateman does not doubt that sometimes students do find an education in schools, and he does concede that sometimes teachers are the agents of students' education, despite what he sees as the intrinsically anti-educational social form of the institution.

For similar reasons, Illich (1971) and others proposed 'de-schooling society', to do away with schools as institutions which modelled hierarchy, oppression and dependence. These are powerful critiques, but schooling has survived them. As it turned out, people would not accept the kinds of alternatives to schools that Illich and other deschoolers proposed (like Illich's idea of 'learning webs' which in some ways predicted the kinds of collaborative learning that happens in some kinds of online communities). Schools have survived partly because of their child-minding functions, but also because they are crucial to the reproduction of societies in their existing forms, although sometimes they have also contributed to the transformation of society—as we will see when we explore the history of schooling.

If we set aside the strong critique of the deschoolers, then perhaps we can ask whether schooling can be reformed to make it more educational. When we ask 'What makes a practice *educational*?' we are asking for clarification about the extent to which it realises and enacts particular educational views and values—we are asking about the extent to which it embodies the views, values and virtues which give education its meaning and significance. These are matters about which people disagree, of course: there are competing theories and values of education. We judge the extent to which an educational practice embodies justifiable and worthwhile views and values not merely by asking what someone's views or values are and then looking to see the extent to which his or her practice embodies these views and values: we also judge them by appealing to whole **critical traditions** which lie behind their views and values and their practice— histories of educational debate, theorising and critically informed practice through which key educational ideas and values have been tested over time. And in judging the value of a real person's educational practice, we also find ourselves asking about the practitioner—in particular about the extent to which he or she is committed to pursuing the values and virtues of education, the extent to which her or his life reveals an abiding concern for upholding the values and

What makes a practice educational?

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Educational views
and values are always
contested

virtues of education and the extent to which his or her practice demonstrates an increasing mastery of the practice and an increasing critical grasp of the views and values which inform it (MacIntyre 1981).

People in schools are not always in perfect agreement about educational aims and values, however. Sometimes, indeed, different educational aims and values jostle uneasily with one another—for example, one teacher may hold fast to old views of schooling as sifting and sorting individuals to direct them towards different vocations and professions, while another teacher aims to build democratic learning communities in which differences are recognised and respected. Schools are arenas in which different views and values of education frequently contend. Times change, so ideas about education are essentially **contested**—they are always in the melting pot, ready to be remade for new times and new circumstances.

Indeed, schools *should* be places where a lively and continuing critical educational debate can be conducted. Schools and schooling will only change to meet the challenges of new times when people in schools, and in their communities, take up the struggle for educational reform.[1]

The alternative to being part of this contestation is that schools become soulless, mindless places driven not only by the dictates of habit and tradition, but also by the curricula and assessments imposed on schools by the state and other agencies. In Australia, these include the Boards of Studies of the various Australian states and territories, the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), the New South Wales Institute of Teachers (NSWIT), and similar organisations in the other states and territories, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), and a host of other advisory and regulatory bodies. Put together, the requirements of these bodies threaten to suffocate education, and the practice and the profession of education. Such bodies (each with its own agenda, sometimes conflicting with the agendas of other bodies) may specify too much, and in too much detail, about what ought to be done in schools and classrooms, and by teachers and school leaders.

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1   When people in schools and communities work to reform or transform how their schools work, they are putting into practice what Marx suggested in the Third Thesis on Feuerbach (see ▶Chap. 1).

It is therefore a permanent task for the education profession to continue to ask whether such specification goes too far, making education vulnerable to the institutional processes of schooling. And whenever education *does* become vulnerable to the demands of those institutional processes—becoming non-educational or anti-educational—it is the responsibility of the profession[2] to speak out. To do so is frequently regarded as controversial. It should not be. It should be regarded not only as normal, but also as necessary. How can schools improve other than by treating their work, their views and values and their characteristic social relationships as problematic[3] and by struggling to change them? If the schools we have today are products of their history, then, to be better defenders of our educational values and aspirations, educators must comprehend and interrogate that history in the light of the needs and circumstances of the contemporary world. They must remake schools so they serve the double *educational* purpose of the formation of good persons and the formation of good societies—people who can live well in a world worth living in. Always and inevitably, remaking schools requires a struggle: a struggle not just for greater efficiency and effectiveness, or new learning outcomes for students in the twenty-first century, but a struggle for education itself.

To remind ourselves of what this struggle is, we will go back almost to the beginning of schooling in the West, more than two and a half thousand years ago, and make our way back to the present.

An Historical Journey: From *skholē* to School

It is uncertain when the first schools were formed. It is clear, however, that they existed by about 600 BC in ancient Greece—more than two thousand seven hundred years ago. There may have been earlier schools in China and India, among other places, but we do not have the knowledge to speak about those. What we say here is based on a reading

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2   Including not only teachers, but also principals and educational administrators, professional developers, and educational researchers.

3   To treat particular forms of schooling as 'problematic' is to enquire whether they have untoward consequences like leading us into falsehood or unreasonableness, unproductiveness or unsustainability, or injustice or undemocratic ways of being.

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▣ **Table 2.1** Some stages in the history of schooling	
From 600 BCE	Military schools existed in ancient Greece
387–301 BCE	Ancient Greek schools of philosophy founded, lasting until 529 AD
From 100 AD	Beginnings of Christian schools
400–1400	The Mediaeval Period—from the fall of Rome to the Renaissance.
From 400	Monastery schools
From 1100	The rise of town schools, the establishment of the first universities
1200–1400	Guild schools
From 1800	Monitorial schools
From 1850 to present	Multi-teacher, multi-classroom schools

of the very big picture of the formation and development of Western traditions of education and schooling since antiquity. To give you a rough outline of the history, ▣Table 2.1 lists some stages in the story we will tell.

It may surprise you to learn that the word for 'school' in ancient Greek was *skholē*—a word so astonishingly like our own word 'school' that it seems utterly to collapse the difference between what the two words signify. On the one side of this chasm stands the ancient institution profoundly shaped by that world now lost to us; on the other side stands the institution so familiar to us that we take what it is and does for granted, as if it were as 'natural' as a tree or a rock. That new institution—the *postmodern school* that emerged in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries from the *modern* school of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries[4]—disguises itself to us in its very familiarity. It hides its educational purposes from us; they are wrapped in all the everyday rituals of 'doing' school: rituals of morning assemblies; bells

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4   Different authors date the beginning of the modern period differently. In *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity*, Stephen Toulmin (1990) dates Modernity from the time of René Descartes (1596–1650) and the rationalist philosophers of the seventeenth century, until about the 1960s. Postmodernity might reasonably be dated from the beginning of the 'digital age' in the 1960s and 1970s. Modernity encompasses the rise of scientific thought through the period called 'the Enlightenment', including the Industrial Revolution (1760–1840), arguably reaching its height in the scientific progress of the last part of the nineteenth and the first part of

that mark the progress of the day; the beginnings, middles and endings of lessons and units of work; and the perennial cycles of teaching, learning, assessing and reporting.

