

Peace and War as Topics in Scholarly Journals of History of Education: a comparative investigation

Edwin Keiner

Abstract – Educational thinking is rooted in ideas of future and continuity. Wars and revolutions, however, indicate discontinuity, disruptions, breaks. The article asks whether wars and revolutions are a significant topic in educational research and reflection, especially, to what extent and how history of education focusses upon wars and revolutions in the past 50 years? In order to answer these questions and also to analyse differences according to time and space the article draws on three disciplinary key journals. They represent important scholarly associations of history of education – the British and the American History of Education Societies and the International Standing Conference on the History of Education, i.e. “History of Education” (UK, founded 1968), “History of Education Quarterly” (USA, founded 1961), and “Paedagogica Historica” (International, founded 1961). We find that war as a special topic seems to be far beyond the scope of educational research and reflection, and, thus, is also not a core subject systematically dealt with in historical educational research journals. It is argued that war does not provide any U-topia (Eu-topia), which could serve as a normative point of reference for education and history of education. War seems to function as an educational A-topos: “whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent” (Wittgenstein).

Riassunto – Educazione e apprendimento sono basati sull’idea di futuro e di continuità. Guerre e rivoluzioni, tuttavia, indicano discontinuità, interruzioni, fratture. L’articolo pone la questione se guerre e rivoluzioni sono un tema importante nella ricerca e riflessione e, in particolare, quanto e come la storia dell’educazione si è focalizzata su guerre e rivoluzioni negli ultimi 50 anni? Per rispondere a queste domande e anche per analizzare le differenze secondo tempi e luoghi, questo articolo passa in rassegna tre riviste importanti nell’ambito della storia dell’educazione. Esse rappresentano importanti associazioni accademiche della disciplina – la British e l’American History of Education Societies e la International Standing Conference on the History of Education, e, quindi, le riviste “History of Education” (UK, fondata nel 1968), “History of Education Quarterly” (USA, fondata nel 1961), e “Paedagogica Historica” (Internazionale, fondata nel 1961). Dall’analisi emerge che la guerra non sembra considerata nella ricerca e nella riflessione della storia dell’educazione come un tema di particolare interesse, ed è, allo stesso modo, un soggetto di cui non si occupano sistematicamente le riviste dell’area. Si argomenta che la guerra non offre una U-topia (Eu-topia), che potrebbe servire come punto di riferimento normativo per l’educazione e la storia dell’educazione. La guerra sembra funzionare come un A-topos educativo: “Su quello di cui non possiamo parlare è opportuno che rimaniamo in silenzio” (Wittgenstein).

Keywords – education, war, peace, educational journals, school

Parole chiave – educazione, pace, guerra, riviste educative, scuola

Edwin Keiner (Ansbach, Germany, 1951) is Full Professor of *Foundations of Education and Social Pedagogy* at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy, and currently the Vice-Dean for Teaching at the Faculty of Educa-

tion. He worked at the Universities of Frankfurt/Main, Bochum and Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany. He was the chairperson of the commission on Research on Educational Research and of the section Foundations of Education of the German Educational Research Association for many years. He is member of the editorial boards of the "European Educational Research Journal", the "Paedagogica Historica", and the "Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability". Among his recent works: *Unscharfe Grenzen – eine Disziplin im Dialog: Pädagogik, Erziehungswissenschaft, Bildungswissenschaft, Empirische Bildungsforschung* (E. Glaser, E. Keiner (Hrsg.), Bad Heilbrunn, Klinkhardt, 2015); *The European Educational Research Association: people, practices and policy over the last 20 years* (M. Honerød Hoveid, E. Keiner, M. P. Figueiredo (Eds.), Special Issue, "European Educational Research Journal", 13, 4, 2014).

In the year 2014 the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE), took place at the Institute of Education, University of London. Its framing theme was 'Education, war and peace'. The International Centre for Historical Research in Education (ICHRE, University College London, Institute of Education) just announced a special double issue of "Paedagogica Historica" composed of papers presented at the ISCHE 36th Conference on the theme of "Education, War and Peace", edited by Gary McCulloch and Georgina Brewis for publication in early 2016 as volume 52, nos. 1 and 2. Already in July 2014 (last updated on 2 February 2015) Mark Freeman, Tom Woodin and Susannah Wright, editors of the journal *History of Education* and supported by the publisher Taylor and Francis, edited the first virtual special issue on the theme "Education, War and Peace", reflecting the theme of the ISCHE Conference. It consists of previously published papers and is structured according to the four sub-themes of the ISCHE conference, I am going to take into account in my present paper.

