Changing Meanings of Public Education in Argentina.

A genealogy.

Angela Inés Oría

Humanities and Social Science

Institute of Education, University of London

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

(PhD)

September 2013

Abstract

This thesis explores the changing meanings of 'public' education and its process of construction. More specifically, I focus on how Argentine education governance resulted from the meaning policy-makers attached to 'the public' at a given juncture, how such meaning evolved over time without a corresponding change in governance, and how there seems not to be within public discourse any significant questioning of this divergence between rhetoric and actual structures. I explore early and current discourses which used and defined 'public education', and analyse how these paradigmatic definitions shaped policy and constrained practice. The historical 'junctures' addressed in this thesis are firstly, the period of pre-institutionalisation of the Argentine education system, focussing especially on the seminal figure of Domingo F. Sarmiento. Secondly, the actual consolidation of the 'official' version of 'state-public' education, mainly achieved during Jose Ramos Mejia's administration of the National Education Council, and over and against alternative discourse regimes, such as that emanating from the anarchist circles. The third period explored in this thesis is the contemporary. 'Common sense' definitions regarding the 'public' nature of 'public' education are breaking and the discursive space is opening. Newly admitted voices and versions of schooling seem to be emerging as a result of new understandings of the meaning of what constitutes 'the public'. However, are these signs of structural reform? Is there any significant questioning within state-public education of its own forms of governance? The reconstruction of the Argentine educational past can be used as a framework for thinking about the reconstruction of its present. I deploy 'Genealogy', as understood within the writings of Michel Foucault, as my research strategy. The thesis is organised into seven Chapters. The first are introductory and subsequently I develop a detailed analysis of the varying positions of the public within different discursive paradigms. Finally, I offer some conclusions.

Declaration

I declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own work. I am responsible for all the research and analyses submitted in this thesis. Except where specified or implied in references to other publications, the work reported is original. This thesis has not been previously submitted for a higher degree at this or any other institution of higher education. The word length of this thesis is 79.384 words, excluding endnotes.

Table of Contents

Declaration 3

Introduction 7

Main theme and arguments 7

Chapter structure 12

Theoretical approach 14

Chapter One: Overview of the changing meanings of public education in Argentina 19

Introduction 19

An overview 19

Historical background *20*

A site for the public within the education system *27*

Struggles towards defining 'public education' *30*

The public blurred *36*

Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework and Method 42

Defining 'The Public' 42

Structural Transformation *42*

Recovering and broadening 'the public' within the social *57*

After Habermas *64*

New perspectives in education *73*

Genealogy and the Writing of History 75

The genealogical method *76*

Part One. The historical layers of meaning embedded in 'public education' 86

Chapter Three: A site for the public within the education system. Domingo F. Sarmiento's vision of 'Popular Education' 91

Introduction 91

The historical sources and texts 96

Displacing views 99

'Popular Education' **112**

Programmatic Centralisation *114*

Administrative Decentralisation *119*

State and education in the 1850's **128**

Society and education in the 1850's **133**

Education in the 1870's and beyond **141**

Historical Revisionism **147**

Conclusion **153**

Chapter Four: State education over and against other alternatives. José M. Ramos Mejía's vision of a 'National state' education system **157**

Introduction **157**

The historical sources and texts **160**

The concept of 'the multitude' **166**

A revearsal of 'public' education **173**

'National Education' **181**

Programmatic and administrative centralisation *193*

Conclusion **202**

Chapter Five: A counter public education system. Julio Barcos' anarchist perspective on public education **205**

Introduction **205**

The historical sources and texts **206**

A counter-public sphere **208**

Anarchism and education **216**

Barcos' anarchist counter-discourse **222**

The role of the people *223*

Challenging State Monopoly *228*

Challenging homogeneity *233*

The idea of Reform *236*
Programmatic and administrative decentralisation *239*
Conclusion 244

Part two. Contemporary Discourse Paradigms 249

Chapter Six: New sites, voices and versions of public education. New Governance? 251
Introduction 251
New discourse paradigms 252
The local debate 267
The reforms of the 1990s *268*
Recent Reform *277*
An Open debate for the New National Law of Education *288*
Conclusion 297

Chapter Seven: On Concepts and Governance 301
Introduction 301
A Comparison of Discourses and Governance 302
Popular Education *304*
Anarchist Education *307*
National Education *310*
The contemporary Paradigm. Continuities and Discontinuities *314*
Public opinion and Contemporary Reform 317
Towards a Public governance of Education. Policy proposals and research topics. 320

Bibliography 330

Endnotes 346

Introduction

Main theme and arguments

This thesis explores the changing meanings of 'public' education and its process of construction. More specifically, I focus on how Argentine education governance resulted from the meaning policy-makers attached to 'the public' at a given juncture, how such meaning evolved over time without a corresponding change in governance structures, and how and why there seems not to be within public discourse any significant questioning of such a divergence.

I address three historical junctures. Although often neglected by Argentine historiography, *the period of pre-institutionalisation* of the Argentine education system is of an extraordinary historical interest, since it shows the definition of 'public education' in Argentina was not an inevitable road towards a State Centralised Public Education System (SIPCE). Additionally, it is the period when Domingo F. Sarmiento published his educational writings and was active in local politics. Sarmiento is a paradigmatic figure in Argentine history. As such, his name is frequently deployed as a source of legitimacy for varied education policy initiatives. However, his particular definition of 'popular' education, in which this key term appears to be used interchangeably with 'public', as

well as the policy design attached to such conceptualisation, are rarely addressed in public discourse. This thesis turns its attention to this issue.

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the state became stronger and increasingly aware of its power to advance into new areas of policy. However, no very clear models for action existed, and other 'publics' concerned with social policy debated not only the legitimacy of state activity but also its organisational form. On the issue of education, their disagreements over the nature of public organisations revealed fundamental value conflicts and alternative visions of social development. A plurality of discourses struggled to prevail as dominant definitions of public education. However, at the turn of the century, 'public' education was widely understood to mean a system of schooling provided, financed and managed by the state.

Educational historiography has contributed towards legitimising this assumption; in part, due to the fact that most works on educational policy take Education Law No. 1420 (1884) as a starting point of Argentine educational history and thus leave behind earlier events (Zanotti 1981; Cucuzza 1995; Carli 2002; Filmus 2003; Tedesco 2003). Leading intellectuals such as Adriana Puiggrós, whose eight-volume *History of Education in Argentina* is compulsory for any student or researcher in the field, illustrates the peculiarity of Argentine educational historiography. The first volume of the series begins by saying: 'In the course of this study,

we have constructed a series of categories that reveal non-recorded, denied or neglected meanings in the classic History of Education (…) Events which contain elements that distinguish themselves from the dominant model (…) traces of a reservoir of popular-democratic alternatives to the institutionalised education…' (Puiggrós 1990: 36). The study in fact accomplishes this aim very well and there is plenty to acknowledge from this contribution. However, the subject matter of this compendium of history is explicitly subsequent to the sanction of the Education Law No. 1420 (1884). Incredibly therefore she omits a place for Sarmiento who is the key figure who articulates a vision for modern public-popular educational reform. The history of Argentine education is formed within these texts. I thus study *the historical consolidation of public-state education over and against alternative discourse paradigms,* such as existed within and around for example anarchist associations. This classical version of public education remained fairly stable for about a hundred years.

At the other end of this history a new wave of reform processes have been occurring in Argentina since the sixties, always applying to substantive aspects of schooling but never reviewing the system's structural forms of governance. State policy is embedded in mechanisms of sectorial pressure, too often affecting the distribution of quality public education for all (Gvirtz 2009). This results in the unequal supply of resources and educational opportunities. Following Cunill Grau, it seems the state continues to be the legitimate provider of 'public' education, in spite of an

increasing 'depublification' of its administration (Cunill Grau 1997). I suggest this form of political practice is ideologically sustained in the discourse that equates 'state' education with 'public' education, benefitting from the normative value of the term 'public'. Within this context, the meaning of 'public' education is being diminished, and structural transformation in favour of a democratic state-public education system is also being constrained.

A few contemporary voices do note the substantial difference between the nature of 'state' and 'public' education and question the extent to which 'Is public education public?' (Fernandez Enguita 2001). Do public schools serve the public interest? Are their public(s) a priority or are they subordinate to non-public interests? How are local public(s) positioned within the broad public sphere? I pay particular attention to the analyses of governance structures, the location of power and the arenas for critique and participation in policy design and administration.

More generally, beginning in the early 1990s, efforts were geared towards redefining the role of the state in education. Around the world reform advocates attempted to realign popular thinking about the common conceptions of 'public' education, since they saw the classical definition as too narrow. In Argentina, the Federal Law of Education passed in 1993 reflected this discursive shift: 'public' education turned to include both state and private schools. However, more recently, Argentina passed a New

National Law of Education (2006), aimed at reviewing and re-establishing the education policy model of the 1990s, distancing current policy from the past 'neoliberal' ideology. This law symbolised a new discursive shift, which broadened the meaning of public education further. The discursive space within the educational field is opening. *Newly admitted voices and versions of schooling could be the reflections of a novel understanding of the meaning of what constitutes 'the public'.* However, is there within state-public education any significant questioning of its own forms of governance? Are these signs of structural reform?

I've been engaged in educational policy for many years, working in and outside the state. As a pedagogue, my view of state politics and power is as means to pursue a social and educational agenda. My concerns are as much ethical and political as *practical*. Whom do we really want institutions to serve? If institutions and policies contradict fundamental political principles, are we prepared to change them? How do we discard the intellectual blinkers that have resulted from the reification of some concepts and forms? On what models should institutions be based? (Katz Michael 1987: 2). As stated at the very beginning, 'the public' is not a given fact, but a process of construction. Cunill Grau suggests the object of contemporary administrative reform requires the 'publification' of public administration; 'this means turning it into being truly public and democratic' (1997: 22). According to this author, 'affirming the republican rights is not an easy task, but it is a new task which has become historically feasible' (1997: 14).

I thus wish to contribute to reconstructing or 'de-constructing' the processes that made 'public education' become equated to 'state education'. Following Ball, Discourse is fallible but influential particularly in providing possibilities of political thought and thus policy (Ball 2007b: 1). This thesis aims at understanding the way in which paradigmatic definitions of 'public' education can shape educational governance and reform, either broadening or constraining their 'public' potential.

Chapter structure

The thesis is organised into seven Chapters. *Chapter 1* offers an overview of the history of public education in Argentina, relating key educational events with the broader historical displacements of the 'public sphere'. Issues around the constitution of public spheres and discursive spaces within the educational field emerge from out of this overview. A genealogy of these periods also points at different stages through which small-scale techniques of self-discipline evolved into the large-scale system of Argentine public education. *Chapter 2* thus draws on Habermas' account of the 'structural transformations of the public sphere' in order to understand the fundamental displacement of 'the public' into the social. However, this section already addresses complementary accounts that seem very relevant both to analysing past and contemporary scenarios. The methodological and theoretical discussion is largely undertaken in Chapter

2, although I do address conceptual issues at the end of each Chapter and in Chapter 7, where I offer the final conclusions.

Chapter 3 focuses on the discourse of Domingo Sarmiento (1811-1888), who argued in favour of building an educational 'public sphere' within the meso level of district participation. He was prolific in his work and much of his influential thinking is available in the form of annual reports, speeches and writings, as well as in archival documents from his early years as Head of the School Department of the Province of Buenos Aires (1956-1961). *Chapter 4* describes the variety of educational discourses that were produced by the state during the period of consolidation of one of the system's main governing structures: the National Education Council. I focus on the administration of José Ramos Mejía (1908 - 1913), where key structural elements of the system's governance were established as well as the advance of central-state intervention in education, which during this period attained full materialisation. *Chapter 5* analyses the anarchist thought as an actual 'counter-public' to the institutional State. Julio Barcos critically pointed to the dangers and limits of institutions, through journal publications, newspapers as well as a very eloquent book – seldom commented upon by education historians - *How the State Educates Your Son* (1920).

The object of *Chapter 6* is twofold: trace changing meanings of 'public' education in contemporary discourse and reflect about the extent to which

these new meanings are shaping educational policy and governance in Argentina. The meaning of 'public education' in Argentina remained fairly stable throughout the twentieth century. Even after the rise of the Radical Party (1916-1930) and greater structuring of a 'public sphere' (in Habermasian terms) the public's claim pointed at how to achieve the system's expansion, not its structural transformation. The mid-twentieth century marks a breaking point in the state-hegemonic discourse of 'public' education, although it took two decades to materialise through actual reforms.

Chapter 7 offers the conclusions and *reversals* (see pp. 67-70) of this study. A key revearsal is that the Argentine state, rather than constructing 'public' education as a traditional account might assume, has instead eliminated the possibilities of 'a public sphere'. The Argentine state captured the discourses, sites and positions from where to speak about education, thus excluding participation of social actors in the state provided educational services.

Theoretical approach

I deploy 'Genealogy' as my main research strategy. Genealogy takes as axiomatic that cultural practices are situated historically (Fraser 1981: 274). Genealogy is concerned with what Foucault calls the 'politics of the discursive regime' (Foucault and Gordon 1980). It is the whole nexus of

objects of inquiry, criteria, practices, procedures, institutions, apparatus and operations which Foucault means to designate by his term 'power-knowledge regimes' (Fraser 1981: 274).

A genealogical approach to these cases allows exploring phenomena such as:

- The valorisation of some statement forms and the concomitant devaluation of others;
- The institutional licensing of some persons as being entitled to offer knowledge–claims and the concomitant exclusion of others;
- Procedures for the extraction of information from and about persons involving various forms of coercion;
- The proliferation of discourses oriented to objects of enquiry, which are, at the same time, targets for the application of social policy.

(Fraser 1981: 274)

A thorough development of the genealogical approach is offered in Chapter two, section two. The historical junctures selected in this thesis are key moments where discourse regimes come-into-being. My work is largely based on macro-political events as criteria for signalling ruptures and discontinuities. However, following Foucault's lead I do not focus on changes of presidencies or governors as historiography normally does. My interest is focused on discursive formations that are articulated in various academic,

political and administrative productions at particular junctures, and their relative impact on the way the role of the state and the public are conceived and expressed in laws and other general normative texts generated by the executive or legislative institutions. I do consider Sarmiento's influencing role as Head of the Educational Department in the Province of Buenos Aires or Ramos Mejía's even at a higher level of government. However, I do not attempt to explain events at the micro-level of the education system through these changes in the discursive field (See Narodowski 1996). I limit my analysis to the way specific meanings have a significant influence on the modes of governance of the Argentine education system until today, and I look at the discursive conditions for the public to assume a role within the educational field.

The selected events reflect varying conceptions of 'the public' and public education within different discourse regimes. Nancy Fraser (1992) argues that critical theory should take a harder more critical look at the term 'public', for it is not a simply straightforward designation of a societal sphere; but a cultural classification and rhetorical label. In political discourse this is a powerful term frequently deployed to de-legitimate some interests, views, and topics and to valorise others (Fraser 1992: 131). 'The public' is therefore a key organising term within the conceptual framework of this thesis. The work of Jürgen Habermas is thus a necessary point of reference. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989) analyses the emergence and changes of this 'central domain of modern

society' - i.e. a sphere between civil society and the state, where critical public discussion of matters of general interest is institutionally guaranteed. Habermas studies the bourgeois life of the seventeenth through mid twentieth centuries. Although there are clear differences between the settings where Habermas focuses his study (Germany, England and France) and the case of Argentina, *Structural Transformation* is relevant to my thesis in two senses: it points at the centrality of 'the public' as a sociological category, and it sheds light on the broad historical displacement of this sphere into the social, where it emerged. Interesting parallels may be delineated between the structural transformations of the public sphere and the changing meanings of 'public' education.

Additionally, new perspectives that put into question some of Habermas' assumptions allow further useful elaborations of the role of 'the public' in the current times. Among these, Fraser's contribution (1992) is of great importance. She points out the complexities of co-existing and contesting public sphere(s) – which applies just as well for the analyses of past and present Argentine education.

The debate on education reform needs to acknowledge the issue of 'publicness', and reveal a more profound understanding of the public nature of public education. Historicising these processes has, I believe, at least two potentialities:

a) Reconstruct education and educational governance as fields for the potential expansion of the 'public sphere', and contribute to prevent its further undermining.

b) Recover 'voice' both in practical terms, as a mechanism of institutional recuperation (Hirschman 1970); and in substantial terms, to allow people to engage in 'practical discourse', creating procedures so that those affected by general political decisions – the publics – can have a say in their formulation, stipulation and adoption.

Following Habermas, 'Publicness is apparently more and other than a mere scrap of liberal ideology' that social democracy could discard without harm: 'If we are successful in gaining an historical understanding of the structures of this complex that today, confusedly enough, we subsume under the heading 'public sphere', we can hope to attain thereby not only sociological clarification of the concept but a systematic comprehension of our own society from the perspective of one of its central categories' (1989: 5).

Chapter One: Overview of the changing meanings of public education in Argentina

Introduction

This Chapter offers an overview of Argentine educational history. Rather than a detailed account of a particular period, I focus on the continuities and discontinuities in the Argentine education system through a specific analysis of changing meanings of 'public' education. The periodisation is based less on the system's legal constitution or periodic changes of government, but instead upon varying conceptions of 'publicness' or the role of 'the public' in changing discourse paradigms. A key idea in this section is that 'state' and 'public' education have not always been equated in Argentine history. A public sphere in the educational field existed and found expression in different ways. The idea of 'the public' being something that resulted from state action did not crystallise in Argentine educational history until the 1880s.

An overview

A set of 'events' define the selection of future Chapters, where I offer a more thorough analyses of the relationships between the theoretical perspectives and historical developments. Thus, I first offer a brief review

of the historical antecedents of Argentine public education and I then focus on the key events that defined the meaning of 'public' education.

Historical background

In the early years after Independence (1810) some expressions of an incipient public sphere were being articulated, and these acquired increasing importance in the 1870s. A very brief description of the antecedents of these is worthwhile.

In Colonial times (XVI-XVIII) education was seen as a way of integrating *criollos, indios* and *mestizos*[i] into the socio-cultural system that was established and sustained by Colonial institutions, legislation and the Catholic Church. Religious indoctrination was a central issue, and several religious orders carried out this task[ii]. As they were educated in the principles of Christianity, people were taught how to read, write and count. They would also receive practical courses to prepare themselves for different trades (Weinberg 1995). From the mid eighteenth century schooling started to expand throughout Hispanic America, in part due to the economic development of the region. Schools for learning the 'first letters' were established in Convents. Later the *Cabildos* (a colonial version of Municipalities) also became interested in providing education. In 1771, the *Cabildo* of Buenos Aires opened a 'School of First Letters' and by 1805 several more were created. The *Cabildo* hired teachers and provided part of

the schools' funding. However, broadly speaking, education during this period was narrow, and the methods often used were catechistic, based on repetition and mnemonic techniques. Besides, both convent and City schools admitted only boys for instruction (Salvadores 1941). Colonial schools were but one element in a series of techniques devoted to 'human dressage by location, confinement, surveillance, the perpetual supervision of behaviour and tasks' (Foucault 1988 in Deacon 2006:123). Schooling therefore had a role in socialising the poor into modern values, thus, neutralising dangers, particularly those of 'moral decrepitude', 'social vagabondage' and 'political disquiet' (Deacon 2006: 126).

The separation of Argentina from Spain took place in 1810 and the formal declaration of Independence was in 1816. The first decade after autonomy was marked by war with Spain and internal conflict, with Buenos Aires pitted against various regional coalitions in a struggle for political dominance. Instability reached its peak in 1820 with the dissolution of the newly born national state (Romero 1959).

Schools continued to function under control of the *Cabildos*. In 1817 the City of Buenos Aires created the position of General Director of Schools, as a sign of the first developments of state sector educational institutions. The first General Director was Saturnino Segurola, followed by James Thompson, famous for trying to install the Lancasterian method in Spanish America (Salvadores 1941; Narodowski 1994). From a Foucauldian

perspective, there slowly began a clear progression through phases of confinement accompanied by a transition from 'degrees of exclusion to degrees of inclusion' (Deacon 2006: 124). For example, schools were only for very few and, very slowly as the incipient state grew, greater numbers of people were selected for education, to later serve social needs and functions.

Contemporary authorities still had negative views about 'the people', who they perceived as lacking diligence and industriousness. Those boys who became schooled were expected to develop habits of self-discipline and application, to prepare themselves for service to the state. A first stage in the early modern history of 'discipline' can be identified here. Manuel Belgrano, in Buenos Aires, argued in favour of education, showing this kind of view about the people. Between 1810 and 1811 he wrote several articles in the *Correo de Comercio,* dealing with his educational ideas: 'How do you want men to care for their work and costumes, to be neat, honourable citizens? How do you want virtue to frighten off vice and *the state to receive its fruits*[iii], if there is no education, if ignorance keeps passing from one generation to the other with greater increase? (Weinberg 1995: 85). Education was thus considered as the appropriate tool to overcome the perceived deficiencies of both economic and social interaction. Civil servants would soon have to create the schools and schools would have to create well-adjusted citizens. However, schools in Argentina had not yet assumed their modern role as one of the principal socialising mechanisms positioned intermediately between the family and the social and economic system.

In 1821, the rise to power of the *Partido Unitario*[iv] brought relative order to the region. Commercial relationships and foreign trade began to establish when countries like Portugal, Brazil, the United States and England acknowledged the independence of the United Provinces of the *Río de La Plata*. Bernardino Rivadavia, Minister of Government, embodied the notions of liberal politics and inaugurated an era of reforms that reached all aspects of public life (Newland 1991; Newland 1995). He abolished the privileges of the clergy and the *diezmo* collected by the Church. He was also effective in introducing reforms into the Army's organisation (Romero 1994: 68). On January 6th 1826, Congress passed a law creating a national executive power. Rivadavia was designated President of the United Provinces.

The development and expansion of education were considered of strategic importance in order to guarantee the triumph of the modern ideals of the ruling party. Rivadavia founded the University of Buenos Aires, as an institution dedicated both to teaching and governance. The *Cabildos* were suppressed and primary education came under control and supervision of the University. It seems that for the first time public authority became 'a palpable object' (Habermas 1989: 18) confronting those who were subject to it and who at first were only negatively defined by it. 'The public' shifted from a form of 'representation', and in a narrow sense became synonymous with 'state related'. However, this conception coexisted with alternative versions of 'public' schooling. While boys' education tended towards state

centralization, Rivadavia chose a different model for the organization of girls' education. He created the *Sociedad de Beneficencia*, a private charitable institution run by women and financed by the state. Decentralised and semi-private/charitable education for women remained as the dominant model for decades. The *Sociedad de Beneficencia* continued as an alternative to the state centralised public education system until 1875, despite some earlier attempts to centralise boys and girls' education in a single office. However, public funds assigned to elementary education were not significant at this stage: they represented 0,45% of the total budget in 1822, 0,79% in 1824 and 0,68% in 1831. Even within the general expenses for education, primary instruction was not the priority: in 1824 it took 24%, the same proportion was assigned to the University (Newland 1992: 75).

Rivadavia's government ended in the midst of armed struggle between Buenos Aires and the provinces, due to differences between *Unitarios* and *Federales* over a national constitution. Civil war and political instability sidelined 'education' from the public agenda.

In December 1829 the *Federales,* led by Juan Manuel de Rosas, took control of the government of Buenos Aires with the support of the provinces. Rosas presented himself as 'The Restorer' of order and tradition, especially the religious. He contrasted his ideas to those of the *Unitarios'* European elitism, identifying himself with the common man and the *gaucho*[v]. Advocate of the federal scheme, in practice he actively intervened in the

political life of the rest of the provinces and refused to cooperate in the country's efforts to enact a Constitution. Rosas soon achieved the 'sum of public power' (1835) uniting under his person all three branches of government. Without any checks to his political power, Rosas proceeded to remove every liberal public servant from government positions. Persecuted by the federal government, political opponents chose to flee to neighbouring Uruguay and Chile (Romero 1959; Newland 1992).

Paradoxically, all of this strengthened the public sphere's political functions in the 'tension-charged field of state-society relations' (Habermas 1989: 29). Intellectuals and political émigrés criticized the government of Rosas through the foreign press and through educational, political and literary publications. The most prominent characters in this were Domingo F. Sarmiento, Esteban Echeverría, Bartolomé Mitre and Juan Bautista Alberdi, who later returned to Argentina to initiate the process of national organization.

Between 1829 and 1852, the state's educational budget suffered extraordinary restrictions. A French blockade of the port of Buenos Aires (1838-1840) aggravated the country's financial crisis and allowed the government to implement measures of extreme austerity: education, health and social welfare were simply erased from the budget (Halperín Donghi 1982). Schools ceased to receive funds from the state and were forced to collect fees from students to pay for teachers' salaries. Enrolment dropped.

By May 1840 only four boys' schools remained in the City of Buenos Aires. The *Sociedad de Beneficencia* continued running its girls schools with a severely restricted budget. Meantime, the imposition of fees in public schools ordered by Rosas strengthened and led to the development of private education (Newland 1992). I thus wish to contribute to reconstructing or 'de-constructing' the processes that made 'public education' become equated to 'state education', a system of schooling funded, provided and controlled by the state. This thesis aims at understanding the way in which paradigmatic definitions of 'public' education can shape educational governance and reform, either broadening or constraining their 'public' potential.

Rosas was overthrown in 1852 by the Governor of the Province of *Entre Ríos*, Justo José de Urquiza, who received support from Brazil and from the *Unitario* émigrés (Scobie 1964). In the aftermath of Rosas' defeat all efforts were focused on the political organisation of the nation (Halperín Donghi 1995).

The three decades that followed the removal of Juan Manuel de Rosas from power were marked by rapid social, political and economic change. In 1861 the provinces and Buenos Aires signed a National Constitution inaugurating the first three Argentine 'foundational presidencies' (Mitre 1862-1868, Sarmiento 1868-1874 and Avellaneda 1874 -1880). The three shared the goal of strengthening the unified republic and expanding the local economy through the international trade market (See Halperín Donghi

1995). Between 1880 and 1916 the national state underwent a process of increasing centralisation. A 'Conservative Order' lasted thirty-six years, until political reform took place between 1912-1916 (Botana 1977). The rise to power of the Radical Party in 1916 led to a great expansion of the bourgeois public sphere. However, in 1930 the radical government was overthrown by military forces, thus eliminating the public sphere both from the state and society.

The following section offers a broad description of the key historical junctures addressed in the thesis. Displacements of the broad 'public sphere' and other educational events marked changes in the meanings of 'public' education.

A site for the public within the education system

Given the relative state of peace in the territory, a unified nation began to consolidate in the period 1861-1880. Juan B. Alberdi and Domingo F. Sarmiento, who were both exiled to Chile during the *Rosist* period, were influential intellectuals in the process of organising the country constitutionally. Following Habermas, under the Constitutional State, three sets of basic rights were established. The first concerned the sphere of public engagement in rational-critical debate (freedom of opinion and speech, freedom of press, freedom of assembly and association) and the political function of private persons in this public sphere (right of petition, equality of

vote). A second set of rights concerned the individual's status as a free human being (personal freedom, inviolability of the home). The third concerned the transactions of the private owners of property in the sphere of civil society (equality before the law, protection of private property). As a consequence of the constitutional definition of the public realm and its functions, publicness became the organisational principle for the procedures of the organs of the state; in this sense one spoke of their 'publicity' (Habermas 1989: 83). However, the developed public sphere of civil society was bound up with a series of social preconditions (Habermas 1989: 85-87).[vi]

Within the context of union and peace in the territory, the 'ideological apparatus' of the state slowly began to gain weight (Althusser 1988). In fact, the Constitution placed education as one of the pillars of the nation's organization and established the 'right to teach and learn' (Art. 14). Article 5 provided that every province should guarantee its own public system of primary education. Sarmiento was the first to address the challenges of establishing a 'public sphere' within this field. In his view, the State should have firm control over provision, whereas funding and administration should be 'inexorable' responsibilities of society. Inspired by the work of local annual assemblies in the United States (Massachusets), Sarmiento conceived 'school districts' as 'small republics' or 'small congresses', where people would gather to deliberate 'not just about *public* interests that often do not affect the committee too seriously, but about a *home personal business*'[vii] (Sarmiento 1853: 59). Private people should gather around this

particular common issue. *Chapter 3* describes the meaning Sarmiento attached to 'public-popular' education and the key variables of his educational policy. Drawing on Habermas, I outline the role Sarmiento played in producing a structural displacement of 'the public'. The inner-workings of this sphere are also viewed from a genealogical perspective embedded as it was in power-knowledge relations and processes of discipline.

Education Law No. 888/75 of the Province of Buenos Aires was considered a milestone in the process of modernization of education, and later served as the basis for the national Education Law No. 1420 (1884), which mandated that education be compulsory, free and secular.[viii] However, it is worth noting that the promulgation of national education legislation was a belated recognition of actual changes on the ground rather than a causal factor in its own right. As put by Roger Deacon, 'schooling emerged less from the pen of legislators, theorists or reformers and far more from the material imperatives of discipline' (2006: 122).

During the 1860s and 1870s, along with the incipient apparatus of the state, there arose a new stratum of the 'bourgeoisie' who occupied a central position within the public domain. Following Sábato (1998) diverse groups and sectors intervened within this framework, expressing their opinions and exerting direct pressure in favour of their interests, with no political mediation, however translating the claims in terms of the collective

interest. At the same time, the government paid attention to the meanings articulated in this space, which began to transform into a source of legitimacy for political action (1998: 11). Habermas describes this process as the *publicum* developing into the public, the *subjectum* into the [reasoning] subject, the receiver of regulations from above into the ruling authorities' adversary (Habermas 1989: 26).

Included in the private realm was 'the authentic public sphere' (Habermas 1989: 31). Within this preserve of private people there emerged a second distinction. The private sphere comprised of civil society in the narrower sense, that is to say, the realm of commodity exchange and of social labour and, embedded in it, the family and its interior domain. A political realm also evolved from the public sphere in the world of letters; through the vehicle of public opinion it put the state in touch with needs of the society (Habermas 1989: 31).

Struggles towards defining 'public education'

Beginning in the 1880's, the state became stronger and increasingly aware of the extent of its power to advance into new areas of policy, among them, education. The state gradually took over functions that had earlier been fulfilled by religious, ethnic, and other social groups.[ix] Schools had demonstrated their mastery of disciplinary techniques for managing people. The prior 'points of governance' – 'subtle arrangements' intertwined with

forms of knowledge – thus became centralised in the state (Deacon 2006: 123).

Argentina's educational system took shape as part of a wider process of state consolidation and institutionalisation (Oszlack 1997). This meant allocating economic resources and creating a structure of power based on the state's legitimacy as the purveyor of knowledge and the public good. Education became 'a privileged medium in the strategy of ideological penetration by the state' (Oszlack 1997: 151).[1] Law No. 1420, also referred to as the 'Common Education Law', passed in 1884, placed the state in the role of 'educator', which it would hold for the following century. The main precedent of Law 1420 was the National Pedagogy Congress of 1882. The debate at that Congress focused mainly on the role of primary education as a tool for social control, and the subject of controversy was precisely *who* should exert such control. The prevailing idea, which would be later reflected in Law 1420, was that the state should create and administer a national education system. For that purpose, it should centralise regulatory tasks and gradually, but forcefully, seize control of education from the Church and other sectors that could provide an alternative version of schooling.

Additionally, between 1890 and *el Centenario* (1910) the country was marked by very strong waves of immigration. A 'struggle for nationality'

took place (Terán 2000: 25) provoking fundamental changes in the universal understanding of 'the Fatherland' envisioned by Sarmiento and Alberdi[x] (2000: 25). Intellectuals now sought to define the country's national identity. As I describe in *Chapter 4*, the state captured most of the discourses, sites and positions from which people could 'speak' about education thus shaping the educational system on the basis of homogeneous identities.

The state embraced its new mandate displacing other institutions from the educational discursive space, as well as taking over regulation, funding and provision, leaving only a few decisions in hands of the schools and civil society. As a consequence, some scholars label the traditional system a 'quasi-monopoly of the state' (Narodowski and Andrada 2001) or a 'State Centralized Public Education System' (SIPCE) (Puiggrós 1990). This version of 'public' schooling worked from the enactment of Law 1420 until the mid twentieth century, with the following general policies:

1. Universal primary education (Tedesco 2003);
2. Secondary education reserved to a small number, with two purposes:
    a) to develop a state bureaucracy,
    b) to prepare the elite for university (Dussel 1997);
3. State monopoly of the training of teachers (Gvirtz 1991; Alliaud 2007)
4. State regulation of the teacher's practice (Gvirtz 1991; Alliaud 2007)
5. State regulation of curricula and textbooks (Narodowski and Manolakis 2002)

6. Direct state supervision of schools through the creation of a school inspection corps (Pineau 1997).

The first two series of policies referred to the segmentation or differentiation of education pathways. The second set was geared towards establishing mechanisms of control over the system. Puiggros additionally describes the SIPCE as having a series of critical aspects, such as: state hegemony, private marginal participation, Catholicism subordinated to the state logic, schooled, verticalised, bureaucratic, oligarchic, non participatory, ritualized, authoritative and discriminatory towards working classes. Puiggros's list is more extensive (Puiggrós 1990: 36). These aspects of state policy were largely devised during José Ramos Mejia's direction of the *National Education Council*, and constituted the basis of the unity and stability that characterized the system during more than half a century. This model of public elementary school –i.e. state-run, secular, free and mandatory– granted broad access to basic education and promoted cultural homogeneity to the extent required for the formation of a specific national consciousness (Tedesco 2003: 245). Large-scale mechanisms of social regulation, or totalisation, began to intersect in different ways with small-scale techniques of self-discipline, or individualisation (Deacon 2006). The discourses and policy documents of the period are the focus of *Chapter 4*. Special attention will be placed on identifying the operations managed by policy-makers in order to exclude alternative voices and co-opt the 'public' label for their agenda.

However, the state did not extend its role in public welfare and education without any opposition. The definition of public responsibility remained especially elusive. Social organisations concerned with public policy – i.e. religious, private or charity schools, immigrant communities - debated not only the legitimacy of 'public' activity but also its organizational form (See Puiggrós 1990). On the issue of education, their disagreements over the nature of public organisation reflected fundamental value conflicts and alternative visions of social development. This suggests that Habermas' account of the formation of the public sphere may need augmenting in order for it to address adequately the tensions that existed between multiple discourses struggling within the broader and complex institution of the 'public sphere'. *Chapter 5* analyses Anarchist thinking as an alternative to the institutional state. This position was mainly represented by Julio Barcos, who critically pointed to the dangers and limits of institutions through numerous publications in journals and newspapers.

Nevertheless, by 1930 the organisation, scope, and role of schooling had been transformed. A new social institution had been created. Schools had become formal institutions designed to play a critical role in the socialization of the young, the maintenance of social order, and the promotion of economic development. The state had achieved a 'statalisation' of schools. The concept of 'public education' in Argentina became synonymous with 'state education' (Narodowski and Andrada 2001: 593). This identity has since, hardly been challenged. In fact, not only did 'the

public' become a synonym of 'state', but 'education' was equated with 'schooling'. Analysing this second synonymy means engaging with a strongly related discussion, but it surely deserves an in-depth analysis that falls far beyond the scope of this thesis.

In 1914, President Roque Saenz Peña passed a *Law of Suffrage* establishing the universal and secret system of voting. General elections were called in 1916 and Hipólito Yrigoyen, chief of the Radical Party, became president of Argentina. The defeat of the Conservatives marked an end to the rule of the so-called '1880's Generation'. Yrigoyen represented 'the cause' of the abolition of the 'conservative regime'. However, following Romero (1994) once triumphant in the elections Yrigoyen accepted the complete 'institutional scaffolding' inherited from the previous governments: provincial rulers, parliament, justice and, above all, the economic structure within which an oligarchy based its strength. According Romero, 'Yrigoyen certainly lacked the audacity to face a revolution from his constitutional magistrate; but it was also true that his Party, constituted by groups that had been previously marginalised from policy, aimed more at being part of the established order than at changing it' (Romero 1994: 133). The Radical Party did not bring about the expected political, economic and social transformations.

In line with this observation, Juan Carlos Tedesco (2003) argues that the social groups that came into power with the rise of the Radical Party did

not seek to change the teaching contents or the structure of the educational system. Their goal was to broaden access to education preserving the old established ideas of the curriculum, knowledge and governance. As long as the humanistic-encyclopedic preparation continued to prove an efficient grounding to claim for political participation, the middle classes remained in favor of the traditional state system and opposed every innovation. While the economic system (*agro exporter*) did not call for technically trained human resources, the structure of the education system only changed in ways that served the political interests (Tedesco 2003: 75).

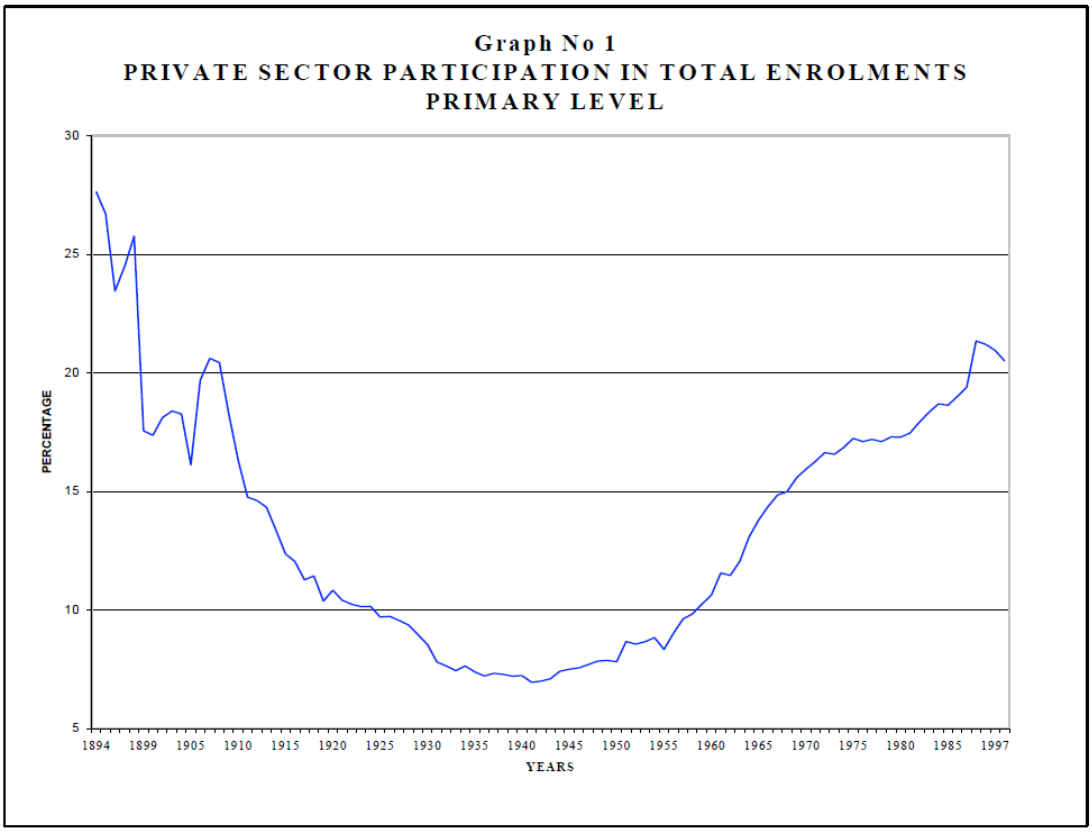
The education system that became consolidated and institutionalised in Argentina was labelled a 'Quasi State Monopoly' (Narodowski and Andrada 2001), due to its strong regulatory force over the private sector and the insignificant participation of the latter in the total enrollment.[xi] However, as displayed in the following section (Figure 1), the second half of the century shows the beginning of a period of increasing private sector enrolment, especially between the end of the fifties and beginning of the sixties.

The public blurred

The first cracks in the foundational version of Argentine public education became apparent in the second half of the 20th century. Large segments of the Argentine population increasingly 'exited' from state

schooling to the private sector. Narodowski and Andrada (2001) explain how the rise of private enrollment ran parallel to a gradual and continuous change in state regulations towards increasing autonomy of the private sector and granting similar legal status to that of public schools.

FIGURE 1. PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN PRIMARY EDUCATION



SOURCE: Morduchowicz et. al. (2000) *La educación privada en la Argentina: Historia, Regulaciones, y Asignación de Recursos Públicos [Private education in Argentina: history, regulations and allocation of public resources]*.Serie Documentos de Trabajo, Documento 38. (Buenos Aires, Fundación Gobierno y Sociedad, 1999.

In absolute values, the number of students in private primary schools increased from about 281,000 in 1958 to 1,122,726 in 1998. Meanwhile, public primary schools went from 2,600,000 at the end of the 1950's to little less than 4,400,000 in 1998. This means private enrolment in Argentina grew at a rate of 4.7% per annum, compared to 1.6% per annum of the state

sector (Narodowski and Andrada 2001: 588). Furthermore, these studies verify a positive correlation between public enrolment and the percentage of population with 'unsatisfied basic needs' (*NBI*)[xii]. This means that public schools in Argentina mainly cater for the most economically disadvantaged sectors of the population, and that people exit to the private sector in search of 'good' or 'better' schools[xiii].

Considering Albert Hirschman's conceptualization of 'exit' and 'voice' as two alternative responses to organisational deterioration (Hirschman 1970) it seems the claim for quality of education in Argentina is exercised by means of the former. The long established consensus about the 'value' of public education seems to be therefore breaking down at the local level. This suggests serious limitations to the content and possibilities of a 'public sphere' at the local level of schools' communities. Rather than attempts to engage in critical dialogue for the recovery of state schools, parents from a variety of social class fractions flee towards the private sector. There is a challenge for education policy to develop voice mechanisms at the micro and meso-levels of schooling politics.

Starting in the 1980s, strong criticisms began to appear in the press and in public opinion pointing at the increasing deterioration of the public/state school system. However, it is worth noting that these critiques were largely part of the circulation of global discourses, and were very much in response to economic crises. Educational issues were to the fore of

national politics around the globe as the new demands of the global economy began to rework the way in which the role of education within national societies was constructed. Ball and others (2007: VI) develop a synthesised view of global reforms over the past 25 years. In general terms, 'two complexly interrelated policy agendas are discernible in all the heat and noise of education reform (…) The first aims to tie education more closely to national economic interests, while the second involves de-coupling of education from direct state control' (2007: XI). Varying meanings of 'the public' are thus put into play or rather become embedded in these policy frameworks.

H. Weiler (1990) sheds interesting light on the subject. According to this author, the modern state, for reasons having to do both with the volume and nature of the demands placed upon it, faces an increasing 'delegitimation of authority' and rather fundamental challenges to this 'worthiness of recognition' (1990: 440). The normative basis of the state's authority has become increasingly precarious –partly due to the breaking down of taken for granted assumptions underpinning public education. One problem with the legitimacy of the modern state lies in its over-centralised nature, its distance from the basis of the political system and its structural inability to attend to important variations within the society. A dilemma arises when it comes to assessing the trade off between the benefits of enhanced legitimacy and the cost of losing control.

As Weiler puts it:

> A major challenge for the modern state lies in reconciling these two conflicting objectives: retaining as much (centralised) control over the system as is possible without a severe loss in legitimacy, while at least appearing to be committed to decentralisation and thus reaping the benefits in legitimation to be derived from that appearance…Walking the fine line between the conflicting imperatives of control and legitimacy.
>
> (Weiler 1990: 440)

A great deal of the current education policy and sociology of education debate converge with discussion about the role of the state and civil society. Since the middle of the 1970s, the social, political, economic context in which education systems operate has changed substantially. Roger Dale (1997) suggests that following a broader trend in relation to changing conceptions on the role of state, the 'community' and the market, education systems have been subject to transformations in crucial aspects of public policy such as regulation, provision and finance. 'We might therefore say that while education remains a 'public' issue, in common with many other state activities, its coordination has ceased to be (at least formally) the sole preserve of the state or government. Instead it has become co-ordinated by a range of forms of governance, among which decentralization and privatization figure prominently' (p. 274).

Proponents of more decentralised models are challenging the traditional centralised state direction and control. In the course of the

development of modern societies this could mean a third displacement of the public sphere, finally into the social. However, the principles underlying these positions suggest we may face the inverse process. The de-centring of the state may have different sorts of consequences. Some may be 'emancipatory' in principle; others may jeopardise the construction of a true public education. Cunill Grau suggests that the object of contemporary administrative reform requires the 'publification' of public administration; 'this means turning it into being truly public and democratic' (1997: 22). I return to this issue in *Chapter 6*.

After this overview it becomes evident that 'the public' is not a given fact, but a process of construction. Cunill Grau (1997) suggests that the object of contemporary administrative reform requires the *publification* of public administration; 'this means turning it into being truly public and democratic' (p 22). In the following chapters, I will focus on different perspectives of the public within different historical junctures. But before analysing in detail the different perspectives on the meaning of the public, I present the conceptual framework of this thesis and its methodology.

Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework and Method

Defining 'The Public'

This Chapter is organised in two parts. The first aims at presenting the conceptual framework of this thesis; the second expands on its methodology.

I first draw on Habermas' study *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, in order to understand the basic displacements of 'the public' into the social. Acknowledging Habermas' work is key to further understanding of the debates around theoretical and practical dimensions of this social category. Some examples of the recent interest in the public sphere and civil society are also acknowledged. Finally, I offer critical and complementary views of *Structural Transformation*.

Structural Transformation

The effort of problematising the public sphere SIPCE has been mainly addressed by Jurgen Habermas in his early book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989). According to Habermas, the public sphere, although traditionally circumscribed to the limits of the state, has its roots in society. Edwards and Foley argue civil society as an analytical concept suffers of 'definitional fuzziness' (Edwards, Foley et al.

2001). At least two related factors underlie this lack of clarity. On the one hand, there are the variations across the different national settings that have been the empirical basis for varying conceptualizations of the term. On the other hand, there is the temptation, despite the variation referred to above, to treat civil society and the 'sectors' ('state' and 'market') to which it is juxtaposed as ideal types. A few notes on the concept of civil society are thus necessary in order to assure that later usage is clear and consistent.

Classical ideas of civil society mainly elaborated by Hegel and Marx are still influential. They certainly appear to influence Habermas' understanding, which is centred on the emergence of a distinct political economy in which individuals relate to each other as independent agents. However, later writers have refined the concept of 'civil society' in ways that make it arguably more relevant to contemporary social analysis.

Following Shaw (2008) Gramsci argued that civil society stood 'between the economic structure and the state with its legislation and coercion' (Gramsci 1971, in Shaw 2008: 270). Civil society for Gramsci was a set of institutions through which society organised and represented itself autonomously from the state. Although representative institutions of the economic sphere, such as employers' associations and trade unions, were among the institutions of civil society, there were also churches, parties, professional associations, educational and cultural bodies. The economic sphere itself, with its functional institutions (firms, corporations)

responsible for organising production, were not, in this definition, part of civil society. It is not my objective to analyse Gramsci's notion of 'civil society' in depth, but it is necessary to acknowledge that he built a comparative theory of political change around this concept.