Thus, for example, where once Australian teachers judged their success, and the success of their schools, solely by the kinds of persons who left our care, now, after a flurry of international concerns and comparisons of schools in different countries, we are obliged also to judge our success in the *realpolitik* of how our schools perform compared with others in terms of our schools' and our students' NAPLAN (National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy)[5] scores—scores on tests administered annually in every Australian school in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in numeracy, literacy and science.[6] In similar ways, the Australian MySchool[7] website masks the lived realities of the schools it represents (or misrepresents) in information that is a poor proxy for knowledge of the life of schools—the everyday knowledge of teachers, students, principals and parents.

More than ever in the history of schools, the administrative machinery of contemporary schooling renders invisible the education that goes on in our schools, and disguises the educational work of teachers. Paradoxically, in the name of transparency, the MySchool websites make access to the life

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Footnote 4 (continued)

    the twentieth centuries. In Postmodernity, some of the certainties of Modernity about science and scientific progress have come under challenge. A good account of the thought of postmodern*ism* can be found in Lyotard's (1984) book *The Postmodern Condition: A report on knowledge*.

5   International comparisons are made between school systems through programs like the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the testing by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) in its Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

6   The (Australian) *National Assessment Program–Literacy and Numeracy* is a nationwide program of assessment of all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in every Australian school overseen by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). For details of the program, see ►http://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/naplan.html.

7   The *MySchool* website, also coordinated by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), gives information about individual Australian schools and provides comparisons of their performance with so-called like schools. For details of *MySchool*, see ►http://www.myschool.edu.au/.

of schools opaque: we cannot see through the shimmering haze of statistical data and the claims about how our school compares with so-called like schools, to see whether, when and how *education* actually happens: when students, teachers and subject matter are engaged with one another, in real places in space and time, in activities that transform those who participate in them and that transform the ways they subsequently participate in the collective life of their communities and societies.

Let us explore how this situation has come about, by tracing the history of the institutions of schooling in the roughest outline, from the philosophical schools of ancient Greece through to the multi-teacher, multi-classroom schools of the present.

(a) *The philosophical schools in ancient Greece*
At the beginnings of Western schooling, *educational* purposes were very clear. Education in ancient Greece was founded on the notion of *paideia*: the idea that it is part of the responsibility of a society and its adults to educate the young, particularly those young people who possessed *arête* or nobility. As French historian of Hellenistic and Roman philosophy, Hadot (2002, p. 12) put it,

» According to…[the precepts of *paideia*], young men strove to acquire the qualities—physical strength, courage, sense of duty and honour—which were suitable for warriors, and incarnate in the great, divine ancestors taken as models. Beginning in the fifth century [BC], as democracy began to flourish, the city-states showed the same concern for forming their future citizens by physical exercises, gymnastics, music, and mental exercises. Yet democratic life engendered struggles for power: it was necessary to know how to persuade the people, and how to induce them to make specific decisions in the Assembly. If one wanted to become a leader of the people, one thus had to acquire a mastery of language…

From the Sophists to the philosophers

At first, that mastery of language was taught by wandering teachers-for-hire, the *Sophists*, whose aim was to teach young men how to persuade an audience—whether in a court hearing a case against an alleged wrongdoer, or in the making of laws for the people of Athens, the city-state. But the Sophists were condemned by later philosophers as false: taking money to teach people the arts of persuasion (*rhetoric*) was regarded as far inferior to, and less noble than, teaching them to pursue the truth through valid reasoning

appropriate to the subject matter being discussed. So that is what the philosophers taught: knowledge in various fields, and the capacity for reasoning directed towards finding truths. To secure philosophical teaching, to give it a home and a base, some of the earliest and best known philosophers of ancient Athens thus established **the philosophical schools** that became associated with their founders' names and the schools' locations.

The *prehistory* of the ancient philosophical schools does not begin with the time and philosophical teaching of Thales of Miletus (in Greek Ionia, now in modern-day Turkey; ca. 624–546 BC), sometimes said to be the father of philosophy, but it is one place to start. Thales rejected mythological explanations and instead sought rational explanations of the genesis, formation and development of *the world*, *the people* and *the city*. This was an important step in the progress of human knowledge. Where previously people invoked the gods to explain phenomena like the growth of crops from seeds, or the failures of harvests, Thales and his followers looked for explanations that did not appeal to the beneficence or wrath of deities. The new approach sought to replace mythological knowledge and divine explanations, with rational, scientific knowledge based on careful observation and sound reasoning.

Among Thales' pupils was Anaximander of Miletus [ca. 610–546 BC]; and among Anaximander's pupils was Pythagoras of Samos [ca. 570–495 BC], also of Ionia, whose name is associated with the famous theorem that the square on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides. Ancient sources say that Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans—an exclusive club which sustained studies in mathematics and the early sciences alongside secret spiritual rites and exercises—had a great influence on the most famous of philosophers, Socrates [ca. 469–399 BC], who was the teacher of Plato (424/423–348/347 BC), who was, in turn, the teacher of Aristotle (384–322 BC).

Socrates said that it was his task to find a wise man, and he questioned all sorts of people in Athens to see whether, indeed, they were wise, or whether their claims to knowledge foundered in falsehood or contradiction. He engaged in philosophical dialogues with people said to be wise, and with his disciples, to explore knowledge about different kinds of subjects. In the course of these dialogues, he seemed to find contradictions and false assumptions beneath everyone's claims to knowledge and concluded that he could find no

The prehistory of the philosophical schools

Socrates: the martyr who put the claims of philosophy above his own life

one who was wise. His 'Socratic method' of questioning, *dialectic*, aimed to explore an overarching question by exploring various subsidiary questions, to discover whether a claim to knowledge held up under questioning. If the questioning led to falsehood or contradiction or ignorance (unfounded assumptions or presuppositions), then the claim to knowledge would be found *not* to be true. The Socratic method became a crucial way of testing truths for subsequent philosophers, including Socrates' pupil Plato, whose dialogues provide most of what is known about Socrates, though the historian Xenophon [ca. 430–354 BC], contemporary of Plato, also discussed Socrates.

Socrates fell foul of various authorities in Athens, and eventually he was tried and found guilty of corrupting the youth of Athens through his teachings, and of impiety, causing young people to doubt the traditional gods of the City. He was condemned to death by drinking the poison hemlock. Despite the possibility that his friends could bribe his prison guards so he could get away to live in exile, he refused. He said that he had been found guilty according to the laws of Athens and that, as a citizen, he was bound to respect those laws. He believed that for a philosopher to renounce his pursuit of truth and wisdom under coercion would be to destroy philosophy as a search for truth and as a way of life. Thus, it is said that Socrates died for philosophy. For this reason, for more than two thousand years he has been remembered as a heroic figure in the history of philosophy. It is significant that, in the years soon after his death, four philosophical schools were established, putting philosophy on a more secure, visible, institutional basis than had been the case in earlier times.

The schools of ancient Greece, beginning about 600 BC, were very different from the schools we know today. The ones we know most about are those associated with the four great philosophical schools of ancient Athens established over a period of about eighty-five years after 387 BC.

Plato's *Academy*

Plato [ca. 424–347 BC] established his **Academy** in 387 BC at a site where it is known that religious rituals had been held since about the fifth-century BC. The Academy lasted in its original form until the sack of Athens by the Roman Lucius Cornelius Sulla in 86 BC, then was re-established and continued until 529 AD when it was brought under state regulation by the Emperor Justinian I of Byzantium as part of his persecution of other sects and religions in the attempt to reinforce the continuing rise of Christianity.