1. Research Question and Theoretical Background

Against the background of this broad and international discursive context the theme 'war, peace and education' is embedded, in view of the fact, that several scholarly associations of the history of education took up this topic the last few years, and recognising, that it is primarily scholarly journals of history of education, which serve as media of publication, I will shortly present the four sub-themes as they have been presented in the call for papers and the abstracts book for the ISCHE conference (LONDON2014Abstracts-book-final.pdf):

"The 36th ISCHE conference, at the centenary of the outbreak of World War I aims at addressing relationships between education and war, and also the role of education in fostering peace. War includes armed conflict between nations, but also other forms of belligerence between rival forces within and across states such as civil wars, culture wars, cold wars, and types of warfare for example ideological warfare, economic warfare and physical combat in all its forms. Peace includes a formalized state of harmony, and also embraces reconciliation and collaboration towards shared goals. Education in many forms, institutional and informal, contributes to war and to peace through formal systems at all levels from school to university, military training, through civics and citizenship, museums, peace movements, art, the media and

official propaganda [...] Under four broad sub-themes the conference will draw together historical scholarship from all parts of the world to represent a global range of geo-political contexts and chronological periods. At the same time we anticipate a creative encounter of the increasing range of methodologies that inform historical research, with attention to historical insights offered by anthropology, sociology, literary theory, and to linguistic, visual and other ‘turns’... The conference sub-themes are:

1. Education for war: the role of education in preparing for and promoting war, including through particular forms of curriculum and organised propaganda.
2. Education for peace: the role of education in preparing for and promoting peace or non-violent action, including through particular forms of curriculum and organised peace movements.
3. The impact of war on education: the experience of war and its direct impact on children, schools, teachers and education systems, and the longer term consequences and legacies of war for education.
4. Representations of war and peace: war and peace in media, textbooks, culture, and organised memory such as museums and official memorials”.

However, when looking at the intensity of the discussion of the relationship between education, war and peace during the previous few years, I wondered whether this might be a current peak or whether the relationship especially between education and war might be a continuous topic during the last decades in history of education discourses. This question was the starting point for a little investigation.

Educational thinking usually is based on ideas of future, continuity, hope, linear expectations etc. The present is perceived as the deficient mode of better alternatives (Mollenhauer 1968; Blankertz 1971). It does not consider the “radical other”, disruptions, ruptures, breaks, discrete processes and uncalculatable events.

Wars and revolutions are such disruptions, breaks. Against this background one could assume that wars and revolutions are not a significant topic in educational research and reflection. Thus, the question arose to what extent and how does history of education focus upon wars and revolutions in the past 5 decades? In addition, are there differences according to time and space? In this context I did not take ‘peace’ in the foreground of the investigation, because I expected this broad and rather unspecific concept implicitly underlying most of the topics and arguments of educational research. My focus addressed “war” as a significant interruption of the normality of education and life.

2. Methodology

Methodologically I took journals as specific media of timely scholarly, disciplinary communication. Specialised journals are media of publication par excellence and a source for investigation and self-reflection. They serve as a source for a history of the history of education in the mode of self-observation, self-reflection, self-governance (Nóvoa & Yariv-Marshall 2003).

However, such an approach is not easy to undertake, because there are several questions, which lie behind a rather naive use of scholarly journals as a source.

What counts as “history of education”? In different countries and cultures you also find dif-

ferent disciplinary cultures according to a different histories and developments of history of education (Knaupp et al. 2014; Keiner & Schriewer 2000; Furlong & Lawn 2010). How can we compare histories of educations? We need rather stable categories and indicators, which guarantee the function of a *tertium comparationis* over time and space (Depaepe 2002; Keiner 2013)? Is it indeed scholarly journals of history of education, which represent the respective scholarly discourses of history of education or is it books, editions, series etc? To what extent are the history of education discourses represented elsewhere, e.g. in other educational research journals? What counts according to which criteria as scholarly journal as compared, e.g. to journals dealing with history for the classroom or historical journals for the educated public? To what extent are scholarly journals not independent, but part of the scientific market? According to some *Workshop on Journals of History of Education, 2015 in Spain and Turkey* (Hernández Huerta; Cagnolati & Diestro Fernández (2015) argue for an urgent need for “*professionalization* of the editorial management for scientific journals”, and they list a large number of historical journals (with short abstracts), and, thus, show the high diversity of formats and cultures.