Habermas' description of the public sphere contains the realm of civil society as one of its components. Civil society stands as the world of commodity exchange within the private realm. Therefore, in Habermas (1989) the term civil society is more enclosed or demarcated (see diagram below). On the other hand, Habermas' definition of the public sphere is largely theoretical: 'the bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public' (Habermas 1989: 27). This meaning may thus broadly adjust to current definitions of civil society, which in general terms is understood as 'a sphere of association in society in distinction to the state' (Shaw 2008: 269). In the rest of the thesis I may use the terms 'public sphere' and 'civil society' interchangeably. Nevertheless, I tend to stick to Habermas' concept of the public for two reasons: firstly, Habermas' development emphasises the role of dialogue, discussion, criticism, 'people's public use of reason', which I feel inclined towards. Secondly, Habermas' special use of the term public helps in critically addressing the use or mis-use of 'the public' in current political and educational discourse.

With the usual reservations concerning the simplification involved in such illustrations, the 'blueprint' of the bourgeois public sphere in the

eighteenth century may be presented graphically as a schema of social realms in the diagram.

PRIVATE REALM			SPHERE OF PUBLIC AUTHORITY
Civil Society (realm of commodity exchange & social labour)	Public sphere in the political realm		State (realm of the 'police')
Conjugal family's internal space (intimate sphere)	Public sphere in the world of letters (clubs, press)		Court (courtly noble society)
	Market of culture products		

SOURCE: Habermas, J. (1989: 30)

The line between state and society, fundamental for Habermas, divided public authority from the private realm. As Habermas explains, included in the private realm was 'the authentic public sphere' (Habermas 1989: 30), for it was a public sphere constituted by private people. Within the realm that was the preserve of private people we therefore distinguish again between private and public spheres. The private sphere comprised civil society in a narrower sense, that is to say, the realm of commodity exchange and social labour; and embedded in it was the family with its interior domain. The public sphere in the political realm evolved from the public sphere in the world of letters; through the vehicle of public opinion it put the state in touch with the needs of society (p. 30).

Habermas' analysis sheds light on my subject matter primarily by offering a historical conceptualisation of the public sphere. Secondly, by describing the course of the public from the seventeenth century to the present, and thus providing an appropriate perspective to understand current discourses that raise questions about the role of society and the state in public policy. Finally, the structural displacements of the public sphere suggest an alternative form of periodising the history of Argentine public education. The following section describes Habermas' account of the structural transformations in greater detail. Other very relevant contributions also provide useful concepts for understanding past and contemporary arenas for institutionalised public speech. Thus I later address the critique of Habermas, broadening the conceptual framework of this thesis.

First displacement of the public into the social

The bourgeois public sphere is defined as the meeting of *private* individuals who join in debate of issues bearing on state authority. The seventeenth and eighteenth century notion developed alongside the rise of and transformation of the modern state, as well as on the basis of capitalist economic activity. The modern state constituted the public as a specific realm (as had the Greek *polis*). In the middle ages, publicness had been more of a 'status attribute'. The public had rarely existed apart from the king and his court (Calhoun 1992: 7), except for moments of political

revolt[xiv]. Gradually, however, court society developed into a new sort of sociability of eighteenth-century salons (France) and coffee houses (England). Aristocrats played leading roles in the early bourgeois public sphere. The new sociability, together with the rational-critical discourse that grew in the salons, depended on the rise of national and territorial power states on the basis of the early capitalist commercial economy. This process led to the idea of society separate from the ruler (or the state) and of a private realm separate from the public.

Following Craig Calhoun, this notion of civil society is basic to Habermas' account of the public sphere, and his account in turn sheds light upon current discussions around civil society that come close to reducing it to the private market. Civil society in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, developed as 'the genuine domain of private autonomy [that] stood opposed to the state' (Habermas 1989: 12). Capitalist economies formed the basis of this civil society, but it involved much more than that. It included institutions of sociability and discourse only loosely related to that economy (Calhoun 1992: 8).

The public sphere, like civil society, could only be conceptualized in this full sense once the state was constituted as an *impersonal* locus of authority. Unlike the ancient notion of the public, therefore, the modern notion depended on the possibility of counterpoising state and society. 'Civil society came into existence as the corollary of a depersonalised state

authority' (Habermas 1989: 19). The members of this elite public began to see themselves through this category not just as the object of state actions but as the opponents of public authority. The medium of this political confrontation was 'peculiar and without historical precedent: people's public use of their reason' (p. 19).

There are parallels with Foucault, in terms of the passage from the 'sovereign state' to the 'disciplinary state'. Following Foucault, from the middle of the sixteenth century, a series of treatises on the 'art of government' began to appear. They were not concerned with the traditional questions of the nature of the state, nor even with problems of how the prince could 'best' guard his power. The major shift was from a concern with the nature of the state to a broader and more detailed consideration of how to introduce economy and order (government) from the top of the state down through all aspects of social life (Foucault and Rabinow 1991: 15). Thus, while Habermas acknowledges the emergence of a public sphere standing opposite the state, Foucault notices 'society' was also becoming a political target. Once one grasps Foucault's conceptualisation of this shift, many seemingly mundane statements by minor administrators take on a new significance. As put by Foucault, 'the concerns of a well governed polity (…) now extend from the prince and his conduct down through the customs of the people to the environment itself (p. 16). I will draw on this analytical line in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

At the same time, the literary public sphere helped to develop the distinctively modern idea of culture as an autonomous realm. The greatest contributions of the literary public sphere to the political sphere lay at the level of institutional bases. These ranged from meeting places to journals to webs of social relationships. According to Habermas, in these instances, *several features were crucial*: the first and perhaps most basic was a kind of social intercourse that, far from presupposing the equality of status, disregarded status altogether. This was in turn linked to a second feature, the notion that rational argument was the sole arbiter of any issue. Third, all sorts of topics over which church and state authorities had hitherto exercised a virtual monopoly of interpretation were now opened to discussion, inasmuch as the public defined its discourse as focusing on all matters of common concern. Fourth, the emerging public established itself as inclusive in principle. Anyone with access to cultural products - books, plays and journals - had at least a potential claim on the attention of the culture-debating public (Habermas 1989: 36-7).

Nancy Fraser (1992) subscribes to the general idea that the public sphere is an indispensable category to a critical theory of contemporary democracies, but also argues that the above assumptions are dubious and thus require a critique: '…I contend that his [Habermas'] analysis of the public sphere needs to undergo some critical interrogation and reconstruction if its to yield a category capable of theorizing the limits of

existing democracy' (Calhoun 1992: 111). I shall come back to this point later in the Chapter.

Habermas acknowledges, in relation to the mass of the rural population and the common people in the towns, that the public was still extremely small. The proportion of illiterate people was high and 'at the start of the eighteenth century, more than half of the population lived on the margins of subsistence' (1989: 38). This was also true in Argentina. The literary circles in Buenos Aires and a few more Provinces gathered very few people. A famous example of the Literary Salon (*Salón Literario*) were writers met to discuss written essays on political issues and courses of action for the country, was Marcos Sastre's Library in the City of Buenos Aires, created in 1837. In fact, discussions focused on two main issues: finding ways of conceptualising and educating the people (el pueblo), who were conceived of as essentially wild and barbaric, and developing a theory of government in order to achieve political stability and economic productivity. I will argue throughout the different Chapters that diverse visions of 'the people' influenced Argentine policy-makers' understanding and organisation of public education.

Gradually, private people began to occupy political functions, confronting the *principle of domination* exercised by the state power and exerting the *principle of control* over power. The *physiocrats* were the first to combine activity in the public discourse and membership in government – a

sign that public opinion was becoming effective. These groups sought not to challenge the role of the state as such, but to come to agreements on general rules (Calhoun 1992: 14).

During the first displacement of the public into the social, two events clearly stand out: a progressive expansion of the public sphere into the realm of the social and the incipient democratization of the state as a product of the political influence and control exerted by the bourgeoisie, mainly achieved by the institution of parliament and the political rights.

The achievement of universal suffrage would not only redefine the concept of democracy (linking it to participation and distancing it from liberalism) but would affect the relations between the public-bourgeoisie and the public-state, or in more general terms, between the state and society. In 1860 Argentina established a Constitution and in 1912 voting became universal. However, as described in Chapter One, the education field would only be partially influenced by these events, inasmuch the meaning of public education remained fairly stable and the prevailing version of public-state schooling continued to structure the organisation and daily life of students and families.

Second displacement of the public into the social

The second displacement of the public into the social, following Habermas, was marked by a crisis of democracy in the state. The foundations of the public sphere were undermined, Habermas suggests, through a 'refeudalisation' of society. Structural transformation took place as private organizations began increasingly to assume public power on the one hand, while the state penetrated the private realm on the other. State and society, once distinct, became interlocked (Calhoun 1992: 21).

The public sphere was necessarily transformed as the distinction between the public and the private realms blurred. The blurring of relations between public and private involved centrally the loss of the notion that private life created autonomous, relatively equal persons who in public discourse might address the general public interest. First, the inequalities always present in civil society ceased to be bracketed and became instead the basis of discussion and action. Second, the notion of an objective general interest was replaced, even ideally with one of a fairly negotiated compromise among interests (p. 21). The functioning of the public sphere thus shifted from rational critical debate to negotiation (Habermas 1989: 176). This second process marked the beginning of the movement towards the welfare state as interest groups in civil society used the public sphere to demand 'social rights' – the services or protection of the state. Civil society was changed also by the establishment of a world of work as a sphere of its

own right between the public and private realms. Large commercial organisations, both public and private, played the central role in separating work from the purely private sphere of the household or the paternalistically managed workplace. The private sphere in turn was reduced to the family (p. 22). At the same time, and largely as a consequence of these trends, the public sphere was turned into a sham semblance of its former self: the key tendency was to replace the shared, critical activity of public discourse by more passive forms of cultural consumption and apolitical sociability (p. 23).

Calhoun subscribes to Habermas' idea that participation was 'fatally' altered by the expansion of access. However, he is 'surprised' that Habermas does not consider the various ways in which forms of access were opened that do not fall in this category – *the extension of public education and mass literacy,* for example, or the increase in working-class leisure time (Calhoun: 24). What Habermas is signalling is simultaneously the depolitisation of the public sphere and its impoverishment by removal of critical discourse.[xv]

This transformation involved a literal disintegration. With the loss of a notion of general interest and the rise of a consumption orientation, the members of the public lost their common ground.[xvi] Drawing on Habermas, this reflects the decay of the public sphere, for although it penetrates increasingly more fields of society, it misses its political function; namely,

submitting the state of public things to the control of a critical public. *A process of integration substituted the principle of critique.*

Drawing on Habermas, Cunill Grau (1997) argues that a change in the role of state institutions took place during the twentieth century. According to this author, there was a movement 'from parliament to a strong executive and bureaucracy' (p. 33). In discourse, this displacement of the *locus* of decision-making from parliament to the government and administration is linked to a change in the function of the state, that moves from legislation to action (p. 34). The means offered by democracy appear to be insufficient in practice. This leads to a direct inter-locking of the state centres of decision and the large organisations geared towards the defence of sectorial interests that relate to the political and administrative system. The key aspect of this process is the fact that it leads to a *de-privatization of the social sphere* as well as a *de-publification of the state*. The public sphere within the social is broadened but, paradoxically, in favour of a loss of autonomy of society for it no longer mediates between itself and the state. In this context, the key institutions of the former publicness begin to loose weight.

These events that reflect a crisis of the state's democracy come along with an evolving diminishing of policy and of the same notion of the public – which reifies the state as the sphere of the public.

Third displacement of the public into the social

It is suggested that during the course of the development of modern societies a third displacement of the public sphere takes place, finally into the social. However, the principles underlying these positions suggest we may face the inverse process.

According to Cunill Grau, neo-liberal responses to the economic crisis that started during the 1960's under the Welfare State emerge as a politico-cultural solution to what is interpreted as a governability crisis. Given the weight acquired by state interventionism, a diagnosis points to the difficulties of democracy in terms of governability, and to a 'crisis of the state' (p. 43).

Following Cunill Grau, the 'minimum government' here finds its justification. Under this framework, what ends up being questioned is the existence of a public sphere, not only within the state but also in society. According to this view, *the discourse in favour of strengthening civil society is somehow distanced from the demand for its 'publification'*. The decentralization of decision-making in favour of society is merely a political consequence of considering both the market as the regulator of economic and political life, and the political authorities and public bureaucracy as deploying public institutions to maximise their own welfare. Society emerges by mere defect (if there's to be less state then there must be more

civil society), and politics are removed from its realm. The 'technification and functionalization' of social participation and the conception of democracy as a 'method or procedure', become the concrete expressions of this particular notion of the social. In short, decision-making moves towards the social realm in response to the need to establish new controls and de-activate popular demands. In this context, the importance given to society is also relative (p. 46).

These new trends had their impact on the educational arena and played a part in re-defining the meaning of public education in many countries of the world. I expand on this later in this Chapter. However, *Chapter 6* also focuses on this juncture and analyses the specificities and complexities embedded in the constitution of public spheres within the contemporary Argentine educational arena.

As a preliminary conclusion to this account, I subscribe to a general understanding of the key value of Habermas' contribution: the belief that 'a public sphere adequate to democratic policy depends upon both quality of discourse and quantity of participation' (Calhoun 1992: 2). However, the meaning of 'the public sphere' is still elusive, and lately has been subject to intense analysis and contestation. Moreover, there has been an increasing interest on this concept and the related notions of civil society, citizenship and participation among sociologists and political theorists (Salisbury 1975; Kymlicka and Norman 1994). Literature on the theme of 'civil society' is

vast and shares significant points of connection with the issue of publicness. The following section acknowledges a set of contributions, some of which are theoretical, others that are rather conceived as action programs.

Recovering and broadening 'the public' within the social

The revival of interest in the theme of civil society and the state is propelled by a variety of overlapping and contradictory forces. What is precisely meant by the distinction between the state and the non-state realm of civil society? This prompts a succession of questions: Why is the distinction again topical? For what intellectual and political purposes is the theme capable of being used? Whose interests might it serve? (Keane 1988: 1; Edwards, Foley et al. 2001) Some writers see the distinction as a way of conceptually analysing the past, present or emergent relationships between social and political institutions and forces. Others view the distinction normatively; still others cast it mainly in 'pragmatic' terms, as a means of formulating a social and political strategy or action programme. Although these three may – and usually do – criss-cross and complement each other, they can also produce divergent types of claims and should therefore be distinguished.

Edwards *et. al* (2001) offer a fine summary of the broad roles that 'civil society' plays in the various accounts. Foremost in recent debate is the neo-Tocquevillian emphasis on its *socialization function*: 'the associations of

civil society are thought to play a major role, if not *the* major role, in building citizenship skills and attitudes crucial for motivating citizens to use these skills' (Edwards, Foley et al. 2001: 5).

A good example is Robert Putman's provocative analysis on the sources of a 'vibrant civic life' in contemporary democracies. In *Making Democracy Work*, he suggests a correspondence between structural features of society – the density of face-to-face associations - and a certain kind of political or civic culture (Putnam, Leonardi et al. 1993). 'The central question posed in our voyage of inquiry is: What are the conditions for creating strong, responsive, effective, representative institutions?' The study moves on to the notion of civic community as an explanatory variable (Baron, Field et al. 2000: 9). Putnam perceives a decline in civic engagement in the United States. *Bowling Alone* caught the imagination of many, and has become almost emblematic. In his own words: 'The dominant theme is simple: For the first two-thirds of the century a powerful tide bore Americans into ever deeper engagement in the life of their communities, but a few decades ago –silently, without warning- the tide reversed and we were overtaken by a treacherous rip current. Without at first noticing, we have been pulled apart from one another and from our communities over the last third of the century' (Putnam 2000: 27). Putman concludes: 'That they bowled together made all the difference' (Putnam 2000: 28). The text is rich in 'pragmatic' terms; it explicitly formulates a social and political action programme. Chapter 24, *Towards an Agenda for Social Capitalists*, reads:

'Let us find ways to ensure that by 2010 the level of civic engagement among Americans then coming of age in all parts of our society will match that of their grandparents when they where the same age, and that at the same time bridging social capital will be substantially greater than it was in their grandparent's era' (Putnam 2000: 404).

A 'communitarian' perspective, mainly represented by Amitai Etzioni (1968; 1983; 1993) also calls for a restoration of civic virtue. The agenda aims at 'working with our fellow citizens to bring about the changes in values, habits and public policies that will allow us to do for society what the environmental movement seeks to do for nature: to safeguard and enhance our future' (Etzioni 1993: 3). Some aspects of the communitarian project provoke criticism. First, the particular concern with a 'troubling mismatch of rights and responsibilities', that at times turns into a rejection of the language of rights altogether: 'The expression of ever more wants in the language of rights makes it difficult to achieve compromises and to reach consensus, processes that lie at the heart of democracy' (Etzioni 1993: 5). Secondly, communitarians state a dubious relationship between rights and the crumbling of morals and public interest: 'As rights exploded and responsibilities receded, as the moral infrastructure crumbled, so did the public interest' (Etzioni 1993: 14). One could argue the claim for rights should rather be encouraged, especially today, when 'publicness' seems undermined not only in society but the state.

It is worth noting these accounts offer a different periodisation than Habermas in *The Structural Transformation*. Putnam and Etzioni call for a restoration of something that has been lost apparently very recently. According to Putnam, 'a few decades ago'. Habermas situates the public spheres interlocking with the state early after the sphere was dramatically expanded with universal suffrage. A note on the issue of the alleged decline of the public sphere will be offered later in this section.

Coming back to alternative perspectives on society's role, other proponents argue that civil society carries out a wide variety of *public or quasi-public functions:* 'the associations of civil society aid efforts or directly act to heal the sick, counsel the afflicted, support the penniless, educate both young and old…' (Edwards, Foley et al. 2001: 5).

An example of this position is articulated by Benjamin Barber (Barber 1984). The concept of 'strong democracy' derives from his communitarian version of politics, characterized by 'participatory process of ongoing, proximate self-legislation and the creation of a political community capable of transforming dependent, private individuals into free citizens and partial and private interests into public goods' (Barber 1984: 132). This conception of democracy as only being capable of realisation from 'the bases' leaves existing political institutions unproblematised. These positions, to different extents, exclusively emphasize the role of associations in enhancing democracy. Although they ignore the possibility of making the

‘political’ sphere an object of social influence, they at least address two relevant issues to the redefinition of ‘the public’: firstly, the importance of solidarity and reciprocity and secondly, the fact that democracy is a problem that concerns society and can only be achieved by society.

In line with these arguments, Pierre Rosanvallon (1988) suggests an alternative to ‘the crisis of the welfare state’ makes sense only as part of a three-pronged approach: reducing the requirement for state intervention, reinstating mutual support as a function of society, and creating greater visibility for the social. According to this author, the alternative to the welfare state is not primarily institutional, but societal. The task is to bring into being a civil society of greater density and to develop its scope for exchange and mutual support, instead of externalising these needs and abandoning their satisfaction to the twin poles of market or state. However, Rosanvallon marks there is also a need for the traditional welfare state to be revamped. In welfare society relations of mutual support between people assume the form of reified relations between individuals and ‘the system’. Wages, prices, profits, taxes and social contributions are all regarded as economic variables, divorced from their real social context. This problem can be remedied only by increasing the degree of social visibility by allowing the sphere of the social greater freedom of movement. The author claims ‘Today an opposite trend prevails, in which the entire machinery of social contributions is becoming increasingly invisible. The welfare state is

operating within a fog, so to speak' (Rosanvallon in Keane 1988: 210). He therefore proposes the need to increase *social visibility*.

A distinctive tradition, more in tune with the European and Latin American uses of the notion of civil society, stresses the representative or contestatory functions of social organizations outside the state: 'civil society gives identity and voice to the distinct interests and diverse points of view characteristic of a modern society; it stimulates public debate and presses government for action on a thousand and one matters of public interest' (Edwards, Foley et al. 2001: 6).

The public sphere, then, organizes itself not just to perform vital public functions independently of the state (and interest groups) but to defend social autonomy and promote policy change and, in the extreme, regime change. The core issue here refers to the creation of a new institutional form that not only allows public administration to be more permeable to social demands, but to take away both from the state and the privileged social agents the monopoly of defining the agenda. Habermas seems to stand within this perspective.

Inspired by Habermas, Cunill Grau (1997) argues that a democratic public space is constituted when opinion is constructed autonomously from the state. This space corresponds to a level between the public and the private spheres, working as a 'sound box' of social problems that need to be

assumed by the political system. Its function is not only to perceive and identify the problems that affect society as a whole, but to elaborate them in convincing and persuasive ways in order to make the whole political system adopt them and process them. Some examples of 'soundboxes' can be traced in Argentina, within the educational field: Education Policy Research Units both in public and private universities, international organisations as well as other very relevant NGO's, to mention a few. Other means of spreading and engaging opinion, such as through blogs, e-newspapers and newsletters are worth mentioning given their remarkable expansion in the last years, although they are not as present in the educational field as they are in others. In *Chapter 6* I will attempt a more in depth description of the discourses regarding the issue of 'publicness' articulated by the state and other representatives of public spheres in Argentina. From this perspective, the key element for the structuring of the public democratic space is its autonomy vis a vis the political system. Habermas emphasizes that the voluntary associations that form opinion are crucial for the building of autonomous public spaces. This issue is what, according to Cunill Grau, gives sense to the notion of civil society (Cunill Grau 1997: 54).

What stands out clearly from this debate is that 'the public' is not a given fact, but a process of construction. At this stage, however, it is worthwhile acknowledging some interesting critiques on Habermas' account, for they are very useful in completing the conceptual framework for this thesis.

After Habermas [xvii]

Titling this section 'After Habermas' has two very clear senses: it *follows* him to a point but then seeks also to break new ground *beyond* his work (Habermas, Crossley et al. 2004). Habermassian themes and issues provoke very strident debates and critiques.

Following Craig Calhoun:

> The most important destiny of Habermas' book may prove to be this: not to stand as an authoritative statement but to be an immensely fruitful generator of new research, analysis, and theory.
>
> (Calhoun 1992: 41)

I do not intend to attempt a comprehensive review here, but an overview of the main points is necessary. Critiques point towards ways of broadening perspectives for analysing the public sphere, avoiding the idealisation of rational discussion and escaping from both condemnation or celebration of some of the classical formal institutions of the public sphere, such as the media. These considerations are all relevant to the analysis of past and contemporary Argentine education.

In general, Habermas' critiques begin by recognising major conceptual contributions of *The Structural Transformations*. Crossley and Roberts acknowledge 'the hope behind the project, at a very general level, is that the critical potential of public argument will achieve a wider audience

and stimulate the processes of transformation that it calls for; that it will reclaim and reinvigorate the public sphere, as a step in a wider process of emancipatory social change' (2004: 6). In fact one of Habermas' most attractive potentials is providing the tools to think of ways of achieving critical reasoning of the public in order to constitute an effective steering force in both society and polity.

Nancy Fraser also highlights the notion of 'the public sphere' as a conceptual resource to designate a theatre in modern societies in which political participation is enacted through the medium of talk, and values the conceptual distinctions between state and the public - the site for the production and circulation of discourses that can in principle be critical of the state. She also values Habermas' conceptual distinction between the official economy and the public - as it is not a site of market relations but rather one of discursive relations, 'a theatre for debating and deliberating rather than for buying and selling' (Fraser 1992: 111). Surely it is both at the same time. It is Habermas' idea to keep a critical separation in order not to lose sight of either one. Thus the concept of 'the public sphere' keeps in clear view the distinctions among state apparatuses, economic markets, and democratic associations; distinctions that, as I argue very early in the Introduction of this thesis, are essential to democratic theory and practice. Fraser subscribes to the general aim behind Habermas' project: '…the general idea of the public sphere is indispensable to critical theory…', but

then she goes on to argue that '…the specific form in which Habermas has elaborated this idea is not wholly satisfactory' (p. 111).

The critique which almost every author agrees upon is that Habermas stops short of developing a new, post-bourgeois model of the public sphere. Moreover, the authors signal that Habermas never explicitly problematises certain questionable assumptions that underlie this bourgeois model. Fraser provides a concise summary of four main assumptions called into question. I therefore quote her at length:

> • The assumption that it is possible for interlocutors in a public sphere to bracket status differentials and deliberate *as if* they were social equals; the assumption therefore that societal equality is not a necessary condition for political democracy
>
> • The assumption that the proliferation of a multiplicity of competing publics is necessarily a step away from, rather than a step towards greater democracy, and that a single, comprehensive public sphere is always preferable to a nexus of multiple publics
>
> • The assumption that discourse in public spheres should be restricted to deliberation about common good, and that the appearance of private interests and private issues is always undesirable
>
> • The assumption that a functioning democratic public sphere requires a sharp separation between civil society and the state
>
> (Fraser 1992: 111-112)

As regards the first point, revisionist historiography has confirmed the argument that formal exclusions based on gender, property and race marked the accessibility to the public sphere. Fraser also draws attention to

informal impediments to 'participatory parity', which can exist even after everyone is formally and legally licensed to participate. She encounters serious difficulty with the bourgeois conception of the public sphere, 'insofar as the bracketing of social inequalities in deliberation means proceeding *as if* they don't exist when they do' (p. 120). Fraser suggests it is rather preferable to un-bracket inequalities in the sense of explicitly thematising them, and concludes: 'One task for critical theory is to render visible the ways in which social inequality infects formally inclusive existing public spheres and taints discursive interaction within them' (p. 121). This seems particularly relevant to the case of Argentina, where society is strongly marked by socio-economic fragmentation. In *Chapter 6* I show evidence of how processes of participation are suffused with social inequalities. In education, these inequalities are expressed in hierarchical relations, both built between teachers, heads and parents and between the schools and their population. As Gessaghi puts it, the definition of 'participation' is built and disputed over the basis of these hierarchies (2006: 8).

While the point above addresses 'intra-public relations', the second refers to 'inter-public relations' - the interactions among different publics. This is a key critique to which almost every author subscribes. Habermas' account stresses the singularity of the bourgeois conception of the public and casts the emergence of additional publics as a late development signalling fragmentation and decline. Firstly, historiography has shown how the liberal public sphere was faced at the very moment of its coming into

being by not only a 'plebeian' public that was disabled, but also a radical one that was combative and highly literate (Eley 1992: 305). This applies to the Argentine case where, as I analyse on Chapter 5, anarchists and immigrant communities confronted the state's endeavour to homogenise the population under a single national identity.

According to Fraser, even in stratified societies, 'arrangements that accommodate contestation among a plurality of competing publics better promote the ideal of participatory parity than does a single, comprehensive, overarching public' (Fraser 1992: 122). The reason is that this offers the venues within which to undertake communicative processes, beyond the supervision of dominant groups. Fraser calls these 'subaltern counterpublics', in order to signal that 'they are parallel discursive arenas were members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs' (p. 123). Calhoun, however, believes it could be a loss simply to say that there are many public spheres, for that would leave us 'groping' for a new term to describe the communicative relationships among them. 'It might be productive rather to think of the public sphere involving a field of discursive connections' (Calhoun 1992: 37). Clusters of relatively greater density of communication can be easily imagined within the overall field. For any such cluster, Calhoun suggests the need to focus upon and analyse the ways in which they are internally organised, something almost completely neglected in *Structural*

Transformation. In socially fragmented contexts like the Argentinean, a first step towards the long process of building a participatory democracy would be to understand some of the internal workings of clusters within the public sphere. The educational could be an interesting empirical case.

In Habermas' account, the bourgeois public sphere was to be a discursive arena in which 'private persons' deliberated about 'public matters'. Fraser argues that there is an essential ambiguity in defining what objectively affects or has impact on everyone. She argues there should be no naturally given, a priori boundaries defining what counts as a matter of common concern; such issues should be decided through discursive contestation[xviii] (Fraser 1992: 129). From an historical perspective, we know that it was only in the late nineteenth century that education became a 'public matter'. Sarmiento developed a strong advocacy and finally set the foundations of 'popular education': 'Up to now for two centuries there was education for the ruling classes (…) the people, the *plebe*, did not form, strictly speaking, an active part of the nation (Sarmiento 1849: 27). On the other hand, Sarmiento also claimed education should be treated 'not as a *public* issue, that generally does not affect the committee too seriously (…) but as a home-family, personal business' (Sarmiento 1853: 59). This synthesises the complexity of the educational subject. A lot is gained in terms of political attention when issues that hitherto had been kept under the rhetoric of privacy come to light and turn into a public concern. But it seems something can also be lost, especially considering the institutional

framework where education is inscribed. The question is whether there can be any room within a *civic-republican tradition* for preferences, interests and identities to be outcomes as well as antecedents of public consideration.

Fraser argues that the civic-republican traditions conflate the idea of deliberation and the common good by assuming that deliberation must be deliberation *about* the common good, consequently limiting deliberation to talk framed from the standpoint of a single all encompassing *we*, ruling the claims of self-interest and group interest out of order. Following Fraser, the rhetoric of domestic privacy would exclude some issues and interests from public debate by 'personalising' or 'familiarising' them; 'casting these as private, domestic personal, familial matters in contradistinction to public, political matters' (1992: 131). She is concerned that the result of this may be to enclave certain matters in specialised discursive arenas and thereby to shield them from broad based debate and contestation, which usually works for the advantage of dominant groups of individuals and to the disadvantage of their subordinates. It seems education could have both the potential of constituting a public matter and at the same time retain a great deal of personal 'familial' interest. It seems that education should engage the subjectivities and capture the interests of those who participate in the deliberation. The question remains being whether admitting more of the personal experience into deliberation would allow a better understanding of the problems and issues that concern the public.

The final observation is key to analysing and understanding the contemporary scenario. Following Habermas' strict divide between state and society, the public sphere may be understood as the nexus of non-governmental or secondary associations that are neither economic nor administrative. The emphasis on 'private persons' signals that members of the bourgeois public are not state officials and that their participation in the public sphere is not undertaken in any official capacity. Accordingly, their discourse does not eventuate in binding, sovereign decisions authorising the use of state power; on the contrary, it eventuates in 'public opinion', critical commentary on authorised decision-making that transpires elsewhere.

The public sphere, in short, is not the state; it is, as defined by Fraser, 'rather the informally mobilised body of non-governmental discursive opinion that can serve as a counterweight to the state' (p. 134). Indeed, in the bourgeois conception, it is precisely this extra-governmental character of the public sphere that confers an aura of independence, autonomy, and legitimacy on the 'public opinion' generated in it. Nancy Fraser calls this a 'weak public' (p. 134); a public whose deliberative practice consists exclusively in opinion formation and does not encompass decision-making. The bourgeois conception seems to imply that the expansion of such publics' discursive authority to encompass decision making as well as opinion, would threaten the autonomy of public opinion, for then the public would become the state, and the possibility of a critical discursive check on the state would be lost.

Cunill Grau raises the question of whether the public sphere can only materialize into 'public opinion' to exert influence on the formation of public will; in other words, if civil society's functions are circumscribed to this dimension or if they relate to other problems such as the redefinition of state institutions and administration. According to Cunill Grau, Habermas conceptualizes the state institutions as monolithic blocs that admit no transformation, but only a specific form of pressure on the issues they deal with, by means of 'siege' (Cunill Grau 1997: 54). Fraser affirms that any conception of the public sphere that requires a sharp separation between associational civil society and the state will be unable to imagine the forms of self-management, inter-public coordination and political accountability that are essential to a democratic egalitarian society (Fraser 1992: 136).

Most of the weaknesses of Structural Transformation tend to be problems of underdevelopment or omission of significant issues. Mentioning them thus points directly to possibilities for extending and developing the analysis. This is important, for though *Structural Transformation* is far less theoretically developed, the historical specificity and grasp of concrete social-institutional foundations gives Habermas' essay some advantages over his later theory.

Drawing on these discussions, I argue the 'public' meaning of 'public education' is thus rich in theoretical implications and can hardly (or only erroneously) be defined as education regulated, funded and provided by the

state. State education, private education and, even more recently, cooperative and communitarian education are clearly susceptible of being understood as clusters or discursive spaces – of greater or less density - forming a 'public sphere', relating amongst each other, the state and even the intimate sphere in very complex ways. In the following section I review a few recent contributions somewhat framed within these notions.

New perspectives in education

Drawing on notions of 'Empowered Deliberative Democracy', new trends emerge as alternative responses to nineteenth century forms of liberal democracy. These have 'the potential to be radically democratic in their reliance on the participation and capacities of ordinary people, deliberative because they institute reason–based decision making, and empowered since they attempt to tie action to discussion' (Fung and Wright 2001: 7). Their object is to deepen the democratic character of politics, instead of reducing the role of politics altogether.

One of the particular forms in which these alternatives developed in the education field is the increase of participation of non-professional members of the education community in decision-making processes; especially parents and other members of the education community, like students and neighbours. Participation of non-professional members has increased both in number and diversity. Forms of participation are

becoming not only vast but complex. Carol Vincent (2000) looks at the 'subject positions' opened to parents in the current education system, and suggests two dominant common-sense understandings of the parent's relations to state education: parents as consumers and parents as partners with education professionals. But the terms of reference which posit consumerism and partnership as viable and valid options for framing parents' relations with education leave out a broader angle; that is, the consideration of parent-school relations as an exemplar of relations between citizens and state institutions (p. 7). Drawing on Mansbridge and Fraser, Vincent admits that 'counter-publics' will not inevitably be egalitarian or democratic, but she argues that the general principle – the expansion of public discursive space as a result of counter-public activity- is a worthy one.

A common second objection is that encouraging parental 'voice' in relation to educational decision-making will simply pit the particularistic views of parents concerned with their own child against the universal concerns of teachers. 'But working with, starting with, particularity is the key to deliberative democracy' (p. 19). This is the very scenario that 'subaltern counter publics' are designed to avoid, as marginalized voices begin to enter into the public. Education, a crucial determinant of individual life chances, would appear to be a highly appropriate field for the formation of alternative public arenas. According to Vincent, 'they could offer a 'way-in' for lay voices struggling to raise educational issues' (p. 19).

The following section offers some explanation about the methodology that guides the analysis of historical changing meanings of 'public education'.

Genealogy and the Writing of History

In this thesis I attempt to re-describe a specific aspect of Argentine educational history. My approach to specific events describes an alternative view of the changing meanings of 'public education' and the varying designs of its governing structures. I draw on Habermas' theory of the structural transformations of the public sphere in order to analyse conditions and possibilities for such attempts in the educational field; and I deploy Foucault's genealogy in order to grasp the relations of power and subject positions embedded in these realizations. The two authors uphold the importance of historical knowledge for social criticism and political change. In quite different ways, each develops a critical theory with emancipatory intent, and their historical work is directly informed by political values and goals. Following Best (1995) both Foucault and Habermas write histories of the past to challenge the legitimacy of the present and help envision and create a different future. Both break from the positivist historiographical tradition that is based on a rigid separation of fact and value. Openly political in approach, they analyse history not for the sake of historical knowledge, but rather to advance critiques of the present era, to show the

historical constitution of present modes of social domination, and to further the cause of human freedom (Best 1995: XVI).

In the subsequent chapters, I shall deploy the genealogical approach in a more in-depth analysis of the relations of power/knowledge, which structure the discourses on public education. Several carefully articulated works shed light on the meaning of 'Genealogy' or 'Genealogical Analytics' (Foucault and Rabinow 1991; Shumway 1992; Castel 1994; ; Tamboukou 1999; Tamboukou and Ball 2003; Goldstein 1994; Prado 2000).

This section offers a broad description of the method and argues there is substantive difference between Genealogy and traditional History. I also relate Genealogy's main principles to some of the ideas I attempt to develop in my specific research project.

The genealogical method

Genealogy problematises what is taken for granted; it 'disturbs what was previously considered [to be] unified; [and] … shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined [to be] consistent with itself' (Deacon 2000: 128). The point of genealogical analyses is not to engage but instead, to displace views and traditions through re-description.

The heart of Genealogy is that there are no essences to be discerned behind historical development and none that explain why things are as they are. Instead of attempting to 'unveil a hidden truth or to unearth a buried treasure', Foucault suggests we reveal what is so obvious and so superficial that it is passed over and accepted without further comment (Deacon 2000: 129). Intellectual inquiry is to trace 'descent' and 'emergence' of what we theorise and what we use to theorise.

Through an analysis of descent (*Herkunft*) Genealogy reveals the miscellaneous and discontinuous nature of beginnings 'the accidents... the reversals (...) the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that have value for us' (Foucault 1971, in Prado 2000: 13). Analysis of descent also applies to 'the body', which supports a self, a subject. Genealogy, as the analysis of descent, exposes the tiny influences on a body that, over time, not only produce a subject of a certain sort, but a subject under the illusion that it is a substantial, autonomous unity. It is expert discourse, disciplinary discourse that shapes subjectivity and establishes regimes of truth (Prado 2000: 36).

The analysis of descent is incomplete without the complementary analysis of emergence (*Entstehung*). The point of analysing emergence is to produce accounts of whatever comes-to-be as not 'the final term of a historical development' (Foucault 1971, in Prado 2000: 21). What emerges is not the culmination of anything but is a consequence of an accumulation of

factors with no inherent inter-relatedness. We misconceive history if we think of it as discerning continuities; we misconceive history if we think about discerning goal-directed processes. Something comes-to-be as a consequence of blind conflict. Following Prado, *emergence* is appearance or advent, enabled by clashes of forces, some of which enhance one another, some of which nullify others, some of which redirect one another. What emerges and gains dominance is everything that orders our lives and which appears natural to us in those lives. It not only looks to be predetermined, it is legitimised in terms of its apparent inevitability. It is the task of Genealogy to counter the view of the emergent as inevitable by recording its lowly beginnings.

I will attempt to trace both elements of descent and emergence through the Chapters of my thesis. *Chapter 4*, for instance, describes the National Education Council's policy actively geared towards establishing regimes of truth that would exclude alternative discourses. In other words, the discourse of the state avoided the constitution of counter-publics that could challenge the prevailing version of public schooling. Next, I focus on Anarchist thought and trace the discourses embedded in the clash of forces that finally enhanced the state's predominance. Struggle also took place between the state and the church, although the latter addressed the state in several ways, achieving different levels of negotiation.

Shumway (1992) specifies these ideas by describing the set of 'strategies' Foucault deploys for understanding the past, works of art, systems of thought, and other objects with which he deals: *reversal, discontinuity, specificity* and *exteriority*.

Reversal is the 'master trope' of the four principles, the one that governs the other three. According to Shumway, reversal means just what one might expect: when tradition gives us a particular interpretation of an event or an historical development, Foucault's strategy is to work out the implications of the reverse or opposite interpretation (p. 15). At the most general level, Foucault looks for the negative side of the statements that make up the discourses he studies, discourses about madness, medicine, pedagogy, sexuality, etc. At this level, reversal pertains to conditions of all discourses in the sense that all the discourses make positive statements, and there are always negative consequences of any positive statement.[xix] Probably one of the key strategies of this thesis is 'reversal'. A major claim of this thesis is that state education, through its proliferation of educational discourses, brought education solely and exclusively within the definition and sphere of the state. This 'silenced' other voices in the field, as well as the participation of communities and local education authorities in the design of policies and even in the routines of daily life within the schools.

Continuity is one of the basic, positive assumptions of discourse. As Shumway points out, we tend to assume that continuity is everywhere: in

authors' oeuvres; in the historical development of a contemporary object or state of affairs… Foucault treats history as if it where *discontinuous* (p. 18). That is, he looks for ruptures, breaks, gaps, displacements, mutations, shifts, interruptions and thresholds. In the face of these assumptions of continuity, Foucault asks not that we assume precisely the opposite – that there is no continuity in history - but rather that we treat any assumed continuity with suspicion. According to Shumway this in itself would not make Foucault an unusual historian, since history is typically preoccupied with 'events', that is, with the moments where the normal course of things is interrupted, where major changes occur. But it has been the preoccupation of history to *explain* these changes. Such explanation requires underlying continuities that we might think of as 'historical laws'. It is precisely these sorts of continuities that Foucault does not wish to rely upon. As a result, his own histories do not discuss the causes for the ruptures he indicates.

This leads us to consider the third strategy, the assumption of the *specificity* of particular discourses or historical formations. This strategy begins with the reversal of our common assumption that discourse is a more or less accurate representation of a non-discursive reality. Following Shumway, Foucault begins rather with the assumption that discourse is a violence that we do to things, a practice we impose upon them (p. 21). Historians of science have traditionally ignored this problem by assuming that each discourse was intended as a step toward the discovery of the truth that the present scientific community accepts. Thus past discourses are not

presented in their specificity, but as part of one great, transcendental conversation that has led inevitably to what we are today. Foucault insists that we take seriously what earlier discourses where trying to do, that we attend to features that distinguish these discourses from each other and from our own. Shumway suggests that the strategy of specificity might thus also be called the strategy of 'alterity', or 'otherness' (p. 22). Foucault asks us to assume that historical periods prior to the modern era are radically different from our own. He eschews any consideration of human nature or other grounds for assuming the trans-historical similarity of human beings. This follows from the assumption of discontinuity, but it is not the same assumption. Discontinuity says that we will look for ruptures of the typical continuity of history. The strategy of alterity says that we should assume that objects or periods divided by these ruptures are radically different, as appears illustrated in '*Discipline and Punish*': 'The movement from one project to the other, from a schema of exceptional discipline to one of general surveillance, rests on a historical transformation: the gradual extension of the mechanisms of discipline throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, their spread throughout the whole social body, the formation that might be called in general the disciplinary society' (Foucault 1977: 209). I argue that before the state consolidated in the 'specific' form of the SIPCE, contextual conditions had allowed the emergence of other discourses, which ought to be treated as 'specific', for by no means did they serve as a basis for a later evolution into the version that finally prevailed. Juan P. Ramos (1910) who I analyse in Chapter Three, is an example of the 'violence'

imposed to past discourses, whenever he states that all past events were only steps towards the discovery of the truth embraced by the contemporary government's education policy. The pre-state period was something different to what came next. In a similar vein, current discourses about 'public education' in Argentina should be viewed as distinct from those established in the 'foundational period', or during the early Sarmiento phase, in spite of policy maker's rhetorical efforts to assimilate them.

The fourth strategy, *exteriority*, is yet another reversal of modern intellectual convention, which has sought, through a variety of means and in differing systems of thought to discover the meaning of discourse in depths that the surface meaning disguises. To look at the exterior of discourse is to treat it as unmotivated or unintentional, to reject agency. Foucault wants to take surface discourse itself as the fundamental reality. But by the surface discourse Foucault does not mean style or form in any of their usual senses. His strategy of exteriority is to look for the 'conditions of existence' of discourse. The conditions of existence come in two varieties. The first is a function of the discourse itself. Within a system of discourse only certain statements are possible. To describe the conditions of existence of a discourse at this level is to seek to understand the range of possible statements that the discourse can produce (Archaeology). On another level, however, the conditions of existence of a discourse are external to it in the sense that they are social conditions, changes in the nature of social relationships. Such conditions include how the right to speak is governed

within discourse, or when it is appropriate to speak in a discourse. These conditions are governed by the role the discourse plays in the relations of power in a society. In effect, Argentine late nineteenth and early twentieth century policy-makers captured the educational discourse and co-opted the 'public' label for their agenda. The Argentine state controlled the right to speak about education, and through the creation of state education governed the population thus making it docile and productive.

Genealogy is the project that first approaches these conditions of discourse. Political and economic concerns are taken into account. As Shumway says, 'In the genealogical approach Foucault remains concerned with the limits and conditions of discourse, but he no longer understands these limits and conditions as linguistic. While Foucault has all along treated discourse as more than mere language, in the genealogical approach he emphasises the fact that discourses are always 'discursive practices' that discourse always exists in the context of a specific institutional environment' (Shumway 1992: 25).

Following Ball and Tamboukou (2003) the genealogist does not look beyond, behind or under the surface of social practices. The aim is, rather, to look more closely at the workings of practices. As stated at the beginning, instead of going deep, looking for origins and hidden meanings, the analyst is working on the surface constructing 'a polygon or rather polyhedron' of various minor processes that surround the 'problem' under scrutiny

(Tamboukou and Ball 2003: 14). This analysis of the 'meeting points' between Genealogy and Ethnography offers a fine synthesis of Genealogy's main features:

> • interrogate the validity and universal authority of scientific knowledge;
> • adopt a context-bound critical perspective;
> • transgress closed theoretical and methodological systems;
> • point to the limits of dominant power/knowledge regimes;
> • recover excluded subjects and silenced voices;
> • highlight the centrality of the body in socio-historical analyses;
> • restore the political dimension of research.
>
> (Tamboukou and Ball 2003: 4)

None of these can be theorised in isolation. They build upon each other and are closely interrelated. Historical studies conducted by these 'principles' involve the challenge of rethinking the subject matter in its entirety and produce displacement, re-description, usurpation; in other words, an interruption of current debate through a history of the very terms under discussion. Form this standpoint, the following chapters of this thesis introduce a historical genealogy of the meaning of the public.

First I focus on the period that ranges between mid-nineteenth century to early twentieth century, in other words, from the pre-

institutionalization to the consolidation of the educational system. I name this section *Part I: the historical layers of meaning embedded in public education*. Then I turn to *Part II: the contemporary history of education.* In both parts I address a set of overarching questions: Which is the position of 'the public' within these discourse regimes? How does this influence the structural forms of educational governance? In other words, which is the role of the public according to each paradigm? What objects, practices, criteria and procedures emanate from out of these definitions?

Part One. The historical layers of meaning embedded in 'public education'

This genealogy seeks to unpack the historical sediments underpinning the meaning of Argentine 'public' education, and the varying designs within educational governance.

Chapters Three, Four and Five present alternative versions of public education. The events reflect three varying positions of 'the public' within the boundaries of each discursive regime. The key historical junctures addressed in this section are firstly, the period of pre-institutionalisation of the Argentine education system, focusing especially on the seminal figure of Domingo F. Sarmiento. Secondly, the consolidation of the official version of 'state-public' education, mainly achieved during Jose Ramos Mejia's administration of the National Education Council. Thirdly, in this same period, counter-public discourses such as that emanating from the anarchist Julio Barcos, who spoke in total opposition to the official voice. As sequences of events in history, these three periods emerge between 1850 and 1930. Chronology, however, is not a key aspect of this historical reconstruction. It is rather the analysis of a trilogy of meanings articulating alternative conceptions of public education.

The three Chapters are linked by a pair of over-arching questions: how is 'the public' positioned within the boundaries of each paradigm? What

is the role of 'the public' in these alternative versions of 'public' education? A second major concern of the thesis is to analyse the extent to which changing conceptions of 'the public' in education show a corresponding change in the forms of educational governance. I thus describe the related set of objects, practices, criteria and procedures that emanated from each of these discursive regimes. In order to address these questions, I analyse writings and describe the policy designs attached to each definition of public education.