Aristotle (384–322 BC) established his **Lyceum** in a grove of trees, near an existing gymnasium for the training of young aristocrats in military pursuits, in 334 or 335 BC.[8] The Lyceum was also destroyed by Sulla in 86 BC, then re-established in the first-century AD and continued in other locations until Justinian's closure of the philosophical schools in 529 AD.

Aristotle's Lyceum

Epicurus (341–270 BC) established his philosophical school, the Epicureans, in his own **Garden** (around his house, about halfway between the Athenian Agora and the Lyceum) in 307 BC. In various forms and places, the Epicurean school also lasted to 529 AD.

Epicurus's Garden

Zeno of Citium (ca. 334–262 BC) established his school, the Stoics, in 301 BC. His philosophical school took its name from the Greek word for porch, **stoa**, because he taught at the painted **Stoa Poikile** in the Athenian Agora, a public meeting space used by many different kinds of people and groups. The school also lasted until Justinian's edict of 529 AD.

Zeno's Stoa

If you happened to be travelling to any of the large cities on the Mediterranean about the time of Christ, you would have found there branches of all four of these philosophical schools. They were not only training grounds for young aristocratic men, but also places where people lived lives dedicated to truth and the intellect—to the **life** of philosophy. Chroniclers tell of the leading people of those times who came to the philosophical schools to meet the leading thinkers of their times, and to hear lectures from visiting philosophers, as well as sending their sons to these schools for a philosophical, and perhaps spiritual, education.

The importance and influence of the philosophical schools

There is no doubt that the philosophical schools were influential. For example, Aristotle was called in 343 BC to educate Alexander, the son of King Philip II of Macedon, known to us as Alexander the Great. At his Lyceum, Aristotle also taught two other future kings: Ptolemy I (Ptolemy Lagides—not the famous astronomer Claudius Ptolemy of the early years after Christ) who became ruler, then pharaoh, of Egypt, and Cassander, who later, after much bloodshed, became King of Macedonia.

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8   The original site of the classical Lyceum, rediscovered during excavation near Athens's Museum of Modern Art in 1996, was opened to the public in 2013.

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There is a vast scholarship about the ancient philosophical schools, written first by contemporaries like Xenophon and later by the writers of early histories, as well as by scholars down the centuries. This line has continued to the present, represented by scholars like the great scholar of Hellenistic (ancient Greek) and Roman philosophy, the French historian Pierre Hadot, upon whom our account here largely relies. You can read the story of the rise and spread of the influence of these great philosophical schools in Hadot's (2002) magnificent and accessible book *What is ancient philosophy?*

The main four philosophical schools of antiquity—Plato's **Academicians**, the **Aristotelians**, the **Epicureans** and the **Stoics**—were institutions of considerable eminence, influence and endurance. In various forms, they existed for at least 900 years, which is not very different from the thousand years since the foundation of the first European universities in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The philosophical schools were not just called 'schools' in the sense of 'schools of thought'. The philosophical schools of antiquity were actual institutions, whose first locations are well known to history and to archaeology. They had senior and junior members, and the distinction between them crystallised into a distinction of roles between teachers and students. Each school established particular ways of doing things, including different and distinctive ways of conducting their pedagogy.[9] They were usually associated with military training of young aristocrats, preparing them for military service, but they went further, also training them to be statesmen. More importantly, Hadot argues in his (1995) book of that name, the schools prepared some—a small number—of these young aristocrats to enter 'philosophy as a way of life'—that is to be *philosophers* or 'lovers of wisdom' (from *philo* meaning love, and *sophia*, wisdom).

Philosophy as training people to live well: learning logic, physics and ethics

One of the most important things to know about those who followed the way of life of ancient philosophy is that they aimed to train young men to **live well**. 'Living well' meant three things in particular: it meant thinking and speaking well, acting well in the material world, and relating well to others. To learn **to think and speak well**, the students

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9   For example, Aristotle is known to have taught his pupils while strolling around the grounds of the Lyceum, so some people called his school 'the Peripatetics', from 'peripatetikos', the ancient Greek word for 'given to walking about'.

studied **logic** or **dialectics**; to learn **to live well in the physical and natural world**, they studied **physics** (natural science); and to learn **to relate well to others**, they studied **ethics**. The aim of these studies, Hadot points out, was not to master a specialist *philosophical discourse*, in the way that people who study philosophy do today. Their aim, instead, was to learn to live what the philosopher MacIntyre (1981) calls 'a certain kind of life'—the life of a philosopher.

Through the philosophical schools, the most important knowledge available was accumulated and taught—knowledge in such fields as mathematics, astronomy, music, geography, physics, natural history, medicine, history, logic, ethics and politics, for example. In the philosophical schools, books and manuscripts—extremely precious things in those times—were collected and copied (by hand). Their libraries alone made the philosophical schools valuable. One of the most famous ancient libraries was the Royal Library of Alexandria (in Egypt, established by Ptolemy Lagides [ca. 367 BC–283/2 BC]), who was mentioned earlier as a student of Aristotle.[10] Its destruction has for centuries been a powerful symbol of the loss of knowledge and culture by accident or by malice—yet it is very unclear from the historical sources whether and when the destruction actually happened.[11]

With their libraries and, later, their lecture halls, the rise of the philosophical schools secured a home and a base for the conduct of philosophy. Crucially for the continuing **life** of philosophy as a practice, the schools provided places where philosophy could be taught and learned. The institutional base of the philosophical schools allowed philosophy to reproduce and transform itself through the philosophical practices of succeeding generations of philosophers, as well as through the efforts of those who were educated and influenced by them.

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10 Apart from his military successes in defending Egypt, Ptolemy I is also remembered for being the sponsor of Euclid (mid-fourth-century BC–mid-third-century BC), the geometrician. Euclid apparently followed researches of Plato and Plato's students in constructing his *Elements of Geometry*, but also apparently followed Aristotle in other work, for example, on specific gravity.

11 It is a matter of historical debate which historical disaster was the basis for this powerful symbol—whether it was the accidental destruction of a book store near the dockyards in Alexandria, during the 48 AD siege of Alexandria during Julius Caesars's conquest of Alexandria (which did not include the Royal Library, which was elsewhere), or in the mid-third-century AD, when the Emperor Aurelian took the city and damaged buildings in the compound

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The practice of philosophy secured through the institution of the philosophical school

Between about 600 BC and 300 BC, then, philosophy as a **practice** began to be passed on through generations by the invention of a new **institution**—the philosophical school. The institution, in turn, served to reproduce, nurture and defend the practice of philosophy. While not essential to living the 'certain kind of life' of the philosopher, the school helped to sustain that kind of life. Ancient sources show that to be a philosopher was also, in a sense, to be a little estranged from ordinary life—for example, by living rigorously according to the precepts of a philosophical school, by searching for rational interpretations and explanations of various kinds of phenomena, and by participating in the life of society in the service of rationality and the good for humankind. But the point we want to emphasise here is that, in practice and in history, **the institution of the school and the practice of philosophy emerged together as a pair**. In the sections that follow, we shall see that the evolution of later practices of education was similarly paired with later forms of the institution of schooling.