In order to avoid all these difficulties in view of the little explorative investigation presented here, I limited my analysis to the following journals:

- “History of Education” (six times, founded 1968 as History of Education Society Bulletin, continued 2003: History of Education Society (UK)
- “History of Education Quarterly” (History of Education Society (US), founded 1961);
- “Paedagogica Historica” (Founded 1961 (in consequence of a resolution adopted in 1956 in Florence by the 8th Congress of the History of Sciences), two times until 1985, three times until 2003, six times until now, International Standing Conference on the History of Education (ISCHE).

All these journals can be regarded as disciplinary key journals, which represent important scholarly associations of history of education – the British and the American History of Education Societies and the International Standing Conference on the History of Education. All the journals cover a relatively long time span, i.e. from the 1960s and 70s to the present. The journals predominantly use English language. “History of Education” and “History of Education Quarterly” primarily represent the Anglo-Saxon world. “Paedagogica Historica”, however – as shown e.g. by the composition of the editorial board and the attempts to publish in different languages –, has a more international, especially European, focus as it emerged and is still influenced by a group of Belgian and Dutch international educational historians.

As these journals are clearly identifiable as high-ranking scholarly journals of history of education with a worldwide reputation, there are several other journals with a similar outlook, e.g. “Histoire de l’éducation” (quarterly, INRP, Lyon, founded 1978); “Historical Studies in Education”/“Revue d’histoire de l’éducation” (two times, founded 1988, Canadian History of Education Association, French and English); “History of Education Review” (two times since 1983, Australian and New Zealand History of Education Society (ANZHES), founded 1971) or “Zeitschrift für pädagogische Historiographie” (two times, German, founded 1998, formerly since 1995: Neue Pestalozzi-Blätter). But there are also many other journals which would only partly meet the criteria of representing a scholarly field of communication on a scientific level (see e.g. the list in Hernández Huerta; Cagnolati & Diestro Fernández 2015).

The decision to use the three mentioned journals was finally made due to pragmatic and

linguistic reasons, especially because the core data were already available, and I had a relatively easy access to the sources.

From the first issue to 2014 every main article was considered. The classification was made according to title, abstract and selected contents on the basis of two sequences of reading; a first, fast one, in order to find and validate categories and a second, more careful one, in order to attribute articles to categories. Each journal contained an amount of about 1,000 articles; that means, the analysis presented here is based on more than 3,000 articles.

The building of categories already was an exciting enterprise, because it raised the question how to define “war” as a history of education topic. In view of the big amount of articles, and considering the ISCHE-conceptualisation, I decided to use a rather strict focus. I regarded war not as the absence of peace. I did not consider articles, who discussed structural problems between states, nations or cultures. I did not take up articles about colonies, colonialisation, proselytization or evangelisation. I did not consider educational heroes living in times of war, and I did not take articles, which used “battle”, “fight” or “war” in a metaphorical sense. That means, for this first investigation I took “war” in a rather restricted meaning: military issues, armed conflicts, revolutions, massive interventions and reactions, extreme collective aggression, destruction, refugees.

3. Results

In sum, one could say, “war” is given not a very high attention in history of education journals. Many articles did not consider “war”, ‘conflict’ etc. even in a broader sense and as a core subject of analysis. If they did, they referred to war and conflicts primarily as political, societal or economical contexts of education, as a kind of periphery or surrounding set of historical educational issues without being related under a particular theoretical or historical perspective. The percentage of articles dealing with “war” explicitly was less than 10% regarding the whole time span, however in rather different forms. “war” was frequently used to define chronological periods, for demarcation of timelines (e.g. ‘after World War II’, ‘Interwar period’). Only some articles took war and its consequences for education explicitly and systematically into consideration. Only few articles referred to war as a theme or topic for historical educational research from a meta-perspective.

	Until 1979	1980-1989	1990-1999	2000-2014	TOTAL
HEQ	19	17	17	23	76
HE	4	13	25	52	94
PH	9	3	24	48	84
TOTAL	32	33	66	123	254

Table 1: “War” as an explicit and systematic topic in articles of scholarly journals of history of education (HEQ=

History of Education Quarterly; HE= History of Education; PH= Paedagogica Historica); N of all articles about 3,000.