Why is *Chapter Three* focused on the discourse of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento? Sarmiento is a paradigmatic figure of the Argentine education tradition. He was a writer, teacher, journalist, politician, governor of the province of San Juan between 1862 and 1864 and president of Argentina between 1868 and 1874. Sarmiento has been canonized as the founder of Argentine education. As such, his figure carries and signifies powerful normative values and his name is frequently deployed as a source of legitimacy for quite varied education policy initiatives. Sarmiento argued in favour of building an educational public within the meso level of district participation. However, his specific understanding of public education, his alternative view of the role of the state and society and the policy design attached to such conceptualisation are barely addressed in contemporary public discourse. Thus, analysing Sarmiento means addressing an extraordinarily rich historiographic and analytical niche and this chapter turns its attention to this issue. Sarmiento was prolific in his work and

much of his influential thinking is available in the form of annual reports, speeches and writings, as well as in archival documents from his early years as Head of the School Department of the Province of Buenos Aires (1856-1861).

Chapters Four and Five outline the actual consolidation of the official version of public education over and against other discourse regimes. Why do I focus on José Ramos Mejía and Julio Barcos? These figures embody the two major competing discourses that co-existed and struggled in the early twentieth century.

The official voice finds a remarkable representative in Jose Ramos Mejía, President of the National Education Council between 1908 and 1913. In those years, the State-centred-system-of-public-instruction (SIPCE) entered its period of consolidation. Ramos Mejía outlines the meaning of public education as 'state-national' education. His discourse symbolised a new 'will of truth' based on scientific and expert grounds, and had a strong direct influence on the educational field. During his administration, the advance of the central-State's intervention in education attained full materialisation. A huge variety of educational discourses were produced and key structural elements of the system's governance were established. I describe these events in *Chapter Four*.

Chapter Five analyses anarchist thought as a 'counter-public' to the institutional State. Julio Barcos was a key figure of Argentine anarchism. He critically pointed to the dangers and limits of state institutions through journal publications, newspapers as well as a very eloquent book – seldom commented upon by education historians - *How the State Educates Your Son* (1927). Barcos outlines the meaning of public education as 'social-popular' education. Because the text differs markedly in most senses from the premises that allow the dominant culture to understand itself as a public, it may be called a counter-public and holds extraordinary interest for this thesis.

There are slight differences in the structure and length of each chapter. *Chapter Three* is longer. This is due firstly to the fact that there is abundant literature on Sarmiento, which I needed to review before focusing on my research questions. Additionally, academics build strong controversies around the figure of Sarmiento and it is hard to arrive at any synthesis without referring to those different standpoints. Secondly, Sarmiento is a paradigmatic figure in Argentine history to whom I will refer often. As such, his name is frequently deployed as a source of legitimacy for varied education policy initiatives. This in itself suggests the need to return to primary sources and pay greater attention to his original ideas and writings.

Argentine educational historians have paid much less attention to the other two cases. Secondary sources are scarce. Ramos Mejía has been taken into account by historiography, but not on his educational role, whereas Barcos has remained almost unaddressed in both fields. I thus consider analysing these authors may be a major contribution to the field of Argentine educational history.

Chapter Three: A site for the public within the education system. Domingo F. Sarmiento's vision of 'Popular Education'

Introduction

In this Chapter I wish to address several issues. An overarching question is what discourse did Sarmiento contribute towards as policy–maker and as a key figure in Argentine educational history. More specifically, what was the role of the public in Sarmiento's conception of public education and how did this shape educational governance. I thus analyse the correlating set of objects, practices, criteria and procedures that emanated from this discourse paradigm.

In order to address these questions, I analyse Sarmiento's early writings and describe the policy design attached to his definition of 'public-popular' education, in which the two terms sometimes appear to be used interchangeably. His early political performance as Head of the Education Department in the Province of Buenos Aires during the 1850s is an additional source of information. A section will also be dedicated to describe the outcomes of what has been labelled Sarmiento's 'participatory project' that was applied in the Province of Buenos Aires in the 1870s. Recent contributions (Freidenraij 2007; Minvielle 2011) offer extraordinary insights on this matter, and provide additional grounds for my final conclusions.

Domingo F. Sarmiento was born in the province of San Juan, Argentina, on February 15th 1811. He died in Asunción, Paraguay, on September 11th 1888. He was a writer, teacher, journalist, politician, governor of the province of San Juan between 1862 and 1864 and president of Argentina between 1868 and 1874.

Singing the Hymn to Sarmiento, for instance, was recently declared compulsory for 'school assemblies' in the City of Buenos Aires (Res. 638/08). The decision was grounded in 'the need to contribute, at least to some extent, towards uniting everyone in support of education and especially, in favour of educators (...) for Sarmiento symbolises commitment to public education, equality of opportunities and the dream of social justice' (Narodowski 2008). Contemporary reformers present themselves as heirs and continuers of Sarmiento: 'It is worthwhile to continue the journey of that 'dream of white uniforms'[xx] that began a long time ago and can endure today if we manage to go more deeply into it (…) We must acknowledge and cherish not the illusion of homogenisation, that destroyed difference allegedly in favour of a common good, but the impetus and enthusiasm of old advocates of popular education: the new builders [we] are making this' (Narodowski 2008).

The resolution to evoke Sarmiento's memory in every school assembly aroused some debate (Bayer 2008; Narodowski 2008; Samar 2008). In this case, the claim was against 'idolising' a figure who, 'besides his

contributions to education, should also be known for his racist outbursts against the *gauchos* and the indigenous people, his cruelty in the war with Paraguay (…) and his "progress"-oriented education plan, that only benefited a few by means of the exploitation of men and nature…' (Bayer 2008). Narodowski's reply to the above critique is firm, although it admits that when the Ministry of Education of the City of Buenos Aires resolved that schools should sing the hymn to Sarmiento, 'we knew the decision would provoke some controversy' (Narodowski 2008). Some authors suggest that today Sarmiento's ideas are as controversial as ever, occupying the centre of the discussions on educational policy in Latin America (Kirkpatrik and Masiello 1994). The intense self-examination currently taking place in Argentina and other countries in the region, drive scholars to look beyond recent events to the post independence period of the nineteenth century, searching for clues about the current crisis in the original blueprint cast by the founding fathers (1994: 2). In fact, radical critics, laudatory biographies, and others in between have written volumes about Sarmiento, his deeds and mistakes[xxi]. Sarmiento is a necessary point of return for this re-evaluation.

However, while these debates are most interesting, they are largely beside the point for this analysis. Sarmiento's specific understanding of 'public' education, his alternative view of the role of the state and society and the policy design attached to such conceptualisation, have hardly been addressed in public discourse. This chapter turns its attention to this issue. Nevertheless, it is worth making a few preliminary remarks: firstly, the

above discussion could be one example of a reflexive/collective debate around educational issues, and this should be valued *per se*[xxii]. Secondly, it is worth noting how figures regarded as 'progressive' early in the nineteenth century, may today turn into the subject of criticism by modernised progressive perspectives. Sarmiento's racism is the most commonly agreed point of critique[*xxiii*]. The fact that Sarmiento arouses such controversy, anticipates a set of tensions and contradictions, which I shall explore throughout this Chapter.

Sarmiento played a crucial role in the period prior to the institutionalisation of the SIPCE. More specifically, after contributing to the overthrow of Rosas (1852), he became a key actor in the Argentine process of nation-building (Halperín Donghi 1995) and a leading intellectual in the institutionalisation and consolidation of the education system. Two key 'events' mark the historical interest of Sarmiento for this thesis: The first is his actual writing and publication of *Educación Popular*, an educational text that became paradigmatic. Here Sarmiento conceptualised 'public' education and began developing a proper discourse, which, within a short time, succeeded in prevailing over others. I highlight *Educación Popular* from among the rest of Sarmiento's writings, for it gained wide recognition and gave Sarmiento a key position within the educational arena. However, his discourse was displayed in a variety of texts. The second is Law Nº 899 of Common Education (1975), which crystallised the central components of this discourse emanating from Sarmiento and was a milestone in the

process of institutionalisation of state education. It is worth noting the Province of Buenos Aires has been pictured as the 'Archimedes' Lever' (Freidenraij 2007). It was a crucial geographical location for the development of nation-wide policy strategies. Sarmiento himself acknowledged Buenos Aires was 'the most adequate starting point for the vast work [of organising and generalising a national education system], and surely the provinces will follow this impulsion, persuaded by the advantages shown in tangible results' (Sarmiento 1858).

Sarmiento's core ideas came to realisation in Law Nº 899. Several historians refer to it as 'the participatory project' (Puiggrós 1990; Pineau 1997). Although it envisions an educational setting that may appear somewhat strange to the eyes of a contemporary observer, Sarmiento viewed the central state as strategically directing the course of a large education system, and a multiplicity of district communities constituting 'local powers', 'public spheres' in charge of key aspects of the everyday life in the local schools. A discourse of 'publicness' seemed to define policy texts and actions. However, the project failed in its implementation phase and Sarmiento's novel ideas of 'public-popular' education barely endured in discourse. The outcomes that actually arouse were another different and complex issue, which I shall address later.

The historical sources and texts

Some aspects of Sarmiento's educational thought can be traced in his published writings and today these are mostly collected in his Complete Work's [*Obras Completas*]: Vol. 4, *Ortografía, Instrucción Pública* [Orthography and Public Instruction]; Vol. 11, *Educación Popular* [Popular Education]; Vol. 12, *Educación Común* [Common Education]; and Vol. 44, *Informes sobre educacón* [Reports on Education].

Orthography and Public Instruction is one of the largest volumes in the Compilation. It gathers everything Sarmiento published while living in neighbouring Chile, between 1841 and 1855. It is divided into two parts: the first displays Sarmiento's vast production on American Orthography, and the second offers a variety of articles published in newspapers, such as *El Mercurio*, *El Progreso*, *La Tribuna* and *El Monitor de las Escuelas Primarias*. The volume's title is symbolically powerful. The fact that the same person who wrote extensive essays on Orthography and education later became President of the Nation shows how far education and state formation could be regarded as related concerns and processes.

In 1853, Sarmiento wrote a report for the University Council in Chile, focusing on three topics:

a) the influence of primary education on customs, public morals, industry and on the general national prosperity;

b) the best organisation for primary education, bearing in mind the circumstances of each country;

c) funding mechanisms to provide education for all.

This work reveals the relationship Sarmiento clearly drew between education, discipline and the economy. Green (1990) also suggests 'although education could be closely entwined with democratic ideas, it still had a contradictory function and wore a Janus face: on the one hand, an ally of democratic forces, including working class aspirations and, on the other, a powerful instrument of political conformity and an essential element in the construction of an individualist, capitalist hegemony' (1990: 36). These tensions appear in Sarmiento's writings and political activity. Sarmiento conceived of schools as a disciplinary technology. Schooling would defend society by excluding real and impeding social dangers; but also, it would have positive, useful and productive effects. Sarmiento was trying hard to persuade the contemporary public about education's potentialities. Following Deacon, it was only once the disciplines began 'to reveal their political usefulness and to lend themselves to economic profit (…) [that] they came to be colonised and maintained by global mechanisms and the entire state system' (Deacon 2006: 130).

Finally, commissioned by the Chilean government, Sarmiento set out in 1845 on a trip to Europe, Africa and the United States with the object of studying the ways educational systems were being organised. As a result of this trip, he elaborated a report that then became publicly known as *Educación Popular*. In the introduction, Sarmiento argued in favour of expanding public schooling and suggested interesting ideas about the meaning of 'the public' and the role of the state. The subsequent chapters deal with different aspects of its organisation. *Educación Popular* is also a remarkable example of the transfer of educational ideas through key intellectuals. The way it was conceived actually obeyed the traditional pattern in Comparative Education:

> 1) A local problem was identified;
> 2) Solutions were sought in foreign educational systems;
> 3) A 'tested' institution or educational practice was adapted to the new context and then implemented
>
> (Beech 2006: 2)

Just like Horace Mann, John Griscom and William T. Harris in the USA, Matthew Arnold and J.P. Kay-Shuttleworth from England and Leo N. Tolstoy from Russia (Noah and Eckstein, in Beech 2006: 3) Sarmiento shared the aim of improving Argentina's national education system, a goal that dominated comparative studies and educational transfer during the nineteenth century. Following Beech, these administrators were generally appointed by their governments to develop their own system of education,

based on the belief that by borrowing ideas from abroad they could avoid mistakes made by other countries in their linear progress towards an ideal educational system (Beech 2006: 3). Sarmiento's final words in the Introduction to *Educación Popular* reflects this idea quite eloquently: 'We shall invent nothing, we shall create nothing that has already been put into practice in other different countries giving complete results, and having procedures become laws or regulations that apply under the conditions of each locality…' (Sarmiento 1849: 39). However, during the first stages of the country's national organisation, the 'solemn, rational and sophisticated' (Oszlack 1997: 163) innovations borrowed by policy-makers from abroad as 'what works', clashed with the state's weaknesses and were exposed to trial and error. Nonetheless, there was an awareness that 'recreating modern institutional forms already rehearsed in advanced countries, increased their legitimacy' (p. 163).

What did Sarmiento, the father of education, define as 'public education'? As stated above, a lot has been written about him so a historiographic note is worthwhile.

Displacing views

Historiography offers different views about Sarmiento's thought and action. Given this study's specificities, works that focus on Sarmiento's educational policy serve as interesting starting points. Gregorio Weinberg

suggests there is vast room for analysis: Sarmiento's thoughts, just as those of many other classics, are more often quoted than read, thus, 'ideas become crystallized into formulas that obscure meanings, all too frequently exacerbated by the detachment from the original source' (Weinberg 1987: 7). Thus, from a historical point of view, some of Sarmiento's ideas require re-examination.

Sarmiento's early public years as Head of Education in Buenos Aires (1856-1862) have been scarcely considered by historians of education. Researchers generally concentrate on the presidential period or upon his role in the debates that preceded the passing of Law 1.420, which gave place to the foundational version of public education in Argentina (Mantovani 1949; Ottolenghi 1972; Kirkpatrik and Masiello 1994; Halperín Donghi 1995). Equally, numerous biographies focus on Sarmiento's 'life and oeuvre' but, again, the presidential period is what mainly attracts the attention (Delucchi 1968; Solari 1968). Sarmiento's most original thinking about 'public' education only becomes available through examining his early work. Additionally, archival documents from the years he was Head of the School Department of the Province of Buenos Aires offer modern readers an extraordinary source of information.

It is thus common to find Sarmiento presented as sharing the conceptions of the 1880's generation, i.e. centralisation and standardisation, bureaucratic oversight, compulsory attendance, assimilation, republicanism

and a common curriculum, to name a few. However, his ideas were actually different from the ones that became prevalent. Since the early twentieth century various authors have argued that Sarmiento believed education should follow decentralising principles and be run, as in the United States, under the control of Municipalities, 'a basis which stands opposite to the current centralism' (Palcos 1929: 88). Similarly, more recent works suggest 'nothing could be more distant from Sarmiento's thought than the huge and heavy bureaucratic mechanisms, where initiative and aspirations are counterproductive' (Weinberg 1999: 32). In a similar vein, Dussel suggests that in spite of Sarmiento being canonised as the eminent leader of Argentine education, those who considered themselves his heirs moved away from the system he envisioned, and increasingly approached the patterns of European centralisation (Dussel 1997: 128).

Juan Carlos Tedesco (2003) suggests that rather than continuity, there was a rupture between the educational thought of the political exiles during the *Rosist period* (Sarmiento, among others) and the actions carried out after 1880 (Tedesco 2003: 28). 'In the previous period to [the battle of] Caseros [1860] and influenced by governance models of countries like the USA and England, Sarmiento tended to relativise the power of state action in the educational field' (p. 29). Tedesco quotes one of Sarmiento's key insights from *Common Education*: 'Government action concerning the improvement of society is always slow in its results and the means do not always produce the intended outcomes. Government can only help the

impulse that is born within society; imprinting it effectively is a task that exceeds its driving force' (Sarmiento 1853: 155).

Argentine historian Natalio Botana suggests an interesting synthesis: 'Sarmiento's education policy was based on a programmatic centralisation and a administrative decentralisation' (Botana 1996: 35). Echoing current highly sophisticated forms of governance, this version of 'public education' seemed to involve a division of the 'intervention actions' (Dale 1977) between State and civil society. It locates education provision under strict control of the State, and regards funding and administration as responsibilities of society. Indeed an innovative version of public education. Sarmiento seems to have attempted to separate the state from civil society, creating a space for 'the public' in the micro-level of communities and school districts. Actually the participation of the 'public' was key to Sarmiento's strategy for educational organisation and expansion. As shall be seen in the following section, the role played by society in Sarmiento's scheme actually clarifies why he refers somewhat imprecisely to 'popular education' or 'public' education. Moreover, Sarmiento's view of the role of the state and society in education reveals not just a 'public' face of 'public education' but, interestingly enough, a novel 'personal', 'domestic', 'family' side of the question.

Botana's 'formula' is probably the one that best expresses Sarmiento's early educational thought and action. However, from a genealogical

perspective, other elements of Sarmiento's discourse come into view. By describing 'programmatic' functions only at a central level, Botana overlooks the complexities involved in the actual 'devolved' responsibilities and, fundamentally, the play of power relations and subject positions embedded in this form of organising the public service. In effect, Sarmiento suggested that putting these responsibilities in the hands of local communities meant more than just an administrative disposition. It underpinned social and political outcomes that should be positively valued:

> The most perfect system of tax and public administration has political advantages that must not be neglected. Leaving the funding and management of the education to the people is vital in order to make them grow in the practice of self-government. *This is not at all an innocent element of public action*[xxiv]. In contrast, those expenditures that come all the way from the top, as well as the intervention of the state in affairs that affect the people but leave them without any influence, only help to broaden their generalised indifference.
>
> (Sarmiento 1841-1854: 354)

The mechanisms of funding and managing public schools contained within them the potential for people to participate in wider ideological processes at the local levels. A subtle arrangement, 'apparently innocent, but profoundly suspicious' (Foucault 1977: 139). Sarmiento saw this as the way through which the public sphere would materialise. The public in each education district should be active in organising, improving and expanding the education system. Sarmiento perceived the great disciplining potential provided by this form of organisation. As in the panoptic schema, this arrangement had a role of 'amplification' (p. 207), it was meant to spread

through all the system and become a generalised function. Although its aim was to make power more economic and more effective, it also intended to 'strengthen the social forces' (p. 208). Key genealogical questions: 'How is power to be strengthened in such a way that, far from impending progress, far from weighing upon it with its rules and regulations, it actually facilitates such progress? (…) How will power, by increasing its forces be able to increase those of society instead of confiscating them or impeding them? (p. 208). Sarmiento seemed to have these issues in mind as well being clearly aware of the answers. The efficiency of power, its constraining force 'is passed over the other side – to the side of its surface of application. As put by Foucault 'He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power (…) he becomes the principle of his own subjection' (p. 202). The object and end of this 'political anatomy' are not the relations of sovereignty but the relations of discipline.

Sarmiento was contributing to the development of a modern disciplinary technology alongside the articulation of forms of governmentality, where participation and 'responsibilitisation' were key tactics. The system of education would engage the subjectivities of the community rather than just their compliance, a basic principle that could also apply to other areas of educational policy. This sophisticated social-political technology of management is expanded upon throughout this chapter. An interesting 'theoretical edge' might emerge after this journey: to

what extent do the workings of 'discipline' and 'knowledge' enhance or constrain the possibilities of constituting public spheres?

Distinguishing 'the public' and 'the plebe'

'Modernity' is described by Habermas as a time of essential shifts. Of critical interest was the emergence of the 'public sphere' as a part of 'civil society'. Habermas symbolises these major transformations describing the shifts from 'royal residencies' to 'towns', from 'conversation' to 'criticism', from 'bon mots' to 'arguments', from 'aristocracy' to 'democracy' (1989: 31). Sarmiento also seems to praise modernity. He views public education as a 'completely modern institution (…) born from Christianity and transformed into a right by the democratic spirit of contemporary society' (Sarmiento 1849: 27). Sarmiento believed the emergence of mass schooling systems was both an indicator of essential changes in the role of 'the public', and a source for its further expansion. In the very opening words of *Educación Popular*, he writes:

> Up to now for two centuries there was education for the ruling classes, for the priesthood and for the aristocracy; but the people, the *plebe*, did not form, strictly speaking, an active part of the nation (…) Public Instruction has the objective to prepare the new generations (…) and the nations in mass for the use of rights that today belong to some or other class
>
> (Sarmiento 1849: 27)

Education would have the responsibility of transforming the 'plebe' into the 'public', constituting a sphere within the social realm. This meant

moving away from '*ancient*' versions of 'publicness', where 'the public' was rather 'something like a status attribute' assigned to the kings, lords and the aristocracy (Habermas 1989: 7). Sovereignty is reconceptualised. The 'sovereign' now should be 'the people'. A well-known book by Sarmiento is in fact eloquently titled 'Educate the Sovereign' (volume 47 in the *Complete Works*). However, a design of 'subtle coercion' (Foucault 1977: 209) is embedded in this process. For 'the *plebe*' to form an active part of the nation, they needed to be accordingly disciplined. Schooling was thus a *sine qua non* requisite for the genuine exercise of 'political' rights[xxv]. This seems to express Foucault's intuition. That is to say, although, in a formal way, the representative regime makes it possible, directly or indirectly, for the will of all to form the fundamental 'authority of sovereignty', the disciplines provide, at the base, a guarantee of the submission of forces and bodies. 'The "Enlightenment", which discovered the liberties, also invented the disciplines' (Foucault 1977: 222). Foucault speaks quite categorically about this: 'the general juridical form that guaranteed a system of rights that were egalitarian in principle, was supported by these tiny, everyday physical mechanisms, by all those systems of micro-power, that are essentially non-egalitarian (p. 222).

The extension of the disciplinary institutions was only the most visible aspect of various, more profound processes (Foucault 1977: 218). In the introduction to *Educación Popular* Sarmiento offers additional grounding to the expansion of the education system, revealing some of these

related concerns. A key issue was the economic. Up to the mid nineteenth century, the Argentine state had been striving with very limited funds, almost no resources available for social provision, and was involved in continuous civil and international conflicts. Only then it initiated an accelerated process of growth, which lasted more than half a century. There were plenty of needs to address and most policy-makers believed this would just be possible with the help of the country's economic growth. Sarmiento rarely addressed directly economic issues (the contemporary economy theorist was Juan Bautista Alberdi, also an exile from Rosas' government). However, he did establish a clear link between the economy and education: 'The power, richness and strength of a nation depend on the industrial, moral and intellectual capacity of the individuals' (Sarmiento 1849: 28). Halperín Donghi (1995) labels Sarmiento's political program: 'Socio-cultural progress as a requisite for economic progress'. His idea of economic progress pursued a change of society as a whole, not as a final result and justification of such economic progress, but as a condition for it (p. 36). Sarmiento did not hesitate to warn that 'the South-American states belong to a race that appears last in the list of civilisations' (p. 28). The increasing numbers of immigrants - 'except for the Spanish, that are analogous to us in intellectual backwardness' - would forcefully bring a 'substitution of one society for the other', provoking the fall of those who were not well prepared intellectually and industrially: 'It is easy to predict a million heads of families that today enjoy an advantaged social position, to see their sons fall to the lower classes of society due to the action of new men with greater capacities' (p.

29). This juncture was thus characterised by 'the growth of production' and 'a change of quantitative scale in the groups under supervision'. Following Foucault 'the development of disciplinary methods corresponded to these two processes, or rather, no doubt, to the new need to adjust their correlation' (Foucault 1977: 209)[xxvi].

Sarmiento's text clearly presents two diverse groups in society: the 'ruling classes' and 'the plebe'. On the 'ruling classes', he does not expand much, except to criticise the Spanish colonisation 'that has left disastrous traces in the American republics, as well as in Europe' (Sarmiento 1849: 11); or to observe some aspects of the post - independence period ruling *elite*: Sarmiento often criticised Rivadavia, for his 'abandonment and meanness, that dragged the majority of those interested in the country's progress to establish and foment universities and seminars, which should only be the capitals crowning a wide and well-based building of public education' (Sarmiento 1841-1854: 248). Sarmiento's concern was directed to the education of 'the many'.

As regards 'the plebe', he has certainly written extensively. In *Facundo* (Volume 7 in the *Complete Works*) Sarmiento contrasts civilization and barbarism as seen in early nineteenth-century Argentina, and also denounces the tyranny of Rosas. The book actually acquired international reputation, and even today attracts literary and sociological studies in foreign countries. From different angles, historians have analysed

Sarmiento's distinction between the two related terms: 'civilisation and barbarism'[xxvii]. Such analyses lead some historians to argue that Sarmiento's participatory project failed due to an essential contradiction between his negative view of the people and his 'foundational appeal' for them to participate in the civilising project (Puiggrós 1990; Pineau 1997).

There has been little analyses of a third social group that is prominent within Sarmiento's writings. This is 'the public', the people who Sarmiento mainly addresses *Educación Popular*, as well as his other educational writings and publications. These already formed a publicly relevant group within society, and Sarmiento counted on them to undertake the process of massive social change. It seems very clear that Sarmiento in fact discriminated between the subjects of education and *others more capable of acting over themselves within the public sphere.* He thus placed responsibility over the latter. The 'public' had therefore a crucial place in Sarmiento's project. When for instance defining a mechanism for the Inspection of primary schools, Sarmiento argued: 'If local commissions did not exist, or if they neglected the role that was assigned to them, primary inspection would suffer a lot from this omission; for it would remain too unknown *to the notable people in each locality*, that is to say, the public, and its influence therefore would not penetrate sufficiently in the schools' (Sarmiento 1849: 76). Moreover, Sarmiento sought to multiply the public sphere in a variety of 'publics' around each school in every district.

By the time Sarmiento wrote his books and played a role in Argentine politics, there were in fact at least incipient versions of both the state and the 'public sphere'. These developments were especially visible in Buenos Aires, where the framework of associative and communicational institutions was becoming increasingly dense. According to Hilda Sábato, the emergence of a wide variety of voluntary associations and the expansion of the press where indicators of the strengthening of civil society and the constitution of a 'public sphere' (Sabato 1998). After Caseros [1852, overthrow of Rosas] Buenos Aires experimented in a 'true explosion of associative life' (Sabato 1998: 51).

Sarmiento moved from Chile to Buenos Aires in 1855, and was first designated Director of *El Nacional* Newspaper. Together with *La Tribuna* (1853-1884), *La Nacion Argentina* (1862-1870) – followed by *La Nación* (1870 to date) and *La Prensa* (1869 to date), *El Nacional* was one of the national newspapers with the largest circulation and greatest continuity in this period[xxviii]. In 1864, an article in *La Tribuna* stated 'Apparently, we are born with the mania of the newspapers', and twenty years later, Enresto Quesada, in a pioneering study about 'Argentine Journalism', attested to the 'dreadful power possessed by the '*diarismo*' among us' (Sabato 1998: 62).

As Head of the Education Department of the Province of Buenos Aires, Sarmiento created a monthly periodical, the *Annals of Common Education*, with the object of keeping the public aware of the efforts that

were being made (and which were needed) in order to organise and generalise the vast system of education. In the early issues, Sarmiento stated: 'If educating the sons is one of the most essential concerns of each head of family, it is important that they take part in its administration and know the complex means that contribute towards guaranteeing its results' (Sarmiento 1856: 63). Sarmiento's goal was to stimulate 'public opinion' in favour of education, both to establish the general notion that this was the best means of producing social change (a contested issue at the time, which I shall touch on later) and to engage the 'heads of family' - main component of the public sphere within education - in its development and administration.

Sarmiento assured 'We have fellow citizens who show a clear interest in everything that may help to add value to our country. The government should take advantage of these dispositions, and trust to them important tasks'[xxix] (Sarmiento 1841-1854: 264). The 'head of family', 'the citizen' and the 'legislator' were social subjects Sarmiento constantly argued for a 'popular' system of education. In the *Annals*, he wrote:

> The creation of a popular system of education, requires the propertied men and their wealth, the educated men and their knowledge, the poor and their desire to improve their futures, the legislators and their necessary dispositions, the head of family and their expenditures, the Parrishes[xxx] and its civil servants… prevailing over the whole a common passionate feeling. Without this, a step forward is impossible.
>
> (Sarmiento 1858: 2)

Sarmiento held an 'optimistic' view of education as the driving force for progress and social change[xxxi], opposing other liberal views that neglected this altogether, or considered other institutions to be more effective (industry, immigration, regulation, labour). Additionally, Sarmiento put the state unfailingly in charge of educational provision but gave a strong role to society and school communities. Herein also lay new dilemmas. Sarmiento wore a Janus face. He seemed very aware of the basic principles of modern power regimes. The productive increase of power could only be assured if it was exercised continuously in the very foundations of society, and also if it functioned 'outside these sudden, violent, discontinuous forms that are bound up with the exercise of sovereignty' (Foucault 1977: 208). The new 'physics of power' were geared towards dominating 'the whole lower region', the region of irregular bodies, with their heterogeneous forces and spatial relations. Sarmiento was building a discourse that articulated strategies of modern power.

'Popular Education'

The title of Sarmiento's book is '*Popular Education*', and the opening words are '*Public instruction* has the object to prepare…' (Sarmiento 1849: 27). The three terms appear interchangeably when making reference to the state organized system of instruction. Pablo Pineau suggests that in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, generally labelled by historians 'the birth of the education system' (Pineau 1998: 2), these concepts were synonyms.

According to Pineau, they all described the 'official' organization of education: agents, contents, and control devices, systems of punishment, direction, accreditation and validation. Pineau also argues that the official education system was established on the bases of Sarmiento's ideas: 'Law 1.420 sanctioned in 1884 was a major expression of this' (p. 3). It therefore becomes necessary to analyse these synonyms at length in order to be clear whether Sarmiento used the terms interchangeably and in order to determine how far his vision of governance made an enduring impact on the history of Argentine schooling.

I argue the way Sarmiento deployed the term *popular* was not simply rhetorical and certainly not accidental, but had a key strategic significance. I show that Sarmiento cleverly appropriates key concepts from competing discourse fields, such as the way he transforms the use and meaning of the word 'popular'. Etymologically, this term meant that which attached to people independently of the state or Church for example, and thus carried notions of freedom. The 'popular', the 'people', the 'populace' are defined in distinction to the dominant public presence of the state. They are distinct terms. But with Sarmiento, the word is appropriated and used to mean something approximating to 'that which people have a stake in within the sphere of state social provision'. The 'popular' thus becomes conceptually incorporated into a decentralised notion of State provision of social services. This sense of 'ownership' is further re-enforced in Sarmiento's arguments concerning sources of funding and the social obligations that underpin the

specific forms that funding were to take. I develop this in the following section. In turn, this also re-inflects the meaning of 'public' as it is aligned very carefully with 'popular'. The 'public' then becomes that which involves everyone under the care and direction of a beneficent state. Sarmiento was politically deploying the term 'popular' as part of a discourse-building strategy, which was geared towards creating a new consensus built around the provision of state education. Once this was achieved, the structural and institutional forms of a new 'public' would be in place and could then be replicated in things like the provision of housing, health, utilities, local government, etc.

Sarmiento's discourse of 'publicness' based on 'the popular' configured a set of practices and structures for educational governance. The following section examines these aspects and signals some of their inner tensions. I shall briefly describe the two policy actions assigned to the state – teacher training and supervision, and expand on the 'devolved', 'popular' functions - funding and administration. This description offers a particular view of education, an alternative discursive regime where a key feature is the conceptual separation between the state and the public.

Programmatic Centralisation

As said before, Sarmiento believed the state should be unfailingly in charge of transforming society. In particular, his position in relation to

teacher training and *inspection* marked out clear limits and boundaries to the roles of the state and society. These technologies should give rise to cultural unity out of a vast territory with intense regional disparities.

Sarmiento thought inspection was a 'conquered truth' (Sarmiento 1841-1854: 346). He believed it should be permanent, professional and rewarded. Inspectors would be in charge of exerting the state's vigilance in every school, allowing the central organism to direct, supervise and evaluate the teachers in their use of knowledge and methods. Thus inspection should be 'local, daily and multiple (…) to make sure its influence is perceived' (Sarmiento 1853: 65). At the same time, it should be arranged within a hierarchical and centralised system. Sarmiento described Inspection as 'a chain of civil servants, touching every extremity of the state, concentrating in different groups and categories until they reached the head of the state, which imposes direction and movement' (p. 65). Sarmiento was clearly applying one of modern power's main features: 'capillarity'. Power was to operate at the lowest extremities of the social body, in everyday social practices. This technology was coherent with Sarmiento's intuition about the advantages of locating power in every level, instead of only or essentially in the central state.

Training teachers was also meant to be a responsibility of the state. Teachers were entrusted with the work of civilisation, and such responsibility required planning and control. Sarmiento advocated that

teachers became licensed only after receiving a diploma in the state Teacher Training Institutes (*Escuelas Normales*). 'There should be no other legal teachers but those who receive special training. As the state is the one in charge of training suitable teachers (…) everything that is an exception to this rule creates unnecessary confusion…' (Sarmiento 1841-1854: 343).

Both institutions – *Escuelas Normales* and the Inspection – came into being only some decades later. Their organisation and scope were just as Sarmiento had foreseen them. Apart from the relative process of modernisation and admission of private provision for Teacher Training, these institutions endure in the forms outlined by Sarmiento today.

I shall not expand here on the specificities of the role assigned by Sarmiento to the state. Analysing state strategies and organisation will be the focus of the next Chapter. However, I wish to comment on how this distribution of functions shows a peculiarity of nineteenth century Latin American 'Liberalism'. In 1859, while Sarmiento was in charge of the School's Department in the Province of Buenos Aires, John Stuart Mill published 'On Liberty'. Coincidences between the dates initially attracted my attention (although this does not necessarily mean Sarmiento read the book). However, what is quite striking is Mill's use of the 'conventional' terminology for the analyses of the role of the state in education policy. Chapter Five of the book explores 'Applications' of the general principles on civil liberty and the nature and limits of the state's authority over the

individuals. Mill stops to analyse 'public education' and uses 'provision', 'funding' and 'obligation' (regulation) to name the objects/actions under analysis. Additionally, John Stuart Mill is a paradigmatic example of the Liberal normative framework. Drawing on this text highlights two issues of substantive importance: on one hand, the contrasting elements between Mill's and Sarmiento's 'liberal' frameworks; the inflections of Liberal thought when applying to different countries and settings. On the other hand, a major contribution of 'genealogy' to socio-historical analysis is the way it suspends the liberal problematic of the legitimacy of state action and tries instead to look at the phenomenon of power in new and interesting ways.

Mill argued it was the duty of the state to enforce universal education. However, 'that the whole or any large part of the education of the people should be in state hands, I go as far as anyone in deprecating (…) A general state education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another: and as the mould in which it casts them is that which pleases the predominant power in the government (…) it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading by natural tendency to one over the body' (1992: 101). Sarmiento, on the contrary, believed the state needed to fuse the people into a mould – this was 'the Republican state'; where, following Botana, 'a mass of immigrants and *criollos* lacking direction and wandering aimlessly of the public good should be poured' (1984: 320).

José Merquior argues there existed 'a surprising variety of liberalisms' (Merquior 1993: 197). Following this author, these differentiate according to the varying perceptions of the obstacles to liberty. What worried Mill was not that which worried Sarmiento. Mill in England was a strong advocate of the rights of the individual in the face of state or social oppression. Sarmiento believed liberty depended upon the collective use of public reason - a Habermasian concern - and thus what he feared most was 'backwardness' and 'barbarism'. Merquior defines Sarmiento as a 'liberal nation-builder' (p. 231), pushed to solve the tension between assuring the rights of the individuals in a spontaneous order and guaranteeing the creation of a modern citizen through public education. Sarmiento's liberal project in fact considered institutions that would mould the citizen. 'The republic' should educate both formally, through a controlled system of schooling, and informally, by promoting the citizen's participation in public affairs.

National 'architectures' were very different. As Botana says, when comparing nineteenth century Argentina with the United States and other European countries: 'very different was the challenge for the legislator who had to build a nation out of the desert' (1984: 324). Paradoxically, the decentralised system based on strong 'local' powers proposed by Sarmiento, was to be constructed from the top[xxxii].

Administrative Decentralisation

In the liberal tradition, there were different objections to intervention by government. The first, following Mill, is 'when the thing to be done is likely to be better done by individuals than by the government' (1992: 104). Sarmiento seemed to agree to this.

On very similar grounds, Sarmiento believed the state should not be given charge of building the schools in the Republic, this should be left as the responsibility of each Municipality. Sarmiento appealed for the public to take into consideration the object and audience this action would serve: 'Each father should take his hand to his heart and solve this situation, which is less about duties and more about natural affection and paternal prudence' (Sarmiento 1841-1854: 204). Schools were useful to the children whose families lived in the neighbourhood, and to every settled district in the country. 'The local school is therefore like a Church, a local need; and the luxury of these buildings and thus the funds put into their construction (…) should keep a proportion between religious mercy and learning mercy, which turns education as the highest of God's services' (p. 204). Otherwise, the State would eventually build schools in each town, following plans of limited expenditure, not minding for the details other than the essential. Sarmiento believed the only way of building fine schools was gathering the interest of the neighbours. As Mill said: 'There is no one so fit to conduct any business, or to determine by whom it shall be conducted, as those who are

personally interested in it' (1992: 104). Probably trying to provoke the public, Sarmiento claimed: 'We are a century away from this spirit and this art! Who in this country is going to believe that there is charity, mercy and patriotism in giving comfort and decoration to school buildings?' (Sarmiento 1841-1854: 204).

In practice, Sarmiento was able to pass a Law in August 1858, allocating special funds for the construction of schools for boys and girls in Buenos Aires. The funds were to be distributed among the parishes and localities, following a specified amount of funds collected from the neighbourhood. Art 3 specified diverse conditions for each locality. The richer ones were required to collect greater sums and the poorer received more funding from the state (*Archivo Histórico de la Provincia de Buenos Aires* –AHPBA- 1858: 69). This law showed interesting effects (See Sarmiento 1856: 76). However, the creation of schools proved to be very difficult in the poorer localities. On September 1859, a new Law authorised the Executive Power to invest funds in places where 'due to the absence of wealthy population, the conditions of Art. 3 in Law of August 1858 cannot be met' (AHPBA 1859: 90).

Sarmiento believed parents would eventually support and call the local school 'theirs' (Sarmiento 1853: 59). He was inspired by Massachusetts, where the annual assembly of taxpayers worked as 'a small republic or a small congress, deliberating (…) about a home-family, personal

business (…) It is about educating their own sons, and contributions will increase according to their capacity to judge the relevance of this need, for this is the only measure of its price' (Sarmiento 1853: 59). Sarmiento declared in repeated letters to the Municipalities in the Province: 'education will not prosper as long as it is not devolved to the population' (AHPB File 29, Doc. 5431). As mentioned earlier, he was building a discursive frame that emphasised what the people may benefit from through state provision. The schools would be 'theirs', they would pay and participate. Thus, education would be 'popular'. Sarmiento skilfully takes this term from a realm that was conceived as independent from the state and places it within the 'public', which was clearly state-controlled.

Mill asserts a second objection to government interference is 'though individuals may not do the particular thing so well, on the average, as the officers of government, it is nevertheless desirable that it should be done by them, rather than by the government, as a means to their own mental education – a mode of strengthening their active faculties, exercising their judgment, and giving them familiar knowledge of the subjects with which they are thus left to deal' (1992: 105). This resonates strongly with Sarmiento's views of the importance of training the people in the arts of self-government. Mill added there was a benefit in taking them 'out of the narrow circle of personal family selfishness, and accustoming them to the comprehension of joint interests' (p. 105). Sarmiento's strategy was to show both dimensions in the implementation of local education: the particular

'home-family' and the republican duty. By addressing the 'heads of families' Sarmiento was perhaps 'pulling out' a non-existent public sphere. He was building a consensus. People surely belonging to different political factions would somewhat coalesce around the educational agenda.

Neither the Central nor the Provincial states should be mainly responsible for creating, supporting or administering schools. In Prussia, Holland, New York and Massachusetts, cities and the country were divided in districts: a circle around each school, 'a teaching parish'. Sarmiento recommended: 'Address your neighbours and there you will find inspiration, science, support and wealth' (Sarmiento 1841-1854: 334). Therefore the basic administrative unit of the system needed to be 'small'. The advantage of dividing the administrative units in this way was that it allowed people to determine the value of the individual contribution to education. The mass of citizens would be grouped in a limited number of 'neighbours', who would recognize each other as members of a community with duties towards their children. Just one more arrangement, capable of reducing the 'uncontrolled disappearance of individuals' (Foucault 1977: 141). The 'district' organisation seemed to favour the state's capacity to collect financial support with greater efficiency. Although Sarmiento's discourse does not often point at the micro-political level, where a 'meticulous control of the operations of the body' is enacted (Foucault 1977: 137) – as later will be clear with Ramos Mejía - there does seem to be a meso-level of 'district- life' somehow susceptible to subjection.

A letter sent by Sarmiento to the Major of Valparaíso in Chile (1849) indicating the means he thought would contribute more efficiently to organising public education, show that funding was a key element that called for the participation of the public. However, a 'trivial' example Sarmiento gives here is an outstanding example of the ways of modern power.

> If the government were to be in charge of providing clothes to the nation by means of the public treasury, we would certainly end up going around naked; because the public administration would see there is not enough in treasury to provide for clothing to a million and a half inhabitants. Although the comparison seems trivial, this line of reasoning applies just as well to popular education. We need to cover the nudity of spirit of the people, or as Your Excellence says, to devise an internal police for the people in our expanding community of Valparaiso. But how do we fund such thing? The same way each person pays for its own dress; the answer is: *each and everyone*[xxxiii], there is no other source, there is no other possible funding.
>
> (Sarmiento 1841-1854: 333)

The brief reference to Mill's 'On Liberty' showed an example of the 'universal juridicism of modern society' seeking to fix limits on the exercise of power; however, Foucault argues, while this happened, 'its universally widespread panopticism enables it to operate, on the underside of the law, a machinery that is both immense and minute, which supports, reinforces, multiplies the asymmetry of power and undermines the limits that are traced around the law' (Foucault 1977: 223). Education fulfilled this criteria: firstly, to obtain the exercise of power at the lowest possible cost (economically, by the small expenditure it involved – especially if, as

Sarmiento intended, the public contributed to pay for it; politically, by its discretion, its low exteriorisation, its relative invisibility and the little resistance it aroused – people's 'internal police'); secondly, to bring the effects of this social power to their maximum intensity and to extend them as far as possible, without either failure or interval; thirdly, to increase the docility and the utility of all the elements of the system (Foucault 1977: 137). Sarmiento's text shows how far education was perceived as a form of 'discipline'. He also assured 'the instruction moralises the population, for there are more accused among the illiterate than among the ones that have received some instruction' (Sarmiento 1849: 31).

As regards the financial aspects, Sarmiento stated the government's duty in funding education was to organise the individual means in order to gather enough resources to distribute among other people who were in greater need. National revenues were meant to assist provinces, municipalities and individuals who could not afford the necessary minimum. He spoke straightforwardly:

> No public administration, no treasury, no national income; the father pays for his own children's education, the district provides for its neighbour's, the city for its people, the province for its population, and so on only until the national state or national income turns necessary.
>
> (Sarmiento 1841-1854: 333)

The state's role in education was meant to be subsidiary. Sarmiento insisted: a free school should not misspend resources in paying for the education of the sons and daughters of the rich, to the disadvantage of the children of the poor who would much more appreciate those sums. He emphasized practical reasons: if the state doesn't charge a *special contribution*, 'the State can't pay for education' (Sarmiento 1841-1854: 337). The state should be in charge of financing teacher-training and inspection and the law should generate an income for the schools, by establishing who were to contribute locally and with how much. Declaring 'free education', in Sarmiento's view, meant legalising a disorder. Sarmiento insisted: 'Leaving in vague terms the obligation of municipalities to fund their own schools and not establishing the sources of funding is equal to legalising chaos and confusion' (p. 343).

Public schools in Chile were funded and supported only by the State. As a result of this, Sarmiento believed parents took advantage of the free provision and neither got involved nor felt any concern about their son's education. In Sarmiento's words: 'If parents aren't asked to pay for their children's education, the lazy ones will find no incentives to participate in the feast that has been offered to them. Furthermore, those who don't profit from this feast should feel guilty' (Sarmiento 1853: 133). Yet, in the Republic of Chile, only 37.565 children were educated out of 179.000 of school age (p. 133). The difference between two figures represented the number of children who weren't benefiting from the 'free gift'. Sarmiento's

discourse in this respect shows the economic ideas followed by Argentina in this period were derived from classical liberalism - English and French models. Various forms of democratic and socialist theories had not yet arrived to the country.

Sarmiento believed absences from school were due to three reasons: schooling was not compulsory, buildings were undersized and, fundamentally, education was free. He observed that only children from the cities and belonging to certain classes attended school half of the year; 'This means the money invested by the state produces no results at all, as if a liquid was poured into a glass full of holes' (p. 134). The children who went to school were sons and daughters of parents who, by virtue of their social position, wealth and education, were able to appreciate the advantages of education and felt encouraged to educate their sons.

> If we count the owners of real estate funds in the Property Registry, and then add up those who own properties in the cities - merchants, miners, workshop owners and other industrialists - the number of wealthy families is equal to the number of children attending schools; this shows that the public treasury ONLY PAYS FOR THE EDUCATION OF THOSE WHO CAN AFFORD IT[xxxiv], and who would do so if nobody else paid for them; leaving a huge sector of the population who can't afford to pay either the land registry or the buildings in cities or workshops, excluded from education.
>
> (Sarmiento 1853: 134)

Sarmiento described this as an 'appalling system of protection', that 'kills what it touches, which is precisely what it means to protect' (p. 137). If

this were to continue, then in the future the state would not be able to expect either interest or collaboration from parents. He called for a system that would stop 'the immorality and the corruption of the state replacing parents in the duties they were made-up to carry out' (p. 139). He considered this a violation of the economic principles required for spreading education everywhere else. In other words, the system was self-defeating. The State was supposed to provide education only for those who otherwise wouldn't receive it. Guaranteeing attendance of the 'poor' children at school would bring 'the moralizing effect of absorbing part of their time, otherwise dissipated in idleness and abandonment' (p. 37). Sarmiento again shows the embedded benefits of education. Somewhat contradicting the above 'liberal' statement on the key role of parents, Sarmiento argues public education 'should add an extra authority to the one of the parents, which not always works constantly over the morals of the children (…) [Education] should form in the spirits and idea of authority outside the enclosed space of the family' (p. 37) 'Free public education', according to Sarmiento, thus meant: education provided by the State, cheap for everybody and absolutely free for those who can't afford to pay.

Sarmiento complemented his statements with evidence from his trips to Europe, Africa and America. The international experience seemed to reinforce his arguments (See pages 44-59 in Sarmiento 1849)[xxxv] The United States, in Massachusetts, regulated public education under a system which Sarmiento judged as 'one of those realisations of the most severe logic,

obeying the intrinsic laws that rule this matter' (p. 54). It fixed a minimum contribution for education directly over the group of people who benefitted from the law. The community of Massachusetts would meet once every year to vote for the rent of schools and impose on themselves a contribution that would complete this fixed minimum, according to their own will. Sarmiento specified 'the rent for schools is not "municipal", but "popular"; the taxpayers given the minimum of education that must be provided according to the law, can impose to themselves unlimited contributions (…) Generosity has no limits, for it must have none when the matter is educational' (p. 59).