(b) *The Christian Church, the demise of the ancient philosophical schools and the rise of the monastery schools*

The rise of Christianity and the demise of the ancient philosophical schools

After about 200 AD, philosophy as it was practised in the philosophical schools was increasingly subjugated by the rise of the Christian Church, even though elements of philosophical spiritual teaching and spiritual practice had been appropriated by Christianity and incorporated into the form and some doctrines of the Church as an institution. Now the Church began to teach a different, Christian 'way of life'—in this case, a Christian way of life rather than the philosophical way of life taught in the philosophical schools.

In the early years of Christianity, the Roman Empire had been hospitable to the Greek philosophical schools and

Footnote 11 (continued)

containing the Royal Library (but did not destroy the 'daughter library', the Serapeum, which was sacked, and its books sent to Constantinople), or in 391 AD, when Christian Bishop Theophilus of Alexandria issued a decree for the destruction of the pagan temples of the city (which included the famous philosophical school in Alexandria and likely also included the Serapeum). It seems unlikely to have occurred in 642 AD, however, with the Muslim conquest of Egypt, when Caliph Omar was said to have ordered the destruction of texts in the city held to be contrary to the Koran. See Hannam's (2011) book, *The Foundation and Loss of the Royal and Serapeum Libraries of Alexandria*.

remained generally tolerant of them after the conversion of Roman Emperor Constantine the Great (272–337 AD) to Christianity during the Battle of Milvian Bridge, in 312 AD. Constantine did not impose Christianity upon the Roman Empire, however; rather, he made it permissible for Romans to practise Christianity or any other religion. In short, Rome at that time made religion a matter of individual conscience, not something to be controlled by the state. In the face of repeated attacks on Rome, Constantine founded Constantinople in the Greek colony formerly known as Byzantium (and later to be known as Istanbul), establishing a new centre for Christianity in the East, outside Europe, directly facing the Persians and the Arabs further to the east in Asia Minor.

Two hundred years after Constantine, however, things took a different turn. In 529 AD, Emperor Justinian I of Byzantium brought the philosophical schools under the control of the Church, effectively obliterating them. Justinian saw that to destroy philosophy as a practice which was, in effect, competing with the practice of Christianity, it was necessary to break up the philosophical schools that nurtured and sustained philosophy: to break the practice meant breaking the institutions. By buttressing the new institution—the Christian Church—Justinian intended that the practice of Christianity would become definitively and coercively the universal successor to the practice of philosophy. From the time of Justinian, then, philosophy was subjugated to theology in the institution and institutional practice of the developing Churches—in Rome (the Roman Catholic Church), in Byzantium (the Eastern Orthodox Church) and in Alexandria (the Coptic Orthodox Church).[12] The Churches nurtured not only new spiritual practices but also new educational practices: the formation of Christian people along with the formation of the clergy, the monasteries, the missionaries (and thus the reproduction of the institution of the Church

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12 The 2009 film, *Agora* (directed by Alejandro Amenábar and starring Rachel Weisz) tells the story of the (woman) philosopher, astronomer and scientist Hypatia [born ca. AD 350–370; died 415], head of the Platonist school of philosophy in Alexandria, who was murdered by a Christian mob after a dispute arose between followers of Orestes, Roman Governor of Egypt, who was concerned about the intrusion of ecclesiastical laws into secular life, and Cyril, the Christian Bishop of Alexandria, whose followers wanted to impose their version of a Christian way of life on all Alexandrians. The film is a work of fiction, of course, going beyond the known facts of Hypatia's life, but imagines an intriguing moment in the history of Alexandria and the Roman Empire.

over time), to take the new, Christian forms of spiritual and social practice into the wider world—throughout Europe and beyond.

As French historian Jacques Le Goff (2011) tells the story, the middle ages (roughly, the fifth- to the fifteenth-century AD) were a time of unprecedented conflict and contestation. The Christian era began with the spread of Christianity, and the establishment of churches and monasteries to secure Christian practice, along with the disestablishment of predecessor practices like philosophy and the philosophical schools, and the disestablishment of the pagan and traditional religions and temples that preceded Christianity. But the spread of Christianity through the Roman Empire, gradually replacing the classical beliefs of ancient Greece and Rome, did not go unchallenged. Wherever the Church fell back from newly conquered territory, old beliefs once again asserted themselves. The greatest challenge, however, came from the Barbarian invasions.

The barbarian invasions crippled the Roman Empire. Le Goff describes how they almost entirely destroyed its culture and civilisation. Following initially peaceful migrations, the barbarian Franks, tribes from Germany that had harried the Roman Empire up to the end of the second-century AD, established themselves on Roman soil in the late 300s AD. The kingdom they established later became what we now call France (whose great King Charlemagne brought about a renaissance in the 800s AD, reviving ancient knowledge and unifying law throughout his empire). After the Franks, the Visigoths defeated the Romans in the Battle of Adrianople in 378 AD and sacked Rome itself in 410 AD. Fifty or so years later, the Vandals ran through the Empire, sacking Rome in 455 AD. The Vandals went on to settle in Spain, giving their name to the part of Spain we know today as Andalusia.

By the middle of the fifth century, then, the institutions and culture of the Western Empire in Europe had been shattered by successive barbarian invasions, and its remnants struggled to retain historical memory of the civilisations of Greece and Rome. Without the memory power of the institutions—like the philosophical schools—to nurture, produce and reproduce them, the practices of philosophy and the highly developed knowledge of the philosophers (of logic, physics and ethics, as well as mathematics, music, astronomy and the rest) fell into decline. Nearly a thousand years of intellectual darkness followed—a period Le Goff characterises

as roughly the time between St Augustine (354–430 AD) and St Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274 AD). Immense amounts of knowledge were lost through this epoch.[13]

According to Le Goff, the knowledge of antiquity lost through this period would only be recovered in the twelfth century, with the rise of the universities. In an era in which the 'pagan books' of Greek and Roman antiquity posed problems to the Christians of the middle ages, Le Goff (2011, pp. 118–120) writes scathingly, the intellectual elite felt:

» …the need of a true return to the ancient sources on several occasions. These were the renaissances which punctuated the middle ages: in the Carolingian [Charlemagne] period [about 780–840 AD], in the twelfth century, and finally at the dawn of the great Renaissance [roughly the 14th to the 17th centuries]. Admittedly the fact that the authors of the early western middle ages needed to use the irreplaceable intellectual equipment of the Græco-Roman world but at the same time make it conform to Christian thinking encouraged, if it did not create, very tiresome intellectual habits: the systematic deformation of the authors' thoughts, perpetual anachronism, and thinking through quotations taken out of context. Ancient thought only survived in the middle ages in fragmented form. It was pushed out of shape and humiliated by Christian thought. Forced to have recourse to the services of its conquered enemy, Christianity saw itself forced to deprive its enslaved prisoner of his memory and to make him work for it by forgetting his traditions. But concomitantly with this, Christianity was dragged into a system of thinking which was atemporal. All truths could only be eternal. In the thirteenth century Thomas Aquinas was still saying that what the authors intended mattered little, since the essential thing was what they had said and what one could use to please oneself. Rome was no longer in Rome. The *translatio* or transfer of civilisation inaugurated the great confusion of the middle ages, but this confusion was the precondition for a new order.