Some examples (5 selected titles from each journal):

HEQ 1967 The Collapse and Revival of Medical Education in France: A Consequence of Revolution and War, 1789-1795

HEQ 1972 Psychologists and the War: The Meaning of Intelligence in the Alpha and Beta Tests

HEQ 1982 Mission on the Rhine: American Educational Policy in Postwar Germany, 1945-1949

HEQ 1993 World War I and the Attack on Professors of German at the University of Michigan

HEQ 2010 From "Wops and Dagoes and Hunkies" to "Caucasian": Changing Racial Discourse in American Classrooms during World War II

HE 1988 The first world war and its implications for education in British museums

HE 1999 National identity, citizenship and education for displacement: Spanish refugee children in Cambridge, 1937

HE2005 The milk in schools scheme, 1934–45: 'nationalization' and resistance

HE2012 Unionised faculty and the political left: Communism and the American Federation of Teachers on the eve of the Second World War

HE 2013 Progressive reformers and the democratic origins of citizenship education in the United States during the First World War.

PH 1972 Militärische Jugenderziehung und Preußische Heeresreform

PH 1996 Seller Filling the Space: Education, Community, and Identity in British Internment Camps during World War II

PH 1997 American Reform Efforts: German Professional Education after World War II

PH 2000 Moving Images: Propaganda Film and British Education 1940-45

PH 2005 Education, nation-building and modernization after World War I: American ideas for the Peace Conference

When taking time and space into consideration, one could say: the "History of Education Quarterly" (USA) has more articles about educational heroes than the other journals, also those living during war periods. Thematically it takes up "war" on a low quantitative level, however, continuously across the time span. The theme "war and education" primarily remains within the own country; it is mostly the Civil War. In the "History of Education" (UK) war and education becomes more and more a topic since the 1990s. Thematically it is primarily the world Wars I and II. In addition, and out of counting, this journal has a remarkably share of articles, which deal with former British colonies. "Paedagogica Historica" also starts to discuss war and education since the 1990s. Thematically it is also focused on the World Wars I and II primarily, however, also deals with former colonies and also South America. In sum, I would repeat, "war" is given not a very high attention in history of education journals. How to explain this phenomenon?

4. War and Education?

The war, the wild, the evil, the "radical other", seem to be far beyond the scope of educational research and reflection, and, thus, are also not a core subject systematically dealt with

in historical educational research journals.

This might be due to the mentioned particular form of educational thinking, which also affects scope and focus of educational research. As the present is perceived as the deficient mode of a better world it does not consider the “radical other” or uncalculatable events just like wars and revolutions. As “tsunamis” – as the title of the Ferrara conference suggests – they are not a significant topic in educational research and reflection, because they cannot be subject of pedagogical control and intervention. In historical journals, therefore, we find more reflections and analyses about the importance of the nation state, national culture and “identity”, citizenship (education), the cosmopolitan, the gentleman/gentlewoman as instruments of prevention and as pedagogical “weapons to combat” the evil. If there is anything uncalculatable, then it is creativity, spontaneity, the individual “subject” (Binder 2009), and its open futures – not the war. In contrast to this structural openness education (research) likes more the orchestration of preformed settings, e.g. learning cultures or new education concepts, it is more in favour of calculating, forecasting, linearity, “longue durée”. In these respects education research and history of education appear as “normal science” (Keiner & Tenorth 2007). They are interested in understanding and explaining “how it works” and “how it has worked” (Smeyers & Depaepe 2006).

However, education and educational research at the same time are especially interested in inventing possibilities and means to develop the respective “Good”, the better world (and tend to neglecting the evil (see Genovesi). Education and educational research at the same time contribute to the continuity and never ending efforts of Sisyphus’ work (Bernfeld 1973). These ambivalences and uncertainties (Keiner 2006) go back to and are embedded in the ideas of enlightenment and the Protestant ethic (Tröhler 2011a, b).

In this context the “dialectics of enlightenment” (Horkheimer & Adorno 1944, 1991) are perceived as unaccepted risks, as “negative” contexts of normative educational efforts aiming at creating the “positive”. History of education to a great deal contributes to these quasi-theological foundations of belief in the better future. In some respects this “optimism” also might help to cover the fact that the World Wars significantly contributed to establishing and professionalising education research (Tenorth 2011) (and psychology (Geuter 1984)) at universities, at least in Germany.

Regarding war and education one could say it in a more general sense: War does not provide any U-topia (Eu-topia), which could serve as a normative point of reference education and history of education are based on. War is an educational A-topos – not in the Platonian heroic sense, but probably in a metaphorical Wittgensteinian sense: “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent”.

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Received December 1, 2016
Revision received January 3, 2017
Accepted January 3, 2017