Once more, Sarmiento deploys the term 'popular' to designate the social non-state character of administration and funding of education. A discourse of 'good citizenship' is also articulated here. Sarmiento seeks to promote a clear comprehension of the 'nature' of education and, consequently, the 'generous' obligation to support it financially.

State and education in the 1850's

The state budget during Sarmiento's administration of the School's Department was in fact very limited. Table 1. Illustrates some aspects of the funding policy during this period (1856- 1860). It displays the annual amounts voted by the legistlature for the different government areas, the total fiscal income and the actual spend. The School's Department received its funds from the Ministry of Government, in which it was subsumed. Thus,

the amounts specifically assigned to education are not reflected in this Chart.

TABLE 1: FINAL ACTUAL SPENDS IN RELATION TO BUDGETS, 1856-1860.

Year	*Chambers*	*Government*	*Foreign Affairs*	*War*	*Finances*	*Total*	*Income*
1856	526.956 **531.913**	19.477.920 **15.189.901**	867.840 **703.892**	32.083.243 **41.815.205**	21.107.749 **14.809.665**	74.063.708 **73.050.576**	68.957.903
1857	604.356 **574.360**	21.325.045 **17.440.748**	819.180 **798.665**	36.584.215 **44.424.385**	19.861.193 **21.434.895**	79.157.989 **84.673.053**	81.549.995
1858	703.336 **771.153**	19.386.168 **18.215.006**	1.670.160 **1.372.442**	55.634.252 **56.367.245**	14.997.447 **16.017.329**	92.391.363 **92.743.175**	74.186.215
1859	602.616 **545.943**	19.303.878 **18.616.691**	1.505.240 **1.008.903**	50.227.576 **104.109.971**	20.304.593 **38.629.607**	91.943.903 **161.911.115**	79.150.697
1860	694.576 **510.421**	18.763.138 **19.329.185**	1.455.240 **872.515**	47.807.409 **42.739.455**	23.687.740 **49.244.213**	92.408.103 **112.695.789**	94.569.007

REFERENCE: TOTAL BUDGETED AMOUNT IN RELATION ACTUAL SPEND (BOLD) [xxxvi]

SOURCE: IRIGOIN, A. (1999) FINANCE, POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN BUENOS AIRES. THE NEW POLITICAL ECONOMY, THE STATE FINANCES DURING THE 1850S. LONDON, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON. **PHD**.

Bad as some of these figures may seem, considering the 'uncontrolled waste and general disorder' that had characterised the administration of Rosas (1828-1852), the relation between the budget and the actual waste in the second half of the 1850's seemed fairly disciplined. Only in 1859 and 1860 were the budgets exceeded due to the war between the State of Buenos Aires and the Confederation of Provinces.

The budget was organised into five sections. 1. Chambers and Administration of public credit; 2. Ministry of Government; 3. Ministry of Foreign Affairs; 4. Ministry of 'Hacienda' or Economy; and 5. Ministry of War and Marine. The Schools Department received funding from the

Ministry of Government, together with other departments, such as the Courts of Justice, Hospitals, the Diocese, the University and the Statistics office. In one of Sarmiento's reports as Head of the School's Department, he claimed: 'In every state and every city in half the United States, the largest public expenditure relates to the intellectual improvement of men. Among us, on the contrary, it hasn't got either offices nor civil servants (…) Everything is urged for except for the intellectual culture of the many' (Sarmiento 1856: 88). Sarmiento's claim for a separate budget might have also pointed at giving education greater visibility. The emergence of a specific budget would have very likely given place to the emergence of groups and constituencies interested in commenting on funding issues, protecting or contesting the budget.

According to Irigoin (1999b), the 1850's decade was a period of great institutional transformations in the political economy of the country and the bases for the functioning of the economy. Commitment to an 'institutional regeneration' led to more responsible use of public finances, more 'virtuous' monetary policies and a more transparent use of public money and administrative procedures. 'During the 1850s, with no precedent in the past, the budget became a key element of public accountancy' (Irigoin 1999b: 205).

Education would not be an exception. A note from Sarmiento to a Local Authority in San Nicolás de los Arroyos, a village in the Province of

Buenos Aires, illustrates the point (in the Department's Archives these notes are repeated numerous times, in slightly different terms or regarding other matters):

> A head-teacher of the public school in the district informs us there is a remaining payment for the annual rent of the school-house (…) but this Department has already done a lot in favour of that neighbourhood. Having budgeted 200 pesos for the monthly rent this year [1856], we actually paid 400, taking for this end money that initially belonged to another service. Now the head-teacher says the rent was 500 pesos. Our answer is we cannot pay the additional 100 pesos. The budget fixed for this year is $400 and we must not exceed this limit. The local authority shall discuss together with the Municipality the means to gather for the necessary funds.
>
> (Archive of the Prov. of Buenos Aires, File 29, doc. 5387)

An analysis of the general budget approved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Buenos Aires, reflects an increase in the budget accompanying an increase in the number of schools. However, the proportions were not too considerable in relation to the general expenditure: in 1854 they represented 1.5% of the budget; in 1855 they reached 2% and in 1858, 2.6%. Nevertheless, these amounts were higher to those assigned during the 20's, when percentages had never exceeded the 1%.

TABLE 2. PROVINCIAL BUDGET DESTINED FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION. 1853-1860

	Boys' Schools				*Sociedad de Beneficencia*				
Year	MCBA Municip. of Buenos Aires	DE Dept. of Schools	Total	%	Schools	College of San Miguel	Total	%	TOTAL
1853*					28.200	72.600	100.800		
1854		346.800	346.800	34	600.000	79.980	679.980	66	1.026.780
1855		712.800	712.800	41	919.600	88.680	1.008.280	59	1.721.080
1856		752.400	752.400	41	939.200	146.680	1.085.880	59	1.838.280
1857	401.200	530.640	931.840	47	920.960	148.680	1.069.640	53	2.001.480
1858	457.600	654.320	1.111.920	46	1.102.160	186.480	1.288.640	54	2.400.560
1859	403.000	667.040	1.070.040	45	1.132.960	186.480	1.319.440	55	2.389.480
1860	486.700	988.960	1.475.660	53	1.083.600	204.000	1.287.600	47	2.763.260

*Second semester 1853

SOURCE: CARLOS NEWLAND, BUENOS AIRES NO ES PAMPA. LA EDUCACION ELEMENTAL PORTEÑA (1820-1860) [BUENOS AIRES IS NOT PAMPA. ELEMENTARY EDUCATION 1820-1860]. GRUPO EDITOR LATINOAMERICANO, BUENOS AIRES, 1992.

The *Sociedad de Beneficencia* had achieved a clear advantage in the assignment of funds compared to the School's Department. In 1856, they had obtained 66% of the sum allocated to elementary education, in 1856, 59%; and in 1858, 54%. The disproportion annoyed Sarmiento, who at the same time was explicitly and publicly struggling to eliminate other educational sources of provision, especially the *Sociedad de Beneficencia* (Sarmiento 1856; Sarmiento 1861).

> It is a glory for the nation in mass that both men and women participate from education and culture in the state of Buenos Aires. However, there is only a single step in passing from the sublime to the ridiculous, and there exists no theory that explains why should government foster the education of women over the education of men.
>
> (Sarmiento 1856: 88)

Education thus did not have resources of its own, or income, or an exclusive budget, and was subject to the national and provincial finances. Sarmiento claimed the government should immediately order things in the exact opposite direction: 'the secure means of stopping the progress of public education is putting the state in charge of paying for all its costs (…) Buenos Aires has received a terrible lesson which should not forget'[xxxvii] (Sarmiento 1856: 29). On the grounds of the state's incapacity to support the expansion and development of the education system, Sarmiento appealed to the public's contribution.

Society and education in the 1850's

Almost a decade later after his exile in Chile, Sarmiento confirmed his ideas on a report to the Minister of Government and Foreign Affairs, Dalmacio Velez Sarsfield.

> Free education does not mean that the state ought to substitute the head of family in the role that nature has imposed in relation to their sons, besides nourishing and dressing. Being harmful for society that for the poverty of some families many children arrive to adult life without receiving any instruction (..) the fortune of everyone, by means of contributions, turns to aid the father who is impeded of educating his sons.
>
> (Sarmiento 1856: 13)

For this, Sarmiento undertook an investigation in order to verify *who* were benefiting from public funds (Sarmiento 1856: 19). He ordered school

head teachers to assess the profession and condition of the parents in each school. As a result, Sarmiento observed:

> School's for boys have: 1 son of a lawyer; 3 sons of doctors; 3 of painting teachers; 3 of musicians; 2 of public school teachers; 41 of public employees; 43 of military; 2 of librarians; 101 of propertied men; 130 of merchants; 1 of an architect; 21 of farmers; 99 of seamstress; 116 widows; 215 of tailors (…) 41 of labourers; 31 of carriage drivers; 24 sailors; 35 poor; 3 invalids…
>
> (Sarmiento 1856: 20)

Sarmiento concluded that 'almost two thirds' of the people that sent their children to free schools were actually able to pay. This would allow the state to assist others in greater need among the 17.000 that were not getting any education. Another interesting survey concerned the price at which private institutions offered 'the same instruction given by the state':

> • Only to teach how to read, some schools ask for 8 pesos per month, and others 25, 30 and even 40 pesos (…)
> • To teach how to read and write, schools ask for 20, 22, 25, 30 and 40 pesos, according to their importance (…)
> • For reading, writing, arithmetic's, grammar and catechism, schools ask 20, 30, 40, 55, 60 and sometimes 100 pesos…
>
> (Sarmiento 1856: 22)

How much did the people in Buenos Aires spend in educating their sons? Sarmiento observed that a significant number of people (and amount of money) was directed towards private schools, 'in spite of not being of great advantage to the public' (Sarmiento 1856: 22). He sent a query to the head teachers in public and private schools, asking for the approximate

amount of money they collected every month from private contributions. He noted 'this number will not be presented in isolation, neither exposing the name of the College, but only as an aggregated general sum' (Sarmiento 1861: 660).

The chart were the information is systematised was titled 'Costs of public and private education in the City and the province of Buenos Aires', and was published in the Annals of Common Education (Sarmiento 1861).

COSTS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION IN THE CITY AND PROVINCE OF BUENOS AIRES

PUBLIC SCHOOLS In millions of pesos	**Public Contribution**	**Private Contribution**
Municipal schools for boys	486.700	108.000
Seminnar	262.560	114.000
School for Orphans	204.000	38.880
Municipal schools for girls	342.000	75.184
Provincial schools for girls	741.600	
Provincial schools for boys (DE)	988.960	
Construction and Capital Deposits for schools	3.011.000	
SUBTOTAL	**6.036.820**	**336.064**
PRIVATE COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS	**Public Contribution**	**Private Contribution**
60 that charge between 80 up to 500 pero month		210.780
21 " " " 500 -1000 p/m.		195.084
15 " " " 1000 - 2000 p/m.		272.892
20 " " " 2000 - 5000 p/m.		724.521
4 " " " 5000 -10.000 p/m		274.800
8 " " " 10.000 - 20.000 p/m.		1.351.200
3 " " " 20.000 p/m.		977.400
8 schools for girls. 400 students /Charge average 20 p/m.		96.000
702 boys/937 girls in Prov/ Charge average 20 p/m.		393.360
SUBTOTAL	**6.035.820**	**4.832.101**
TOTAL CONTRIBUTION PUBLIC AND PRIVATE	**10.868.921**	

SOURCE: TERCER INFORME DEL JEFE DEL DEPARTAMENTO DE ESCUELAS DE LA PROVINCIA DE BUENOS AIRES. 1860 [THIRD REPORT OF THE HEAD OF THE SCHOOL'S DEPARTMENT IN THE PROVINCE OF BUENOS AIRES. 1860] ANALES DE LA EDUCACIÓN COMÚN [*ANNALS OF COMMON EDUCATION*] VOL. II, N° 21, BUENOS AIRES, 1° JUNE 1861.

Buenos Aires had spent the 'huge amount' of around ten thousand pesos: a sum which, according to Sarmiento, exceeded the investments of any other South American state, and equaled the most populated North American cities. The chart reflected the trends Sarmiento had been signaling since earlier years:

1. High costs of public education
2. Broad expansion of the private sector

The public treasury's investment in education was around six million pesos per year. Private income through fees or voluntary contributions amounted to three thousand pesos. As shown in the chart, these were not at all significant; they came to just 5.6% of state expenditure. Additionally, they seemed to be concentrated in the schools in the city. The private contributions in the province must have been relatively minor for Sarmiento to ignore them in the Report. Thus, private participation in the funding of public schools was scarce and predominantly concentrated in the city.

Private outlay in private education stood as a different case. According to the data, parents who sent their children to private schools spent almost five million pesos annually; this was equivalent to 44% of the total cost of the education in the state of Buenos Aires. These figures,

together with the success of some experiences in the City of Buenos Aires, gave hope to Sarmiento: if public schools were improved, the heads of families who paid costly private education would begin to choose public schools and agree to direct their money accordingly. Sarmiento's main goal was to build an education system, perfectly organised, able to offer better quality education at a lower cost than the private. Only in this way would the 'public' sector count on the support of the 'neighbors' in order to extend its sphere. Sarmiento reasoned if the 40 pesos that parents paid for their sons in private schools were paid instead to the schools of the Parish by means of a municipal contribution, there would be a significantly greater amount of money available for school maintenance.

> 'Here's the secret of common education, the palladium of freedom, civilization, moral and wealth: administrating the money that parents forcefully waste in educating their sons, and under their shadow, educate the sons of the poor.'
>
> (Sarmiento 1856: 24)

However, the province's regulations did not allow for this possibility. Under the Law of Direct Contribution a local commission (Capital Regulation Commission) annually ordered to regulate the farms and private properties in each jurisdiction. Occupiers were obliged to pay their corresponding fees to the Municipal Treasury and the Municipality transferred the product of the collection to the General Tax Collector, keeping a 10% conveyed by the Law of Municipalities for general expenses (Official Registry of the Government of Buenos Aires 1856, AHPBA).

Sarmiento argued that other countries of the world established a 'direct' and 'specific' contribution to provide for education. He advocated for a *local special* contribution, and distinguished very clearly his proposal from the existing alternatives: 'voluntary contributions' and 'schools fees'. Fees 'suffer of incurable vices (…) Of course the teaching ceases to be free, and thus the sons of the poor leave or postpone their education, for they have no means to pay for fixed fees, thus destroying the primordial object of common education under the patronage and direction of the state' (Sarmiento 1856: 93). The contribution should be regulated and demanded by law, in order to avoid inhibiting those lacking funds to send their children to school. This tax should also be *special*; the obligation should have a specific object (education) that stood independent from any other state activity. Last but not least, the contribution should be *local*; this aimed at avoiding two situations: that contributions got mixed with other state expenditures, and that bureaucracy absorbed large portions of the collected sums.

Given there already existed private schools where parents paid fees as well as public 'paid' schools (schools that received voluntary subscriptions), Sarmiento assured his audience that his idea was not to impose a new contribution upon the members of the neighbourhood but to administrate their investments:

> The *voluntary subscription* for the objects of education and of philanthropy, although it may not be compulsory, it is not less than a contribution, religiously paid by the most advanced segments of society, *which may not necessarily be the most rich*;[xxxviii]

> The *direct contribution* is a voluntary subscription ruled by law, and I call it voluntary although it is compulsory because the contributor knows what it means and measures its importance every year.
>
> (Sarmiento 1858: 46)

Whilst voluntary subscriptions were to be the base and origins of the calculations for direct contributions, education funding could not be allowed to rest solely upon the weak basis of voluntary subscriptions. To argue for this position Sarmiento complimented those who would see themselves as part of 'the more animated by public spirit and intelligent part of society' (Sarmiento 1856: 105) and suggested that any proposed changes would not add further burdens to what they already contributed through their payment of voluntary fees. Instead the implications were that the new law would require those who did not realize 'the interests of their sons, the duty of citizens and the dangers that threaten the future of the same fortune they keep, see themselves exonerated of helping the common goal of guaranteeing education for all the present today, and hand down to future generations a well organized system of education.' The appeal was to the higher sensibilities of those who self-defined themselves as being part of 'the intelligent part of society' (Sarmiento 1856: 105). As outlined in the list of those paying already and drawing on Sarmiento's last quote, it seems he was attempting to build a cross class constituency.

The result of the preceding analysis could be summed up in 'very short and intelligible truths':

> Primary education constitutes a branch of the public administration. The state is in charge of education; it controls and inspects it. Towns, divided in school districts, determine the taxes, enforce their payment and decide on their investment (…) The State does not finance education. Self-interest and the fatherly love in each town will provide the schools with an income, through contributions that benefit their own children, as well as the children of the poor families in their communities. The department, the province and the state fulfil the deficit and the lack of resources of a town (…) train teachers in Teacher Training Institutes and care for the Inspection system making sure education is properly distributed throughout the Republic.
>
> (Sarmiento 1853: 62-64)

This last paragraph reflects a real verbal architecture. On one hand, Sarmiento resumes his definition of 'popular education', meaning education for the people, managed and sustained by the people. Although Sarmiento's discourse on the responsibility for education mainly addressed the 'heads of family', 'society in mass' was compelled to contribute with its funding; that is, the 'wealthy public', regardless of having sons in schooling age or not. State and public are thus separated financially and conceptually. Additionally, the prior deployment of the term 'popular' is now filled with new structures and ingredients. Sarmiento captures the notion of 'fatherly love', certainly from a Catholic Church discourse mode, suggesting the heads of family's role transcends the education of their own sons. They are called to practice 'fatherhood' over other families, essentially the poor. Sarmiento is politically appropriating terms from other discourse fields to rework them in a discourse of institutionalised education, framed within democracy and the Republic.

Education in the 1870's and beyond

The participatory project: characteristics and outcomes

In 1873, by the time Sarmiento was President of the Nation, a Constitutional Reform took place in the Province of Buenos Aires, aiming to change its 'Structure of Authority'[xxxix], increasing the local powers and adding new roles and authorities to accomplish them. Chapter 6 in the Constitution divided the provincial territory into 'districts' and conceived the Municipality as the space of local administration par excellence. The Municipalities would have an Executive and a Deliberative branch, whose members would be locally elected by means of direct vote. In general terms, Municipalities were put in charge of 'the governance and direction of all the local interests'. Some examples of new attributions were 'financial management' (annual voting of a budget, freedom to fix local contributions) and 'control of the police' (which had been removed from local authorities in 1860). These attributions, legislative and coercive, marked a significant shift from the previous legislation and defined greater possibilities of self-government to the local jurisdiction (Minvielle 2011).

The 1873's Constitutional reform had a substantive impact upon educational governance. It was followed by Law Nº 899 of Common Education (1875), which defined a new structure of authority and a new distribution of power over decision-making in all matters concerning educational governance. Articles 16 and 20 of the Law established a

governing structure composed, on one side, by two central organs (Education General Council and Education General Direction) in charge of the general administration of schools, and on the other, a large group of local administrations called 'Education District Councils', in charge of 'the local administration and immediate government of common schools' (Registro Oficial, Pcia. de Buenos Aires. Año 1875, in Minvielle 2011). Although the central authorities were appointed by the Executive Power, members of the District Education Councils were to be elected by direct vote of the 'neighbours' in Parishes (City of Bs As) and Municipalities (Province of Bs As). The 'school demos' - i.e. those with the capacity to vote for authorities - were composed of people who regularly voted for provincial delegates (*diputados*). The same group of people were 'eligible' to occupy positions of authority.[xl]

Law Nº 899 of Common Education followed the general orientation of the Provincial Constitution (1873), and worked both on the structure of authority and the distribution of functions and responsibilities for the educational governance. After a detailed analysis of the regulatory components of this document, Minvielle's conclusion is that a new institutional design was clearly oriented towards establishing a 'system', a structure were the central organs would be in charge of strategically defining contents of study, teacher training career paths and supervision over teaching and schools, while local authorities would be empowered to

decide over relevant aspects of the district's educational life, opening participation to (all) members of the communities.[xli]

It is worth briefly acknowledging the system of funding established by Law Nº 899, for it addresses Sarmiento's long held claim of 'special' funding for educational policy. The law defined two main 'non-transferable' and 'inviolable' sources of funding, only applicable to educational issues.

Law of 1875 stated: 'schools and other common education institutions are sustained by the rent provided by the Schools' Permanent Fund, by the taxes that this regulation imposes and by National, Provincial, Municipal and individual subventions' (Art.60).

Two points are worth comment:

1. The Law fixed a complex system of funding, geared towards guaranteeing a permanent fund for education and avoiding dependency upon the state's treasury. The law included Sarmiento's novel idea of 'imposing' a 'special tax' both to the Municipalities (15% of annual collection) and to 'individuals' (2x1000 annually over property value). The law stipulated as well enrolment fees paid by every parent o person responsible for the child at the moment of registration, 'excluding the poor of *solemnity*' (Art. 77)[xlii].

2. As stated by Minvielle, those who designed this institutional scheme believed an active participation of members of the local communities should also materialise in monetary contributions.

Sarmiento had persistently argued in favour of these issues, and 'the text' of this Law in an indication, in those terms, of his success. However, it is worth noting that this funding mechanism sets the responsibilities of the different levels of administration in an opposite way to that Sarmiento had proposed in his early writings. He had actually described a substantial difference between NY and Massachusetts based on this point: 'The state of New York provides a rent for schools through a complicated system that makes it national, municipal, popular and individual at the same time. Like the French, it relies on state's expenditure; like the Prussian, it creates a rent ad hoc for the schools in each locality; but it substantially differs from all of them, for instead of placing the State in the last line to provide support to those in need, on the contrary, it turns to be the head of public education, defining its quota before the municipal contribution' (Sarmiento 1849: 51). Massachussets, instead, fixed a minimum contribution for education directly over the group of people who benefitted from the law. The community would then meet once every year to vote for the rent of schools and impose themselves a contribution that would complete this fixed minimum, according to their own will (Sarmiento 1849: 54).

At this stage in history, Sarmiento's discourse seemed to provide useful answers to contemporary concerns. Since the long colonial period, throughout post-independence and during the government of Rosas, there had been no perspectives for constituting a relatively broad 'public sphere'. The centralisation of Rivadavia's government, the despotism of Rosas gave enough grounds for *a discourse that favoured a system that weighted towards its base and which highlighted the role of 'the public'*. The Editorial of Volume 26 of Sarmiento's 'Complete Works' says: 'After the civil disorders and the tyranny, [building the Municipal power] constituted a *desideratum,* for this was a lost link in the chain of primordial institutions of the human tradition' (Sarmiento 1856: 76). Additionally, given that Argentina had not yet defined for itself a precise form of political organisation, international discourses and experiences had a significant influence. As shown earlier, Sarmiento had been greatly impressed by the United States and indeed following the US model, Argentinean Municipalities were positioned as the basic unit of administration of the system. Sarmiento had found in the 'local powers' the form of democratic development (Botana 1996: 31).

What was actually the fate of this project? Law Nº 899 only applied for a few years. In early stages of its implementation, the provincial state began to apply gradual modifications, until 1905, when it was completely replaced by a centralised scheme. The implementation of the 'participatory' institutional design clashed with other developments and counter-veiling discourses, and as the country entered the 1880's decade criticisms towards

the 'participation' project became stronger. I will address this discursive displacement more fully in Chapter 4. However, a quote from the official journal edited by the General Education Council in 1884 (*Revista de Educación*) illustrates the sorts of 'concerns' being mobilised against participation, which suggest that the 'public' is insufficiently 'developed' to take up the responsibilities of devolution:

> Given the current conditions of our population, public education can not find any advantage in being attended by the neighbourhoods; this makes it hard to adopt systems from other countries like England, where Institutes, Academies and Universities are funded by the sole particular action (…) Given among us there is no spirit of association and initiative to hold up those kind of institutions, it is not possible to dispense the State from intervening directly or indirectly in the organisation and progress of teaching.
>
> (Revista Educación, Marzo 1884 quoted in Minvielle 2011)

The modification of the Law was confirmed in 1905. Meanwhile, smaller changes in pieces of regulation gradually had the effect of reorganising the educational system. Following Minvielle (2011), the reform strategy policy-makers adopted was not to change the structure of authority, but to guarantee a re-distribution of responsibilities and powers for decision-making, introducing the 'expert criteria'.

In the following section, I review contemporary revisionist perspectives on the studies of nineteenth century educational governance in the province of Buenos Aires.

Historical Revisionism

Historiography offers different explanations about the failure of the 1875 participatory project. A recent work by Freidenraij (2007) critically systematises these views or responses to the problem. According to this author, two main positions seem to address the reform of Law Nº 899. One is represented by De Luca (1991) who argues the project was marked by an 'original vice': Education District Councils emerged by state imposition and since the beginning they were absolutely co-opted by the central organs. Another version is Pineau's (1997) who believes the district councils were inspired by a 'civilising imaginary', but very soon they proved to be unrealisable, turning its creators - 'Sarmiento himself' – disappointed by 'the people', the key social subjects hailed by the project.

Freidenraij considers these accounts reflect 'naïve' views of history. More specifically, the author signals they are somehow trapped within the same hegemonic logic of the state documents and sources. They render unproblematic the complaints and observations made by provincial or national Inspectors, the 'authorised voices' of the period. Freidenraij analyses 'who threw the 'diatribes' against the District Education Councils' (2007: 30), and builds an alternative account.[xliii] What stands out clearly in this effort is that the arena of the implementation of Law Nº 899 showed two levels of the incipient bureaucracy struggling among each other for different areas of responsibility. According to Freidenraij, both the central

and local levels were 'measuring their forces, seeking to maintain or seize positions' (2007: 34). The study argues that a patient work of propaganda intended to discredit the District Education Councils and their provincial functionaries, finally bore fruit: 'their critiques against the Councils pointed to their unsuitability/lack of expertise for carrying out the functions assigned by the law (…) preparing the scenario for the vigorous General Education Council who was to advance over the District Councils in 1905' (2007: 35). Discourses of governmentality were shifting from proposing a form of autonomy and self-discipline to being state-centred and administrative.

Now, who were the people, 'the public' engaged in District Education Councils three decades after Sarmiento initially articulated his discourse? A study by Minvielle (2011) provides a convincing counter-hypothesis to the commonly accepted 'socio-cultural paradigm', which argues the failure of the participatory project was due to non-existence of modern citizenship features in the actors who were required to enact the decision-making processes and carry out the local governance of education. According to the 'socio-cultural hypothesis', centralisation comes about as a consequence of a citizenry which was neither interested *in* nor able *to* pursue local issues. The technocratic apparatus of the state should therefore make up for the lack of local capacity.

Based on data provided by the censuses of 1869, 1881, 1890 and 1895, and other research that focuses on 'sociability' and 'citizenship' in nineteenth century Argentina, Minvielle looks at the Province of Buenos Aires from the 1870's up to the beginning of the 20th century, seeking to empirically test the socio-cultural hypothesis. Previous research mainly by Sábato (1998; 1999), Guerra (1998) and Salvatore[xliv] (2003), describe the province's general socio-cultural profile. Although there existed strong regional differences, forms of sociability proved to be entirely possible.

In terms of socio-demographic information about the Province of Buenos Aires, the Censuses show firstly that the Province was divided into four regions - City of Buenos Aires, North, Centre and South of the Province – characterised by important differences in size and population density. Moreover, the internal constitution of each region varied from census to census, mainly due to a significant expansion of the provinces' surface, after 'campaigns to the desert'[xlv]. While the City of Buenos Aires was completely urban (4.517 hab/km2); the rest of the regions did not reach the ratio of 3 habkm2; they were predominantly rural. In the City of Buenos Aires, 100% of the population was urban. In the rest of the territory, only 33%. However, a growing trend showed, especially in the northern region, population density reaching 9 hab/km2 n 1895. However, in 1895, ten years before Law Nº 899 was abolished, cities were steadily advancing over the 'countryside'. In that year, at least 40% of the population lived in urban areas.

Secondly, they show that in 1869 (1st Census) the Province's population reached 317.330 inhabitants. In 1881, the population reached 526.581, marking a growth of 66%. The engine of this growth was predominantly adult population, which grew 78% during this period. The total population of the province continued its growth during the following years. In 1890, inhabitants of the province of Buenos Aires reached 762.551 and five years later, they were near to a million. With a 4% annual rate, population in Buenos Aires tripled in a quarter century. A very strong motor for this was immigration.

Thirdly, the censuses show that in 1869, 30% of the population could read and write, while 70% were considered 'illiterate'. Here, differences between the City of Buenos Aires and the rest of the Province are worth noting. While 45% of the City population knew how to read and write, only an average of 22% did so in the rural regions. However, just like in the rest of the indicators, there was a remarkable rising trend. In 1890, 51% of the population was literate, five years later, 55%.

Fourthly, having set the main socio-demographic characteristics of the Province of Buenos Aires, Minvielle attempts to describe whether such conditions may have influenced the possibilities of constituting associative ties and exercising participation in governance activities. Previous research mainly by Sábato (1998; 1999), Guerra (1998) and Salvatore[xlvi] (2003), describes the province's general socio-cultural profile. There existed strong

differences among the different regions. The City of Buenos Aires' population density was higher than the most densely populated city in the United States (District of Columbia) and even more populated than Massachusetts, which is frequently presented as an example of effective local self-government. Forms of sociability in the City of Buenos Aires thus proved to be entirely possible. The 'socio-cultural paradigm' finds no empirical grounding here (Minvielle 2011). In fact, already in Sarmiento's first period of public activity (1856-1861) numerous archival documents show the efficacy of the 'Neighbours Commissions' in the City's Parishes to collect funds for school's buildings.[xlvii]

The socio-demographic characteristics of the other regions were very different. There were wide spaces between houses and the population was predominantly rural. In these particular settings, there actually seemed to be substantive empirical support for the socio-cultural hypothesis. The studies mentioned above indicate that the social cultural features of modern citizenship – association, participation - were not fully developed in the Province of Buenos Aires until the early twentieth century. However, already at this stage authors agree there was a clear 'situation of transition' (Minvielle 2011). The elites were those who first made sense of themselves as citizens, assembling themselves through different forms of modern sociability. Following Sabato (1999) the press and associations were key indicators of modern sociability already present. The census of 1881 also showed that in the most densely populated zones of the province, there

existed a significant number of civil associations. Therefore, although *some* of the conditions for the development of modern citizenship and the implementation of a system of local self-government were not yet in place, close examination of the historical dynamics of the region suggests this assertion may have further complexities.

Minvielle develops a case study of the associational life and community participation in two Municipalities located in the North and South regions of the province. The findings are very much in line with the previous argument. Although District Educational Councils at this stage showed clear difficulties in acquiring a stable governing corps, in both cases studied by Minvielle, there appear to be numerous indicators of community associations and increasing participation around 'public' issues throughout the decades. *Moreover, participation increasingly expanded to engage the immigrant population, and by early the twentieth century these trends acquired full development.* Nevertheless, it is in this period that Law Nº 899 is abolished in the whole province of Buenos Aires. Minvielle's study offers an alternative to the generally accepted interpretations of the 'failures' of decentralisation, and serves as an extraordinary revisionist perspective on this subject.

Conclusion

This Chapter had the general aim of adumbrating the 'discursive regime' that Sarmiento contributed to the field of education, focusing on the way in which the significance of 'publicness' is positioned within this paradigm.

The 'public' to whom the state appeals for the purpose of expanding and organising the education system, has a central place within Sarmiento's discourse. The structure of educational governance and its accompanying matrix of practices are centred upon the role of 'the public'.

Law Nº 899 can be seen as an attempt to enact a coherent relationship with Sarmiento's definition of 'popular' education. The design that came into force in the mid 1870's was framed within this long held claim and broader discussion around the role of 'the public' and local organs of government within the general governance scheme. This reform was essentially oriented towards a thorough decentralisation of the system. However, I am cautious in trying to avoid conflating 'publicness' with 'decentralisation', or 'the public' with 'the local'. 'The public' category betrays a multiplicity of meanings and uses in public discourse – including the academic. As I described in the previous Chapter drawing on the literature in this subject, there is much more to the 'public' category than a 'simple' system of organisation and administration, however crucial that may be.

There are (and must be) very clear and critical points of contact between 'publicness' and 'decentralisation'. However, only by separating them conceptually does it become possible to trace relations of coherence or contradiction between changing discourses and governance structures. As I argued earlier, the term 'public' is very often politically deployed (due to its normative power) solely for its rhetorical effect. Therefore, meanings attached to discourses about 'publicness' and 'the public' need to be 'unravelled' in order to assess their meaning in practice.

To what extent can Sarmiento's project be understood as a challenge to build a 'public sphere' within the social field of education? Can we argue that Sarmiento had in mind the 'Habermasian' concern of transforming 'the subjectum into a reasoning subject?' (Habermas 1989: 26). Besides Sarmiento's disciplinary agenda, I offer a positive answer to this question. Sarmiento directly addresses a male bourgeois constituency and argues for them to be prepared to resign some of their 'freedom', pay taxes and act within an institutionalised state-regulated framework, in order to contribute towards a stronger state and towards the expansion of a new social order, that reduced conditions of possibility for the re-emergence of earlier regimes and despotisms (such as Rosas'). He's offering a new social contract. Sarmiento additionally 'trusted' that this constituency would build a common concern around education because for the bourgeoisie their human capital is that which they live from. In contrast to many countries in Europe, with longer traditions of independent community life and social

development, in Argentina social formations were very new historically and thus too were the various emergent 'publics' who made up society. Many of these not surprisingly felt it necessary to align themselves and their interests to the type of state formation that people like Sarmiento were advocating.

However, Sarmiento achieved limited success in enacting this discourse of 'citizenship' and participation. His project was never fully realised in the Argentine 'public' education tradition. In a simple sense, Sarmiento's discourse of autonomy and self-discipline was 'ahead of its time' and proved not to 'fit' into the contemporary forms and discourses, which were primarily state-centred and administrative.

In nineteenth century Argentina, Sarmiento 'failed' to establish forms of self-discipline *as well as* and *over and against* other 'disciplinary' technologies he contributed to putting in place (regulation, inspection, bureaucracy etc). Only the latter were actually taken, heightened and intensified by the state education system.

The 1880s marked an essential rupture with Sarmiento's ideas and principles of 'self-government'. In spite of this 'failure' to prevail, Sarmiento was canonised as the Argentine education hero (*prócer de la escuela*), but those who claimed to be his heirs moved away from the key structural elements proposed in *Popular Education*, following instead the

contemporary European patterns of state centralisation. In a Report to Congress in 1884, Minister of Education, Eduardo Wilde, says: 'Modern societies have consecrated as a doctrine inherent to civilization, a tripod that grounds the regulation of 'popular education': compulsory, free and secular' (Roca and Wilde 1884: 170). The essential meaning assigned by Sarmiento to 'popular education' is absent from this discourse.

Between the 1880's and the 1920's reformers increasingly referred to their model of schooling as 'public'. By about 1920's the term 'public education' was widely understood to mean a system of education provided, financed and managed by the State. 'A reversal of a relationship of forces, an usurpation of power, an appropriation of a vocabulary turned against those who had once used it'? (Foucault, 1971: 21). The common school reformers slowly but surely asserted their version of 'public' education not only as rhetoric of reform, but in practice in and through legislation as well. The Argentine state captured all the discourses, sites and positions from where to 'speak' about education.

The following chapter describes the period in Argentine history when key structural elements of the system's governance were established; so was the advance of central-state intervention in education, which attained full materialisation during this period.

Chapter Four: State education over and against other alternatives. José M. Ramos Mejía's vision of a 'National state' education system

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the period of consolidation of the official version of public education over and against other discursive regimes. In the midst of key historical social developments such as massive immigration, growth of nationalism and the process of state consolidation, the complexities of co-existing and contesting public spheres becomes manifest. I describe a variety of educational discourses that were produced during the period of consolidation of one of the system's main governing structures: the National Education Council. I focus on the administration of José Ramos Mejía (1908 - 1913), where key structural elements of the system's governance were established as well as the advance of central-state intervention in education, which during this period attained full materialisation.

Between 1890 and *el Centenario* (1910) the country was marked by very strong waves of immigration. A 'struggle for nationality' took place (Terán 2000: 25) provoking fundamental changes in the universal understanding of 'the Fatherland' (*Patria*) envisioned by Sarmiento and Alberdi[xlviii]. Historians highlight two features of Argentine political life in the late nineteenth century: the gradual concentration of power and the lack

of effective mechanisms to involve the people in decision-making (Pineau 1997). Both characteristics are directly linked to the issue of publicness, to how the term 'public' may inflect the meaning of education and its structural forms of governance. However, historians, policy-makers, and public opinion itself rarely question this relationship. Historiography has paid much attention to regulatory frameworks while describing state centralizing trends. Systems for electing authorities, as well as other aspects of modern bureaucracies, appear to be particularly relevant in the context of nineteenth century state-building (De Luca 1991; Marengo 1991). For example, Tedesco (2003) explains how the state actually prevailed, based on the analysis of Law Nº 1420 (1884) and *Ley Avellaneda* (1885)[xlix]. The author emphasises 'verticality' in the forms of election of school and university authorities as a key element of the state-centred trend in education. According to Tedesco, education thus rested in the hands of the State, enabling an elite to preserve their leading role in society. From this perspective, Argentine nineteenth century education was to be labelled oligarchic[l] (2003: 83). However, I argue these types of formal arrangements are just one part of the process of concentration of power. Law Nº 1420 and *Ley Avellaneda* in themselves are inadequate to explain how policy-makers co-opted the 'public' label for their agenda, displacing 'the public' from the realm of civil society.

I argue the state won a critical discursive victory against its counter-publics. Over and against Sarmiento's earlier definitions, in 1910 a state official claimed:

> We hear no other voices in the Republic but the Central Government's' (…) Argentine schooling is now an exclusive attention of the State.
>
> (Ramos 1910: 587)

Following a complex, non-linear process, the discourse that prevailed conceptually incorporated 'the public' into a centralised notion of state-provided, funded and administered education, and displaced 'popular' participation to the margins of the official system. This is why local lay voices struggling to raise educational issues lost significance under this paradigm.

Definitions of 'public' education can shape educational governance, either broadening or constraining its 'public' potential. Organisational structures are not neutral shells within which an almost unlimited range of values can find expression (Katz 1987). On the contrary, their structural details and operational rules reflect priorities, limit possibilities, and shape outcomes. An analysis of the discursive regime, and its accompanying matrix of practices, that made 'public' education equal to 'national state' education is thus necessary. I approach this juncture by undertaking a discourse analysis from a genealogical perspective.

The historical sources and texts

During Ramos Mejía's tenure, the National Education Council commissioned two texts that are worthy of a detailed analysis.

One is Juan P. Ramos' extensive two-volume publication, *History of Instruction in the Argentine Republic* (1910). This book represents the nationalist and centralist perspective in education, and was instrumental in the construction of the paradigmatic vision of 'public' education as 'state' education in Argentina. It portrays a powerful administrative and educating State, opposed to a weak system run by private, local or 'popular' sectors. Such was the vision of José María Ramos Mejía. In fact, Ramos' book begins: 'Stamp this book with your name [Ramos Mejía], for you have been its only initiator' (Ramos 1910: XVI).

The second is *La Restauración Nacionalista* (1909), by Ricardo Rojas. State-commissioned, this book develops a critique of Argentine education and offers the basis for a reform in the studies of Modern Humanities, oriented towards 'spiritualising the national consciousness' (1909: 7). Rojas was one of the main advocates of Argentine nationalism. As many intellectuals of that time, Rojas sought to define the country's national identity, and the education system was to play a crucial role. Education in

fact became 'a privileged medium in the strategy of ideological penetration by the state' (Oszlack 1997: 151).[2]

The texts combine with a proliferation of articles, letters and reports on educational issues by the NEC itself, as well as writings of José Ramos Mejía himself, which develop the concept of 'the multitude' over and against the idea of 'the public'. From amongst this surging of discourse I make a choice of themes and texts that relate to the main subject of my thesis: the role of 'public(s)' within the field of education. Both the published books and the archives are extraordinarily revealing of the discursive strategies enacted by the NEC. From a genealogical perspective, they are illustrative of a discourse dissemination oriented to objects of enquiry that, at the same time, become targets for the application of social policy. Secondly, the licensing of some individuals entitled to offer knowledge claims – the experts - and the concomitant exclusion of others - lay voices –, revealing a whole matrix of practices and forms of coercion becoming institutionalised. The role of experts became somewhat exclusionary. It demarcated boundaries and sites of decision-making. I shall point out these aspects throughout the Chapter.

Before I turn to analysing these texts, a note on the historical conditions that allowed the emergence of these types of discourse is necessary.

As a consequence of Buenos Aires becoming Capital City of the Republic in 1881, the provincial schools in the City fell under national jurisdiction. To govern these schools, a decree dated January 28, 1881 created the National Education Council, in charge of directing and administrating education in the federal capital and national territories.[li] Although the National Education Council was not among the earliest state agencies, the characteristics it acquired in a relatively short period show the formation of a modern bureaucracy with a high degree of professionalization.

The creation of the National Education Council was a milestone in the drive towards the centralisation of the administrative bodies and the role of experts in the state educational system[lii]. Following Marengo (1991), the growth of the National Education Council followed three stages: a) structuring, b) expansion and c) consolidation.

The first stage began in 1884 and ended in 1899, comprising Benjamín Zorrilla's administration and the first years of Dr. José María Gutierrez's. During this period the different state agencies began to take shape and the system's diverse branches were established (adult education, military schools, etc.). The second period runs from 1899 to 1908 and comprises the remainder of Dr. José María Gutierrez's administration and the administration of Ponciano Vivanco. This period was mainly geared towards universal coverage. In 1905 Congress passed Law N° 4878, taking another

step forward towards the National State's centralisation and concentration of power. This Law – known as *Ley Lainez,* after the senator who endorsed it in Congress – allowed the National Executive Branch to create schools in the provinces under control of the National Education Council. However, Law N° 4878 was controversial. As we shall see later in the chapter, the *Centralist* wing supported national educational policies for the provinces. On the other hand, defenders of the provinces autonomy deemed the nation's intervention in provincial education as unconstitutional. Even a century after, the *Centralist* versus *Federalist* debate in educational policy still endures in Argentine politics[liii].

The new National Education Council integrated former schools and teachers of Buenos Aires, under federal jurisdiction. Bertoni (2005) argues that for this reason much of the liberal tradition of this province permeated the NEC in its early years[liv]. However, in the decades that followed, the character of this institution evolved. Gradually, old forms were abandoned and new ones emerged. The National Education Council became standardised, regulated and professionalised (p. 1). In effect, the expansion of the national state starting in 1880 meant an increasing professionalization of public functions and, at the turn of the century, the increasing participation of 'experts' in the elaboration of policies.

Education was set alongside the development of other sections of the State. Zimmermann (1995) argues this political-institutional 'regeneration'

also came from new emerging fields with strong interest in promoting the State's active participation in their respective areas; for eg., the cases of public hygiene and criminology, which were embodied in institutions like the Department of Hygiene and the Institute of Criminology (1995: 217). Although educational policy had been developing since the early period after Independence, this branch of the State's activity can also be considered as an example of these trends.

Between 1908 and 1916 the National Education Council entered a period of consolidation. This was mainly characterised by the expansion of the administrative offices and the control of the system's practices. The *Palacio Pizzurno's* (Ministry's building) expansion project considered in the 1909 Annual Report of the National Education Council, serves as an indicator of this process. The project was a response to a growing volume of administration, 'the tasks of which multiply every moment, partly due to the creation of new schools, but also to the new orientations in teaching, the assimilation of foreigners, the progress of the pedagogic sciences' (Ramos Mejía 1909: 56). All this had an impact on the National Education Council, complicating its administrative mechanisms and stimulating its expansion. Additional space was needed, to accommodate the work of the Medical Inspection, the Warehouse, the Directorate of Architecture, the National Teachers' Library, the Hall for Public Ceremonies, the School Museum, the Technical Inspectorate, the Office for Illustrations & School Decoration, the Judicial Office, among others. The majesty of the State was enacted. A

proliferation of the Ministry's offices is an example of the material manifestation of State power. Most importantly, they are illustrative of the strategy by which schools were fundamentally changing from being largely negative and restricted social technologies to becoming predominantly positive ones. School practice was beginning to be disciplined, appropriately regulated and objectively managed (Deacon 2006: 128).

Following Foucault, as the fostering of life and care of population became a central concern of the State, a new regime of power took hold. Foucault calls this regime 'bio-power' (Foucault and Rabinow 1991: 17). Under this political rationality, scientific categories (species, population, fertility, and so forth), rather than juridical ones, become the object of systematic, sustained political attention and intervention. This seems to set conditions for figures like Ramos Mejía to gain predominance in the political arena. Aspects of the human species in fact are the issues he displays in *Multitudes Argentinas,* his 'study of applied biology' (Ramos Mejía 1899: 12). Bio-power also approaches the body, not directly in its biological dimension, but as an object to be improved and controlled through 'disciplinary technologies' - among which are schools. Interestingly, this approach to social issues leads Ramos Mejía to draw conclusions on the material imperative of consolidating a 'national education' system to manage the population.

Dr. José Ramos Mejía was President of the National Education Council between 1908 and 1913. It is worth highlighting two of the main policies implemented during this administration: the significant expansion and specialization of the inspectorate and the development and implementation of nationalist and patriotic education policies. I widen this analysis later, as examples of matrixes of practices associated with this discursive regime.

In the following section I outline the discursive regime that Ramos Mejía, as head of the NEC, contributed to the field of education, focusing on the significance of 'the public'. Fears and concerns about the risk of social disintegration strongly combine with the awareness of the power of education to transform subjectivities, to build a common nationality and thus challenge social dissolution. Ramos Mejía contributed to the consolidation of the role of the national state in directing, managing and funding a 'state-national' education-system based on principles of unity and homogenisation.

The concept of 'the multitude'

Ramos Mejía's conception of 'the people' influenced the possibilities of a public sphere within the educational field. Historians have tended to view Ramos Mejía as one of the most representative cases of positivist thought in Argentine education (Puiggrós 1990; Terán 2000). Drawing on his medical background, he conceived society as an organism, and its crises as diseases.

According to Oscar Terán (2000) this vision is also evidence of the pretension of a medical sector within the intellectual circles to seize the right to speak about politics (2000: 98). A preface to a book published by Ramos Mejía earlier in 1899, *Multitudes Argentinas*, actually defines the work as 'a study of applied biology, one of the first to rigorously deal with the emergence of a sociological element called *the multitude*' (p. 12).