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13 Le Goff believes that we have a false picture of the middle ages as an era of churches and stone buildings—those buildings were the few that survived. Except within the churches and monasteries, the arts of stonemasonry were almost lost to European society in that period, and most building was once again in timber. In general, those timber buildings have not survived.

Here too, antiquity in decline had facilitated the work of the Christian clerics of the first centuries of the middle ages. What the middles ages knew of ancient culture had been bequeathed to it by the late [Roman] empire, which had chewed over, impoverished and dissected Graeco-Roman literature, thought and art in such a way that the barbarised middle ages could assimilate it more easily. The clerics of the middle ages did not borrow their scheme of knowledge and education from Cicero or Quintilian but from a [fifth century] Carthaginian lawyer, Martianus Capella. He had defined the seven Liberal Arts in a poem called *The Marriage of Mercury and Philology*. Mediaeval clerics did not look so much to Pliny and Strabo (who anyway were themselves inferior to Ptolemy) for their knowledge of geography as to a mediocre compiler of the third century (when the decay began), Julianus Solinus, who bequeathed to the middle ages a world of prodigies and monsters: the Wonders of the East. Through this, imagination and the arts were to gain where science had lost. Mediaeval zoology was to be that of the *Physiologus*, a second-century Alexandrian work translated into Latin in the fifth century. It watered science down into verse full of legends and moralising lessons. The animals were changed into symbols. But the middle ages was to draw its bestiaries from them, and here again the mediaeval feeling for animals was to be fed on scientific ignorance. The main point is that these rhetors and compilers provided mediaeval men with learning broken down into crumbs. The late [Roman] empire transmitted an elementary mental and intellectual equipment to the middle ages, composed of word-lists, mnemonic verses, etymologies (false ones) and florilegia. It was a culture consisting of quotations, choice morsels and digests.

Despite the crumbling of the heritage of Greek and Roman knowledge through the middle ages in Europe, the spread of Christianity was accomplished in part by the spread of monasteries, and the monasteries also preserved some kinds of knowledge. Le Goff (2011, p. 124) writes:

» … the great focal point of civilisation in the early middle ages was the monastery, and increasingly the isolated monastery in the countryside. With its workshops it was a conservatory for crafts and artistic skills; with its scriptorium and library it maintained an intellectual

> culture. Thanks to its estates and its tools and workforce
> of monks and dependants of all sorts it was a centre of
> production and an economic model, and of course it was
> a focus of spiritual life, often based on the relics of a saint.

Most important to our story here is that with the monasteries came *monastery schools*. Like the Cathedral schools of the great cities of Europe, these were another new institution. They served not only the monks themselves, but assisted with the formation of literate classes of people who, by virtue of their education, would ally themselves with the church and its teachings. At times, there was anxiety within the monasteries about these 'external' institutions, since they brought the teaching monks in contact with the world beyond the monastery walls.[14] As in ancient times, these new institutions also helped in the formation of the young and in the formation of educated classes that were not of the nobility (which continued as a warrior or military class), nor entirely of the Church. Their learning was for private religious observance, and the living of Christian lives, but also included secular teaching to assist them in secular commerce and trade and to give them access to the elite culture of the aristocracy. (Through such means, one of the greatest minds of the sixteenth century, Erasmus of Rotterdam [1466–1536], rose from monastery schooling to become a prodigious author, translator, educator and an adviser to monarchs.)

The monastery schools thus aided the continuing development of the trades and guilds, and the glacially slow rise of a mercantile class. In due course, the guilds would break free of their dependence on the church for education and establish schools of their own. One step in that direction was the formation of yet another new institution: the university.

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14 Some of this anxiety about the world beyond the monastery walls, as well as the struggles between different versions of mediaeval belief within the Church, is depicted in the Italian scholar Eco's (1980/1983) celebrated book, *The name of the rose*, about a series of murders in a monastery and about the struggle between emerging scientific thought and religious dogmatism within the Roman Catholic Church. The book was made into the 1986 movie, *The Name of the Rose*, directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud and starring Sean Connery and Christian Slater.

(c) *A secular turn: the rise of the town school and the university*

In the twelfth century, a new epoch began. Le Goff (2011, p. 84) remarks that

» [t]he cultural translation which made the monasteries lose first place to the towns occurred chiefly in the fields of teaching and architecture. In the course of the twelfth century the town schools, which grew out of episcopal schools, decisively overtook the monastic ones. The new centres of learning freed themselves from controls by being able to recruit their masters and their pupils, and by choosing their teaching programs and methods. Scholasticism was a child of the towns, and reigned in the new institutions, the universities or intellectual guilds. Study and teaching became a profession, one of the many activities which were becoming specialised in the urban workplace; the name itself is significant, for *universitas* means a corporation. The universities were merely *universitates magistrorum et scolarium*, or corporations of masters and students, though they varied to a greater or lesser extent from each other, from Bologna where the students were in control, to Paris which was ruled by the masters. Books became tools rather than objects of worship, and like any tool they came to be mass-produced, objects for manufacture and retail.

The origins of the university

At the end of the middle ages, then, philosophy once again began to renew itself. As Le Goff suggests, this was made possible by the formation of **the university** as a new institution, which would nurture and defend another new form of intellectual practice. The first universities (the University of Bologna, in what is now Italy, 1088; the University of Paris, 1150; Oxford University, which existed in some form from 1096, grew rapidly from 1167, was named a university in 1231, and received a royal charter in 1248[15]; the University of Cambridge, 1209; the University of Salamanca, in what is now Spain, 1218; the University of Padua, in today's Italy, 1222; and so on) were generally established by papal decrees (although in some cases, by royal charters). They were a mixture of the monastic forms of life fostered in the monasteries, and the 'closed shop' of the guilds that preserved the

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15   See University of Oxford: Organisation: History ►https://www.ox.ac. uk/about/organisation/history?wssl=1.

practices of particular occupations (like the guilds of clothiers, or the guild of masons). In the particular case of the university, the purpose of the guild was to serve and preserve the practice of 'the Liberal Arts'. The Liberal Arts of the late middle ages consisted of *grammar*, *rhetoric* and *logic* (the *Trivium*) and *arithmetic*, *geometry*, *music* and *astronomy* (the *Quadrivium*). It is clear that the content of the Liberal Arts owed much to the knowledge of antiquity in Greece and Rome—at least that part of it that had survived the middle ages. According to C.S. Lewis (1964), *grammar* consisted principally in learning language—especially learning Latin, in mediaeval times still the universal language for intellectual, scholarly exchange. *Rhetoric* consisted of learning how to persuade, both in speech-making and debate, and in poetry; it also involved learning about style. *Logic* consisted of learning how to argue: the different forms of arguments and proofs, for example. *Arithmetic* was greatly assisted by the arrival in mediaeval Europe of the so-called Arabic number system from India via the Arab world (a vast improvement on Roman numerals for all kinds of calculations). *Geometry* included knowledge important for architecture, among many other uses. *Music* was regarded as critical not only as a sign of a 'cultured' person, but also because it was an expression of the orderliness of the universe: 'the music of the spheres'. And *astronomy* was crucial for navigation by land and by sea, as well as for an informed reading of the passing of the seasons through the cyclical movements of the planets and the stars.