Ramos Mejía barely uses the term 'public' throughout the book. He suggests instead the problematic emergence of 'the multitude', and concentrates on this social phenomenon of assembly:

> In certain circumstances, an assembly of men acquires new and different features from those that each one possesses separately or in isolation. Due to a kind of abdication of the conscious personality… feelings and ideas tend to acquire an equal level (…) in such a way that the organised group constitutes the so called spirit of the multitude, a collective soul… When this happens, the community becomes what, for want of a better expression, common language has classified as mob or crowd, a psychological multitude forming a single soul…
>
> (Ramos Mejía 1899: 34)

Ramos Mejía offers a detailed 'physiognomy' of the multitude. He deploys a scientific language to describe the nature of this 'provisional being', formed by 'heterogeneous elements' that at once 'fuse like cells when they form a new living body or a new different being' (p. 31). Attachment to the multitude, in Ramos Mejía's view, is a symptom of 'biological' weakness. A quote from Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People,* is taken by Ramos Mejía as

the 'eternal truth': 'Only the one that is alone is strong' (p. 25). The powerful, talented and moral man is not a man of the multitude. The text conveys a sense of fear of a social force potentially turning against reasonable individuals who remain as such only in isolation. According to Ramos Mejía, in a gathering or assembly of men there cannot be 'silent reasoning', or 'intelligence'. Moreover, men of a certain moral level, by merely becoming part of a multitude, descend several grades in the scale of civilisation. Gendered visions also appear quite explicitly:

> The multitude is impressionable and capricious, like passionate women; pure unconsciousness, fiery, but full of flashing light; lovers, above all, of the violent sensation, the lively colour, the loud music, the beautiful man of great stature (…) the multitude is sensual and full of lust for the pleasure of its senses. It does not reason, it just feels. It is not intelligent, it reasons wrong, imagines and deforms; wishes everything big and bombastic…
>
> (Ramos Mejía 1899: 38)

According to Ryan (1992), gendered visions of society were strikingly universal at that time. The Republican ideology held that the female sex embodied uncurbed human passions that inevitably subverted the self control and rationality demanded from citizens. This gendered logic made 'manliness' the standard of a Republican character and 'effeminacy' the most debilitating political malady in nineteenth century America (1992: 266). As historians of the early republic and feminist political theorists argue, the universal citizen was not genderless but male. The French

revolution and early Republic visioned the ideal in female form. As such, men carried a restricted notion of the general interest into public discourse.

The use of language is extremely interesting. Ramos Mejía deploys a scientific register, thus enacting a practice of knowledge where 'common language' is disregarded as a mean to accomplish cognitive functions (Vallejos de Llobet 2000: 227). On the other hand, a political register is also present in the text. Here language is expressive, containing affective and, fundamentally, axiological elements. Ramos Mejía's discourse actually combines scientific and political configurations. The following passage exemplifies these characteristics:

> While I was studying the admirable process adopted by nature to slowly develop all the organic types, from our primitive fish, to the man; I thought, with a reason, that in the formation of society, something analogous should occur (…) First the embryo, the immigrant, joins the social order with the anatomic structure of a fish, later turns into an amphibian and finally a mammal; I mean to say that in the order of his intellectual and moral perfection, he must follow this transformation.
>
> (Ramos Mejía 1899: 247)

In Ramos Mejía's view, immigrants mainly composed the 'undeveloped' segment of society. The immigrant who just arrived to the country, particularly to Buenos Aires City, was perceived by Ramos Mejía as an 'amorphous' being who needed to complete a whole intellectual and moral evolution. The language of biology again crops up significantly: the

terms 'organic', 'evolution', 'transformation', and even more extremely, 'primitive fish', 'embryo', 'amphibian' and 'mammal' are manifestations of the *organicist* and Darwinist influences over the Sociology of the time (Terán 2000; Vallejos de Llobet 2000). The description of the Argentine crowd melting into the modern era by the heat of immigration, posed a revisionist hypothesis. In contrast to what other political leaders (Alberdi and Mitre) had postulated a few decades earlier, spontaneous immigration was not to transform a still and lethargic local society; it was society itself that would modify the foreigner's weak idiosyncrasy (Botana and Gallo 1997). Ramos Mejía enacts a complex discursive intersection, joining bits of progressive enlightenment and human sciences, including Psychology, as sources contributing to the possibilities of organizing the population. The variety and number of sources that influence this discourse makes it extraordinarily complex.

Ramos Mejia acknowledges that the merging of immigrants and local society gave rise to an *aureus bourgeois*, 'unbearable and voracious' (1899: 252). He criticizes their 'assemblies, theatres, and chambers'. He also criticizes their means of expression – Habermas' institutions of 'the public': 'the daily, the small circle, chitchatting and street talk' (p. 268). Ramos Mejía seemed to interpret public opinion was being determined by the passions of the masses, thus needing to be purified and subjected to effective limitation. From a Foucauldian perspective, Ramos Mejía's book represents the political discourses and struggles between social interests and

standpoints, a condensation of struggles between three political groups: the local elite, the bourgeoisie and the popular classes. By referring to pointless talk – 'only chitchatting' – Ramos Mejía asserted the power of state structures to decide upon and regulate the social.

Throughout the book, Ramos Mejía presents several categorisations of the local population. He deploys both scientific and social categories to determine 'characters that assemble individuals and species into more general units, distinguishing those units one from another and enabling them to fit together to form a table in which all individuals and all groups have their appropriate place' (Foucault 1970: 245). Educated and powerful citizens were supposed to form an elite public (in view of the lack of an aristocracy by birth) whose critical debate would determine public opinion. Along with the bourgeoise, Ramos Mejia disqualified other series of categories of men: 'ill-mannered' (*guarangos*) (p. 257), 'uncouth' (*huasos*), 'skunks' (*canallas*) and 'hoodlums' (*compadres*), who were perceived as indifferent, cold, sceptical and essentially mercantile (p. 270). 'Forcefully, one has to believe that this heavy yokel is not like us', stated Ramos Mejía (p. 247). The incapacity of theoretical and rational development was a connotation of the multitudinous man. Only the 'big quadrupeds', beings of a higher size and force, were not objectifying subjects. These knew what properly appertained to any individual, precisely by having before them the classification – or the possibility of classifying – all others. All other designations awaited for their personality to be purified. The means to

achieve this were: a) biological evolution installed in a supportive environment; b) authoritative insights of materially independent citizens; and c) a wise and stable *national* education to clean the mold within which tendencies must be shaped to fix the national temperament' (Ramos Mejía 1899: 270)[lv]. It was only after this process, that small 'fauna' would achieve the size of the large 'quadrupeds'. Education would therefore have a major role. Ramos Mejia emphasized the 'national' character of 'public' education. Additionally, he distances himself from the liberal position, in the sense he did not share great concern about the tendency toward the centralisation of government power.

Local liberals and anarchists shared this concern. I return to this in the following section. What is worth noting here is that Ramos Mejia's basic concern was the problem of governance in a society permeated by the presence of 'the multitude'. He aims at redefining the whole 'lower region' and elaborating new views on how to introduce economy and government from the top of the state down to all aspects of social life. He constructs 'the crowd' as a threat to order and progress. He suggests a lack of structure and leadership within this level of society.

In a sense, through these kinds of discourses, there can be no public sphere within the social. There is no conceptualisation of the possibility for social interaction, debate, reflection, and rationality. It is rather a biological system. Population is reduced to natural drives. Additionally, the public

sphere that Habermas conceived as an 'educated strata of people putting reason to use', in Ramos Mejía could only be a 'state-educated' strata. Ramos Mejía believed that only through several years of state schooling did children become capable of achieving a complete generational transformation: 'the immigrant is modified, turned into people' (Ramos Mejía 1899: 256). Immigrants would earn a legitimate place in society only after receiving a primary national education and becoming the depositaries of a future love for the nation. The school medium was meant to operate 'marvellous' things on 'the plastic submissiveness of their virgin brain' (Ramos Mejía 1899: 247). The following section describes how these notions build a particular discursive paradigm where 'public education' becomes equated to 'state education', a system of schooling funded, provided and controlled by the state.

A revearsal of 'public' education

The idea of a public sphere, as Habermas defined it, is reversed within the discursive paradigm to which Ramos Mejía contributed.

Ramos Mejía believed that modernity's secularization had caused a shift in power from the church to the state, and thus required a new form of social government and control anchored in the power of state institutions. His particular organization of a 'patriotic liturgy' in education illustrates this statement.

The 1910 Annual Report to the Ministry of Education describes in great detail every resolution aimed at 'intensifying the nationalistic orientation of education' (Ramos Mejía 1913: 27). In May 1908, schools started celebrating the 'Week of May' (*Semana de Mayo*)[lvi] evoking 'the great historical days and the glorious deeds that originated our emancipation and were the genesis of the liberty of half of the American continent' (p. 34). The Council also prescribed the 'Salutation to the Flag' (*Saludo a la Bandera*). This ordered all the schools to 'hoist and lower the flag, a ceremony that should be announced by a ringing of bells, while the students stood showing respect to the glorious symbol of the Fatherland' (p. 38). These tiny, everyday, physical mechanisms, certainly provided, at the base, a guarantee of the submission of forces and bodies (Foucault 1977: 222). In November 1908, the National Education Council also decreed the Annual Commemoration of the 'Fallen in Defence of the Fatherland' (p. 39) and, finally, in 1909 a resolution was passed to set up the 'Oath to the Flag' (*Jura de la Bandera*), including full prescription of the steps to follow during the ceremony (p. 41). In this Report, Ramos Mejía evokes a visit to the country of a professor from the University of Tokyo, who openly manifested his admiration for the patriotic spirit that drove Argentine primary education. The 'Salutation to the Flag' that took place twice a day was what had mostly attracted the attention of this professor, who had admitted to General Inspector Mr. Francisco Herrera it had made him think about the reasons why in Argentina so often people paid homage to the symbol of the Fatherland, while in Japan this only happened three or four times a year.

The foreign professor had finally found the explanation: 'We are ancient people. Our soul has already been moulded. You receive every day a thousand foreign elements you need to assimilate, to *Argentinize*'. For this reason you need to keep an intense patriotic feeling in continuous vibration' (p. 37). Ramos Mejía somewhat proudly exhibited the anecdote, seeking to legitimise the local patriotic ritual's intensity through the voice of a foreign observer.

These prescriptions over everyday behaviour, such as saluting, hoisting, lowering and swearing the Flag, are examples of Foucault's most original contribution to understanding the subject's objectification, 'modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects' (Foucault and Rabinow 1991: 7). One mode is precisely 'scientific classification', earlier exemplified through Ramos Mejía's particular ordering and defining of the social elements in contemporary society. Another mode is 'subjectification', which concerns 'the way a human being turns him – or herself into a subject', differing in significant ways from the other modes due to the active participation of the subject in this process of self-formation. Following Foucault 'it takes place through a variety of 'operations on [people's] own bodies, on their own souls, on their own thoughts, on their own conduct' (Foucault and Rabinow 1991: 11). These operations characteristically entail a process of self-understanding, but one that is mediated by an external authority figure. Ramos Mejía asserted:

> Systematically and with obliged insistence, they [the children] talk about the Fatherland, the flag, the national glories and the heroic episodes in our history; they listen to the hymn, they then sing it, they frown while they recite it with the ardour of an epopee, they comment on it in their own bewitching ingenuity; and in this active verbalization it becomes demonstrated how appropriate childhood is to throw the seeds of such noble feelings.
>
> (Ramos Mejía 1899: 256)

On February 1909, Ramos Mejía created the Bulletin of Public Instruction (*Boletín de la Instrucción Pública*) aiming at 'disseminating inside and outside the country, the main guidelines for public culture'. It was organised into four sections. One, the 'Official Section', compiled all the decrees of the Executive Power and resolutions from the Ministry; Two, 'Doctrinaire and Technical Section', compiled scientific publications, works and initiatives of public civil servants and institutions, on methods and systems of teaching; Three, 'Administrative Section' kept track of the work of offices and statistical data on general education. Finally, number four, 'Information and Bibliography Section' compiled a variety of news and useful knowledge for teachers, as well as reviews of new publications on education and teaching. In this case, disciplinary control, rather than ordering individuals in space, takes the form of a 'normative rationality'; it establishes norms and criteria for teacher practice. The body of teachers required as much disciplining as children who were sons of immigrants. Each section of the Bulletin reflects a nexus of objects of inquiry, criteria, practices, procedures, institutions, apparatuses and operations that built this particular 'power/knowledge regime'.

Patriotic exaltation gave place to public events and meetings where various sectors of society and the ruling elite gathered together seeking the formation of a national identity. Bertoni (2001) keeps a record of daily articles in *La Prensa* newspaper, commenting on the events of May 25th, 1889: 'We have never seen such a large assembly of carriages in Buenos Aires...' (2001: 95). Also the CNE, through numerous articles in *El Monitor* periodical, described how around Argentina's first Centennial numerous patriotic ceremonies generated social mobilization (Monitor 1910: 1040). The construction of nationhood also triggered complex and contradictory processes. Bertoni argues this climate of patriotic sensitivity went alongside other concerns: the disagreement of old political groups displaced by Roquism[lvii] as well as new claims for increased participation from emerging groups, that included young students, young professionals and intellectuals who found both the circles of power too restricted and the roads to full political participation too narrow. 'Among the gatherings in clubs and coffee shops, in corridors and halls of Congress, government and private meetings, a reaction of the public mind started growing in a peculiar patriotic keynote' (Bertoni 2001: 97). This is illustrative of Habermas' idea of a public sphere eventuating from a general aim to transform arbitrary authority into rational authority. The growth of the public sphere was set alongside the widening of political participation and the crystallizing of citizenship ideals.

Eley (1992) acknowledges the simultaneous emergence of nationalities and 'publics' in the nineteenth century. According to this

author, in large parts of southern and eastern Europe in the late nineteenth century, the growth of an audience for nationalist discourse entailed simultaneously the formation of a public sphere (p. 296). This co-determination makes a large body of literature on nationalism relevant to the historical discussion of 'the public'. However, Habermas focused on the idea that the public sphere presumed prior transformations in social relations, their condensation into new institutional arrangements, and the generation of new social, cultural, and political discourses around this changing environment. The public sphere presupposed this larger accumulation of socio-cultural change. As Eley describes, the emergence of a public was linked to the growth of urban culture – metropolitan and provincial – as the novel arena of a locally organised public life (meeting houses, concert halls, theatres, opera houses, lecture halls, museums), to a new infrastructure of social communication (the press, publishing companies and other literary media; the rise of a reading public via reading and language societies; subscription publishing and lending libraries; improved transportation; and adapted centres of sociability like coffeehouses, taverns and clubs), and to a new universe of voluntary association (Eley 1992: 291). By 1910, Argentina was in fact a site of these manifestations of socio-cultural change.

The immigrant's bourgeois-middle class defence of their national identity as well as the ambition to raise their particular interests was a point of concern for the ruling class. Voluntary association is in principle the

logical form of bourgeois emancipation and self-affirmation. Following Eley (1992), associational initiatives were fundamental to the formation of a bourgeois civil society. The ideals and practices of association were explicitly hostile, by organisation and intent, to older principles of 'oligarchic' organisation, which ascribed social place by hereditary and legal status. By contrast, the new principle of association offered an alternative means of expressing opinion and forming taste, which defined an independent *public* space beyond the legal prescriptions of status and behaviour of the ruling class. This is central to Habermas' conception of the public sphere. Sociologically, associationism reflected the growing strength and density of the social, personal and family ties among the educated and property-owning bourgeoisie. It described a *public* arena where the dominance of the bourgeoisie would naturally run. It was the constitutive organisational form of a new force for cultural and political change. Voluntary association was the primary context of expression for bourgeois aspirations to leadership in nineteenth century society (Eley 1992: 298).

Historiography suggests the Argentine ruling class showed awareness of the power of association. Given the local context, associative life would thus be accepted provided the guidelines were nationally inspired. If, through public education, the public might begin enjoying the necessary skills to access the written word, content should thus be nationally oriented (Terán 2000: 125). Potential multiple public(s) arranged around convened concrete, localized, and sometimes 'special' interests - such as educational

issues, which Sarmiento had projected at district level – had to be subsumed by the state; for what lay outside the state was to be feared: 'This bourgeois, in a crowd, will be frightening if national education does not change it with the brush of culture and the infiltration of other ideals that contains their precipitous ascension to the Capitol' (2000: 262). Associative life was thus a new object of concern for the leading elites in late nineteenth century in Argentina. The state sensed the necessity of distributing *mottoes* that would gather community life around the ideal of the Fatherland.

Within this discursive paradigm, the role of the public(s) was constrained. Policy makers discarded 'participatory' projects arguing that given the population's condition, public education would find no advantage in being directed by the communities, and the situation demanded direct intervention of the state. Additionally, while the new idea of citizenship was defined in terms of cultural singularity, it also carried a definition of the national society, marked by the exclusion of diversity. According to Bertoni (2001) the 'national interest', of which the ruling group felt itself as sole depositary, was constantly called upon to justify the curtailment of rights and freedoms (p. 156). The educational responsibilities and management role of municipalities were taken away with the purpose of unifying education by giving it a sole direction, and transferring control to the central government (p. 129-130). These dispositions organised the schools to celebrate 'a cult to the nation' (Terán 2000: 98). Ramos Mejía believed that through the mechanisation of these practices he would soon achieve the

nationalisation of the *multitudes*. I thus wish to describe the characteristics of a national-state public school under this discursive paradigm.

'National Education'

During the stage of *consolidation* of the educational system, Ramos Mejía was able to spread his influence. By 1910, the Argentine education system began moving towards building a virtual 'State monopoly' (Narodowski and Andrada 2001). Ramos Mejía devised a plan to deepen the teaching of patriotic and nationalist contents. The program was linked to all areas of knowledge as well as increasing mechanisms of central bureaucratic control over the work of teachers and students.

Rojas, a collaborator of the National Education Council, shared Ramos Mejía's concerns in relation to 'signs of unsuspected denationalisation' in the schools of the capital city: 'In certain schools, some children refuse to study National History, showing tolerance towards their foreign parents' (Rojas 1909: 178). A Report from the General Inspector of Private Schools, Lakes Bismarck, supported these impressions: 'Most of the 66 schools run by foreign societies in the capital, i.e., Italian, French, German, English, etc., are essentially a piece of land of their own nationality transplanted into ours' (Monitor 1909: 320). The report comments on minutiae regarding different aspects of the school's organization, such as the size of rooms, the building's general conditions, contents of teaching, attitude of teachers

towards teaching, decoration and portraits of 'great men' hanging in the walls... Subtle observations included in this report are worth a quote:

> When speaking about any heroic act of our emancipation or national organization, teachers show a cold attitude. There isn't either enthusiasm in their soul or a spirit of light strong enough to present all that such acts can provide in terms of examples and beauty. The Argentine student, son of a foreigner, behaves like the savage who sees nothing, infers nothing, or if you will, as the mountain or seaside peasant for whom greatness and teachings go unnoticed.
>
> (Monitor 1909: 320)

The text suggests teachers communicated no feelings, no patriotic devotion for the 'heroes' of Argentine history. Educational leaders thus viewed the need to develop curricular policies and to prescribe the content of teaching. Rojas mentions the need of connecting school programs with locally-elaborated themes and contents, replacing foreign books and literature, providing new teaching material, forming a stable and enthusiastic professoriate, 'everything that constitutes a true national education' (Rojas 1909: 147). In this context, the expression, 'We now have to make our school ours' (1909), reveals a strong official bias. Who does Rojas refer to deploying the terms 'we' and 'ours'? The author celebrates the emergence of a strong alliance among a series of state offices and institutions 'in the highest centres of our pedagogic culture', geared to found 'the Argentine school':

> The Ministry, the superior educational authority and head of secondary education; the National Education Council, that governs primary education in national territories, city of Buenos Aires and secondarily in the provinces; the Council of Buenos Aires, that governs this vast and cosmopolitan territory; La Plata University, one of our biggest scientific and patriotic enterprises, and the School of Philosophy and Letters, that forms our educators and researchers.
>
> (Rojas 1909: 144)

All these institutions would form an intra-state association aimed at bringing unity and identity to Argentine education. Other potential publics within the social realm did not fit within the 'we'. This stand articulates a traditional conception of educational policy: a defined government action designed and implemented from the macro level of the educational system without the institutionalised participation of other sectors. Under this paradigm, the 'art of government' suggests that state education is the exclusive means of accomplishing the nationalisation of society. Even the 'broad' public sphere is perceived as powerless. Amazingly consistent with previous analysis, the Private Schools Inspector's report stated:

> Newspapers and magazines spill ink into sermons and articles, patriots into eloquent speeches and proclamations geared to raise the civic spirit of our people. However, they will achieve nothing. Schools are the only capable of forming during childhood the hearts of our citizens, a sense of duty and love for the Fatherland.
>
> (Monitor 1909: 321)

Government reiterated the dismissal of any other site for the expression of civil society. Heads of family, colonies of immigrants and

groups of different ideological persuasions – both the broad and the local educational public(s) – would have a marginal standing under this discursive regime. The children entered the school as individuals. Social groups other than the nation did not exist, or at least – as in the Greek *oikos*- remained immersed in the shadow and obscurity of the private sphere. Citizens would get nothing from them. In fact, potential public arenas could be threatening if they articulated the interests of other groups against the Nation.

The state built a sense of alarm in relation to foreign community schools, and this was translated into systems of regular control and inspection. The National Education Council declared it was 'time to react' (Monitor 1909: 321). Authorizations granted for the management of private primary schools were revoked; teachers and principals were required to submit titles and pass *ad hoc* examinations proving the necessary scientific and pedagogic qualifications to teach; the state established analytical programs in order to regulate the curriculum and school schedules were supervised by controls on the distribution of time allocated to the teaching of each subject (Monitor 1909: 321-322). The General Inspector of Private Schools reported:

> At the beginning, the Council's resolution raised the resistance of principals and teachers who thought to see in these dispositions the curtailment of their principles of freedom enshrined in our Constitution. However, they were soon convinced that the purpose was not to restrict their freedom; only to guarantee that whoever is engaged in teaching knows at least how to do it.
>
> (Monitor 1909: 313)

The state deployed teacher training and examination as techniques to order and value certain types of individuals: civil servants and people that did the work of the State. Pedagogy, as a discipline, was thus made functional to the state. It produced subjected and 'docile bodies' (Foucault 1977: 138). It drew teachers into the work of the state, by turning power into an 'aptitude', a 'capacity', which the state sought to increase. Power was masked. It was productive. Instead of inhibiting the teachers, this made them up, but in the interest of the State. As put by Foucault, 'disciplinary coercion establishes in the body the constricting link between an increased aptitude and an increased domination' (1977: 138).

Oszlack (1997) describes various forms of state dissemination: a 'repressive' form, which carried the organization of a military force, unified and distributed throughout the territory with the object of preventing or suffocating any attempt to alter the order imposed by the national state. A second form, labelled 'co-optive', which entailed gaining the support of dominant sectors and provincial governments through the construction of alliances and coalitions based on reciprocal compromises and favours. A third form, the 'material', which presupposed diverse forms of advancing, locating services, works and regulations in provincial territories; and, finally, the 'ideological', which consisted in increasing the state's capacity to produce and distribute values, knowledge and symbols in order to strengthen the feelings of nationality and to legitimate the domination.

Rojas is thus summoned by Ramos Mejía to develop a key part of the nationalising project. His work is inscribed within the ideological strategy. However, the ideological dissemination also articulated some elements of a repressive discourse space:

> The main element for the completion of the work at school is the teacher, the true teacher, that ignored hero; for heroes are not only those who fall in the battlefield defending the flag of their fatherland or fighting for their order, but are also those who fight daily with the most formidable of enemies: ignorance. Modest soldiers who hear the trumpet sounding to call them to fight unknown enemies, who leave the ranks only when they feel mortally wounded, and who then silently withdraw without honours, just as they carried out their action, without hearing victory trumpets after the battle.
>
> (Monitor 1909: 316)

The official discourse has plenty of war metaphors. At least metaphorically, education is inscribed within the framework of a 'repressive' strategy. It confronts ignorance and unawareness of 'the national'. Action takes place on a 'battlefield' where society is defended. This links to Foucault's advice in terms of what genealogy should pay attention to:

> We should orient our analysis of power toward material operations, forms of subjugation, and the connections among the uses made of the local systems of subjugation on the one hand, and apparatuses of knowledge on the other. (…). We have to study power (…) outside the field delineated by juridical sovereignty and the institution of the State. We have to analyse it by beginning with the techniques and tactics of domination
>
> (Foucault 1997: 34)

The state battles mobs and crowds. There is a likeness of power to war. State agents do the work of the soldiers, but in a docile way. Doing the work of the state was a humble process. Another interesting element underpinning this fragment of official discourse is the constraining of the teacher's field of activity to the classroom or school. Their voice neither raises demands nor puts the state in contact with the needs of the school. Moreover, when teachers 'leave the ranks', they do it in silence. In this sense, teachers as a whole are not encouraged to come together as a public.

A similar concept applies to other actors in the school level. A note raised by a high school principal in the City of Buenos Aires published by *The Monitor* (Monitor 1909: 67) helps to illustrate the National Education Council's position in relation to local initiatives. This principal supported an idea 'advanced by the female students in the school aimed at 'perpetuating the memory of the fallen for the Fatherland'. They requested the Council's permission to raise subscriptions among schools in the Capital City and other provinces in order to gather funds and build a monument. The National Inspectorate gave a negative response:

> The Honourable Council has already established, in a thoughtful and stern way, how to commemorate the day of the Fallen for the Fatherland, and schools must comply with this resolution. Leave initiatives of this magnitude to parliamentary action, to the social and political institutions that duly represent public opinion and government. Schools must contribute to the achievement of patriotic ideals in more humble ways, although not less effective or productive; this is, through the teaching of Argentine history and geography, through the teaching of moral and civic education.
>
> (Monitor 1909: 679)

The official voice ordered the quantity and nature of participation for different actors involved even in achieving the patriotic ideals. Schools were relegated to the 'humble' function of teaching national contents, under the shadow of other sectors properly licensed to raise their voice. Moral and civic qualities of the people had to be created by the school. The social was to be built by the state and education.

La Restauracion Nacionalista (1909), by Rojas, was officially printed and handed free to every teacher and publicist in the Republic. The main issue that can be traced throughout the book is that history is not 'instructive' in the way of natural sciences or mathematics. It is essentially 'educative' of the character and the intelligence. A whole chapter is devoted to justifying the need to orient the teaching of History towards 'strengthening the national spirit' (Rojas 1909: 37). The goal of history is 'creating the soul of the people', viewed as 'our most urgent problem' (Rojas 1909: 37). The curriculum has been the object of analysis in the field of Argentine history of education (Dussel 1997). A statement in the first section of the introduction offers a clear account of the existence of diverse social sectors in conflict:

> The book's doctrine hurts so many prejudices and interests in our society that passionate voices have emerged from everywhere to scold the author.
>
> (Rojas 1909: 13)

The interest of this work is to recover these voices, illustrate their discursive strategies, and track the outcome of these clashes. The introduction states,

> I reviewed the newspaper clippings and felt humorously impressed with the attacks I received from very different standpoints: *La Vanguardia*, marxist; *La Protesta*, anarchist; and *El Pueblo*, catholic. This was the tacit coalition of the offended interests. Other *bourgeois* newspapers from confusedly alarmed *foreign communities* also dared to complain. Above all, that was not a critique but a passionate reaction, the crassest errors in the interpretation of my ideas.[lviii]
>
> (Rojas 1909: 18)

The allusion to Ramos Mejia's paradigmatic *Multitudes Argentinas* is unavoidable. Voices emerging from sites other than the state, especially when raising critiques, are dismissed and catalogued as a product of 'passionate reaction'. Anarchists, Marxists, even the Church, are all accused of responding impulsively against the official voice. Reasoning, in contrast, should be 'silent' and 'serene' (Ramos Mejía 1899: 13), for passion leads to 'wrong reasoning', 'imagining and deforming' (1899: 13). Counter-public opinion, thus, is yet another example of 'mob' behaviour. Rojas accuses these sectors of misconceiving the ideas of his book. However, an example of these critiques appeared on a review of *La Restauración Nacionalista,* published in *La Protesta* newspaper, reveals both the form and content of counter-public opinion met basic criteria of 'reasonability':

> In the first place, it is a mistake to establish patriotic traditions as instruments of pedagogic moralisation. In history, good and evil cannot be catalogued as fixed and invariable values; there exist favourable or harmful events for our society, and in time this is judged or measured in arrangement with the moral of each time and class (…) Over this immense land that expects the efforts of men of different languages and latitudes to realize its treasures (…) making patriotism would simply be not to obstruct with restrictive measures and corrupted political practices the evolution that Sarmiento envisioned.
>
> (Dagnino 1909)

The text is signalling a contradiction between the government's aim of guaranteeing the country's economic growth and a set of restrictions targeting the key actors of this process. The article also shows alternative perspectives towards immigration, and criticises the state's pretence of cultural homogeneity, a core aspect of the official paradigm. Notably, references to Sarmiento are deployed in both competing discourses. Dagnino hails the public to fulfil Sarmiento's 'prophetic vision', and at the same time Rojas' Report assures 'Sarmiento introduced civilisation, but wanted it to be Argentinean (…) otherwise he would not have conceived the prophetic end of his discourse to the Flag, that every true Argentinean reads with thrill' (1909: 235). Both discourses draw on Sarmiento in an attempt to legitimise their proposals.

Sarmiento's discourse to the Flag can be found in the National Education Council's journal *El Monitor* (Monitor 1910: 159-168). Curiously enough, it focuses almost completely on describing the deeds of the heroic

figure of Manuel Belgrano, 'who fought against Spanish troops' and 'whose soul was the first to feel the move of American patriotism' (p. 159). Sarmiento mentions the word 'patriotism', but barely displays nationalist ideas in the whole of his discourse. Towards the end of the speech he mentions Argentina compared to the United States, 'the amalgamation of citizens and foreigners runs slower', and suggests a hypothesis: 'Perhaps the sacred fire of freedom is not too vivid yet to melt the nationalities into the strong bronze of a regenerated People…' and concludes: 'It doesn't matter. Maybe Providence follows here another path' (p. 165). Although this idea of diverse nationalities fusing to constitute a regenerated People can be somehow interpreted as fairly aligned with the nationalist trend, what strikes the attention here is the tone of lack of alarm, the reference to the slow course of providence. Instead, Rojas' report announces a 'tragic destiny' for the Argentine people 'if they abdicate their personality and interrupt their tradition', 'if they opt for a suicide vocation' (Rojas 1909: 236). Rojas reasons in the exact opposite direction from 'the work of providence',

> We cannot free ourselves to the sole characterising influence of the territory over the inhabitants, or to the chances of a slow and new ethnographic formation. Let's trust better the power of ideas that change the spirit of men and govern the mysterious dynamics of civilisation.
>
> (Rojas 1909: 236)

The state acknowledged a massive emergence of discourses around education. Ramos Mejía actually wrote in his *Memorias* as President of the

National Education Council: 'there has never been so much talk around education' (1909: 77). However, from this high-ranking government official's perspective, the statement carries negativity. Following Foucault's notion of the 'repressive hypothesis', the state seemed well aware that education should be captured within a 'national' discourse. Critical consequences would be unleashed if all this discourse were left to its own devices. As said before, the 'conglomeration of races' arriving daily to the country worried many Argentine intellectuals and politicians (Monitor 1909: 675). Ramos Mejía perceived 'a remarkable lack of unity, of serene and profound harmony of conception' (1909: 77) in Argentine society, and feared for the anarchy that such diverse elements could potentially produce over the country as a whole. 'Multiply this anarchy, this disorientation by fourteen, since each province has its own law, its criterion, its separate curriculum, and you will see, mathematically, the state of our education in the republic' (p. 81).

This appreciation contrasts the view of discursive practices and talk constituting the very essence of publicness. Contrarily to the notion that a public sphere adequate to democratic policy depends both upon the quality of discourse and the quantity of participation (Calhoun 1992: 2), here, any manifestation of diversity was perceived as undermining of cohesion and order. The city turned increasingly strange for the members of the elite. As signalled by Oscar Terán, 'unable to understand diverse languages; the different has turned into threatening, and the public space appears at risk

to break in a game of languages whose translation will only be possible through a code imposed from the top' (Terán 2000: 129).

In this context, the influence of Ramos Mejía extended beyond ideological dissemination. Simply changing teaching contents would not reform Argentine education. The goals of 'unity' and 'nationalisation' would materialise in structural forms of governing the educational system, transcending substantial policies. The following section describes the formula of programmatic and administrative centralisation that characterised state public education during this period and endured for more than a century.

Programmatic and administrative centralisation

In this section I review a set of measures and discourse strategies geared towards consolidating a national state education system.

Ramos Mejia believed that Congress should pass a law *nationalizing* education throughout the territory of the republic. In his view, this could potentially be 'the most transcendent law ever recorded in the Argentine education Annals' (1909: 82). According to Ramos Mejía, a great part of the opinion favoured nationalisation, 'as it is shown by the almost daily preaching of journalism in all areas of the country, the manifestation of our most distinguished authorities on the matter, the vote of educational

conferences, and finally, the very governments of provinces adhering unreservedly to *Lainez* Law'[lix] (1909: 82). In his opinion, only a minority was against nationalising education, on the grounds of 'a historical and constitutional error' (1909: 82).

Among the different strategies deployed to build a common sense in favour of unifying and nationalising primary education, Ramos Mejía commissioned Juan P. Ramos (National Inspector of the National Education Council) to produce a report on the history of Argentine education. Ramos' two-volume report is a most interesting reconstruction of history beginning in the *Colonial Era*, culminating with the inexorable creation of the 'National School' in contemporary times. It contributes towards building a common sense about the challenges of Argentine education, and their single solution: *the national school*.

> Half a century since our fundamental charter, more than half a million illiterates show the indisputable failure of schooling in the provinces and the urgent need to unify and nationalize primary education.
>
> (Ramos 1910: 84).

Ramos claims the 'inevitability' of reform. Schools in the provinces were presented as 'fundamentally poor'; the system of subvention as inefficient (p. 128), and Ramos' report develops the key hypothesis: the solution to the problem can only be to set *schools founded and sustained by*

the nation, 'showing conditions of superiority over nearby provincial schools, serving as the necessary stimulus for educational progress' (p. 125).

Ramos deals with structural details for the construction of a national educational system. The way in which he speaks about policy, his references to untrue (and true) principles, his vocabulary, is part of the creation of new conditions of acceptance and enactment of contemporary policy. He constructs the inevitable and the necessary (Ball 2008: 5). His text holds an extraordinary interest.

> Argentina has needed thirty-five years to break with the federative principle; thirty- five years in which a conventional lie managed to prevail over the need that, at last, time came to impose.
>
> (Ramos 1910: 125)

The Discourse enacted by Ramos Mejía is re-contextualised into the field of history and contemporary educational policy by Ramos's text. A state-centred perspective is expressed in his perception of the process that led inexorably to the consolidation of a national education system run by the National Education Council. According to Ramos, in the early years of the nation schools were simply minor institutions: 'Schools were not a concern, as they are today' (Ramos 1910: 114). Interestingly, he asserts 'In the language of the period, they do not figure in government platforms, nor in annual budgets or laws in Congress' (Ramos 1910: 114). Until education achieved a separate budget, its visibility was limited. As a consequence,

education could only depend on local initiative and, for Ramos, this meant 'subsisting miserably, relying on the provincial authorities' (p. 114). From this perspective, 'popular initiative' is viewed as the result of government's defective action. As put by Ramos, 'until the state began to intervene more actively in education, the nation had to teach itself how to read' (p. 85).

In the period that preceded the Revolution of May (1810), Ramos says 'there were no scientific guidelines, either for primary or higher education' (p. 3). He acknowledges the action of a few *Cabildos [municipalities]* 'formed by men who appreciated the advantages of general instruction', and Convents, which occasionally created schools in their annexes and homes. Ramos views the 'colonial school' as 'a modest creation based on the needs of the moment… so distant from our current institutions' (p. 17). The main goals of schools in that period were teaching how to write, read, and offering the essential arithmetic and Christian doctrine. Teachers lacked *expertise*, they 'did not even know the names of the pedagogic methods and procedures, which today are so abundant' (p. 17). 'Everybody did things without imagining that teaching the ABCs could turn into a science' (p. 17), an arena of professional skill. As for schooling after the Revolution, Ramos points to 'men in government' as mainly responsible for Argentina's educational backwardness. He admitted they may have wanted better schools but, in practice, nothing was done to pursue this. He is suggesting the emergence of a new form of the will of truth: based on institutional grounds and reinforced by pedagogic practices and valorisations, this will of

truth exerted pressure and coercion over other discourses (Foucault 1970: 22).

Ramos' work is a history of state-public education. A brief review of this narrative is worthwhile. Starting in 1820, Dr. Martín Rodriguez and Don Bernardino Rivadavia's administrations are regarded as a 'brilliant period for our nationality' (p. 48). The period 1821-1827 is considered to be one of great educational progress, given the expansion of the State sector mainly through the provision of schools for girls. Ramos' distinctive note is the critical view of the following Rosist period. The years between 1828 and 1852 are regarded as a closure, a halt in progress. The State's neglect of education eliminated any possibility of effective development. For this reason, the era after the fall of Rosas, where state education is reinstated, is valued favourably[lx]. Ramos identifies in Sarmiento the beginning of a great educational era. He shows admiration towards 'the Educator's' personality and discourse-building capacity: 'In every phrase of his there is harshness, masculinity of thought; this is why he writes and speaks illuminating language with the brush of his sex brutally exteriorised' (p. 96). Explicitly gendered, Ramos recognises the power of discourse pronounced by one who has the right to speak and knows the required rituals (Foucault 1970: 19).

By deploying Sarmiento politically, he is somehow attempting to emulate his ability of speech. Ramos assures 'a man like this is what American education needed' (p. 97). Presumably drawing on Ramos Mejía,

Ramos asserts 'our *multitudes* were not to be moved by conviction, but through enthusiasm' (p. 97). Conviction would have meant the people subscribing intellectually to the benefits of education. From this perspective, the population lacked the ability to engage rationally with education. The approach had to appeal to the senses. According to Ramos, a convinced, sensible and serene attitude would not have been as useful as Sarmiento's, who introduced the ideals of education 'like *a hammer*, like a wedge inside the people's heads' (p. 97). In Ramos' view, Sarmiento had achieved a new orientation of contemporary ideas about schooling. The main effect was policy makers agreed on the need to initiate a reform process in order to improve primary schools[lxi]. In 1868, he became President of the Republic, and 'shifted from being a spokesman from below to become an executor from above' (p. 106). This note shows how far the executive of the national state was early perceived as a key locus of power. Voices from 'below' struggling to raise educational issues to the 'public powers' were not effective.[lxii]

Educational historiography will then leave behind the distinct aspects of Sarmiento's educational policy formula. This 'neglect' by historians does not seem casual. For Ramos, 'popular' points to an undefined 'multitude', a population incapable of contributing to education. Ramos argues for the recognition of Sarmiento as the Argentine 'Educator', however he distinguishes a theoretical from a practical criterion. Theoretically, Ramos states:

> It is doubtless Sarmiento failed to understand the life of the Argentine social environment (…) he erroneously believed that by spreading the liberal arts, making the *crowds* know the intellectual and moral advances of the foreign world, their habits would be changed in a beneficial and transcendent way.
>
> (Ramos 1910: 107)

Ramos' critique points to Sarmiento's idea of administrative decentralisation, to the heart of the possibilities of 'the public's' contributing to the daily life and administration of the educational system. He criticises Sarmiento for relying too heavily on theory, 'judging the land and people according to his own measure'.[lxiii] He stresses that there is a dichotomy between theory and practice, and claims that 'the measure of things is within things, not within theories (…) The intimate nature of the people could not be transformed overnight only by disseminating schools and books' (p. 108). On these grounds, pretty much inspired by Ramos Mejía, Ramos assesses Sarmiento's call to public action through the creation of 'popular commissions' not only as 'useless, but harmful in general' (p. 167), erroneously designed to make up for the lack of official action. According to Ramos, the people's social condition did not allow for these committees to genuinely take charge of the school's administration the way theoretical views of the time sought to impose. In his view, the majority of the commissions had failed in their endeavour.

Ramos celebrates that Sarmiento transformed 'the culture of popular masses into one national aspiration' (p. 117). It is however worth noting the

position of the term popular next to 'masses' and the shift from a public education to one national aspiration. From Ramos' perspective, Sarmiento had achieved a major step in the development of public culture, but his practical measures of educational policy had been mistaken. Ramos critiqued the subvention system. Among other complications, subventions would arrive to the provinces the moment these had already exhausted their resources. In fact, several reports to the National Education Council alerted about problems arising after delays in the payment of subventions to the provinces (Wilde 1883: 851-855) [lxiv]

Surveillance was another mechanism of the state. The National Education Council structured a complete system of Inspection and developed a comprehensive Regulation framework for national inspectors in the provinces, travelling inspectors and sub-inspectors (Ramos Mejía 1910). A meticulous control 'based on a system of permanent registration' (Foucault 1977: 196) was shaped in the requirement for detailed annual reports of every Inspector to the National Education Council. 'The registration of the pathological should be constantly centralised (Foucault 1977: 196). Juan P. Ramos assured: 'The private schools are deficiently attended (…) in the Provinces and Territories, the spectacle is the same, if not worse' (Ramos Mejía 1913: 10). Thus, regulation included a special section with instructions for travelling inspectors. As General Inspector, Ramos defined them as representatives of the General Inspection in each province and 'technical directors of education' (Ramos 1910: 35) This reflects

the process of creating public professionals, authorized and licensed to transmit orientations to teachers and schools. The document stated: 'Once the Inspector has formed an opinion on every point [signalled within this regulation], he is ready to fulfil the most important of his functions, that is, to point to the school on the grounds of the knowledge he has about it the orientation to follow in the future' (Ramos 1910: 32) – and continued – 'it is necessary to fix the ideal of the Fatherland as a sacred motto of the school (…) such is what the Inspector must suggest to the teachers most' (Ramos 1910: 32). Orientations should thus be both pedagogical and nationalistic.

Ramos' text illustrates the role of 'commentary' as an internal procedure within discourse. His reconstruction of Argentine history seems to have the simple purpose of saying 'at last' what was articulated in silence 'further back in time' (Foucault 1970: 29): The national state had the inexorable role to advance educational progress. The interpretation of Argentine history based on such a firm state-centred perspective, supports a particular view of events in positive or negative terms according to the historical absence or predominance of state action. Contemporary policy-makers viewed the 'urgent' need to expand the system, improve service and reduce illiteracy. More specifically, unifying primary education, training good teachers to respond to the nation's needs, ensuring their stability and developing a systematic plan for school construction throughout the territory of the Republic, constituted a set of 'necessary' policy measures.

Power relations became institutionalised. Sarmiento's policy formula of programmatic centralisation and financial decentralisation (Botana 1996), based on the division of 'intervention actions' (Dale 1977) between State and civil society, ceased to apply under this scheme. Provision, funding, administration and fundamentally voice, were relocated under the strict control of the national state. The official voice eliminated the idea of a public separate from the State, or a site for civil society at the micro-level of community and school districts. This trend towards a greater or complete centralisation of public action structured key organisational aspects of the Argentine education system.

By 1910 the National Education Council had completed its process of consolidation. The public sphere collapsed into the State and a new version of 'public-national state' education emerged as the symbol of national unity, progress and social cohesion.

Conclusion

Throughout the Chapter I have described how the representations of the ruling elite are historically significant both in their assumption of educational leadership, and in the extent to which these conceptions regulated the early work of institutions.

Jose María Ramos Mejía constructs 'the crowd' as a threat to order and progress. He suggests a lack of structure and leadership within this level of society. Juan P. Ramos' position fully holds the 'socio-cultural hypothesis' as explanatory of the failure of local governance and participation in education. For Ramos, centralisation comes about as a consequence of the lack of active citizenship either interested in or able to pursue local issues. The national State's predominance therefore had to make up for the lack of local capacity.

Just as Sarmiento had emphasized the role of 'the popular' and designed a set of key correlated practices at the local level, contemporary discourses favoured 'the national', with a corresponding locus of activity at the central level. A whole system of exclusion of the 'local' and its associated notions is put into play. The state built a system of institutional licensing for expert civil servants to offer knowledge claims, and a concomitant exclusion of other actors linked to the micro political level of the education system.

However, the symbolic world this minority defined, was not totally hegemonic (Terán 2000: 22). As the studies on 'subaltern' cultures emphasize, society at that time proved to have a great dynamism. Subaltern counterpublics undertake communicative processes beyond the supervision of dominant groups; 'they are parallel discursive arenas were members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to

formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs' (Warner 2002: 123). Julio Barcos is a representative of the anarchist 'counter-public' in education. In *How the State Educates Your Son* (1927) he articulates a discourse paradigm that challenges the institutionalised version of public schooling. This analysis of a specific counter-public also develops more in terms of explaining the criticisms of Habermas. Barcos' insights enrich the historical scene. In this sense I agree with Fraser's critique of Habermas' assumption that the proliferation of a multiplicity of competing publics is necessarily a step away from, rather than a step towards greater democracy, and that a single, comprehensive public sphere is always preferable to a nexus of multiple publics. I want now to move on to look at this as one example of what Ramos Mejía viewed as a mob or crowd, a 'ghost image of a counter-public' (Warner 2002: 112) but now from their own point of view.

Chapter Five: A counter public education system. Julio Barcos' anarchist perspective on public education

Introduction

The idea that the formation of the modern Argentine education system was an object of struggle is not new: traditional historiography has acknowledged tensions in the construction of the Argentine education system in the late nineteenth century, especially under the dichotomy of 'Liberalism and Catholicism' (Auza 1975; Zanotti 1981; Newland 1991; Halperín Donghi 1995; Ramallo 1999; Tedesco 2003). However, this dichotomy fails to reflect all the positions that appeared in the discursive field. The State did not extend its role in public welfare without serious opposition. On the issue of education, disagreements over pedagogic perspectives and, of special interest to this thesis, the nature of public organizations, reflected fundamental value conflicts.

The work of critical reconstruction reveals the existence of alternative visions that cannot be subsumed into the categories of 'liberal' and catholic'. These alternatives were 'events, experiences or educational discourses that remain absent from the common texts of History of Education (…) formal and informal educational processes that share the fact they differed from the dominant model' (Puiggrós 1990: 36). Analysing all the alternatives requires an effort that exceeds the limits of this chapter.

This Chapter specifically focuses on the anarchist discourse within the education field. Following Judith Suissa, 'an anarchist perspective suggests that it is not enough to say (...) that philosophy of education should be centrally concerned with questions about what should be taught, to whom, and with what in mind; one has to also ask the crucial question "by whom"? (Suissa 2010: 5). In this sense, the focus of anarchist educational thought and experimentation was on developing active forms of social interaction which would constitute an alternative to the state (p. 6).

The historical sources and texts

Historians argue about the difficulties for historical reconstruction of the anarchist pedagogical initiatives. Barrancos (1990) assures that crucial data has not survived. The sources available are some publications of the period and testimonies of a reduced amount of direct actors. Archives that could have been of extreme importance have disappeared, like those of the ancient societies of workers, who promoted the main educational experiences (p. 88).