With the rise of the university, **university degrees** also arose, the system of 'degrees' having also been borrowed from the guilds. A person became Bachelor of Arts by studying the Liberal Arts for three or four years. The term 'bachelor' was used before the rise of the university to designate someone who had been trained in the relevant military arts who then served as an apprentice to a knight. After receiving the degree of Bachelor, a person could be awarded the degree of Master of Arts by participating for a further three or four years in further academic study and participation in the disputation, which was a central part of the academic practice of the mediaeval university. The Master of Arts was like a master of other trades, like a master stonemason, who had similarly been apprenticed for seven years. The Doctor—of philosophy, or theology, or medicine, or law—was the person who had completed substantial further scholarship beyond the degree of Master and had thus earned a right to teach that was independent of the university in which the degree

of Doctor was awarded. In mediaeval times, the degree of Bachelor of Arts was also a prerequisite for substantive studies in other professional fields. After completing the Bachelor of Arts, a person might then go on to further studies in other fields—to become, in addition, a Bachelor of Medicine, or Theology, or Laws, for example.

The first university, Bologna, was established as a corporation in 1088. Its curriculum harked back to the ancients: among the things taught were Justinian's (sixth century) codification of Roman law, the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*. At a time when new orders were being established throughout Europe, and when kings and nobles needed the legitimacy of legal knowledge and instruments to secure their sovereignty over their vassals (whether cities, states or lords or serfs), Bologna became a thriving intellectual centre, nurtured not only by papal power but also by Islamic scholarship transplanted from across the Mediterranean.

As noted earlier, during the middle ages, much knowledge and many texts from antiquity were lost in Europe. Many books of Aristotle, for example, no longer existed in Europe. Happily for history and for humanity, however, Islamic scholars and caliphs continued to preserve and extend the knowledge from antiquity in such fields as medicine, mathematics, law and philosophy. One of the greatest of those scholars was the Persian Ibn Sina (980–1037), known in Europe as Avicenna, whose medical texts were used for centuries after his death—including in the University of Paris, for example. He also wrote many texts in philosophy and other fields. Lost texts from antiquity began to return to Europe not only through contact among travelling scholars, but also following the Moorish (Berber Arab) conquest of the Iberian peninsula (now Spain and Portugal) in 711 AD, which secured the region as 'Al-Andalus' (later known as Andalusia) under Moorish rule. Especially in the era of the Caliphate of Cordoba (929–1036), there was a period of extraordinary culture and scholarship in Al-Andalus, though it gradually declined from 1036 until 1492 when Granada at last fell to the Christian rulers Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon, who married in 1469 to create the unified kingdom of Spain and who gave new force to the bloody 'Reconquista' which aimed to reconquer Islamic territory in Europe, reclaim it for Christianity and expel all Muslims and Jews.

With the formation of the universities in Europe, philosophy began to renew itself in its centuries-old tension with Christian theology and doctrine. Once again, however, the rise of a new institution had led to a new institutional form

and practice of philosophy—Scholastic philosophy, which involved disputation about texts and their meanings, drawing inferences to lead to new knowledge, and rigorously testing contradictions between new knowledge and established 'truths'. A key question for Scholastic disputation was whether the proponent of an argument might be led into heresy—further evidence of the prevailing tension between philosophy and Christianity, in which, for most, Christianity always prevailed on the basis of faith alone.

The new practice, Scholastic philosophy, was energised by the recovery in Europe of many of the lost texts of Aristotle, thanks to the Islamic scholars and libraries who had preserved and sustained them. The great Islamic scholar Ibn Rushd (1126–1198), born in Cordoba, and known to the West as Averroes, made a detailed study of a number of Aristotle's known works preserved in Arabic sources. His learned commentaries on Aristotle's texts were translated into Latin and widely read in Europe. The recovered works of Aristotle were now, once again, in tension with the works of Plato, particularly the prevailing Platonism of the mediaeval Christian Church. The Italian Dominican friar, (Saint) Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), who studied the texts of Averroes, struggled to reconcile the newly recovered works of Aristotle with the Platonism of Christian doctrine. He was twice regent master at the University of Paris, among other academic appointments. It was Aquinas, however, especially in his *Summa contra Gentiles* (written 1270–1273) and *Summa Theologica* (written 1265–1274), who produced arguments said to refute major heresies and to prove the existence of God and who asserted the ultimate primacy of faith over reason. Nevertheless, the fruits of Aquinas's engagement with Aristotelian philosophy and science helped to usher in a new flowering of philosophy, which also, in turn, helped pave the way for the Great Renaissance in Europe, a period of intellectual creativity and ferment that lasted from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century.

(d) *Steps towards universal public education: from mediaeval guild schools to compulsory education in the mid-nineteenth century*

As we have already seen, the monastic schools of the middle ages gradually ceded importance to the town schools which freed themselves from the domination of the Church, giving birth to the new institutions of the town school and the university. One particular example of a new town school in

England was the Cathedral School, associated with St Paul's Cathedral in London, which was founded in 1103 but in decline by the sixteenth century. In 1509, John Colet, Dean of St Paul's, privately funded and had built a new school on land north of the Cathedral, beside the River Thames. The new school took its name from the Cathedral: St Paul's School. Colet's fortune was inherited from his father, a member of the Worshipful Company of Mercers (merchants), and so he established the school under the governance of the Worshipful Company of Mercers, together with representatives of the universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London. Under these governors, the school was detached from the control of the Cathedral and the Church.

As it happens, one of Colet's friends, the eminent Dutch humanist, Biblical scholar and teacher Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466–1536), wrote texts for the new school. Erasmus is one of the most important figures in the history of education in Europe and one of the most learned people of his time. He wrote several texts on education.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, schools of other kinds also developed. Some were associated with specific trade guilds—other than the 'trades' of Medicine, Law and the Liberal Arts, taught in universities. In 1690, for example, Robert Aske left a bequest to establish a hospital including a school to educate twenty poor members of the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers, thus bringing into existence Haberdashers' Aske's School which has survived and multiplied until today (there are now several Haberdashers' Aske's Schools). Such guild schools played important roles in maintaining and preserving not only the guilds themselves, but also the social status of the tradespeople they educated.

David Hamilton's history of schooling from the late middle ages to the twentieth century

There is not space here to trace in detail the history of schooling from the middle ages to modernity. Hamilton's (1989) *Towards a Theory of Schooling* outlines the history of schools from the late middle ages (about 1400) to the First World War (1914–1918). As his research on this history proceeded, Hamilton (1989, p. 6) began

» …to envisage the history of post-mediaeval schooling in terms of three 'revolutionary' phases and two intervening 'transitional' periods. Successively, these five 'episodes' comprised: (i) the 'revolutionary' emergence of modern schooling and the associated stabilisation of an individualised pedagogy [the 'in-turn' processing of learners]; (ii) the seventeenth century elaboration of this pedagogy as schooling began to incorporate

the children of wage labourers; (iii) the 'revolutionary' change-over from 'individual' to 'batch' production at the time of the Industrial Revolution [teaching groups of students as a single 'batch']; (iv) the nineteenth-century elaboration of 'simultaneous' methods alongside the growth of 'elementary' schooling; and (v) the 'revolutionary' change-over from batch processing to new forms of individualisation at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Hamilton's history identifies several key moments in this history, describing how some of the major turning points in the life of the institution occurred, shaped by the intellectual–cultural, economic and social–political trends of their times. He describes a succession of three new pedagogical forms characteristic of schooling as it evolved through the period.