In this thesis I analyse the work of Julio Barcos, an anarchist pedagogue, who has only sketchily been acknowledged in the works of historians of education. A book he published in the early twentieth century, *How the state educates your son,* is paradigmatic of the anarchist position in education. *How the state Educates your son* is a rare publication, only

available at the serial library of the National Teacher's Library, in a single edition that has never been reissued. I additionally consulted the *Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Cultura de Izquierdas* en la Argentina (CeDInCI) [Left Wing Cultures Documentation and Research Centre], where several anarchist newspapers and serials of the time are available for researchers.

Barcos pointed to the dangers and limits of 'public' institutions. His text builds what Warner (2002) defines the 'ghost image' of a counter-public: a scene where a dominated group aspires to re-create itself as a public and in doing so finds itself in conflict not only with the dominant social group *but with the norms that constitute the dominant culture as a public* (Warner 2002: 112). As Barcos' text differs markedly from the premises that allowed the dominant culture to understand itself as a public, it may be called a counter-public statement and thus holds extraordinary interest for this thesis.

Before I turn to the analysis of *How the State Educates Your Son*, I wish describe some general aspects of the nature and behaviour of counter-public discourses, in order to broaden the understanding of the anarchist discourse paradigm.

A counter-public sphere

In Argentina, historians acknowledge an accelerated process of modernisation starting in the 1870's and affecting urban life in the early twentieth century (Botana 1977). This process led to the constitution of an incipient working class employed in a few important industries, numerous workshops and services, mainly in the ports and in transport. The society formed in this way had certain features that favoured the establishment of contesting public spheres. A key feature was the constant social mobility (vertical and horizontal) within a social body that, although it allowed the ascent and welfare of a segment of workers, excluded and impoverished other fractions. Additionally, the state had done little to address the most compelling problems of the workers. According to Suriano (2001) this shaped a society where social conflict and confrontation became prevalent (p. 18).

Anarchism occupied social zones left vacant by the state or other institutions, and became a significant factor in the culture of conflict. While these features endured, combined with other problems, such as inadequate housing, lack of work protection, unemployment, low salaries, poor working conditions and political exclusion, the anarchist alternative had a validity and was relatively credible and attractive to the workers. The need for a space of contention, especially for immigrants with no family ties, became more evident when these groups found their aspirations for social mobility

frustrated (p. 19). If trade unions offered a space to present the most immediate economic claims, the anarchist circles and centres became places of reunion and sociability, spaces where people could belong and participate.

Suriano's description of these anarchist spaces is most interesting. The so-called 'circles' were arenas of education and indoctrination, not only for the workers but also for their families. The circle was a spatially delimited field of formal association. According to Suriano, members satisfied their needs for a social life, far from the influence of coffee houses, bars and other public spaces considered pernicious by the left-wing ideologues; although during those formative years, these places served as meeting-spaces and spheres for spreading ideas. The anarchist circles began their activity like small ideological nuclei, editing pamphlets and periodicals. Although at the beginning they were closed and even scarcely communicated, from the second half of the 1890s, they evolved into an open political struggle, extending their activities to include national conferences. Anarchist propaganda also took shape. The appearance of The Human Protest [*La Protesta Humana*] in 1897 was of great importance. This periodical became the link between different anarchist groups, giving certain coherence to their activity, stimulating their development and proliferation (Suriano 2001: 47).

At the end of the century, these groups and circles became political and cultural centres, with a range of activities that covered publication of

periodical pamphlets, holding of conferences, courses and study groups, as well as recreational activities, which included acts of declamation, theatrical or philodramatic representations, revolutionary singing of hymns, festivals, country parties and anarchist parties. The circle was, thus a social field where working class culture was processed. On the basis of sociability and exchange, the circle transformed individual into collective experiences, shaping a common identity (Suriano 2001: 40) [lxv].

Studying anarchist discourses and practices helps to illustrate some of the arguments made by the critics of *Structural Transformations*, who point at other types of public spheres left unaddressed by Habermas. Habermas in fact confines his discussion to the bourgeois public sphere. He explicitly limits himself to 'the liberal model of the bourgeois public sphere' on the grounds of its dominance. However, as Eley (1992) argues, the *virtue of publicness* could materialise other than by 'the intellectual transactions of a polite and literate bourgeois millieu' (p. 303). Following Eley, despite the best efforts of the latter to appropriate such a function to itself and to establish exclusive claims on the practice of reason, 'private people putting reason to use' could also be found elsewhere (p. 304).

Warner (2002) offers a notably broad definition of *a* public sphere: 'a public is a space of discourse organised by nothing other than discourse itself (…) It exists by virtue of being addressed' (p. 67). This means there can be (historically there have been) an ample multiplicity of publics.

According to Warner, publics work within a small set of rules. Understanding these forms and rules sheds light on counter-publics expressions within the Argentine particular setting, where diverse discursive spaces emerged, interacted and struggled for predominance. It is worth noting Warner's definition draws attention to 'the surface qualities' of any particular discourse and the social space in which it takes place. This does not mean that there are no objective interests informing and shaping the discourse, or that it has no direction and purpose. I address below Warner's ideas about counter-publics and further analyse the originating purposes and social directions of the anarchist discourse.

As first rule, Warner asserts that the idea of a public, unlike a concrete audience or the public of a polity, is 'text-based' (p. 67). 'Without the idea of texts that can be picked up at different times and in different places by otherwise unrelated people, we would not imagine a public as an entity that embraces all the users of that text, whoever they might be' (p. 68). Surely it is also the practices and appropriations of texts that constitute the public as well as the texts. It is the relationship between the texts and social practice that constitutes the distinctiveness of the discourse. However, space and physical presence do not make much difference; a public is understood to be different from a crowd, an audience, or any other group that requires co-presence. Thus, it is a space of discourse organised by discourse. It is self-creating and self-organised; and herein lays its power. The production of numerous periodicals, pamphlets and newspapers

reflected anarchism's conviction in the value of spreading literacy (Suriano 2001: 113). Of course this approach towards writing and readership was not exclusive to the anarchist circles – rather a characteristic of every sector involved in Argentina's modernisation. However, as shown in the previous section, the official voice tended to neglect this capacity, and referred to counter-public modes of interaction based on co-presence like 'assemblies' and 'crowds'. The life of anarchist circles was based on social gathering and co-presence, but also on the circulation of an open-ended discourse, aimed at reaching many types of readers. Anarchism hailed 'the people' ('el pueblo'), offering messages of liberation essentially oriented to the workers.

Pueblo, however, was a broader category, that encompassed a range of working class people, but also members of the liberal professions, merchants and even 'capitalists of all species' (Suriano 2001: 92). This broad idea of *el pueblo* also included the dispossessed in a broad sense (the sick, the old, destitute children and prostitutes). This is why the anarchist discursive space –although mainly constituted by workers - is a good example of a broader counter-public Ramos Mejía derided through the category of 'the multitude'. The anarchist notion of 'the people' underpins a conception of the people as the depositary of the social revolution's political energy[lxvi]. This revolutionary force was placed against the state, which represented the means of exploitation and oppression, of power and subjugation of the whole society (*pueblo*), not a class in particular.[lxvii] The texts and institutions of the anarchist circles offered a site for 'the people' –

a broad public – to manifest values and aspirations. The fact that these were in stark opposition to the state was what worried the official sector. Ramos Mejía in fact recognised the 'multitude's' political energy, and saw it as a dangerous force.

The second rule, according to Warner (2002), is that 'a public is always in excess of its known social basis. It must be more than a list of one's friends. It must include strangers' (p. 74). Strangers come into relationship by its means. As put by Warner (2002) 'where otherwise strangers need to be on path to commonality, in modern forms strangerhood is the necessary medium of commonality' (p. 75). Strangers must be treated as already belonging to the world. Thus, Warner argues, public address differs from the mode of address associated with the genre of gossip. Gossip might be seen to be a perfect instance of public discourse. It circulates widely among a social network, beyond the control of private individuals. Yet, although gossip sets norms of membership in a diffuse way that cannot be controlled by a central authority, it circulates without the awareness of some people, and it must be prevented from reaching them in the wrong way (p. 79). Gossip is never a relation among strangers. Ramos Mejía criticised the immigrant 'dailies, small circles, chitchatting and street talk' (1899: 268). By deploying those terms, he was dissolving 'strangerhood' and despising these forms of social interrelation. During the Argentine period of state formation, strangers were considered a disturbing and mysterious presence requiring resolution.

Warner (2002) deconstructs the usual way of imagining the interactive character of public discourse through the metaphors of conversation: answering and talking back. 'Argument and polemic, as manifestly dialogic genres, continue to have a privileged role in the self-understanding of publics (…) Indeed, it is remarkable how little work in even the most sophisticated forms of theory has been able to disentangle public discourse from its self-understanding as conversation' (p. 90). In the Argentine educational arena, the official voice repeatedly disregarded counter-public voices arguing they failed to respond in rational terms to the issues under critique, thus enacting the conversational rule of publicness. Like in the case of Ricardo Rojas, who interprets the public's response to *La Restauracion Nacionalista* 'not [as] a critique but a passionate reaction, the crassest errors in the interpretation of my ideas' (Rojas 1909: 18). However, by publicly communicating this, the writer is not only *addressing strangers* – creating the addressees and constituting them into a public - but also working the *temporality of circulation*, another crucial element in this particular conception of publicness. The same counter-reflexivity that Rojas intends to neglect, is being brought into being by the simple flow of discourse. Anything that addresses a public is subject to circulation. First there is the circulation of a text, then the appearance of reviews, reprinting, citations and finally the controversies. The temporality of circulation is specific and may be measured. *La Restauración Nacionalista* first appeared in public; then, the public(s) 'reacted', publishing reviews and commentaries in newspapers; finally, Rojas re-edited the book 'responding' to these

‘critiques’. From Warner’s point of view, the interactive relation postulated in public discourse goes far beyond the scale of conversation or discussion to encompass a ‘multigeneric lifeworld’ organised not just by a relational axis of utterance and response but by potentially infinite axes of citation and characterisation.

Anarchism actually instantiated the essential characteristics of ‘a public’: it was self-organised and text-based; it also created a reflexive circulation of discourse open to strangers. Yet, patterns that constituted at that time the dominant culture as public, suggest this discourse could not constitute a public the way *El Monitor* was able to do through its articles, columns and essays. Anarchism expresses a style of sociability too embodied, too frontal, too aggressive to be imagined as the indefinite circulation of discourse among strangers. It was the refusal of any familiar norm for stranger sociability as well as the simple anti-state content of its message that made anarchism a counter-image of the public. Anarchists aspired to a public or quasi-public condition. But dominant norms and aspirations – such as ‘public order’, ‘social defence’ (Zimmermann 1995: 135) and more specifically ‘national’ and ‘patriotic’ education which were so strong at that time - made this quasi-public look like irrationality out of place. The elites were not only concerned by the Anarchists passionate rhetoric. Their sense of alarm also had to do with the threatening social character that Anarchism indicated in the worker’s movements and political protest in general. However, to displace this discursive space, the official

public sphere only needed to display what was regarded essentially as an un-public character of the anarchist mode of interaction.

Summing up, Warner's theorisation assists in to make the argument that anarchism's discursive space was a public too. It just worked by many of the same circular postulates. But because it differed markedly in one way or the other from the premises that allowed the dominant culture to understand itself as part of 'the public', I call it a 'counter-public'.

The anarchist educational concerns became manifest during the first decade of the twentieth century, especially as the state tightened the processes of control over education as well as the symbolic construction of a national identity.[lxviii] The following section focuses on the anarchist educational counter-discourse, as a mirror image of the official voice. Anarchism constitutes a novel counter-public/state governance discourse paradigm and thus holds extraordinary interest.

Anarchism and education

> *"We are accustomed to the occasional philosophical argument for states without schools. Yet how often do we pause to consider the possibility of schools without states?"*
> *(Suissa 2010: 6)*

The general advance of anarchism in Argentina serves as a frame to understanding its educational development. Barrancos (1990), describes this process in three stages: an initial one, covering the first decade of the

twentieth century; an intermediate period from the Centenary (1910) up to 1919; and a final stage, from the 20s to 1930 (1991: 86). This periodisation responds to evidence of a flowering-extinction cycle. There are various reasons to explain why anarchism followed this course, some relate to internal aspects of the anarchist movement, others to the harsh repressions faced by these groups mainly during the second stage of development. Studies give different emphasis to one or other of these phases (Barrancos 1990; Suriano 2001).

Barrancos (1990) studies the educational institutions built by the Argentine anarchists during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Her work is based upon archival sources concerning the foundation, development and eventual closure of the anarchist schools. She signals that repressive tactics in 1902 momentarily destroyed the initial efforts. The Law of Residence[lxix] (1902) removed a sector of the anarchist militants from their teaching functions and obliged them to leave the country (1990: 98). Recovery was relatively quick. However, the Stage of Siege in 1905 again destroyed anarchist progress, which in the city area was quite abundant. The complete re-animation of the alternative pedagogic project based on creating regular teaching centres occurred in 1906. Barrancos offers a detailed description of these initiatives. She arrives at the conclusion that although anarchist education achieved a certain growth during this period, the strategy that finally prevailed was one of knowledge dissemination by means of the expansion of written media and diffusion, rather than a

systematic effort geared to implant a specialised and regular educational activity (Barrancos 1990: 145).

Suriano's analysis is richer in terms of explaining this movement's limited educational achievements. He suggests that although the effects of the Law of Residence on anarchism were significant by the end of 1902, this did not dramatically affect the process of construction of an educational alternative[lxx]. During the period immediately after 1905, a historical juncture marked by extreme social conflict, the most important pedagogical developments within the anarchist movement took place: the School in Lanus, the Modern School of Buenos Aires and the Modern Schools in Villa Crespo and Lujan. A rationalist trend developed, led by Julio Barcos, who was without doubt the most important representative of local 'rationalism' between 1905 and 1910 (Suriano 2001: 238). However, in spite of the relative success of these experiments, progress was complex, slow and full of difficulties. The lack of immediate results generated impatience and loss of support within leading anarchist circles, who saw the initiatives as not being able to compete against official education and, given those circumstances, recommended closure or not reopening of any institution that had proved a failure. The key reasons for the poor development of an anarchist educational alternative, according to Suriano, were twofold: the first had to do with the lack of a *social demand* for an alternative to State-public education; the second to the lack of clarity within the anarchist movement about the need to fund their own system of schooling (2001: 235).

Summing up, these pedagogical initiatives had an ascendant curve during the first decade of the twentieth century. There then followed an intermediate period of limited expansion followed by attempts at revitalization in the first years of the 1920s. Finally there was an abrupt crumbling of the movement. Although these experiences in Buenos Aires[lxxi] were fragmented and discontinuous, dedicating a section to analysing the contesting vanguards, regardless of their unsuccessful fate, helps us to understand the behaviour of both its militants and the social sector to which the projects were directed.

Discourses embedded in the clash of forces here are relevant from a genealogical perspective. Genealogy allows submerged voices marginalised by specific power-knowledge arrangements to speak. I analyse Barcos' ideas of self-government, teaching and disciplinary regimes, in firm opposition to the state's version of schooling. Anarchists questioned the monopoly of education by the state for several reasons, some of which relate to a major claim of this thesis: state education, through the proliferation of educational discourses, brought education solely and exclusively within its own sphere and definition. Attempts to put into practice alternative meanings of 'public' education failed. In fact, all the possibilities that developed initially were excluded, they all collapsed into the State. This 'silenced' alternative voices in the field, and eliminated alternative sites for public spheres in the local level, as well as the potential development of local education authorities. Somewhat dramatically, Barcos expresses these concerns. This

reconstruction aims at recovering a fragment of history that otherwise would remain marginally or insufficiently known.

An additional event specifically reinforces the interest of a figure like Julio Barcos for this study. Around 1910 Barcos began to distance himself from anarchist militancy. Taking regard of the role of education in the process of social change, he developed deep strategic differences with the 'pure doctrinaries' - the 'urgency militancy' - within anarchism. The 'pure doctrinaries' sought immediate transformations and therefore relegated the importance of education, which was essentially a long-term project, to devote all their energy to politics, syndicalism and the revolutionary strategy (Suriano 2001: 243). This, added to the increasing weight of state education and the relative indifference of the public ended up discouraging ideas of putting in place an alternative pedagogic project. The 'rationalist' sector within anarchism, headed by Julio Barcos, ended up separating themselves from anarchism. Some even became prepared to come closer to the state with the idea of reforming it from within. The aim was to create a true pedagogic project for the whole Argentine society (Suriano 2001: 245). The divorce between doctrinarian anarchism and the League of Rational Education became evident with rationalism's approach to the state. Barcos himself began subscribing to official education, culminating in his integration to the National Education Council. This is illustrative of two associated processes. The first was the state's notable ability to co-opt counter-discourses during this period. This was mainly achieved by it's

proto-social policy. The second was the apparition of syndicalism in 1912, which interpreted better the claims and needs of the working class. These processes marked a breaking point between the workers' expectations and the anarchist premises. Secondly, this illustrates the interest of some anarchists both in 'attacking' the state, whilst at the same time working towards reform. With Barcos there emerges a more deliberate purpose of contributing to educational reconstruction. This meant a substantial change of perspective. According to Barrancos (1990), until the 1920's, anarchism had renounced any hope of transforming the official system, considering it 'a lost cause'. Any attempt to act from within the official sphere was 'to demonstrate the state's endless sterility rather than contributing to its fertilisation' (1990: 80). Barcos' book speaks in extremely severe terms about Argentine state education. However, he assures the reader, 'I do not say this with the mania of denigrating it – at the end of the day this is a book of optimism – but with the scientific spirit of arriving at a diagnosis' (Barcos 1927: 10).

Barcos' text thus constitutes a novel discursive paradigm. Although inclined towards the rationalist wing within anarchism, as part of the anarchist line of thought, it may be inscribed within the Argentine counter-public historical expressions. Some authors also view anarchism as part of the Argentine 'utopian tradition' (Weinberg 1976). Utopias engaged social restructuring and new political forms, and were symptomatic of the atmosphere of that time. They showed alternative pathways and

deliberately sought 'solutions' out of existing contexts. These utopian anticipations worked like mirrors where the audience could visualise the triumphant culmination of their struggles (1976: 11). The conceptual discourse entailed in Barcos' text (as well as in other anarchist oeuvres), exteriorises an effort to promote the improvement of reality, even if it was with 'imaginative' proposals. These texts at times oscillate between the 'picturesque, the extravagant and absurd' (1976: 11). However, some of their formulations indicate concerns and reflections that merit some reconsideration.

Barcos' anarchist counter-discourse

> *'No chapel is more sectarian and inquisitorial of a child's conscience, than the so-called public school of the State, a chapel of hate towards the redemption lights of this rising civilisation.'*
> *(Recand 1921: 6)*

This section focuses on Barcos' anarchist counter-discourse. I analyse the critique to state education in the book titled *How the State educates your son*. Barcos mostly writes against the state or government, and sometimes he specifically addresses the figure of Ramos Mejía as an embodiment of the government's educational policy. Some objections to the Church are also articulated. I also analyse relative similarities and differences between the anarchist discourse and Sarmiento's, although a more thorough comparison is left to the final conclusions in chapter seven.

The role of the people

The title of the book as well as the text in the over-leaf captures this discourse's dramatic attempt to call the people to assume the responsibility of educating their sons. *How the State educates your son* is a personal and direct call to parents to take up this role, one that should not be delegated, under penalty of severe moral judgement. Barcos quotes Alberto Masferrer, an anarchist deploying an appellative, firm and demonstrative tone. I quote at length.

> Forge your son! You have to make *your son*. Your son, precisely your son, for us can be an instrument of condemnation or life (…) there is no middle term for us, he shall be good or evil, a burden or a benefit. And for this, yours shall be the glory or the embarrassment (…) If you wish, don't do anything else: if you can't, live obscurely, peacefully, retired and exempt of any fight. We exonerate you from the social and political work and we concede you peace and liberty, in return of you leaving us *a man*. But if you leave us an evil, and oppressor, and exploiter, a tyrant, a madman, an insane or degenerate, then we won't absolve you, and whatever your apparent merits in life may be, we shall declare that you disappointed us and that your path through life has been a disgrace.
>
> (Barcos 1927: 5)

The educating role of the people is a key element of the anarchist discourse, over and against other social roles and functions. According to Suissa (2010) in anarchist philosophy, systematic educational intervention in children's lives, on the part of social institutions, is necessary in order to sustain the moral fabric of society, and this education must be, first and

foremost, a moral enterprise (p. 147). To leave education unattended in the pursuit of other objectives (particularly those endorsed by the state) was considered a serious mistake; other objectives were just 'apparent merits'. The text further says: 'They may raise you statues; government may say you've shared great services and newspapers praise you loudly; but neither the gold nor the distinction or the worship will make us absolve you' (Barcos 1927: 10).

Following this initial appeal to 'forge' the children, Barcos declares in the very opening sentence of chapter one: 'I didn't write this book for professionals, but for the people' (p. 9). Technically, he admitted education could be viewed as a pedagogical matter; but socially, it concerned the community. From this perspective, education is of more interest to the head of family than to the schoolteacher: 'Never the pedagogues that are fabricated and regimented by the State will feel for the children the love and interest of their progenitors' (p. 9). Barcos is clear that he seeks to address parents and the community, thus challenging the established criteria for the right to speak about education, thus challenging the role of experts and expertise in the work of bio-power. Anarchism's pedagogic projects actually displayed explicit technical and expert knowledge (in France, with Paul Robin; in Spain, Francisco Ferrer; in Argentina, Barcos, Vergara, among others)[lxxii]; however they objected the type of pedagogy that emanated from the official sphere and remarked upon the importance of the social and psychological dimensions of education. Against the state's influence to

exclude or displace society from educational government, content and administration, anarchism hailed the parents to assume a key role. Delegating this strictly personal task should not be a choice, least in the hands of the educating state, which 'doesn't tolerate strange doctrines or hostile patriotisms, and organises intellectual life against the freedom of thought' (p. 62).

However, convincing the parents to undertake their essential mission was not an easy task. Anarchists recognized that they needed to combat 'distortions' rooted not only in the official schools but also within popular common sense. The problem was not only the state's effective monopoly of public schooling, but also the level of acceptance achieved by these institutions among the population. Barcos illustrates this point:

> The antinomy between the child, who carries deep down the spiritual yeast of the future, and the *domine magister's* regressive mentality, who insists on making out of the former a pale replica of the deceased generation, reveals the crime of our official education *and the existing tacit complicity between the home and the school,* to go seizing from generation to generation the best mental energies of our intelligent Creole race.
>
> (Barcos 1927: 10)

Anarchism objected to the school system itself, with its micro-systems of penalties, activity, behaviour and speech, as a key device geared to control and intimately transform the individual. In opposition to this was the free, rational and integral school which was one of the chosen

instruments to counter-balance these influences. The pedagogic project of 'integral' or 'rational' teaching, which had long roots in the anarchist discourse, mainly consisted in avoiding segmentation between manual and intellectual activities as well as the linking of theory and practice in order to guarantee a complete acquisition of knowledge for the popular sectors. The pedagogical project of the anarchist movement pointed towards regeneration of a new individual, freed from the objections and prejudices imposed by religious and patriotic education. Barcos hailed young teachers 'not yet attached to the cart of the state school, not yet dressed with the livery of bureaucracy and officialism, not yet domesticated by the merciless disciplines of the educational authorities nor made mindless by the years of routine and professional exercise' to join the quest of building 'a new world' by creating as many rationalist schools as possible 'capable of adapting to modern social life, and being elements of liberty and work instead of mental coercion' (Recand 1921: 7). The 'ideal' was to create a network of these schools 'reaching the whole country, in order to allow their benefits to reach the whole proletariat' (p. 7). The means of support of these schools would come from diverse resources: 'from what is produced through the work of the students, from the minimal contribution of parents, from the occasional contribution of trade unions and particulars and from what public events geared to these ends might produce' (p. 7).

Barcos marks different aspects of the capillarity of State structures. In his view, bureaucracy had penetrated 'the deep end of our house, into our

private life' (p. 56). He argued the state had acquired an unrestrained power over the individual. Moreover, he believed the state had become the successor of the church. Society had moved from 'religious idolatry' towards 'secular stateolatry' (p. 56). Barcos likens the mechanisms for capturing the population by the church, now by the state.

> The atheists may laugh at the miter and the stole that the Ministers of God in Earth carry as symbols of their divine power, but surely they'll bow before the authority of law applied to the most intimate acts of their existence by a State official.
>
> (1927: 56)

Barcos showed awareness of the 'petty mechanisms' contained in the system's bureaucracy and administration, geared to cut out spaces of intervention, action and 'joy' to the people. He thus blamed the 'arrogant, oligarch' current administrations, for disregarding as 'outlandish' Sarmiento's basic belief that the education of all and financed by all, should run under the tutelage of all, gradually passing from the hands of the state to the hands of The People.

> Instead of granting the people increasing participation in the management and promotion of education, they have deliberately been pushing it further away, stupidly, more and more, defending it from its vital contact, so as to never allow the school to become an instrument of collective joy, but rather a political device at the service of a privileged class.
>
> (1927: 72)

From Barcos' counter-public standpoint, 'popular' activity would find it hard to find a place under state education. The 'public powers' had shown their eagerness to 'confiscate sovereignty from the sovereign' (p. 70). They had 'taken away from the People of the Republic the right to intervene over their culture, declaring it *dangerous*' (p. 70). Barcos asserted that the state had converted public instruction into an unacceptable monopoly, reserving for itself, exclusively, 'the direction of the spirits'. Thus, the anarchist discursive paradigm breaks down the affinity Sarmiento had carefully established between 'popular' and 'public'. The site of the popular was again located outside the domain of the state. The following section shows Barcos' discourse building a firm opposition to that of the state. The point of harshest critique is precisely the state's monopoly of education.

Challenging State Monopoly

Anarchists questioned the state monopoly of education for at least two reasons: first, because they believed the state tended to reproduce social inequalities, maintain privileges and guarantee the reproduction of the dominant groups. Second, because they understood the State as actively promoting anti-international feelings, which also contributed to a greater monopoly over the local education system (Suriano 2001: 220). A third and fundamental motive of confrontation, was the sense of the state's negative view of the people. Government drastically circumscribed civil powers and responsibilities and built a super-powerful state, which Barcos defined as

'Napoleonic' (p. 40). The alternative model sought by the anarchists was a 'genuinely democratic' state, geared towards restoring to the people the free exercise of their sovereignty, by involvement in the running of public services, such as hygiene, building aesthetics, communal taxes, education and justice.

Barcos believed intellectuals in Argentina had taken the side of the Napoleonic state, and were thus enemies of the political and administrative decentralisation of public services. He claimed:

> In spite of them weaving garlands to democracy, they possibly do not notice that in their civic life they practice Mussolini's sacramental formula: 'The State is everything, outside the State there is nothing.
>
> (Barcos 1927: 44)

Barcos expresses how it feels to be marginalised and dominated by the state. However, while Ramos Mejía derided contemporary social life, Barcos referred to the contrary: he perceived a 'dynamic and spiritual' society opposed to the 'constipated official thought'. He even seems to establish a direct dialogue with Ramos Mejía, when he states

> If the soul of our youth is assassinated; if the best of our spiritual energies is stolen from our race; if the only thing we long for is to avoid the failure of our popular culture, we must not be mentally inhibited by the calculus, nor the fear of being called like Ibsen's character, *an enemy of the public*; only let ourselves be driven by the immense fervour of truth.
>
> (Barcos 1927: 116)

The title given by Barcos to a Journal he founded and edited during the 20's is illustrative of this contrasting valuation -. 'Quasimodo' (*Cuasimodo*). Quasimodo is of course the central character of Victor Hugo's novel *'Notre Dame de Paris'*. Hunchbacked and one-eyed, Quasimodo represents physical ugliness; but his spirit represents the opposite: beauty and spirituality. Hugo characterises beauty through Emerald, another protagonist of the same story. The monstrous Quasimodo, is in love with her. The title is highly suggestive, and a note published in one of the early numbers of the journal makes this meaning explicit. I quote at length:

> Our comrades Barcos and Canale write this Journal for the people, and the people may interpret the title in the following way: Quasimodo is *the people*, the people physically degenerated by the tortures of manual work. Quasimodo is me, for example, with my hands full of calluses, my face burned by the sun, round-shouldered after bending myself too much, my legs arch after standing up during long working days. The excess and roughness of work make us monstrous. But our physical degeneration is compensated by our moral beauty, by our dreams of redemption, by the ideals of our spirits: me and my comrades, the people, the manual workers, are the Quasimodo of this hour, in love with the beauty of a society freed from tyrants and exploiters.
>
> (Recand 1921: 4)

The argument is illustrative of a game of opposing perceptions of 'beauty' and 'ugliness' between the state and its counter-public. Barcos rejects the state's approach to the people. In *How the State Educates your Son*, he claims to perform an act of faith in the people and of unbelief in 'public men'. The term 'public' acquires positive connotations only when

inscribed within the social. Barcos says all he aims at is 'turning the heavy apparatus of our common education' (p. 20), by adapting it to the 'public' needs, as he considers this to be 'the quickest vehicle to the moral and material progress of the Republic' (p. 20). Notions of 'the public' intermingle in his discourse. The needs of 'public' men are put opposite to the 'public' needs of the people. The People, in Barcos's view, were the supporters of liberty and self-government. Their 'love towards liberty' was, according to Barcos, the 'the best moral attribute of the species' (p. 44). He argued the state had evolved in an opposite (negative) direction and thus policy had transformed public education into 'a hermetical function of government' (p. 48). However,

> This tutelage cannot continue indefinitely over the people, for they have become adults, and their general culture - I shall repeat this a thousand times - has matured in the opposite way to the mental petrifaction of the rulers.
>
> (Barcos 1927: 48)

Barcos thought to find at this stage of the 'social evolution', a 'biological conflict' between the people, who aspired to recover their sovereignty, and the 'leading caste'. The references to 'race' and to a 'biological conflict' evidences the expansion of a type of positivism reaching far broader sectors than the specifically intellectual. A type of positivism, of immanent and anthropocentric tone, that ran through social and political ideas of the time. According to Terán (2000), 'much of the knowledge and practice within the subaltern sectors of society built a structure of resistance grounded in a lay god (Nature), that guaranteed hope and

legitimised a present of struggle' (2000: 95). The prestige of science and democratisation of knowledge were elements that combined in an evolutionist perspective and contributed a particular rationality to the structure of scientific feelings within these groups. They accepted as a good equation that the sum of Truth (Science), Moral (Fraternity) and Justice (Socialism) equalled Progress (Terán 2000: 97).

Barcos describes an imaginary dialogue between two state officials: 'Isn't it dangerous to grant the people intervention over educational issues?' He declares Sarmiento had posed this same question to someone during his time in Chile, and reproduces the received answer: 'People are considered capable of electing their ruler and taking care of road conditions and public lightning; how can we deny their capacity to pursue the most sacred of their interests, which is the education of their sons?' (p. 48-49). However, from Barcos' perspective, politicians had never wanted to recognise the country's 'coming of age' (p. 48). Government was alarmed about the dangers that might arise if people were allowed to 'stand up from their wheelchairs' (p. 48). Government was not prepared to let people walk on their feet, become the owners of their own movements, arbiters of their own destiny. Devolving education to the people also meant challenging homogeneity. Anarchists had a clear position on this point.

Challenging homogeneity

Barcos argued that Argentina's staunch defenders of a uniform school system, of a unique mould for all intelligences, would fall on their feet if they travelled around the fifteen or twenty states of 'the land of Horace Mann', observing that each school they visit is different from the other; that each state has its own and characteristic education and each school its individuality; that in the huge Republic there is no other national organ to control the work of public schools with its million teachers but a single Bureau of Education, with no administrative faculties. Education governance results from the meaning policy-makers attach to 'the public' at given junctures. He makes a comparison between Argentina and 'the genius' of North American education, where he believed in spite of some of the system's downsides, 'the school of the people, is the people's' (p. 61). Barcos then speaks in total opposition to the official standpoint. He says each school should be individual. In his view, all the manifestations of order and cohesion undermined diversity. In the same vein, he signals a contradiction between contemporary academic discourse and state discourse:

> Don't the same bourgeois sociologists in University teach that the socio-genetic laws of human progress are not called uniformity, vulgarisation and mechanisation of life, but rather differentiation, originality and autonomy? Originality and self-government (this is, the obedience to oneself) are the philosophic formula of Liberty, against uniformity and centralisation, that is the secular formula of despotism'.
>
> (Barcos 1927: 37)

This passage reflects how far the anarchist discourse had points in common with other discursive regimes: socialists, liberals and even social-Catholics. Although the concerns were oriented towards different objectives, the anarchists did not possess an 'uncontaminated' cultural capital, rather a discourse crossed by multiple influences, less closed and isolated than it may be supposed. Barcos insisted that the problem was Argentina had no 'experience of a system of freedom, which is of social cooperation, and yes only of a despotic regime in education' (p. 76). This led rulers increasingly to lack trust in the capacity of the people to do anything, 'but obey blindly the will and caprice of its leaders' (p. 76). Despite the state's rhetoric, which spoke of the convenience of bringing the home nearer to the school, Barcos felt that in practice they did everything possible to avoid the influence and participation of the family.

> As in the ancient animal parks, the public school is closed with containment pits: everyone can watch them work… without getting too close (…) There is no signpost saying 'entry is forbidden', but everything, even the walls of the building say: do not interrupt with your inappropriate presence the peace or the routine of this sacred enclosure (…) What teacher has ever shaken hands or exchanged ideas with every student's parent? Look at the posture of high bureaucrat that teachers adopt every time men or women of the community arrive to the school and interrupt their duty in order to talk about their child.
>
> (Barcos 1927: 130)

These were interesting ways in which the daily practice of discourse contradicted the rhetoric and informally defined a system of exclusion. Barcos claimed education should change from being a sterile political

function of government, to turn into a fertile social function of the people. 'Wouldn't the educational expansion have been much greater if the state, instead of sticking to hermetic formulas would have shared this function with the free attendance of all the social elements?' (p. 76). Barcos is asserting that education is likely to be better done by individuals and communities than by the government. Almost in a classical liberal keynote, Barcos seems to subscribe to Mill's principle of *development*. The idea that even in those cases where individuals may not do something so well, on the average as officers of government, it is nevertheless desirable that it should be done by them rather than by government, as a means to their own 'mental education' (Stuart Mill 1992: 121) and/or, as put by Barcos, as a source of 'collective joy'. Mill had also observed the advantages of individuality of development and diversity of action. 'Government operations tend to be everywhere alike. With individuals and voluntary associations, on the contrary, there are varied experiments, and endless diversity of experience' (1992: 122).

Again a common argument in anarchist discourse was that the state gave people a school mould that responded to its own ends and not those of the emancipation of culture, nor the fundamental interests of the country. Barcos argued for an educational alternative, less 'elaborated, pasteurised, embalmed and sealed up by the state' (p. 14). He argued for diversity, and questioned why the education of future generations had to be circumscribed

to the 'constipated official thought', instead of open to all 'the spiritual currents of contemporary social life' (p. 14).

> Instead of conceiving popular education as an isolated lake at the peak of a mountain (the peak of official wisdom) whose waters, asleep, reflect only a piece of the blue sky, why don't we regard it as more dynamic and progressive: like the fertilising rivers of our Mesopotamia, that converge on bigger ones which also then carry their waters and mix with the ocean, while their crystal waves portray all the views they go through?
>
> (Barcos 1927: 13)

A political, ideological and cultural movement needs to be analysed in its multiple discourses and practices. In this sense, if anarchism seems to have included elements of other discursive spaces into its message, its political practices were undoubtedly more subversive of the predominant values and ideas. The anarchist view of the State and its resistance to becoming integrated in the political system gave the movement its distinctive characteristics (Suriano 2001: 27). Even Barcos, who as I suggested earlier, belonged to a relatively open trend within the movement, built a discourse of strong anarchist inspiration, challenging the official system and opposing a particular version of educational reform.

The idea of Reform

Among the anarchist circles, no one questioned the role of education. The controversy was of a tactical order. While the 'educationist' sectors

promoted the creation of libertarian schools, others considered popular education as a task to be realised only in the post-revolutionary society. Differences responded to two opposite trends in arnarchist thought, already present in Europe. There were those who relegated education for 'the day after revolution', influenced by the ideas of Bakunin. They thought it impossible to offer an alternative education in the context of a capitalist society (Suriano 2001: 225). The educationist sector held a different position, influenced by the Spaniard Francisco Ferrer y Guardia, who was also inspired by the French educator Paul Robin. This sector believed that the revolution would be possible only by radically transforming the individual first through rational education. They proposed the creation and diffusion of rationalist schools, capable of inculcating in the individual the ideas of science, liberty and solidarity, avoiding authoritarian and confessional influences (p. 226). As said before, in Argentina, the Bakuninist conception had deep roots, and was manifested in the spirit of insurrection and revolutionary urgency that characterised the local anarchist movement. The educationist trend was a minority, and conceived the revolutionary process as gradual and long term, only possible after the transformation of the individual.

Barcos advocated that educational reform should occupy a central place within the anarchist agenda. He revealed his position in *How the State Educates your Son*, literally claiming the other ends of the anarchist movement, 'such as giving *coup de grace* to capitalist society', could well be postponed, but not 'the immediate problem of public culture, of which the

birth of revolution depends to result more or less bloody' (p. 47). Apart from belonging to the 'educationist' trend within anarchism, Suriano defines Barcos as a *heterodox intellectual*. Compared to the *pure doctrinaires,* 'the heterodox were more open ideologically' (Suriano 2001: 77). While Barcos certainly saw the state as responsible for many of the ills of education, he did not portray the state, or state education, as the 'monster' to destroy[lxxiii]:

> I repeat the free, non-religious and compulsory school is the most great and beautiful thing created by bourgeois institutionalism, even when our dazzled rulers, who see in it a 'dangerous' instrument of liberty, attempt to suffocate it, to prevent its development; crystallize it, so it cannot be an organ of renovation of ideas; or prostitute it, to serve as footstool to the sensual ambitions of politicians. There can be no worse demagogues than the ones who hold power and discredit the more noble of our republican ambitions, the one that has for an end the education of the sovereign.
>
> (Barcos 1927: 47)

As Suissa suggests, the anarchist objection to the state is an instrumental one (2010: 57): 'the crucial core of anarchism is, rather, the positive values which it espouses, and it is the state as inimical to these values, not the state as such, to which anarchists object' (p. 56). In Barcos' writing, the state loses the abstract character that anarchism had traditionally assigned to it. He recognised the state as a speaker to whom reforms could be proposed. His proposals, however, were radical for that time and context.

Anarchism advocated a 'truly organic' reform. From Barcos' perspective, the meaning of 'true reform' when applied to transforming education had different dimensions. It meant transforming the disciplinary system, moving from vigilance to self-control and self-disciplining, to 'children being the masters, not the teacher' (p. 162). It also required destroying the 'great fraud to which the ordinary school was clinging: intellectualism' (p. 165), and instead offering opportunities for the children to experience varied interests both linked to work and study. These measures would orient education towards the principle of internal and external liberty. However, just reforming plans and methods of teaching would not truly reform education. Barcos felt this was just like symbolically reforming a bird's cage and negating the freedom to the 'poor bird' (p. 14). Reforming education had a key precondition: transforming both state and society. Notions of freedom, autonomy and the role of the public have already been analysed in the previous section. I analyse further some of Barcos' reform ideas regarding the main practices of educational governance.

Programmatic and administrative decentralisation

In quite explicit terms, Barcos advocated for a programmatic and administrative decentralisation of education. The State needed to 'give up one day to the pressure of the popular desire, accepting political and administrative decentralisation of education, for the benefit of the whole

population' (p. 21); and society needed 'gradually, each day more and more, gain intervention in common education' (p. 48). He put this condition clearly:

> As long as we do not replace the Prussian concept of the State, that centralises all the powers and all the public services, for a harmonious Hellenic democracy that takes culture to be the spiritual patrimony of all, enriched by the free cooperation of all, changing education will be just puerile dilettantism, mere intellectual idleness, simple scientific charlatanism about reform in education.'
>
> (Barcos 1927: 14)

True reform entailed both structural and substantial dimensions of educational governance. Barcos drives the debate towards fundamental questions regarding the distribution of power, freedom, autonomy, the role of the public, and a whole matrix of practices and organisation.

With regard to the distribution of power, Barcos is sceptical about the possibilities of reform within an 'all-powerful State'. The main point was to get the state detach itself from its 'all-powerful faculties' and dismantle the stagnant and onerous bureaucratic regime, to which progress in education was subordinated. Barcos was proposing a complete turn in the logic of power relations within the education system. Instead of the children and the people serving the interests of the State, education at every level of its bureaucracy and organisation, should pay attention to the needs of the people. In other words, the official, bureaucratic publicum of the state apparatus should direct their energies and attentions to the service of the

needs of the people as a publicum, and not the other way round. '*The child* will not be the slave but the lord of the school' (p. 15). Barcos perceived the official sphere was 'frigid', in opposition to 'the warm hearted people', to whom the care of the schools should be gradually transferred. This meant abolishing the 'silent dictatorship of the lousy office administrator', in order to favour 'the people's' greater engagement in educational governance and progress. Barcos thereby advocates a radical shift in what is and what constitutes a public. The following quote is extraordinarily eloquent:

> The marble of glory is waiting to become the statue of a man who understands the magnitude of our educational problem, a man able to find the *decentralisation formula* for the government of education (..) This statue shall be placed at the right hand of Sarmiento's.
>
> (Barcos 1927: 15)

The use of term 'decentralisation' is strikingly contemporary. Barcos resorts to Sarmiento to pose a reform project of the official regime based upon a two-fold 'decentralisation formula': programmatic and administrative. The anarchist critique against state nationalism, homogenisation and the nature of teacher training spoke eloquently about this counter-public's perspective towards the programmatic dimension. The 'educating state' is viewed as 'intolerant towards strange doctrines or hostile patriotisms', organising 'intellectual life against the freedom of thought' (p. 62). In terms of administrative decentralisation, as said before, Barcos believed that only the people had the capacity to guard the most sacred of their interests, the education of their sons (p. 49). Thus, only the people

could be decent administrators of the public good. He insists on this point, even turning to religious metaphors: 'Only the people are capable of producing the miracle of multiplying the bread and fish', that is, of doing a lot out of very little (p. 76). Public powers, in his view, usually did the opposite: 'very little out of a lot'. Barcos considered waste to be an inherent quality of the bureaucratic organisation. He suggests a curious comparison between 'what public works cost to the treasury in comparison to what they cost to particulars' (p. 77) using as an example the costs that railroads produce to private companies, and how much it cost the state to run its own.

Regarding funding, Barcos shared Sarmiento's basic questions: 'Why are the Yankees always ready to stick their hand into the pocket and contribute voluntarily to encouraging education?' He rejected the idea that the answer could have anything to do with a question of 'race', and argued 'it's because the hands of North American People have been freed to do all that is on their reach for the development of the education of their sons…

> To ours, instead, it is strictly forbidden to worry about things that government employees understand is of their exclusive concern and, jealous of their jurisdiction, very rarely admit the officious interference of particulars regarding the promotion and progress of public instruction.
>
> (Barcos 1927: 91)

Calling the people to contribute to education was a key feature of Sarmiento's advocacy. Essentially inscribed within a liberal way of thinking,

Barcos argued the people would know best how to conduct education if they were allowed to become personally involved – even financially. Barcos articulates an alternative to this critical diagnosis, curiously enough, through references to North-American education and, quite insistently, to Sarmiento's ideas, which he claimed the Argentine education policy-makers had neglected. Barcos assured 'in spite of the Yankees showing certain traditional imbecilities, the free culture, open to the collaboration of private initiative, has been the great factor of moral and material richness, that has elevated the Republic over other empires' (p. 98). He thus insisted on describing the official logic as 'petrified', 'blind' and 'incapable of translating its own rhetoric into action' (p. 20). Barcos posed a reversal of everything the state said, and provocatively declared 'Sarmiento has no heirs', confirming that the way politics were enacted at that time was very different from what Sarmiento argued for. Deploying a 'utopian' narrative, Barcos moves the reader to think of alternative scenarios, of things being otherwise. Two ideas gave him hope that the current scenario could change.

First, Barcos believed that bureaucracy, the main pillar of the State, carried 'the germ of its own destruction' (p. 57). He likens bureaucracy to a 'parasite', with two main qualities: 'voracity and excessive multiplication'. In bureaucracy's alarming development lay the roots of its own death. The discourse shows again the inflection of positivism, in this case of an anti-state inspiration. Their rational and scientific fervour drove anarchists to an extreme faith in the idea that a scientific form of organisation of society

would eliminate political authority along with the ideological power of the Church (Suriano 2001: 219). Barcos stated this voracity and excessive expansion would result in, 'the collapse of the State' (p. 57).

Second, Argentineans only knew the experience of education as a 'political machine of one class' (p. 13), but knew little of how a system of education would materialize if reinstated to popular control. Barcos believed 'the only unrehearsed system of education is freedom'. Anarchism appealed the Argentine people to 'try the disbureaucratisation of the education regime, which other countries of America have rehearsed successfully, offering the People, gradually, each day more and more intervention in common education' (p. 48). This was the main pillar of a truly organic reform.

Conclusion

The role of 'the people', 'the public', stands in the centre of this counter-discourse. Thus, the anarchist initiatives were challenging to the official political and educational system. How does this affect the understanding of 'public' education?

Pineau analyses the changing meanings of 'popular education' marked by historical changes in the relationship between the official 'public' sphere and the non-official 'popular' sphere. The author identifies four

stages starting approximately from the 'origins' of the education system up to 1983[lxxiv]. The first period covers 1850-1900, when, according to Pineau, discourses produced the homology between 'Popular Education' and 'Public Instruction'. I agree with Pineau's argument that Sarmiento produced a 'fusion' between the two terms. However, some key nuances are carefully analysed in Chapter 3. The second period is of special interest to this chapter: 1900-1943, defined by Pineau as a time of 'complementarity' between Popular education and Public Instruction (Pineau 1998: IV). Pineau finds evidence of a double educational circuit, related to each other in complementary fashion: on one side, the official system of public education (SIPCE), 'strongly organised and monopolised by the state'; on the other, a series of civil society associations, most assembled around the relation of *Sociedades Populares de Educacion* movement. Following Pineau, the State both established clear frontiers between public schools and these external initiatives and limited the existent opportunities of participation. A new definition of 'popular education' began to emerge. From different positions, immigrant associations sought to recover the foreign community's national contents of their country of origin, the trade unions gathered workers and other organisations attracted women, abandoned children and other constituencies.

During this period, 'popular' became a synonym of 'non-official', although defined by a relation of complementarity with the SIPCE (Pineau 1998: V). Such a relationship was first expressed by these organisations

working in support of the state, and secondly, by taking charge of the care of the excluded subjects, as well as delivering contents relegated or neglected by the official curriculum (Pineau 1998: V).