(1) The pupil-by-pupil teaching of the schools of the late middle ages, in which each pupil came to the master's desk to get feedback progress on set work and to have new work set. Hamilton likened this mode of pedagogical 'production' with pre-industrial modes of production in the economy beyond the school, in which each thing to be manufactured, whether a cathedral, a carriage or clothing, was individually handmade.

(2) The monitorial system of the nineteenth century with its halls of students and teachers divided into rows (generally, but not always, by age), with each row working on different set tasks under the supervision of a different 'monitor'.[16] The monitorial system introduced a more massified mode of pedagogical production influenced by the emergence of the factory and the industrialised production that spread throughout Europe with the Industrial Revolution. In the monitorial system, as in the factory, many things of the same kind were being produced simultaneously.

(3) The multi-teacher, multi-classroom schools of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries that echo the much more organised, specialised and differentiated modes of large-scale industrial production in the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. In these 'modern' schools,

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16 As Hamilton indicates, pupils in a single row often stood in a semi-circle around a banner with a lesson on it. As each mastered the lesson, he or she might move forward to the next row. The banner was called a 'standard', thus giving us the educational term 'standards'.

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teaching is much more differentiated so that smaller classes of 'like' pupils are handled together, as a batch. In the mid-twentieth century, for example, students were 'streamed' into different classes[17] and curricula on the basis of their intelligence and/or aptitudes and/or abilities, so like students could be taught together. These pedagogies were motivated by a desire to respond to students' individual differences; they may or may not have succeeded in achieving this.

In Hamilton's work in particular, we see the mutual influence of pedagogical practices and institutional forms as they shape one another in relation to the contemporary forces and movements of their times.

The emergence of the educational concepts of 'class', 'classroom' and 'curriculum'

For example, Hamilton tells the story of how, in the University of Glasgow in the first part of the eighteenth century, the educational concepts of 'class' and 'classroom' emerged for the first time, and together. With the rise of the Reformed Church of Scotland through the previous century, ministers were required in larger numbers than ever before. In order to allow them to pass through their theological education, the University decided to teach students in the first year separately from those in the second year, who were taught separately from those in the third year—instead of all attending lectures together. Each 'year' of students became a separate 'class' to be taught separately, in a separate 'class room' (later becoming 'classroom'). Thus, in addition to lecture halls in which all the students could attend to a single professor, new 'classrooms' were built, in which each 'class' could withdraw for studies suited to their stage in the course. In some later designs, for example, the design of some teachers' colleges from the nineteenth century, it is still possible to see this arrangement, in buildings with a large rectangular hall, with a raised dais at the front, with several 'classrooms' on each long side on the ground floor, and, above them, a second tier of classrooms' on

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17 In the mid-twentieth century, in many countries, students were segregated by ability into different kinds of schools, especially in the compulsory years of secondary education. Following the 1944 *Education Act* in England and Wales, for example, students were separated (by the 11+ examination, taken after pupils had turned 11 years old) into the 'grammar' schools for academic study (oriented towards the professions) and 'secondary modern' schools for a form of education (oriented towards the trades). In mid-twentieth-century Australia, several states segregated secondary education students into 'high' schools for the academically capable, and 'technical' schools aimed towards the trades.

a mezzanine on each long side. In some designs, these class-rooms have no front wall, so students in them can also attend to teachers addressing the whole school from the dais; in some later designs, the large hall has seating for the whole school assembly, and the classrooms have walls so students cannot hear a teacher on the dais from the classroom.

A little earlier, in Europe, the term 'curriculum' had first been used in its educational sense (previously it had been the Latin word for the circular track used for chariot-racing). The educational use of the term 'curriculum' was intended to convey the notion that, in the course of their studies, a student would pass through a series of stages in a journey from the beginning to end, like the chariot passing through the stages of the circular track. Along this journey, the students passed from one set of studies to another and then to another, in essentially the same sequence. The idea of structuring students' studies in such 'curricula' helped with the establishment of the ideas of 'class' and 'classroom' a few years later in Scotland: the first 'class' could study subjects appropriate to its level, the second 'class', more advanced subjects, and the third, still more advanced subjects. These notions of 'class', 'classroom' and 'curriculum', which seem so indispensable in our contemporary language of school-ing, turn out to have a history only a few centuries old. It is hard to imagine that, before that time, teachers and stu-dents would have found them odd and perplexing, and per-haps contrary to what seemed to be good practice, in which younger or less advanced students could see and learn from older or more advanced ones in a shared space.

Hamilton shows that those ideas of 'class' and 'classroom' spread relatively quickly from the University of Glasgow to designs for colleges and schools, so that one century later, the multi-teacher, multi-classroom school was becoming the norm. In later versions still, the hall sometimes disappeared entirely, and a school might wait years or decades to have the funds to build a hall for common worship, or school assemblies, or phys-ical education.[18]

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18 In Australia, the word 'gymnasium' is often used for such large halls, especially when they are specifically designed for physical educa-tion, but also able to be used for larger assemblies of students. While we might think of the gymnasium or 'gym' entirely in the context of physical exercise or physical education, the word also has other uses and connotations—in German and other European languages, for example, a 'gymnasium' is an academic high school, and its use recalls the ancient Greek education of aristocratic young men who were prepared, in 'gymnasia', to be warriors and, later, to be orators or philosophers as well.
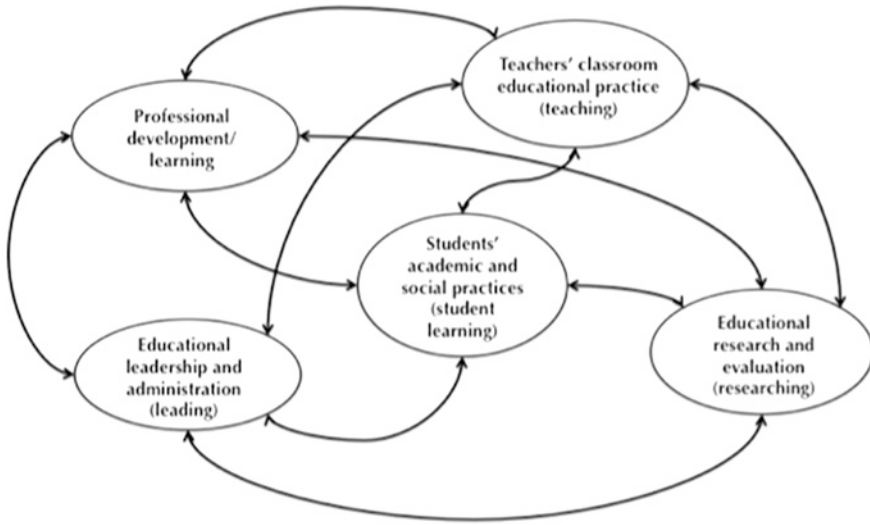
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The emergence of universal education: mass compulsory education

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the education of children and young people in schools had become widespread, though far from universal. Only the children of the poor were excluded. By then, however, it was a relatively short step for newly industrialised nations, themselves settling into the new, more democratic forms of nineteenth-century Europe, to seize on mass education to serve the needs of the economy and the civil state. Education was once again a force for nation-building, but now democratised: not just for building an aristocratic elite as it had been in ancient Greece, but for educating more or less whole populations. Between the middle of the nineteenth century and its end, almost all the nations of Europe, North America and Australasia enacted laws providing for the free, secular and compulsory elementary education of all citizens. By the time of the Second World War (1939–1945), this had spread also to secondary education, in the form of compulsory education to the age of fourteen or fifteen years.