Pineau's analysis continues with a third phase of transformation in the meaning of 'Popular Education'. Between 1943-1955, Peronism attempted a new 'synthesis' between these two concepts, although, from this author's perspective, 'the appearance of strong internal contradictions did not allow the construction of such a synthesis' (Pineau 1998: V). Only starting in 1955, and with greater intensity during the 60's and the 70's decade, Pineau acknowledges 'popular education' was defined in strict opposition to 'public education'. The author argues from many different standpoints both the school as an institution and its ends were put under question. On the other hand, these new discourses articulated an idealised notion of 'The People'. 'The People were the unpolluted; only among the People and by the People change would be possible' (Pineau 1998: VIII). Paulo Freire developed his ideas and practices within this context, and had a great influence in Argentina especially during the 70's. Under this paradigm, 'dualism' appeared as a main discursive strategy, something also very present in Freire's early writings. This found expression in the divisions between 'rulers vs. ruled', 'state vs. the people' and, finally, 'popular education', condensing all the opposite characteristics to the official system of education, represented by the SIPCE.

While I agree with this periodisation, which sheds interesting light on the subject matter of the present thesis, but it strikes me that the author does not sufficiently acknowledge the 'tension-charged field of state-society relations' (Habermas 1989: 29) during the period of state consolidation, and rather defines it by 'complementary' links between the state and other publics. These tensions exerted pressure on the state apparatus, which was obliged to mount a range of reactions and initiate counter-offensives. In some cases, reactions ended in police assaults on schools; others in less dramatic closures authorized by education authorities. However, the state's most frequent answer to the anarchist offensive was the effective expansion of its own primary schools among 'working class' neighbourhoods and groups.

In my analysis of Ramos Mejía's administration, which is more detailed than previously attempted, the state not only established strict boundaries between the official and non-official spheres, but also sought to capture all the voices, discourses and sites from where to speak about education. As I argued initially, even Sarmiento's discursive paradigm failed to establish a clear distinction between the 'popular' and the contemporary state-centred version of public schooling.

Anarchism, foreign and 'popular' initiatives in general were excluded from the educational discursive space. This was both the state's rhetorical victory over alternative voices and, as I suggested earlier in this chapter,

the result of the counter-discourses weak level of performativity, in other words, their inability to capture their own constituencies, or realise those 'worlds' and social entities through address.

The classical version of public education remained fairly stable for about a hundred years. Reform processes in Argentina have been occurring since the sixties, always applying to substantive aspects of schooling but never reviewing the system's structural forms of governance. However, more recently, new sites, voices and vesions of schooling seem to be emerging as a result of new understandings of the meaning of the public. The following chapter inscribed within the contemporary history of education (Part II) analyses this new phenomenon as well as the extent to which changing meanings being articulated are beginning to bring about structural reform.

Part two. Contemporary Discourse Paradigms

As described in Part One of this thesis, at the turn of the century, Argentine 'public' education was widely understood to mean a system of schooling 'provided, financed and managed' by the national State, a state that had won a critical discursive victory against its counter-publics. The voice of the National Education Council 'sounded louder than the rest' and 'turned off the other echoes' (Ramos 1910: 121), building a single version of *public education* that remained fairly stable for about a hundred years.

The consolidation of the national state education system was followed by a series of landmarks: military coup d'états and revolutions which bracketed the liberal consensus, Peronism which had an extraordinary impact on different dimensions of Argentine public life and education, among others. Within these contexts, there were attempts to reform education according to diverse ideological perspectives: catholic, left wing or nationalist, however the latter again prevailed in conducting the education system. There were some substantive but no real structural changes within the dominant discourse paradigm.

Today however these long established common sense definitions regarding the 'public' nature of public institutions and education are slowly beginning to break down and new discursive spaces are opening. This genealogy takes the structural displacements of the public sphere as an

alternative form of periodising the history of Argentine education. I thus select the contemporary paradigm as the final *moment* for my analysis.

Beginning in the 1990's, reform advocates have been able to shift mainstream thought towards a less narrow definition of public education. The Federal Law of Education (1993) broadened this definition to include both state and private managed schools. More recently, Argentina passed a New National Law of Education (2006), aimed at reviewing the education policy model of the 1990's. This law also broadened the meaning of public education. Article 13 and 14 established the recognition of 'cooperative, social and private run, confessional and non-confessional institutions of education' as part of the National Education System, in all its levels, modalities and jurisdictions of the country (p. 12).

New sites, voices and versions of schooling are beginning to be recognised partly as a result of the emergence of new understandings of the meaning of 'the public'. However, are they signs of structural reform? Is there in Argentina any significant questioning within state-public education about its own forms of governance? What are the meanings of the 'public' now in play? In the following Chapter I address these questions.

Chapter Six: New sites, voices and versions of public education. New Governance?

Introduction

The object of this Chapter is twofold: firstly, to trace the changing meanings of 'public' education in contemporary discourse, reflecting on the extent to which these new meanings are having an impact on educational policy and governance in Argentina. I shall thus first describe the 'effects' of new discourse paradigms in re-defining the meaning of public education, drawing on debates both within the Argentine context and in broader global settings. Secondly, I describe Argentina's latest reform. Special attention is paid to the process of its passing and the discussion around a key policy text that articulated the discourse and animated public opinion. However, it is important to be clear that the changes I describe are ripples rather than ruptures, they are chinks in the edifice of state-centred education, they are nascent and stuttering, nonetheless they need to be taken seriously. Finally, a conclusion is offered that distinguishes global from local trends in educational governance and, fundamentally, discusses the difference between rhetoric and practice, which characterises the Argentine education setting.

New discourse paradigms

In this section I review the global discussion on the meanings of 'public' education, mainly based on contributions from the UK and the US contexts, which are most prolific and representative of a broad spectrum of perspectives.

Starting in the 1990's, conflicting definitions of what constitutes the 'public' nature of public schooling emerged in Argentina as elsewhere. Roger Dale suggests that following a broader trend in relation to changing conceptions on the role of state, the 'community' and the market, education systems have been subject to transformations in crucial aspects of public policy such as regulation, provision and finance. 'We might therefore say that while education remains a 'public' issue, in common with many other state activities, its coordination has ceased to be (at least formally) the sole preserve of the state or government' (Dale 1997: 274). Instead it has become co-ordinated by a range of forms of governance, among which decentralization, privatization and network governance figure prominently (Ball and Junemann 2012).

Proponents of more decentralised models of educational governance began to challenge the traditional centralised state direction and control. Jessop (2002) spells out 'two sets of emerging trends in the lifeworld' that have undermined the Keynesian State: 'a continuing tendential

“denationalization” of civil society’ (p. 88) and ‘values, social identities and interests associated with the welfare state and the growth of social movements opposed to one or more aspects of the Keynesian State’ (p. 89). The former is reflected in ‘an expansion of diverse social movements that now operate across national boundaries (…) associated with a crisis in the national state’ (p. 88). In this context, the sense of national identity becomes also weakened (p. 88). The second trend is connected to the existence of ‘a shift from national citizenship to 'a more universal model of membership [in a state], anchored in deterritorialized notions of persons' rights' (…) [and] the expansion of the so-called 'third' sector, which supposedly operates flexibly outside of the framework of pure markets and the bureaucratic state (but often in close conjunction with them as a “shadow market” and “shadow state”)’ (p. 88-9).

In the course of the development of modern societies this could mean a third displacement of the public sphere, moving finally into the social. However, if the principles underlying these positions only promote market rules for educational governance and eliminate the salient characteristics of authentic ‘publicness’, we may face an inverse process.

The decentring of and changes in the form and modalities of the state, destatalisation as Jessop calls it, may have a variety of consequences. Some may be ‘emancipatory’ in principle whereas others may jeopardise the construction of a true ‘public’ education system, as I have sought to define it.

It is worthwhile pointing out that the policy agenda framing this process may radically condition its outcomes. I will consider four inter-related aspects of the forms of 'destatalisation' (Jessop 2002) and their concomitant effects in redefining public education.

Many academic educationalists (Chubb and Moe 1990; De Wesse 1996; Mc Griff 1996; DurantIII 1997) suggest *schools should be defined solely by purpose*. The underlying requirement of this assertion is expanding the common definition of a public school to encompass entities including any public organisation, corporation or agency that exhibits the primary mission of providing teaching for learning academic skills and knowledge. This definition asserts that 'the public' aspect of education is in funding, access and accountability for academic outcomes, rather than processes or institutions. According to this line of reasoning, while democratic processes and providing quality of access and opportunity may be laudable goals, they are not most effectively pursued by direct democratic government control. Instead, public education is defined in terms of the instrumentality of its academic mission. Following Cris Lubienski, this 'functional' definition represents the essential conception of the reconfigured 'public' education (Lubienski 2000: 10). Their fullest concrete expressions are the 'charter' schools privately owned, for-profit, state schools. Chilean charter schools, Swedish 'free schools' and Spanish 'Concertados' are fully developed cases that fit into this category. Whereas in Argentina one provincial government, San Luis, failed to implement a Charter School policy during the 90's. This

policy presented an innovative package of new 'solutions' for educational 'problems' that radically transformed the traditional relationship between the state and education. It also sought to encourage privatisation and competition within state provision – all reforms which are generally associated with global policy trends (Cardini 2005: 26). No trace of that initiative remains. Perhaps this illustrates Ball's (2012) point that 'network governance' is not a stable structure for managing state and society, but rather 'it is made up of a set of more or less stable methods and relationships which if they do not work as expected can be dispensed with and replaced' (p. 8).

A second argument increasingly put forward is that *public schools should be the schools the public chooses to have*. The problem of choice has been analysed extensively (Gewirtz, Ball et al. 1995). It seems that the advocates of 'choice' have achieved a major discursive shift in equating the nature of 'public schools' to the public's entitlement to have a 'verdict' on the desirability of one school over another *through choice*. This notion has two clear consequences: universal access should mean both universal opportunities and choices. The rhetoric endows 'equity' with a new meaning. In Lubienski's words, '[it] seeks equal educational opportunity essentially all the way up to the schoolhouse door' (Lubienski 2000: 11). The new definition of 'public education' changes the demand for equity from one of resources intended to provide equal educational opportunities or outcomes, to one that permits families equal opportunity to seek access to the more

desirable schools. In practical terms, this means 'the public' is effectively narrowed. It is redefined in terms of immediate and individual 'consumers' of schooling. For this public – now identified as the students, their parents and, to some extent, the employers who employ skilled graduates – education is a private good to be pursued (and provided) in terms of individual self-interest. There is a subtle yet significant shift in the language from public education as a public good to public education as a private good.

The literature on school choice, according to a review by André-Bechely (2005: 5), makes one thing clear: when mothers and fathers and guardians make decisions about where their children will attend school they enter into a relationship with schooling institutions known for inequitable organizational structures and practices, as well as unequal educational opportunities. Choice arrangements provoke a shift from a state of tension between 'personal' and 'impersonal' standpoints to an almost completely personal perspective (Nagel 1991 quoted in; Oría, Cardini et al. 2007). A study of English education policies (Oría, Cardini et al. 2007), particularly of parental choice, competitive school enrolment, performance league tables and school specialisms and diversity, suggests they create an ethical framework which encourages 'personal' values and legitimates parents in the pursuit of competitive familial advantage through education. These policies produce a specific version of parents, which authorizes or celebrates these kinds of actions. Parents are to act as 'citizen-consumers' (Clarke

2005) choosing a school which best fits the needs and interests of their child by collecting information, comparing performance and interrogating teachers. Thus, the reflexive engagement with the social in terms of responsibility to the public good and the needs of 'others' that matter as much as the individual needs (the impersonal standpoint) is replaced almost entirely by a focus on the needs of specific children and the families in relation to imagined futures (the personal standpoint). Opportunities for other forms of public engagement with schooling are, concomitantly, closed down. However, these policies misread or homogenise the urban middle class and produces for many families, especially of the liberal/aesthetic middle classes, tensions and dilemmas, which they would prefer not to have to deal with.

This arrangement of competition and choice locates education within a 'market' framework where consumers 'vote with their feet' (Vanderberghe 1999) and are invited to apply the very well known and 'neat' mechanism of 'exit' as a response to the institution's performance (Hirschman 1970). Quasi markets emerged in the last decades of the twentieth century, as attempts to transform the 'vices of market in public virtue' (Vanderberghe 1999: 272). That is, a system of provision that combines state funding and regulation with modes of provision oriented to market and competition. The quasi market is a now well developed but much debated model[lxxv]. However, rarely, if ever, can one find all the necessary 'conditions of possibility' for quasi markets to work in most

national settings. Key variables such as 'perfect information', 'transport' and 'surplus spaces' are usually not fulfilled. A great deal of research suggests that this version of 'public schooling' may be unachievable, as in the Argentine case (Minvielle 2004).

However, in Argentina there is increasingly an option to choose a 'non state school'. The long established consensus about the 'value' of state public education seems to be therefore breaking down at the local level. As stated in previous chapters, private enrolment in Argentina has grown over the past sixty years at a rate of 4.7% per annum, compared to 1.6% per annum of the state sector (Narodowski and Andrada 2001: 588). Rather than attempting to engage in critical dialogue for the recovery of state schools, parents from a variety of social class fractions are fleeing towards the private sector. This suggests serious limitations to the content and possibilities of a 'public sphere' at the local level of school communities. There is a challenge, then, for education policy makers to develop voice mechanisms at the micro and mezzo-levels of state schooling politics or to introduce choice into the public school system.

The third key strategy for redefining public education is presenting *the nature of the educational good detached from its form of control*. Plank and Boyd (1994) argue that growing frustration with the multiple 'failures' of the public school system has led a number of educational policy analysts, on both left and right, to an explicit repudiation of democratic control and a

search for alternatives (Boyd 1994: 266). The two sides share an instrumental view of educational governance, in which one or more of the multiple goals assigned to the education system are held to be prior to the means that are adopted to achieve them (Elster, Hylland et al. 1986). The institutions of educational governance are judged on the basis of their efficiency in attaining public purposes. In other words, no set of institutions is intrinsically better than another; those that 'fail' to achieve satisfactory standards of performance are subject to replacement. Control is moved from democratic polity to individual 'direct control'. These newly defined 'public' schools may thus 'be' public in several ways: they are publicly funded, open to the public, sometimes even 'chartered' by a public authority and accountable to that authority, as well as to the families that choose them. However, according to Boyd (1994) they are less public in one respect of critical interest to the construction of a public sphere: 'democratic control'.

The alternative models for educational governance range from 'Equality, Uniformity and Central Control' to 'Efficiency, Effectiveness and Expert Control', to 'Decentralization and Differentiation' or 'Competition and Markets' (Boyd 1994: 271-274). Boyd argues that in current education policy debates *local democratic governance* is often treated as an obstacle to the attainment of public purposes, and sometimes as a means to the accomplishment of other ends, but almost never as an end to be valued in and for itself. The authors then suggest that 'an alternative to the present quest for alternatives to democratic government in education is therefore to

seek to strengthen the institutions of democratic control, and so to expand the opportunities of citizens to participate in democratic exchange (Boyd 1994: 276). They hold democracy to be not just an instrument for accomplishing policy objectives, or a strategy for increasing the efficiency or effectiveness of public institutions, but as 'a way of living together in a pluralistic and imperfect world, a forum in which issues are discussed in an effort to achieve deeper understanding and agreement' (Boyd 1994: 276).

Underlying all these trends, a fourth contested aspect of the debate is: *the distinction between the public and private spheres in education*. The literature reflects a pervasive process of blurring the boundaries between the private and the public. This 'wall of separation' is presented as the primary obstacle to radical reform.

Norton (2004) argues 'public or private are designations based more in convention and history than logic or principle. There are no definitive features of one or the other. None of an institution's origins, purposes, activities, regulation or funding consistently lead to a classification as "private" or "public"' (Norton 2004: 5). Drawing both on philosophers and neuroscientists another critic of the public-private distinction asserts, 'it is hard to think the future from the past' (Loader 1999). According to this author, the ideas in our head and our expectations in a time of dramatic change limit our thinking. Specifically the burden of past curriculum and structures such as the dichotomy of public and private, lock us back. 'Our

brain is literally hard wired with our existing paradigms (…) Laying down new neural connections requires immense energy that can be a painful experience' (Loader 1999). Additionally, Hill (1995) claims the 'real' alternative for public education's governance is to include a variety of public and private organizations, based on school-specific contracts that define each school's mission, guarantee funding and establish standards and procedures for accountability' (Hill 1995: 11). Hill critiques the current system in which schools are both funded and operated by a government agency. Existing examples of this alternative are the previously mentioned Chilean charter schools, Spanish Concertados and Swedish 'free schools', and in a less clear cut form, English Academies and Free schools.

A significant body of practice and economic argument distinguishes the two spheres, but asserts the role of the private sector in the reform and transformation of the state sector, either by substitution or cooperation There are various forms of public-private collaboration (Levin 2000) and literature on partnerships is also very extensive (Draxler 2008). Following Draxler:

> Partnerships can be defined as 'the pooling and managing of resources, as well as the mobilization of competencies and commitments by public, business and civil society partners to contribute to expansion and quality of education. They are founded on the principles of international rights, ethical principles and organizational agreements underlying education sector development and management; consultation with other stakeholders; and on shared decision-making, risk, benefit and accountability.
>
> (Draxler 2008: 31)

However, when it comes to analysing and defining 'partnerships' in education, there can be varying and divergent perspectives on the subject. In a previous study (Gvirtz and Oría 2010) I analysed a spectrum of educational improvement initiatives, with a particular focus on Public-Private Partnerships. However, I must be clear that while this previous study deploys the terms 'public' and 'private' to refer to clearly delineated spheres, I also call into question the meaning that commonly takes as 'public' all that is state-run and 'private' that which is corporative or social. Drawing on Habermas, the 'public sphere' arises from the social realm, and it is 'the gathering of private individuals' into institutionalised spaces 'where rational interchange takes place on issues of common concern' (Habermas 1989: 27). Rational interchange and critical examination are the two distinctive attributes of the 'public'. However, in order to structure a typology and give the analysis greater clarity, in this study I distinguish the two players – 'state' and 'civil society' by using the associated terms 'public' and 'private' respectively. I classify PPPs according to two main variables: funding and provision. These functions can be assigned both to private and public actors. In turn, I make a distinction between two sectors within the private sphere: a) 'intermediate organisations' within civil society; and, b) for-profit companies which operate in the field of education.

The a) category includes a wide range of experiences, involving corporate social responsibility (CSR) within companies; extension work in universities and a very broad range of foundations tackling educational

issues. On the basis of a diagnosis or problem, these organisations develop viable responses and mobilise voluntary funding to work on immediate needs. An analysis of the development and increasing complexity of CSR and its growing linkage with the field of education would require a separate study (Drucker 1984; Berger 1998; Austin 2000). In many settings, corporate philanthropy has gradually turned into local development strategies built on close interaction with public institutions, intermediate sectors and community stakeholders. Various circles are now urging companies to apply the principles of good corporate citizenship in their decision-making plans and processes. In Argentina, this is a widespread phenomenon. Although these contributions may work well in specific contexts, these efforts cannot give answers to full-scale needs nor transform the general 'internal efficiency' indicators of the education system as a whole. Here the need can be seen for strong state involvement and sound public-policy design. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile for civil-society foundations and organisations, proven their ability to efficiently manage improvement, to continue seeking other ways and means to co-operate with government in the attempt to fulfil the right of every child and young person to education[lxxvi].

The b) initiatives – for profit educational business – represent a different phenomenon. There are different types of privatisation involving various forms of funding and relationships between financiers, service providers, and customers. This is translated into various types of public-

private collaboration, from arrangements of public funding for private schools to the various types of linkages between the state, corporations, schools, and families (Levin 2000). As Ball suggests in *Education plc.*, 'it is more appropriate perhaps to think about "privatisations"' (Ball 2007b: 13). First-order privatisation is described in terms of ownership, organisational forms, financial relations etc. Second-order privatisation is described in terms of the implications for social relations, social space, family responsibilities, citizenship and democracy, and also incorporates the privatisation of governance. Drawing on Hatcher (2000) he also distinguishes between exogenous and endogenous privatisation. Where the former involves private companies entering education to directly take over responsibilities, services or programmes, the latter refers to changes in the behaviour of public sector organisations themselves, where they act as though they were a business, both in relation to clients and workers, and in dealing with other public sector organisations (2007b: 14).

For profit companies that provide educational services to the state are slowly appearing in Argentina. They enter the educational field mainly by offering solutions to public sector 'failure'. This allows the State to establish exogenous alliances and to outsource its policies. For instance, within the teaching-learning fields, according to the National Assessments [*Operativos Nacionales de Evaluación, ONE*], UNESCO and PISA, Argentina achieves very low positions in all disciplines, after Chile, Uruguay and México. A company that works in offering teaching and

curriculum solutions named *Sangari* is now established. Originally founded in the United Kingdom (1965) it operates already in sixteen countries: Brazil, Egypt, Spain, United States, Greece, Iran, Kazakhstan, Mozambique, Namibia, Pakistan, Portugal, United Kingdom, Romania, South Africa and Turkey. The program offers teacher training, organises periodic meetings to discuss planning and class work, distributes printed materials and videos and has an infrastructure of more than 400 employees across Brazil, United States and Argentina. From a techno-pedagogical perspective, this company offers innovative contents. The specialists who undertake the program are prominent members of the academic field. However, this approach to educational improvement fails at least in two aspects: high costs and, fundamentally, unlikely sustainability (Gvirtz and Oría 2010: 51). An initiative is sustainable when it has sufficient human and financial resources to endure and scale up. It is worth remembering that successful innovations can often lose momentum when financial resources or key people are withdrawn. The most effective way to ensure lasting teaching-learning conditions for educational improvement in schools is by way of integral designs that link school-management with academic improvement, that is to say, the work of supervisors, head teachers and the teaching staff (Gvirtz and Oría 2010: 51).

Having acknowledged this case, it is important to note that privatisation(s) in Argentina have only a limited significance for 'public' schooling. Blurring and hybridism – private organisations delivering 'public

services', public service organisations acting like businesses, the repositioning of the public as clients – as expressions of the new global trends in educational governance remain very rare. The above case is an unusual phenomenon in the Argentine context.

However, Ball's most interesting contribution is moving beyond a simple juxtaposition of public/private to 'explore the blurrings and elisions between them' (2007bb: 13). He audits 'in a critically constructive fashion' the different privatisations currently under way, as well as the way in which the role of the state is re-inserted in relation to privatisation (2007b: 13). Following Ball, 'privatisation can have paradoxical effects, good and bad at the same time (…) and small particulars of privatisation might contribute to larger-scale social and political changes' (2007bb: 13). However, political agendas are played out in terms of 'an ensemble of generic policies', which nonetheless have local variations (Ball 2007: XII). Policy ideas are received and interpreted differently within different 'political architectures' (Cerny 1990, in Ball et. al 2000), national infrastructures and ideologies (Hall 1986, in Ball et. al 2000).

The following section seeks to 'map' the Argentine debate on changing meanings of 'the public' within the field of education.

The local debate

For those of us who position ourselves in defence of state-public education, discussing, re-elaborating and enriching the concept of 'the public' is an issue of major relevance.

(Hillert 2003: 85)

Argentina is characterised by a strong tradition of public education as a symbol of national unity, progress and social cohesion as the previous chapters of this thesis have outlined. One could thus expect the debate on changing meanings of 'public' education to occupy a key place in the fields of policy sociology and educational policy. However, very few authors address this matter specifically. Relevant research is scarce, and two recent publications virtually gather the whole discussion: *The meanings of the public. Reflections from the field of education [Los sentidos de lo publico. Reflexiones desde el campo educativo]* (2003), by M. Feldfeber; and *To think about the public. Notes on education and the state [Pensar en lo público. Notas sobre la educación y el Estado]* (2008), by R. Perazza. The dates of publication - 2003 and 2008- are significant, for each one follows on from key points of reform in Argentina. Both publications reflect the symbolic weight that the notion of 'the public', linked to 'the national', and 'the state', has carried historically up to the present. Common sense is played out in these positions, but also there is a particular sensitivity, which in most cases argues in favour of maintaining the association between 'state' and 'public'. There are however variations between the sets of contributions gathered in the two publications. A brief review of Feldfeber's book

published in 2003 with a focus on the reforms of the 1990s will be useful in clarifying the antecedents of the contemporary debate.

The reforms of the 1990s

An educational reform took place in Argentina during the 1990's, aimed at redefining the role of the State in education. Through decentralising processes and giving more autonomy to schools, the idea was that the State would act as an agent of control, rather than as a provider of education. These educational reforms were geared towards developing a new organisational model for public education.[lxxvii] Most commentators viewed these reforms as 'neoliberal', and suggested therefore that public education was, if they were implemented, in danger of being handed over to private capital. This is largely the position sustained by the authors in Feldfeber's compilation.

For example, in this compilation of papers Sandra Carli (2003) reconstructs the 'constitutive principles' of the education system at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and describes how they were linked to the generation of a tradition of public education, that eventually became a myth. As such, 'it acquired a metaphorical character and became a social imaginary that somewhat neglected the complexities and vicissitudes of its origins at the beginning of the twentieth century' (p. 17-8). According to Carli, recent neoliberal discourses, which are hostile to public education,

attempt to negate and eliminate this *tradition* of public education, relegating it as a product of the past. Carli admits that 'demystifying' education is often a key to academic research. However, she emphasises the need to maintain a 'belief' in public education and in the role of the state, which should endure in time beyond critique (p. 18). The author urges readers to 'politicise' the debate on public education and to 'remember it constitutes a privileged space for the development of future generations' (p. 23).

Carli's argument resonates with my initial concerns with the public sphere – which could be configured in various ways. In fact, the Argentine Constitution prescribes the right to education since 1853, fixing a regulatory framework to the public powers. Government is compelled to attend to the design of good policies and satisfy the right to education (Gvirtz and Oría 2009). However, in my view, Carli's approach based on the 'belief' in state-public education should give way to one linked to evidence based research and critical analysis of state provision. Academia should assume a leading role in acknowledging the strengths and difficulties of state education. Politicising the debate on public education may otherwise result in neglecting the challenges to the system and a failure to develop new discourses, strategies and technologies of governance capable of 'actualising' the nineteenth century educational potential. The challenge is to articulate new discursive practices of educational governance in order to effectively improve and offer increased educational opportunities for all.

Another contributor, Roberto Follari (2003) questions the discursive effects achieved by the advocates of a non-state public sphere, where civil society is invested with a purity of origin, free from the struggles of interests that characterise state action. The author acknowledges today it is 'almost universally accepted' that the public is not coextensive with the state, but warns that the state continues and will continue to be one of the most decisive *locus* of power. For this reason, he argues the public should always remain inscribed within this arena, for 'it may be more than the state, but by no means something other than the state' (p. 50). Follari is against the views that oppose state and society as if they were social arenas completely exclusive and strange to one another. He even articulates a critique of schools of *social management* – a new school profile linked to local popular initiative that were officially endorsed in 2006 - and other expressions of civil society. The author considers these are 'under-cover ways of handing in the school administration to private capital' (p. 50). He argues it is 'curious and self contradictory that discourses that hold the value of the non-state public sphere at the same time appeal to the state in order to fund their non-state activity' (p. 62). Here capital re-enters the scene of governance as a third player. He views this as an attempt to 'empty' the state of its role of guarantor of equal opportunities, and openly turn it into a subsidiser of the private administration of the school apparatus. Further, under these mechanisms, he sees no substantive improvement in terms of saving state expenditure. According to Follari, the state is simply divorced from administration, which is given to private capital under the innocent label of

an ‘agent of civil society’ or ‘the third sector’ (p. 63). For all these arguments, Follari claims ‘the State must be defended’ (p. 59).

Clearly, there is a need to critique positions that minimize or neglect the complexities and difficulties of the ‘social sphere’. In fact, recent literature actually warns that civil society many times replicates the state’s flaws in terms of management and organisation (Acuña and Vacchieri 2007). Literature on ‘partnerships’ generally distinguishes ‘who brings what’ (Draxler 2008) to an educational initiative or policy. In effect, there are advantages and disadvantages in operating both within the state and civil society. However, the unilateral defence of the state may result in a residualisation of civil society. Follari’s critique is an example of this. He argues that state funding of non-state public provision is prejudicial to the state. Two points are worth making:

The study of previous discursive paradigms shows for instance Julio Barcos posing the exact opposite claim: government drastically limits civil powers and responsibilities and builds a super-powerful ‘Napoleonic state’ (p. 40). Anarchist advocacy for a ‘genuinely democratic’ alternative model of educational governance was based on restoring to the people the free exercise of their sovereignty, engaging them in the running of public services, such as hygiene, building aesthetics, communal taxes, justice and education. Barcos additionally believed intellectuals in Argentina had taken the side for the Napoleonic state, and were thus enemies of the political and

administrative decentralisation of public services: 'Instead of granting the people increasing participation in the management and promotion of education, they have deliberately been pushing it further away, stupidly, more and more, defending it from its vital contact' (1927: 72). Some of Follari's arguments may be seen as representative of this position within the academia. I would argue that governance structures, the locus of power and arenas for voice and critique need to be revised in order to avoid eliminating the possibilities of a 'public sphere' with public-state education.

Secondly, international experiences are useful here. And we can note how countries 'otherwise' address the challenge of governance. The Netherlands, a major case of contrast, presents alternative deep-rooted governance schemes, where state funding of civil society is by no means understood as 'a concealed form of giving school administration to private capital' (Follari 2003: 63)[lxxviii]. In The Netherlands, the 1920 Primary Education Act introduced a system of completely equal treatment of both state and denominational schools (Van Vugt 1996: 23). Societal division along the lines of different philosophies of life is not an exclusively Dutch phenomenon. However, comparison shows that *pillarisation* has been more thorough, complex and far reaching in The Netherlands (Sturm 1998: 289). In contrast to the Dutch case, Argentina shaped its educational system on the basis of homogeneous educated identities. It currently, however, appears to be moving from homogeneity to heterogeneity in a particular way I shall analyse in the next section of this chapter.

Flora Hillert (2003) asserts that 'discussing, re-elaborating and enriching the concept of 'the public' is an issue of major relevance for those of us who position ourselves in defence of state-public education' (p. 85). She identifies an anti-state discourse underpinning a 'neo-conservative project' (p. 87). In a similar vein to Follari, she discusses the categories of 'civil society' and the 'third sector'. Hillert admits the state should never 'totally absorb' the multiple versions of public schooling. She agrees there can be two forms of 'the public': the state-public and non-state public, but distinguishes the latter from the private sector and limits non-state public spheres to the arenas of cooperatives and NGOs (p. 90). Hillert also asserts, however, that the state form of education should be dominant, and establishes a theoretical and practical dividing line between the public and the private spheres. Hillert thus argues the need to amend the Federal Law of Education, where private schools are defined as public schools. She wishes to recover the definition of the public school as state school, where 'the ends of goods and services are supposed to be discussed publicly, where the sovereign are supposed to be the people' (p. 89). According to this author, 'public opinion' and 'sovereignty' are the fundamental reasons why public policy is the real expression of a general will (p. 90). Summing up, Hillert accepts the possibility of forms of schools apart from state schools, but asserts that they should occupy a minor space within educational provision, because the state sphere of popular sovereignty should be predominant.

Again it is hard not to agree with some of these principles. However, the genealogy of Argentine education shows that, in this particular context, centralisation is high, voice mechanisms are limited and the state is invested by corporate interests of various kinds. Hillert's ideals of popular sovereignty seem unrealistic. This is fundamentally because of the lack of institutionalised sites and channels for the emergence and development of public(s) within the educational system. *It is thus necessary that the state's organisational forms adjust to the values and principles of popular sovereignty and 'publicness'. This is a fundamental point of this thesis.* Whom do we really want institutions to serve? If institutions and policies contradict fundamental political principles, are we prepared to change them? How do we discard the intellectual blinkers that have resulted from the reification of some concepts and forms? On what models should institutions be based? (Katz Michael 1987: 2). As stated at the very beginning, 'the public' is not a given, but a process of construction. Both the state and society are necessary to form genuinely 'public' spaces that express these conceptual, political, and social attributes, each in accordance with its purpose and role. *Inter alia* this would require that the state build greater transparency; that it make relevant information on the system - its strengths and its weaknesses - available to the public; and that it be accountable for the outcomes of its policies and involve *the demos* in determining the public agenda.

Maria Silvia Serra (2003) asks what precisely the meaning of 'public' in education might be: 'What do we mean by a public school? What does this adjective stand for?' (p. 97) – questions I have asked in this thesis. Serra draws other fields of knowledge and reflection into the discussion on the meaning of 'the public' in education. She acknowledges that 'the public' category is closely linked with Political Theory and Philosophy, and that within these fields of thought and research 'the public' category clearly transcends the exclusive association to the state (p. 101). However, Serra looks back to the 'foundational period' of the Argentine education system, when 'the public was equivalent to the state', and argues although the state imposed education on the people, 'it had to be that way because other publics did not exist: there were no citizens who could be recognised as such' (p. 98). Serra's historical reconstruction thus neglects the struggles involved in defining the meaning of 'public education'. The process that led to the foundational definition of public-schools as state-schools is considered inexorable.

One of the purposes of genealogies is to make the present revocable, to make it historically contingent; to show, as Foucault says, that 'things are not as necessary as all that' (Gordon, Miller et al. 1991: 76). As I analysed in previous chapters, the state captured the right to speak about education by silencing other voices and eliminating alternative sites for the public outside the sphere of the state. As a consequence, Serra's ideas miss part of their historical background.

The 1990's reforms in Argentina did give rise to some discussions around the meaning of 'public' education, as evident above. Public opinion largely rejected the re-conceptualisation of the 'public' and 'private' spaces, i.e. the single distinction between state and private schools according to type of administration. It also resisted the incorporation of non-state arenas to 'the public'. Many academics, in particular, strongly opposed the 90's reforms. However, other authors argue that *in practice* the logic of the traditional system co-opted the main 90's principles (Gvirtz and Narodowski Unpublished - personal access to the manuscript). According to these authors, the 1990's reforms in Argentina were not implemented to their full extent, resulting in the continued presence of the state through the traditional mechanisms of governance, with the addition however of some new results-oriented and decentralising policies. The clearest example was the new National Evaluation System, which instead of replacing the surveillance methods of Inspection, became an addition to traditional mechanisms of control. Furthermore, the powers held by the national State were not devolved to educators, families or other local agents, but to the provincial states.

In many respects this was a non-reform, a change in rhetoric rather than practice. The concept of 'the public' remained mostly 'untouched', even the policy rhetoric that was deployed seemed trapped in a state-centred matrix, where the role of 'publics' and 'communities' remained residual.

The key contemporary event in this history of Argentine education took place in 2006. That year, the Executive Power passed a new National Law of Education, aimed at reviewing the education policy model of the 1990s. This reform sought to distance contemporary policy from the past 'neoliberal' ideology and reinstate, at least rhetorically, the leading role of the National state as the main guarantor of educational justice. The elaboration of the new law also put to play new meanings of 'public' education.

The following section will focus on a new discourse paradigm expressed in the National Law of Education. The actual Law Nº 26.206 is only briefly and partially outlined. I rather focus the analysis on the process that led to its passing and the discussion around a key policy text that articulated the discourse and organised public opinion: *National Law of Education: Towards quality education for a just society*. New meanings of 'the public' underpin both the process and the text. I reflect on the extent to which these new meanings are shaping educational policy and government.

Recent Reform

In this section I wish to identify new meanings of 'the public' underpinning recent reform. The papers compiled in Perazza's publication - *Pensar en lo público. Notas sobre la educación y el Estado* - contribute to this analysis. I also draw on other literature in order to consider various *aspects*

of the presentation and discussion of the Law that are relevant to the discussion on the meaning of 'the public'. Finally, the document titled *National Law of Education: Towards quality education for a just society,* which was publicly presented and disseminated and served as a platform for the first phase of consultation and discussion among the different social actors, is a source of considerable interest.

Chapter one in *Towards quality education for a just society* (Ministerio Nacional de Educación 2006) articulates the grounds for a new law. As said before, the National Law of Education was geared towards reorienting the education policy model of the 1990s and might be considered in some respects as 'post-neoliberal'. Following Senen Gonzalez (2008), 'post-neoliberal' reforms worked to recreate state intervention capacities and re-establish the legitimacy of the 'public-function' (p. 112). For example, the change of denomination, from *federal* to *national* law, provides a renewed sense of national integration and protection, which rearticulates the political dimension of educational discourse (p. 91). This national-state version of 'public education' reintroduces elements of the tradition and myth of public education, but through an updated discourse that incorporates 'participation' and 'diversity' as its main symbols. Such notions recur repeatedly in the document that served as a basis for the debate.

The argumentation is specifically based on a critique of the 1990's, when 'education was diminished in its equalising capacity through policies

that subjugated large sectors of the population to poverty and exclusion' (p. 13). Many academics endorsed this position (Perazza 2008). They signalled the numerous 'dangers' arising from autonomy, ranging from 'privatisation' and 'clientelism', to 'potential pressure-groups imposing their views within schools and excluding differing positions and pedagogical practices' (Contreras 1999, in Perazza 2008: 57). Perazza values the new law because it is geared towards 'sustaining the state as guarantor of public education' (Perazza 2008: 63). She argues that 'reducing *the public* to the school evokes the conception of an absent or defenceless state' (p. 69) and highlights the need to reconstruct and rehabilitate other forms of empathy and communication between state and civil society: 'In these days, the circulation of new and diverse models of communication between state and civil society is a priority in order to strengthen both parts and establish and respect collective agreements in the pursuit of a common horizon' (p.69).

Perazza turns to ideas of educational justice and makes a central claim: the need to recognise the subjects of education, including 'the diverse' and 'the multiple' in policy designs and modes of provision. She argues 'Policy can work on processes of power redistribution, so that the decisions do not always rest on the same sectors (…) In the countries of the region the contexts of production of just educational policies require the construction of institutional spaces that systematically incorporate the sectors involved in the processes of schooling' (p. 64). In this same line, the policy document describes 'a new scenario' - marked by 'the process of recuperation', 'recent

social transformations' and 'the will to position education as the key to social justice'- that calls for a new regulatory frame for the education system (p. 13). The law is presented as a tool for reordering the functions, responsibilities and competencies of the state at different levels. Within this redistribution of functions, the national state is positioned to take a leading role. This seems to be a return to the state-public education position. The document argues that 'a state that limits itself to focalised social policies, which are only partial, lacks the conditions to produce changes of relevant magnitude' (p. 17). Within this discourse paradigm, the state is no longer conceived as an assessor or equaliser, but as provider, regulator and funder of education, essentially defined as a 'public' good.

The document suggests a list of ten axes for discussion. Among these, three refer to aspects of governance, potentially oriented towards greater 'publicness'.

Number 5 is very brief, and refers to 'Guaranteeing the right of families to participate in the education of their sons' (p. 37). *Number 8* speaks more broadly about 'Guaranteeing the right of all to participate in the educational challenge' (p. 41-42), and has a slightly lengthier description. *Number 10* is titled 'Putting educational governance at the service of achieving quality of education for all' (p. 47-52), focusing on the issue of decentralisation and the role of each level of government in the

construction of quality of education and social justice. It is worth analysing these three points further.

The first point asserts 'families have the inalienable right to participate in the education of their children, and the obligation to commit to the work of the school' (p. 37). Therefore, it argues the governance of education should facilitate the participation of families, promoting communication, mutual respect and collaboration within a logic of shared efforts to reach quality of education for all' (p. 37). The text asserts schools should thus give each parent periodical information about the learning process of their children, as well as guides to cooperate with their progress.

A traditional or 'common-sense' understanding of the parents' relations to state education underpins the discussions as well as the actual text of the law. Following Vincent (2000), the two common sense versions of parent – education relations are: a) parents as consumers and b) parents as partners with educational professionals. The text seems to figure a relation between parents and teachers within individual schools, rather than a broader role for locally-based parent-centred groups and organisations, and their potential contribution to the wider education system. Vincent posits an alternative understanding of the relation between parents and the education system: parents as 'citizens'; and develops a conceptualisation, based on ideas of deliberative democracy, which can begin to account for

collective action among a population marked by heterogeneity and difference. The document is silent on this point.

The actual Law, sanctioned on December 14th, 2006 does not present further conceptualisations or details regarding the role of the public, parents or citizens in the education system. Title X (Ten) asserts that 'Parents, mothers and tutors' have the right to 'participate in the schools' activities and be informed about the evolution and evaluation of their child's educational process' (p. 48). It is worth noting that the text does not mention the district level of educational government, the main site for the constitution of public spheres and organised groups. Furthermore, in practice Argentine education at local and institutional levels hardly enforces and operationalises these very general goals set in the law. Very rarely do state programs or projects target parents 'as citizens', or attempt to create the conditions for a gradual emergence of community-based public spheres. Promoting such social practices requires thorough analysis of other existing experiences and alternative organisational models. As Vincent indicates, the role of locally based, parent-centred groups and organisations in contributing to the wider education system, are largely overlooked in recent literature. The dominant 'gaze' within educational research focuses on the operations and interactions within classroom, school and/or local education authorities, rather than those pertaining to locally based educationally oriented organisations (Vincent 2000: 1). However, it is the author's

contention, 'such groups deserve attention and appreciation in any discussion of moves towards a more inclusive education system' (p. 1).

Number 8 begins by stating 'education is a challenge for society as a whole, not a particular sector. In this sense, although the main responsibility over education is the state's, this doesn't mean neglecting the participation of different actors, or working on partnerships to promote a greater democratisation of the education administration' (p. 41). Democratising the education administration, according to this text, should consider three dimensions:

a) the state itself;

b) the participation of different actors in defining the orientations of educational policy;

c) the participation of social actors in the life of the schools.

As regards 'the state itself', the document suggests that 'successful educational policies in most cases depend on policy actions arranged by various sectors within the public administration' (p. 41). Links between education, health, work and communication are viewed as increasingly necessary and should thus be established by legal frameworks. As regards the participation of different actors in defining the orientations of educational policy, the text asserts that social, cultural, academic, communitarian, productive and union sectors should participate in defining the orientations of educational policy.

New narratives about what counts as a 'good' policy are being articulated and validated here. According to Ball 'narratives serve to repopulate the field of policy, legitimating new actors (…) they rework the possibilities of public sector delivery and establish new key ideas and new social logics' (Ball and Junemann 2012: 12). In some countries, governments are increasingly 'catalyzing all sectors - public, private and voluntary – into action' (Osborne and Gaebler 1992, in Ball and Junemann 2012: 6) to solve community problems, redefining themselves 'as facilitators engaged in value chains, and working through markets rather than autarkic doers who owned, operated and produced everything themselves' (Wanna 2009, in Ball and Junemann 2012: 6). Eggers (2008, in Ball *et. al.* Op. Cit.) calls this new trend *'Governing by network'* (p. 2). In this model the core responsibilities of government no longer centre on managing people and programs but on organising resources—often belonging to others— to produce public value. Through all of this, public services are increasingly delivered through 'a mix of strategic alliances, joint working arrangements, networks, partnerships and many other forms of collaboration across sectorial and organizational boundaries' (Williams 2002, in Ball *et. al.* Op. Cit.: 6) based upon relations 'involving mutuality and interdependence as opposed to hierarchy and independence' (Peterson 2003, in Ball *et. al.* Op. Cit.: 6), although this interdependence is clearly, as a number of commentators point out, asymmetric. However, these are not exactly the kind of shifts that are being prefigured in the policy text.

In the text and in practice, the role of the different actors and sites for participation in Argentine education are all based at the central level administration. The document signals several sites where such sectors are called to take part in the discussion of the new law: 'curricular councils', 'technical councils' and 'sites for establishing agreements between mass media and education representatives' (p. 41). At a local level, parents are called to participate in various aspects of the school (p. 42), very little is added in terms of community participation in the daily life of schools. This point is addressed to some extent above (Axis Nº 5), on which I have already commented. Public education in Argentina is therefore governed by a logic of state hierarchy.

Number 10 deals with the forms of educational governance and administration, 'which should not be conceived as ends in themselves but instruments at the service of policy objectives' (p. 47). The document claims 'today we face a context that obliges us to redefine the forms through which our national identity was built and the role and relationship of the different levels of governance of education' (p. 47). The demand for devolution of educational services emerges in relation to a claim for a 'true federalism' and a 'greater autonomy' of the provinces in relation to the power located in *Buenos Aires*.

The text specifies the state's position in this matter:

> We need to move out from the simplified pendulum of a national centralised educational system that does not respect diversity or the provincial fragmented educational system that breaks national cohesion and integration. The National state is a federal state, and educational administration should work on that line.
>
> (Ministerio Nacional de Educación 2006: 48)

Devolution, however, is again put at provincial level. Moreover, the document assures 'there can be no successful process of decentralisation without a strong central administration' (…). This 'strength' should not be associated with bureaucratic controls, but with 'strategic capacities', among which, 'promoting new forms of participation in the processes of educational decision-making' (p. 52) is highlighted. The actual Law does not offer further details regarding the role of publics, parents and citizens in the education system. Institutions are asked to articulate the participation of different actors of the 'educational community' (p. 46), but no concrete channels of voice or processes that regulate and promote participation in the school's daily life are suggested. Chapter I, articles 13 and 14 of the Law establish the recognition of 'private, cooperative, social, confessional and non-confessional institutions of education' (p. 12) in all jurisdictions of the country. The discourse of diversity is articulated here. According to Perazza, the idea of a uniform Argentine public school is blurring and references to public school(s) rather than *the* public school are consolidating (2008: 51). In this sense, the critiques of the 1990s opposing non-state versions of public

schooling seem to lose weight. The discourse of diversity articulates a widespread critique of the school's traditional 'single format' geared to homogeneity.

Again the ideas that underpin these axes relate to some extent to the concept of 'publification' introduced by Nuria Cunill Grau (1997). A new institutional model that goes beyond both the approaches of bureaucracy and the market toward a system of public services, geared towards expanding the 'public sphere' and guided by criteria of efficacy, efficiency and accountability (Cunill Grau 1997: 255). Cunill Grau argues 'public' administration needs to move from a state-centred to a socio-centred matrix, and thus rearticulate the relations between the state and society. However, the discourse paradigm under which the new National Law of Education was passed, plays out a more state-centred perspective: a) the discourse strongly advocates for a greater role of the state, over and against the market, positioned as the guarantor, provider and funder of education; b) critiques of the 1990s are harsh and recurring; c) little is developed in terms of local community participation.

Within this discourse paradigm, the state's recognition of different educational institutions *(diversity*) and the pursuit of new institutional forms in which all actors may be included at different levels of management (*participation),* seem to fulfil the meaning of 'the public'. *Diversity* and *participation* are therefore the key pillars of contemporary discourse.

However, they have a limited translation into educational governance structures and practices.

Although it is true that texts where policies are articulated – especially laws –never say what to do, they just 'influence, inform and animate educational policy' (Ball 2008: 102), the distance between rhetoric and practice seems to be a pattern of Argentine recent reform. An example of this is the way in which the process that lead to the passing of the law materialised into practice. The following section describes how participation and diversity were played out during the debate set by the National Executive Power to elaborate Law Nº 26.206.

An Open debate for the New National Law of Education

In this section I begin to reflect upon the extent to which new meanings of 'the public', in this case inflected by the notions of 'diversity' and 'participation', have an impact on educational policies and practices.