The Education Complex

The second half of the nineteenth century was a time of great educational aspiration. Following the industrial spirit of the age, however, it instituted education through mass schooling, which was not always or everywhere great education. It is breathtaking, however, to consider the vast work done from the late nineteenth to the twentieth century:

- to build, resource and operate schools distributed across the whole territory of those nation states—enacted in practices of *teaching* and *student learning*;
- to develop state curricula and to administer various forms and levels of examinations to assess students—to support the practices of *teaching* and *student learning*;
- to educate, examine and provide teachers and head teachers for all of these schools—the practice of (initial and continuing) *professional learning*;
- to regulate schools in a jurisdiction (a state) by enacting and implementing laws and policies to govern the administration of whole education systems at various levels from the local and municipal to the state and national through the efforts of armies of educational officials—which we categorise together under the practice of *leading* (both outside and inside schools, and involving not only people in positions of authority but also many others who are not in such positions); and
- to set in train the work of educational research and evaluation capable of guiding and informing this vast

◘ Fig. 2.1 The education complex of practices

educational enterprise—in forms ranging from school inspection to commissioned research for education systems to independent research in universities—the practice of *research and reflection.*

We call this set of practices, which emerge together in a new, interdependent and consolidated form with the rise of mass compulsory schooling in the second half of the nineteenth century, *the Education Complex* of practices. We depict it as in ◘ Fig. 2.1.

With the rise of compulsory mass education, new institutions sprang up to support all of these activities: teacher education institutions inside and outside universities to prepare teachers; state education departments and universities to help form curricula and assessments; new educational bureaucracies at local, state and national levels; and universities and educational research agencies (like the Australian Council for Educational Research formed in the 1920s) to assist with educational research and evaluation.

This vast undertaking was motivated by educational aspirations, but the institutions through which it was implemented were often bedevilled by chauvinistic notions of duty to country and Empire, sometimes militaristic in manner, and enslaved by conservative contemporary ideas and ideals about the class structure of the societies they served and that they aimed to reproduce—a privately educated, wealthy

elite; a class of professionals; a class of tradespeople; and a large class of unskilled workers. Each class had very different educational opportunities and was served by different institutions—universities for the professionals, vocational education and training institutes (including the important Mechanics' Institutes of the nineteenth century) for tradespeople, and basic schooling for the unskilled. One might equally point to the contemporary ideas about the gendered structure of society and the way those assumptions played out in the provision of educational opportunities for girls and boys, men and women. It is not surprising, under the presuppositions of those times, that the institutions of schooling were sometimes mechanical in their operation and limited in their achievements. Despite these real limitations, their great glory was the spread of literacy and numeracy to a very large part of the populations of most 'developed' countries by the time of the First World War, along with an 'elementary' education in such subjects as history, geography, science and the arts. A consequence of this generous spread of elementary education was that some young people, men and women, were liberated from the apparently fixed destinies of their class, making them 'mobile' in ways that would previously have seemed more or less unthinkable except for the very wealthy.

The struggle for education in and with schooling

Yet there has always been a struggle for the practice of education in and with the institution of schooling. It is a struggle not unlike the struggle for the health of religion within the institution of the Church that has provoked controversy throughout the ages—perhaps none so strong, in the Christian tradition, as the Protestant Reformation sparked by the 1517 publication of Martin Luther's Ninety-Five Theses, which sparked the Thirty-Year War between Catholics and Protestants around Europe. Although with less enmity, the ceaseless struggle between the practice of education and the institution of schooling goes on today. It is evident not just in schools for children and young people: it goes on in the contemporary Australian university, as the ideals and academic practices of higher education are increasingly subjugated to the economic and administrative demands made on and by the institution of the university. We, in universities, also face the question of whether we are educating our students or only schooling them.

The tension between practices and institutions

The philosopher MacIntyre (1981, p. 181) described the very intimate tension between practices and institutions:

» …so intimate is the relationship of practices to institutions…that institutions and practices characteristically form a single causal order in which the ideals and the creativity of the practice are always vulnerable to the acquisitiveness of the institution, in which the cooperative care for the common goods of the practice is always vulnerable to the competitiveness of the institution.

This is the tension we are caught up in: the tension between practising education and doing schooling. When we do the latter, we just do what the institution requires of us—what we are obliged to do as functionaries, as operatives, of institutionalised systems. Professionals in health and medicine also experience the tension between practices and institutions, as do professionals in human welfare—in fact, in many professions in the public sector. We in the education profession are not alone. But when or if the obligations of schooling overwhelm the practice of education, the game of education is lost. At that point, we will no longer be educating people to live well in a world worth living in, but training docile citizens for the administrative state, and workers to fit whatever the demands may be of the contemporary economy. We will no longer be preparing people for lives worth living, but preparing people to 'fit in' to the social, political and economic arrangements of our era—whatever they happen to be. If we do arrive at that point—if we have not already, that is—then we will have returned, though without the accompanying Enlightenment aspiration of the best of the educational reformers of the Industrial Revolution, to the task of schooling for the industrial age: to domesticate workers to punctuality and obedience, and to give them sufficient knowledge and skills to be useful in the economic worlds conceived by their employers.

A Thesis: The Historical Interdependence of Practices and Institutions

We have described the evolution of the institution of the school through a number of stages. First, we described the philosophical schools of ancient Greece, an institution that lasted around nine hundred years. That institution aimed at the education of the young so they could speak and think well, act well, and relate well to others and thus live a good life. Next, we described the Christian institution

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of the Church that succeeded and suppressed the ancient philosophical schools—in a period from the time of Christ until the late middle ages—a time when the learning of the ancients was almost lost and also a time which gave birth to Cathedral and monastic schools that aimed at the salvation of those they taught and at preparing some with the knowledge to maintain the Church's alliances with the nobility (the military) and the wealthy. Third, a new institution arose out of the monastic schools: the town school, and especially its radically new institutional form, the university. The first universities spread knowledge in many fields—particularly in the Liberal Arts, medicine, law and theology. They also created new professions of teaching and studying. Fourth, we looked in passing at guild schools, educating their members in a great variety of fields—not just for the practice of their crafts, but also as respected members of their societies and as members of an emerging mercantile class. Finally, we noted the rise of mass compulsory education in the mid-nineteenth century, aimed at achieving mass literacy and numeracy, and the preparation of a citizenry sufficiently well educated as to propel the economic and political progress of the nation states of the developed world and, though perhaps less assiduously, the progress of the colonies in their empires. As each arose, it fostered new educational practices and new educational aspirations, but with each transformation, new threats also emerged. The practice of education remained—and still remains—vulnerable to the acquisitiveness of the institutions and the people in them. There is always a question as to which is dominant: education or schooling.

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