To elaborate Law Nº 26.206, Government addressed a wide spectrum of actors of the education system and the broader general 'public(s)': 'teacher union organisations, parents, students, associations linked to education, both with private and public management (…) representatives of the mass media, the world of work and production, the Churches, NGOs and popular organisations..' and so forth. In line with contemporary patterns of 'good

governance' (Acuña and Tomassi Unpublished - Personal access to manuscript), the National state emphasised the need to incorporate new sites and voices into policy design and implementation. The new law would then result from discussion and consensus, the products of 'citizen participation'. The document opens inviting everyone to 'participate'. I quote at length:

> We look forward to an active participation of all the social actors. The provinces will be able to reflect upon the reality of the Argentine education system and its key problems. They shall be able to express themselves through their educational authorities and technical teams, bringing ideas and proposals for the new law. The Commission of Ministers, recently created in the sphere of the Federal Council of Culture and Education and composed by representatives of different regions, will design different channels in order to multiply the debate in the whole territory of the Republic. This Commission will summon all the actors of the education system: teacher union organisations, parents, students, associations linked to education, both with private and public management, etc. The Commission shall also call important social actors committed to the educational reality: representatives of the mass media, the world of work and production, the Churches, NGOs and popular organisations. It is key that the debate reaches the schools and educators. Having that aim in view, we will deliver in each jurisdiction, in concerted manner, working days of reflection and discussion within every school institution. The object of this is to gather teachers' and parents' opinions and proposals in relation to the new norm. We shall also hold an intense communication with the educational commissions in Congress, in order to position the debate in the sphere of the Legislative Power, and to make sure that the bill of law arrives to Parliament as a product of strong consensus. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, will also invite national and private universities, as well as other academic and expert institutions from the country and abroad. Opinion polls with ample diffusion will also be delivered in order to reach a high number of citizens, schools and teachers all over the country.

(Ministerio Nacional de Educación 2006: 3)

Three ideas relevant to this study emerge very clearly from this excerpt:

1. The Law sought to be widely legitimated through the opinions and participation of a range of citizens. Participation was defined as the key tool for legitimating reform and as a means of constructing a new consensus around state policy.
2. 'Voice' was mainly open to teachers and actors involved in the education system including parents and private universities who 'shall play a leading role in this debate', but also, at least rhetorically to 'all the Argentineans and the organisations that represent them, for education is a social right that concerns to all'. These actors, it was suggested, should come together in a process of discussion marked by 'commitment' and 'an open approach'.
3. The Law was announced as being 'an effective plan of action, a key tool for the country's transformation'.

Although the making of the law was a relatively brief process, designed and controlled by the national authorities, 'citizen participation' was the guiding axis of the actions geared to its production. At the end of the first phase, a draft bill was elaborated, which was then subject to a second phase of consultation and discussion. The draft bill was thus re-worked to include the observations and modifications that emerged from the previous instances of discussion. Finally, a bill of law was debated in to Parliament. The following graphic shows these stages and activities distributed in a timetable:

TABLE 1. METHODOLOGY AND SCHEDULE OF CONSULTATIONS

Phases of Consultation	Activities	Schedule	Text for discussion
Launching of Debates	Signature of presidential decree and launching of debates	22-may	
First Phase	Meetings, consultations to institutions and experts	may and june	*National Law of Education.Towards quality education for a just society. Ten axis for the debate and lines of action.*
	Opinion polls	june and july	
	Reflection/debating sessions in schools in all the national territory	5, 6-july	
	International debate about the future national law	8-august	
	Vitual forums of discussion	may to september	
	Systematisation of contributions	july and september	
	Writing of draft bill	September	
Second Phase	International debate about the future national law	14-september	*National Law of Education. Draft bill. Towards quality education for a just society.*
	Meetings, consultations to institutions and experts	september and october	
	Reflection/debating sessions in schools in all the national territory	october	
	Systematisation of contributions	october	
	Final draft and elevation of the bill of law to National Congress	november	

SOURCE: NATIONAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HTTP://DEBATE-EDUCACION.EDUC.AR/LEY/INFORMES/INFORME_SOBRE_LA_METODOLOGIA_Y.PHP

As the Chart shows, the calendar arranged by the National Ministry of Education included a range of open activities and channels for participation. 'Consultation' involved experts, institutions, representatives of different trade unions and the Catholic Church, among others. In June 2006, a 'general debate' was opened, which gathered opinion polls, debates in schools (including parents in specific instances) and international conferences. In July, the calendar established a period for the systematisation of these contributions. Teams of specialists processed the

answers to surveys, opinions in forums, documents elaborated by institutions and other voices into different reports, available at the Ministry of Education's website (http://debate-educacion.educ.ar/ley/informes/). Also available on this website are the contributions of experts (specialists, academics, researchers) who made comments and observations on the ten axes proposed by the key text: *Ley de Educación Nacional. Hacia una educación de calidad para una sociedad más justa* (http://debate-educacion.educ.ar/ley/aporte-de-expertos/). I make reference to these contributions later. The writing of a draft bill took place in August. In September, government opened a new phase of consultation, followed by the presentation of the bill of law to Congress in October. Finally, in November of this same year, the Senate and House of Representatives sanctioned the new law that replaced its predecessor, the Federal Law of Education.

The Ministry of Education quantified the number of participants in the process of elaboration of the law. The following graph presents the different forms of participation and the number of actors involved.

TABLE 2. PARTICIPATION IN THE DEBATE

Modalities of Participation	Level of Participation
Two virtual forums of discussion	2466 interventions
Consultation to Argentine specialists and professionals	113 experts
Meetings with diverse sectors of society: social, religious, governmental and international organizations; unions, private companies, academic institutions and research centers.	more than 700 institutions
Two International debates about the future national law	22 specialists
Opinion polls in the main Argentine newspapers, internet and the main cities of the country	110000 opinion polls
Reflection/debating sessions in schools in all the national territory	750000 teachers

SOURCE:HTTP://DEBATEEDUCACION.EDUC.AR/LEY/INFORMES/INFORME_SOBRE_LA_METODOLOGIA_Y.PHP

As for the 'debating forums' arranged by the Ministry of Education and available in the website (http://debate-educacion.educ.ar/ley/foro/), the 'pain-staking' review and analysis of the virtual exchanges suggests that:

1. Discussion rarely followed the line of the suggested issue. In practice, recurrent concerns related to poverty, health and education, the effective application of norms, role of teachers (working rights, performance in class, loss of authority), special education, educational budget and the articulation between levels of education, among others.

2. No questions were raised in terms of redefining educational governance and the role of civil society. The role of the state as the main guarantee of the right to education remained unaddressed. Opinions only touch upon the idea of 'publicness' when raising issues of 'responsibilisation': 'We are all responsible. From top to down; from down to top.'

3. A large number of interventions in the forums disregarded the suggested issue/theme and simply claimed the so-called 'participation' was not-true. 'This participation of all is a virtuality'. Critiques largely refer to lack of time and vagueness of the issues proposed for discussion.

Both the themes and critiques displayed in this forum are notably reiterative, often beside the point. Concepts like 'publification', or reflections on the role and meaning of 'the public' do not appear in the exchanges. Therefore, the content of the forum *itself* does not offer much promise for this thesis. However, two points are worth noting. First, the fact there is a clear consensus on the value of public participation at different levels and stages of public policy. At least on the evidence of this exercise, 'the public' values 'public' participation and wishes to participate: 'We need to know our opinion is taken into account'. In this sense, the transfer of responsibility and roles from the state to the public, far from being imposed unilaterally by the state, articulates with some nascent expectations built 'from below'.

As seen in previous chapters, individual responsibility is often invoked by sectors of civil society, as a form of promoting its capacities, channelling demands and defending its own interests. On these grounds, participants in the fora created to debate the Law, articulate a strong and coherent critique about the way in which participation was enacted by government. 'The communication about this participation in four days doesn't give us time enough to talk about the subject even with our families';

'If government wishes to increase the participation *of all,* the time to debate about this project should be extended'; 'I do not agree with the way in which the New Law of Education is being treated. It is the backbone of a country. We should have started discussing this since the beginning of the year'; 'We wish to insist on the need to extend the period of discussion'. These comments prevail in the forums, and indicate some awareness of the distance between government rhetoric and practice. The government's call for everyone to participate in the debate configures a clear tension with the limited time assigned to local discussions and the poor guidance and tools to undertake discussion. 'We only received a document and a question guide. Time for reading and analysing the text was too accelerated, given the social, political and economic relevance of this measure'. These are salient examples of the voice of the local actors, the public(s) in the school community.

Micro-politics are also key arenas of compromises (Ball 1997) and the debate arranged by government raised a few criticisms. Tiramonti (2008) argues the continuous insistence on the benefits of 'participation' is inscribed within a state power strategy geared to strengthen its social legitimacy. In terms of the local debates arranged by government, Gessaghi *et al* (2006) argue that the 'community' hailed was treated as a homogeneous and a-historical entity. Participation was thus sought while at the same time neglecting the heterogeneity of experiences that construct 'participation'. The debate that appeared to legitimate the law is presented

as an instance where every citizen was able to participate, homogeneously. Thus 'participation' seems to be constructed mainly in the abstract, not in relation to 'real' political or economic allegiances and experiences.

Gessaghi also focuses on the local debates and explores the meanings that different actors put into play during their participation in the debates around the new law of education. The study uses observation methods and describes the dynamics between actors during the actual debating meetings. The researchers find no homogeneous patterns in terms of the schools' positions towards parent participation. The 'will to listen' to the families varied from school to school. The study concludes that processes of participation are suffused with social inequalities. These inequalities are expressed in the hierarchical relations, both built between teachers, heads and parents and between the schools and their population. The definition of 'participation' is built on and disputed over the basis of these hierarchies. At times, this itself became an object of struggle between parents and teachers. According to these authors, processes of 'participation' do not operate 'outside of history', nor out of 'the everyday life of the subjects' of participation (p. 4). Thus, 'participation' must be contextualised and analysed in terms of its specific historical constitution. The complex and multiple ways in which the meaning of 'participation' can be built should be considered in the analysis of 'the demands' of 'those below', where schools are great examples.

Conclusion

I want to begin by returning to some general issues in order to clarify some of the complexities of the Argentine case.

First, it is important to distinguish global from local trends in educational governance. As I review in this Chapter, the debate in the US and UK as well as in other numerous countries, shows an evident passage, more or less well developed, from 'government to governing by networks' (Ball 2012) - a discourse paradigm that describes the decline in the hierarchical model of government and the emergence of new interdependent actors involved in delivering services and making policy (Ball 2012). In Argentina, until very recently, the prevailing governance discourses were articulated in stark opposition to the participation of private and social-voluntary organizations, either in discussing and defining the policy agenda or in delivering services. Only in recent times are we beginning to glimpse of the possibility of new forms of publicness. The role of the state is reinforced, but there is a conceptual framework for the participation of other actors in several aspects of the educational agenda. A consensus among academics, specialists and policy-makers seems to prevail around the idea that education is a 'public question', and, as such, 'it is not the state's exclusive responsibility'. On the contrary, 'the presence of other subjects that dispute, agree, contribute to and discuss its meaning, is essential' (Perazza 2008: 47). According to Perazza, both spheres of discussion are developing and there is

an increasing integration between them. This translates into a version of 'public education' that reintroduces elements of the tradition and myth of state-public education, but through a discourse that incorporates 'participation' and 'diversity' as its main symbols.

A new common sense around the idea of public-ness is being articulated. Academic contributions to this issue, however, are pretty general and mainly conceptual. Very little is elaborated in terms of concrete schemes and instruments for 'public' governance. Thus, the distinction between rhetoric and practice is also necessary to understand the case of Argentina: how things 'sound' like and how they are in practice. There is a clear distance between new meanings of 'public' education –inflected by diversity and participation– and actual modes of government. The institutions that govern education in Argentina are still guided by uniformity and central control, the key pillars of the SIPCE. Although the 1990s did bring about a displacement from the national-state sphere to the provincial-state sphere, for the most part power remained within the centralised level of state governance. In fact the single case of Charter Schools in San Luis not only did not prosper, but it is hard to trace any facts, discussions or analysis about what were the grounds of this initiative, who were involved, what went wrong and why. Even now, as I described earlier, there are very few experiences of PPP; not to say privatisation, which in fact records a single case (Sangari), applying to only three jurisdictions over a small number of schools, and has already ceased to

work. 'Co-labouring' or 'network governing' at a general level cannot be seen as an Argentine phenomenon. A state centred matrix clearly prevails in practice. In a similar way, Barrenechea and Beech (2011) argue that pro-market reforms implemented in Argentina during the 1990s were visible only at the level of official rhetoric. These authors also analyse briefly recent developments, such as the New National Law of Education, which position themselves as being discursively 'anti-neoliberal', and offer some reflections about Argentine as an exception as regards pro-market forms of governance.

Current reforms do put forward notions of participation, diversity and the democratisation of the educational administration. *Towards quality education for a just society*, the policy text that served as a basis for the discussion of the New National Law spoke: a) of the inclusion of different actors in defining the orientations of educational policy and decision-making; and b) of guaranteeing that the governance of education would facilitate the participation and collaboration of families.

It could be argued that the voice of teachers, parents and the broader public sphere found a place of relative weight in defining Argentina's latest reform process. This is mainly what has been emphasised in the media coverage and valued most from the processes related to the Law. However, more thorough analyses suggest 'participation' was linked more to a state power strategy geared to strengthen its social legitimacy, than to a genuine and efficient process of social construction. Genealogy problematises what is

taken for granted and seeks to recover excluded subjects and silenced voices. Voices in the fora did articulate critiques of the forms and timing of the general debate. Such critiques were in part addressed in Gessaghi's description of the dynamics occurring between actors during the debating meetings. Moreover, the content of the fora is no longer available on-line, nor can it be found even 'reworked' in official reports or analyses.

Although the text of the law seems to indicate a step forward in terms of including a broader constituency in the educational debate, there is still a long way to go in order to adjust actual structures and organisation to enable a growing role for parents and the community in each school. To think about 'the public' in these terms requires considering a lot more than allowing participation during the elaboration of a law. Genuinely 'public' spaces, that express these conceptual, political, and social attributes, need to be constructed by the state and within civil society,, each in accordance with its purpose and role. The challenge is to establish 'public-ness' both in educational policy and school life: a priority among the numerous themes that affect the educational agenda in Latin America and around the world.

Chapter Seven: On Concepts and Governance

Introduction

The purpose of this final chapter is to extract the main ideas from the analysis offered in this thesis, and to reflect upon the arguments in the light of the evidence that has been presented. It is divided into three sections.

I first review the discursive regimes that contributed to the meaning of 'public education' in Argentina, in order to compare their key features and reflect upon the extent to which governance structures result from the meanings that policy-makers attach to the concept of the public. I argue that the meanings of the public evolved over time without a corresponding change in governance. Secondly, I suggest there does not seem to be, within recent public discourse, any significant questioning of this divergence. I thus present the results of an exhaustive review of newspaper coverage of recent reforms in Argentina, which is illustrative of the limited extent to which public opinion acknowledges the difference between rhetoric and practice of education governance. Thirdly, I outline the key components of an agenda for the 'publification' of education. I suggest some of these axes or components should be at the same time objects for future discussion and applied research.

A Comparison of Discourses and Governance

The Chapters in this thesis have had the general aim of outlining the discursive regimes that constructed the field of education, focusing on the way in which the public is positioned within each paradigm. Each discourse embodied different priorities and aspirations for the shape that Argentine society should assume. Each rested on concepts and social values, which had enormous influence and emotional significance, although only some had constructive effects. In this thesis I analyse the way 'the public' is conceived of and what its assigned role in education should be. This concept at times is implicit, but often it explicitly frames the debate.

The differences between discourses– *Popular education, National Education, Anarchist education* and *Contemporary education* - emerge in summary by comparing the concept and role of the public under each model. In this comparison I signal the key features of each discourse regime, I identify the social sector that they address and I outline associated concepts and forms of governance they attempt to institutionalise. With the usual reservations concerning the simplification involved in such illustrations, the comparison of discourses and governance in early and contemporary history of Argentine education may be presented graphically in the following diagram.

DIAGRAM 1. ALTERNATIVE VERSIONS OF 'PUBLIC EDUCATION'

VERSIONS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION	KEY FEATURE	ADDRESSEES	ASSOCIATED CONCEPTS	STRUCTURE OF GOVERNANCE
'POPULAR EDUCATION'	• Conceptual separation between state and 'the public'	• Sovereign public and heads of family: Subjects capable of acting over themselves within the public sphere. A variety of publics around each school district	• Participation • Responsabilis ation	• Programmatic centralisation • Financial decentralisatio n
'NATIONAL EDUCATION'	• Conceptual integration between the national state and 'the public'	• State organisms and officials Experts Teachers Inspectors	• National unity • Homogenisati on	• Programmatic and Financial centralisation at National level
'ANARCHIST EDUCATION'	• Conceptual integration between the social and 'the public'	• The People (el Pueblo) Heads of family Workers	• Differentiatio n • Autonomy • Originality	• Programmatic and financial decentralisatio n
'CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION'	• Conceptual broadening of the public.	• Diverse publics: Experts Teachers State organisms and officials Families Communities Private companies The third sector	• Participation • Diversity	• Programmatic and financial centralisation at Provincial level

The historical junctures selected in this thesis are key moments at which discourse regimes come into being. I used 'Genealogy' as a research

strategy in order to reconstruct or deconstruct the meaning of public education as a 'history of the present'; that is, starting from problems in the present. As such, my work cannot avoid a normative dimension. Moreover I aim to bring the debate on the concept of 'the public' to the fore, establish its connection with organisational forms and contribute to the discussion of the correspondences or divergences between rhetoric and actual government.

In this section I briefly review the different discourse paradigms in order to extract some final conclusions in light of the historical perspective.

Popular Education

A discourse of 'publicness' defined policy texts and actions during Sarmiento's period. The 'public' to whom the State appealed for the purpose of expanding and organising the educational system had a central place within that discourse.

Sarmiento clearly discriminated between the subjects of education and others perceived by him to be more capable of acting for themselves within the public sphere. He referred to the latter as 'the public', and valued their being 'animated by public spirit', 'intelligent' and 'aware' of the importance of education (which served all sorts of explicit economic, moralising, and cultural purposes). Sarmiento built a discourse of civic engagement that appealed to these social subjects, particularly the 'heads of

family'. He took citizens to be active rather than passive subjects, and intended to fashion their conduct through certain cultural norms, values and practices of participation rather than by forms of direct control; practices through which he expected that citizens would act in their own self interest whilst at the same time acting in the social interest. A 'public sphere' constituted by 'heads of family' is clearly demarcated as distinct from the state.

Sarmiento cleverly combined the terms 'popular' and 'public'. 'Popular' was that which people in localities 'volunteered' to do in order to 'satisfy their aims regarding public education (…) to improve the public school in their own district' (Sarmiento 1849: 51). 'Popular' was the act of 'contributing directly for the education of their own sons (sons of heads of families) and the sons of the poor' (p. 51). 'Popular' was the people's effort geared to 'satisfy the personal interest in giving greater education rather than the minimum prescribed by the state' (p. 51). In Sarmiento's discourse, 'popular' action was aligned to the state's agenda. The term became conceptually incorporated into a decentralised notion of state provision of social services. With Sarmiento, the word is appropriated and used to mean something which people have a stake in within the sphere of state social provision. Paradoxically for Sarmiento, 'popular' action then becomes a person participating in some level of activity within the state sponsored and managed system redefined as a new 'public' sphere led by 'heads of family' – who are offered a central place within this scheme.

Sarmiento's education policy was based on the formula of 'programmatic centralisation and a financial decentralisation' (Botana 1996: 35). Echoing current forms of governance, this version of 'public education' seemed to involve a division of the intervention actions between State and civil society (Dale 1977). It located education provision under strict control of the State, and regarded funding and administration as responsibilities of society. This was, at that time, an innovative version of public education. Sarmiento seems to have attempted to separate the state from civil society, creating a space for 'the public' in the micro-level of communities and school districts.

In a simple sense, Sarmiento's discourse of autonomy and self-discipline was ahead of its time and proved not to fit into the contemporary forms and discourses, which were primarily state-centred and administrative. In nineteenth century Argentina, Sarmiento failed to establish forms of self-discipline (governmentality) as well as and over and against other disciplinary technologies that he contributed to putting in place (regulation, inspection, bureaucracy etc). Only the latter were actually taken up, heightened and intensified by the state education system. As noted before, the 1880s marked an essential rupture with Sarmiento's ideas and principles of self-government. In spite of this 'failure' to prevail, Sarmiento was canonised as the Argentine founding father of education (*prócer de la escuela*), but those who claimed to be his heirs moved away

from the key structural elements proposed in Popular Education, following instead the contemporary European patterns of state centralisation.

Anarchist Education

The educating role of the people was a key element of anarchist discourse, which articulated a dramatic attempt to call upon the people to assume the responsibility of educating their sons and daughters. Barcos articulated a personal and direct call to parents to take up this role, one that should not be delegated under penalty of receiving a severe social judgement. From this perspective, education is primarily the concern of the heads of family rather than the state or even the schoolteachers. Barcos' discourse emphasised the social dimension of public education. He sought to address parents and the community, thus challenging established criteria on the right to speak about education. Barcos explicitly displaces expert criteria and assigns key functions to parents and the community. The social dimension of education links to a community sphere of interaction – separate and opposite to the official. Notions of 'the public' intermingle in his discourse. The needs of 'public men' are placed over and against the 'public needs' of the people. The term 'public' acquires a positive connotation only when inscribed within the social. Thus, the anarchist discourse paradigm breaks down the link Sarmiento had carefully built between 'popular' and 'public'. The site of the popular is put outside the domain of

the state. 'Popular' becomes in Barcos' writing and thought, a synonym for 'non-official'.

Barcos criticised contemporary forms and discourses, which were primarily state-centred and administrative. In this sense, some similarities between Barcos and Sarmiento can be identified. As I suggested earlier, Sarmiento articulated a discourse of autonomy and self-discipline, which proved not to fit into the predominant common sense. Barcos criticises the way Sarmiento's ideas were marginalised. He too, somewhat more dramatically, advocated the rights of the people to become 'owners of their own movements, arbiters of their own destiny' (p. 48). Freedom and Liberty are key associated concepts in the anarchist discourse paradigm. However, their meaning is transformed, together with 'popular education'. Sarmiento had conceptually incorporated 'the popular' into a decentralised notion of state provision of social services. This sense of 'ownership' had even been further re-enforced through a rhetoric of funding and social obligations that underpinned the specific forms that funding were to take. In turn, this also re-inflected the meaning of 'public' as it was aligned very carefully with 'popular'. The 'public' then became that which involved everyone under the care and direction of a beneficent state. Although both Sarmiento and Barcos called for Heads of family to become strongly involved in public education, appealing to notions of 'autonomy', 'participation' and 'responsibility', the differences between them are substantial. Sarmiento advocated a strategic association between social and state action.

Anarchism, instead, understood that the goals of the state would always be contrary to the 'redemptive ends of culture and the fundamental interests of the country' (Barcos 1927: 9). It is worth noting that anarchism also argued strongly for diversity – which is one of key references within contemporary reform.

Barcos' formula for education policy was based on both programmatic and administrative decentralisation. He sought an organic structural reform, geared towards breaking the bureaucratization of the education system and facilitating the increasing participation of the people in its governance and management. Sarmiento had only argued for the former, reserving for the state the overall responsibility of strategically governing and expanding the education system. Anarchists did not trust the state's capacity to pursue this. Barcos considered the state incapable of transforming its own rhetoric into action. He argued for the need to produce deeper, more radical reforms in common sense thinking about how to organise and provide Argentine education.

To a greater extent than Sarmiento, Barcos' proposals were radical for that time and context. Beyond their specificities, the interesting point about anarchism is the clear understanding of the key condition for reform in education: transforming both state and society. True reform entailed both structural and substantial dimensions of educational governance. Barcos thereby advocated a radical shift in what was and what constituted the

public. He addressed fundamental questions regarding the distribution of power, freedom, autonomy, the role of the public, and an entire matrix of practices and organisation.

In practice – under the political status quo of the early twentieth century – anarchism and foreign and 'popular' initiatives in general were all marginal to, or excluded from, educational discourse. This was both the state's rhetorical victory over alternative voices and, as I suggested in a previous chapter, a result of the failures of the counter-discourses to capture their own constituencies, or in other words, their inability to realise those 'worlds' and social entities through address.

National Education

This discursive paradigm aims its critique right at the heart of the 'the public's' possibilities of contributing to the daily life and administration of the educational system. The notion of 'the popular' is linked to 'the multitude', a population incapable of contributing to education and progress. The National state's experts, bureaucrats, teachers and officials are the people called upon to take a leading role in education and make up for this alleged social incapacity within the multitude. Ramos Mejía contributed towards consolidating the role of the national state in directing, managing and funding a national-state education system based on principles of unity and homogenisation.

It is worth noting here that Ramos Mejia's basic concern was the problem of governance in a society permeated by the presence of the multitude. He aimed at elaborating new views on how to introduce economy and government from the top of the state down to all aspects of social life. He constructs 'the crowd' as a threat to order and progress. He suggests a lack of structure and leadership within this level of society. The state thus subsumes the public sphere. There is no conceptualisation of the possibility for social interaction, debate, reflection, and rationality. He envisages the social polity as a biological system in which population is equated to natural drives. For Ramos Mejía, there could be no public sphere within the social. Heads of family, communities and groups of different ideological persuasion – both the broad and the local public(s) – have a marginal standing within this discursive regime. National schools are the only agencies capable of forming the 'sense of duty and love for the Fatherland in the hearts of future citizens' (Monitor 1909: 321). Government reiterates the dismissal of any other site for the expression of civil society.

The 'national' level of educational governance is also set in opposition to other programmatic and administrative bases for the education system, such as the federal or the local. Sarmiento's policy formula - programmatic centralisation and financial decentralisation (Botana 1996) – based on the division of 'intervention actions' (Dale 1977) between state and civil society ceased to apply under this scheme. Provision, funding, administration and voice are all relocated under the strict control of the national state. The

official voice thus eliminates the idea of a public distinct from the state, or a site for civil society at the micro-level of community and school districts. This trend towards a greater or complete centralisation of public action structured key organisational aspects of the Argentine education system.

By 1910 the National Education Council had completed the process of its consolidation. The public sphere collapsed into the state and a new version of public education emerged. Some elements of Sarmiento's legacy were maintained, but few of the innovative forms of governance. The voice of the National Education Council would soon be the only voice, for it 'sounded louder than the rest' and 'it turned off the other echoes, remaining the single one, in an endless clarion call, convinced and enthusiastic' (Ramos 1910: 121). In Chapter Three I suggested a tension between Sarmiento's canonisation as 'founding father' of Argentine public education and the institutionalisation of the 'State Centralized Public Educational System' (SIPCE). Ramos Mejía, I would argue, exerted greater influence in defining the meaning of 'public education' as 'national-state-education'.

As Juan P. Ramos proposed:

> Let Argentines make the nation's ideal be the ideal of this President of the National Education Council, Dr. José María Ramos Mejía, who for the first time in history has raised in his hands, very high, the banner of the Fatherland as the best symbol for the future of Argentine schools.
>
> (Ramos 1910: 157)

Although some reformers within the official sphere[lxxix] tried to revitalize Sarmiento's discursive paradigm (an interesting case is Joaquin V. Gonzalez[lxxx]), the discourses produced by the Argentine intellectual elite between 1880 and the Centennial (1910) were distant from the vision of local communities organised around several school districts, as 'public sphere(s)' deliberating and acting over daily aspects of schooling. The educational field is yet another example of the difficulties that the liberal-democratic tradition had in becoming firmly established in Argentina. Key positive points of nineteenth century liberal-democratic thought - such as the importance assigned to local power, development of civic practices associated to citizenship and the active exercise of political rights within the population - failed to materialise as practices in Argentina. By Argentina's first Centennial, the liberal-democratic synthesis had failed (Roldán 2008).

In conclusion, rather than constructing 'public' education as traditional accounts might assume, the Argentine state eliminated the possibility of a public sphere within this discursive space. The Argentine state captured the discourses, sites and positions from which to speak, thus excluding both the possibilities of articulation of other social actors participating in the state-provided educational services and the alternative versions of 'public' schooling.

The contemporary Paradigm. Continuities and Discontinuities

All the alternative visions that developed in the formative period of the Argentine nation state, including Sarmiento's, collapsed into the state. However, the genealogical and comparative perspective make it possible to identify the elements of past versions of public education that re-appear, re-worked in current discourse.

The themes of Chapters Three to Five relate very closely to current questions of educational policy and government. In fact, Sarmiento was anticipating forms of 'governmentality' (self-discipline) that resemble some of the contemporary phenomena in different parts of the world. The main objective of these conclusions is to identify whether current discourses geared towards enhancing the role of 'the public' within state provision do in fact re-create historical principles and meanings.

Within the contemporary paradigm, the traditional integration between 'national-state' and 'the public' is once again split, both through the official recognition of a diversity of educational expressions in society (a new link between 'the public' and 'the social') and through the promotion of interest and participation of the people within education policy (a link between 'the public' and 'the popular' in Sarmiento's terms). The role of the state is reinforced, but there is a conceptual framework for the participation of other actors in several aspects of the educational agenda. The social

sectors that had been historically constrained are today called upon to raise educational statements and knowledge claims. The addressees of discourse are a wide and diverse set of social actors. Indeed, as expressed in Government communications: 'We look forward to an active participation of *all* the social actors'. The chart in *Chapter Six* gives some indication of the level of social participation in the forums and discussions around the New Law, mentioning teachers, experts, specialists and the general public; social, religious, governmental and international organizations; unions, private companies, academic institutions and research centers. All these sectors, at least in theory, had a say in the New National Law of Education. Homogenisation and its associated practices of coercion no longer seem to be valid vectors for social and educational policy[lxxxi].

The contemporary version of 'public education' reintroduces elements of the tradition and myth of state-public education, but through a discourse that incorporates 'participation' and 'diversity' as its main symbols. However, this contemporary paradigm shows limited coherence when it comes to comparing the concept of 'the public' – based on diversity and participation – with the forms of governance of state-public schooling. 'The public' is located both within the spheres of the state and the social. Within this discourse, the state's recognition of different educational institutions (diversity) and the pursuit of new institutional forms in which all actors may be included at different levels of management (participation) re-signify the meaning of 'the public'. However, both programmatic and

administrative functions rest in hands of the state (mainly at provincial level) and there is scarce or null devolution of government functions to the local level of educational administration and school communities. Processes of reform have been underway in Argentina in different forms from the 1960s, but have always applied to substantive aspects of schooling rather than the system's structural forms of governance.

Conversely, the three versions of public education analysed in Part One (See *Introduction to the historical layers of meaning embedded in 'public education*), articulate a direct correspondence between concepts and governance. Popular Education established a conceptual separation between the state and the public, together with a division of functions between the state and society: programmatic centralisation and administrative decentralisation. National Education built an integration between the state and the public at a national level and thus concentrated all the policy functions within the national state. Anarchist education in an opposite way attempted to integrate the public and the social and therefore advocated the devolution of all the governing functions to the people.

I suggest that there does not seem to be within recent public discourse any significant questioning of the distance between rhetoric and practice in educational governance. The following section analyses expert and public opinion around contemporary reform. It is my perception that academia, public opinion and, fundamentally, the political rationalities which prevail

in Argentina have not yet assimilated the implications of 'public' education, both for the state and for society. I then argue some final general points.

Public opinion and Contemporary Reform

An analysis of media coverage of the National Law of Education shows that there is among the Argentine public little awareness of the tensions between discourse and practice of public education and participation. The majority of articles that appeared in 2006 around this event articulate a critique of the 1990s and celebrate the upcoming of the New Law (Downes 02/07/2006). A review of the main national newspapers, reveals the following:

A large proportion of articles present historical-normative overviews of Argentine education, focusing on how the New Law entails a normative turning point that repeals the existing Federal Law. Similarities within this set of articles are striking. Many show concern about the system's segmentation, but only a few times do they develop arguments which indicate how the Law might specifically address and resolve this. Most articles report the need to link the levels or stages of education: primary-secondary and secondary-university. Most emphasise participation as the outstanding quality of the process of elaboration of the New Law, and a basic condition to construct the necessary consensus. However, very few point out the need for structural change in educational governance.

This lack of awareness of the distance between rhetoric and practice could be viewed as a sign of *the* public sphere failing to perform its political function; namely, 'submitting the state of public things to the control of a critical public' (Calhoun 1992: 24). That is, as if a process of integration had been substituted for the principle of critique in this case. In contrast, school communities, the public(s) around each school and district did act as genuine sounding board for educational concerns. As I develop in *Chapter Six*, participants in the fora articulated a strong and coherent critique about the way in which participation had been arranged and controlled by government. The call for everyone to participate in the debate contrasted with the limited time assigned to local debates and the poor guidance and tools offered to undertake discussion. Statements in this case indicate that the voice of the local actors, the public(s) in the school community, were challenging to the state.

Within the general debate, however, voices that attempted to recreate bottom-up processes of governance were scarce and very few raised the issue of 'how to govern education' (Terigi 2006). At this stage, I want to argue that:

1. The rhetoric of diversity and participation actually displaces the discussion over the nature and possibilities of 'public' education.

2. Academic contributions to the issue are both general and conceptual. Very little is elaborated in terms of concrete schemes and instruments of 'public' governance.

3. The state offers official recognition to a wide range of educational expressions. Nothing more, and nothing less. However, this recognition is to 'the public' within the social and private realms, rather than the public(s) in the state-run system of schooling.

4. Although the nineties brought about a displacement from the national-state sphere to the provincial-state sphere, power remained within a centralised level of state governance. The institutions that govern education in Argentina are still guided by uniformity and central control, the key pillars of the SIPCE.

5. A state centred matrix clearly prevails in practice.

Additionally, state education is embedded in mechanisms of corporative pressure. Cunill Grau makes reference to large organisations geared towards the defense of sectorial interests that relate to the political and administrative system. These are clearly evident in Argentina. Additionally, I see sectorial interests acting within government. Educational policy in Argentina is often deployed as a political tool. This has consequences for both the 'public' character of decision-making processes and the distribution of state-public resources. I argue this form of political practice is ideologically grounded on the prevailing view that equates 'state' education with 'public' education, benefitting from the normative value of

the term 'public'. It seems, following Cunill Grau, that the state continues to be the legitimate provider of 'public' education, in spite of an increasing 'de-publification' of its administration (Cunill Grau 1997). Although ideas of participation and diversity are beginning to translate into common sense, **the key point that fails to become established is that 'the public' is not a given fact, but a process of construction.** In this context, the meaning of 'public' education is being diminished, and new forms of governance capable of democratising state-public education are also being constrained.

It is my contention that constructing a site for 'the public' in educational governance is a pre-requisite for improving public education. In the following section, I briefly outline a set of points for an agenda oriented towards this goal. An in-depth development of these points would clearly exceed the limits of this thesis. Therefore, some of the proposals are made into questions as potential topics for future discussion and applied research.

Towards a Public governance of Education. Policy proposals and research topics.

Following Cunill Grau, transforming state institutions is a necessary condition in order to attend to the needs of the public (1997: 22). According to this author, the two main issues that generally obstruct the recuperation

and expansion of the public sphere within state administration are: a) the tendency towards a self-referential behaviour, and b) the lack of social responsibility (Cunill Grau 1997: 198). These two trends are mutually reinforcing and may result in the privatisation of the state.

As I review throughout the thesis, resolutions of this problem vary according to different ideological perspectives. *New Public Management* is one of the proposed answers. A market reform based on separating the elaboration of policies from the provision of public services, attaching funding to results and establishing rules of competition vs. monopoly of provision. This standpoint implicitly assumes that private sector management is better than state sector administration. However, as I suggest earlier in this thesis, reform needs to consider both administrative improvement and its impact on democratic institutions. Within *NPM*, citizens are repositioned as 'clients' with a capacity to influence the micro level of school management over and against the traditional sources of legitimacy, thus gradually debilitating the capacity to exert influence over the macro level of public policy and general management. *Policy networks* are then presented as both a real change in the structure of the polity and as an emergent and distinct form of governance beyond the methods and 'reassembly' (Clarke 2009 in Ball 2012) of *New Public Management*. Network governance is presented as a further move 'beyond the public bureaucracy state' (Hood 1990, in Ball 2012) and a further 'reinventing of government' (Osborne 1992, in Ball 2012) – a new kind of governance

mechanism that relies 'on a dense fabric of lasting ties and networks that provide key resources of expertise, reputation and legitimisation' (Grabher 2004 in Ball 2012). Following Klinjn (2012), governance networks can roughly be defined as: 'more or less stable patterns of social relationships between mutually dependent public, semi-public and private actors, that arise and emerge around complex policy issues or policy programmes' (Klijn, Rynck et al. 2012). According to Skelcher (2008), the theoretical debate around policy networks is polarised. One view, often associated with a normative perspective on deliberative democracy, sees networks as arenas that offer new ways of connecting public policy-making to citizens, overcoming the limitations of representative democracy. The contrasting view is that networks give private interests a structural advantage in the public policy process.

An important amount of research and publication nowadays focus on examining how institutions promote collaborative policy-making between state, civil society and business, 'at arm's length to traditional forms of representative government' (Skelcher 2008: 15), specially in the UK and other countries in Europe. It is extraordinary to discover that there is a possibility for governance networks to develop a 'democratic anchorage' (Skelcher 2008) by a) providing legitimacy for the institutional form of network governance (this generally means maintaining clear leading roles for elected politicians within the network) b) enabling ex ante consent for its policies, programmes and budget, and c) ensuring ex post accountability for

its actions (p. 18). Legitimacy, consent and accountability are the three principles for democratic governance (Klijn, Rynck et al. 2012).

As I have argued before, 'governance networks' are not a significant phenomenon in Argentine education. However, it is a trend that may sooner or later impact on local policy, and there are plenty of experiences and lessons to consider. Studying structural and constitutional conditions of possibility – apart from the discursive/rhetoric – for new governance arrangements to work in Argentina would be an interesting contribution to the field of educational policy.

Cunill Grau introduces the concept of '*publification*' of state administration (Cunill Grau 1997), somewhat in line with the *network approach*, inasmuch as 'it seeks to transcend both the bureaucratic and the market perspectives' (p. 255) and favours 'triangular relationships' between elected representatives, public administration and citizens (p. 251). However, **the highlighting and development of the notion of 'the public' is important.** The vision of a 'publified' state as a condition for greater efficiency and service, as well as the expansion of the public sphere, both within the state and society. Publification is based at least on four pillars: a) cooperative work, or partnership (p. 272); b) profesionalisation of the public service (p. 276); c) new administrative sensors guaranteed by citizenship access to information and voice, or receptivity (p. 277); and d) at

the core of the process, mechanisms capable of turning public administration socially responsible, or accountable (p. 286).

A study of the state and possibilities of each of these pillars within Argentine educational governance would be worth undertaking. Roughly, inquiry could point at:

- Analysing the outcomes of a (few) experiences of cooperative work or partnership in Argentina
- Describing the professional profiles of public officials
- Studying viable corrective measures to avoid rigidity and lack of incentives within the bureaucratic organisation;
- Including how the public career, the system of income and training could be reconceptualised.

Another set of questions could relate to:

- The regulative framework for citizen's access to information
- How far is the state organisation 'comprehensible' to citizens and suited to the public's expectations;
- The ways in which the public is involved in the adoption of administrative decisions that affect its members.

In this same line, research could give a deeper look at the nucleus of 'publification':

- Which are the mechanisms that may make the administration more directly socially responsible to the public?
- Are there clear norms and procedures for the work of bureaucrats and technicians?
- Are there mechanisms for assessment and control, indicators of management to follow and measure against defined goals?

According to Cunill Grau, in the absence of a democratic ethos, a genuine civic culture and an ideology of public service, there are no fertile grounds for effective accountability (p. 294). In this context, there is an important role for the institutions that serve public needs and associations and movements that may contribute to the public debate. In sum, 'the continuous update of what is common to all and concerns all, remains centrally a problem of society' (p. 295).

Education, as a core branch of the state's social policy, faces the same challenges as the rest of the state administration. The New Law of Education (2006) is a good example of a process of revision of past and new values in Argentine educational policy. It is an attempt to displace homogeneity by accepting, recognising and promoting participation and diversity. However, as argued above, the Law still leaves unaddressed the issue of how to govern education. Over and against this, and drawing on my own analysis of historical alternative versions of public education, as well as on the experience of public administration, I put forward below a series of

proposals geared towards building greater *publicness* in education (For further development of these points, see Gvirtz 2009). These are only starting points for a deeper and sustainable agenda of public participation in education.

1. *Set and communicate clear goals for the educational system*. These goals should mark the direction for schools and all levels of the educational administration. It is a task for the National Ministry alongside the Provincial Ministries, and it should include working on operational definitions for these goals.
2. *Reverse the top-down logic of educational policy and broaden the sites for decision making at school and the meso-levels of the education system*. Although not all schools have the material and technical capacity to deal with greater decision-making, responsible institutional autonomy will never be achieved if gradual processes are not designed, established and supervised. It is key to break the historical and current circular logic (*descents* of the socio-cultural hypothesis I describe on *Chapter Three*), which assert that the system must remain centralized due to the lack of training and capabilities among directors, supervisors and the actors of the school community. Actors must be *enabled* to work in new and autonomous ways.
3. *Achieve a shared responsibility for results*. Every level of the system should elaborate a social accountability for the results they achieve according to national and provincial standards that have been agreed

and endorsed *ex ante*. This involves having the obligation to share transparent information on both administrative and pedagogical management, from the highest levels of the system to every school unit and actor of society.

4. *Generate specific policies geared at leveling or compensating for differences.* These policies should occupy a privileged place in the short and middle term agenda, and gradually lose weight in the long term. The constant need to rely on 'emergency' policies in Argentina highlights a serious weakness of educational governance. Inequities cannot be eternally addressed through *ad-hoc* policies.

The challenge is to find new governmental processes that may guarantee greater quality and equity in education. The solution involves the state, but requires the creation of a new state (Aguerrondo 2002, in Gvirtz 2009: 47). Gvirtz suggests this could be based on a re-centralisation of the system's direction, control and integration mechanisms, and a devolution of decision-making processes to the schools and actors that are closer to the interests of those affected by these decisions (p. 49). These measures will favour the internal democratisation, transparency and equity of the education system. These measures may also increase the level of participation and commitment of all the different public(s) linked to the education system (parents, teachers, students, non-teachers, NGOs, among others).

These ideas somewhat connect to Sarmiento's aspiration of a 'popular education', where school communities would participate in some level of activity within the state sponsored and managed system. Under Sarmiento's conception people had to have a stake in education, view schooling issues as 'familial', 'personal' and 'domestic' concerns. At the same time, they connect to Fraser's reflections on the public sphere (1992) when she argues that there should be room within a civic republican tradition, as opposed to the liberal individualistic, for preferences, interests and identities to be outcomes as well as antecedents of public consideration. The broadened public sphere must collaborate, support and control the educational institutions in order to guarantee greater quality and equity.

Both historical analysis and current discussions on the public sphere indicate that education could have both the potential to become a public matter and at the same time retain a great deal of personal and familial interest. Education, a crucial determinant of individual life opportunities, would appear to be a highly appropriate field for the formation of alternative public arenas. Education should engage the subjectivities and capture the interests of those who participate in deliberation. The public sphere, in short, is not the state but rather, drawing on Fraser, 'the informally mobilised body of non-governmental discursive opinion that can serve as counterweight to the state' (Fraser 1992: 134). The public meaning of public education is thus rich in theoretical and practical implications and

can hardly (or only erroneously) be defined as education regulated, funded and provided by the state.

The debate on education reform needs to acknowledge the issue of 'publicness', and reveal a more profound understanding of the public nature of public education. Historicising these processes, I believe, may serve to:

- Reconstruct education and educational governance as fields for the potential expansion of the 'public sphere', and contribute to prevent its further undermining.
- Recover 'voice' both in practical terms, as a mechanism of institutional recuperation (Hirschman 1970); and in substantial terms, to allow people to engage in 'practical discourse', creating procedures so that those affected by general political decisions – the publics – can have a say in their formulation, stipulation and adoption.

Following Habermas, '[Publicness] is apparently more and other than a mere scrap of liberal ideology' that social democracy could discard without harm: 'If we are successful in gaining an historical understanding of the structures of this complex that today, confusedly enough, we subsume under the heading 'public sphere', we can hope to attain thereby not only sociological clarification of the concept but a systematic comprehension of our own society from the perspective of one of its central categories' (1989: 5)

Bibliography

[AHPBA] (1858). Registro Oficial de la Provincia de Buenos Aires [Official Record of Province of Buenos Aires]. Buenos Aires, Imprenta La Tribuna.

[AHPBA] (1859). Registro Oficial de la Provincia de Buenos Aires [Official Record of Province of Buenos Aires]. Buenos Aires, Imprenta de Mayo.

Acuña, C. and M. Tomassi (Unpublished - Personal access to manuscript). "Some reflections on the institutional reforms required for Latin-America."

Acuña, C. H. and A. Vacchieri, Eds. (2007). La incidencia política de la sociedad civil [The political advocacy of civil society]. Buenos Aires, Siglo Veintiuno.

Alliaud, A. (2007). Los maestros y su historia. Los orígenes del magisterio argentino [Teachers and their history. Origins of the Argentine teaching profession]. Buenos Aires.

Althusser, L. (1988). Ideología y aparatos ideológicos de Estado. Freud y Lacan [Ideology and ideological state apparatuses. Freud and Lacan]. Buenos Aires, Nueva Visión.

André-Bechely, L. (2005). Could it be otherwise? Parents and the inequities of public school choice. New York.

Austin, J. E. (2000). "Strategic collaboration between nonprofits and business " Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly **29**(1): 69-97.

Auza, N. T. (1975). Católicos y liberales en la generación del 80 [The 1880's generation of Catholics and Liberals]. Buenos Aires, Ediciones Culturales Argentinas.

Ball, S. (2007). Education, globalisation and new times. London, Routledge.

Ball, S. (2007b). Education plc : understanding private sector participation in public sector education Routledge.

Ball, S. (2008). The education debate. Bristol, The Policy Press.

Ball, S. and C. Junemann (2012). Networks, new governance and education. Bristol, The Policy Press.

Ball, S. J. (2003). Class strategies and the education market : the middle classes and social advantage. London ; New York, RoutledgeFalmer.

Barber, B. R. (1984). Strong democracy : participatory politics for a new age. Berkeley ; London, University of California Press.

Barcos, J. (1927). Cómo educa el Estado a tu hijo [How does the state educate your son]. Buenos Aires, .

Baron, S., J. Field, et al. (2000). Social capital : critical perspectives. Oxford, Oxford UP.

Barrancos, D. (1990). Anarquismo, educación y costumbres en la Argentina de principios de siglo [Anarchism, education and customs in early twentieth century Argentina]. Buenos Aires, Editorial Contrapunto.

Barrenechea, I. and J. Beech (2011). "Pro-market educational governance: is Argentina a black swan?" Critical Studies in Education **52: 3**: 279-293.

Bayer, O. (2008). "Después de las palabras, vayamos a los hechos [After words, let's get the facts]." Página 12.

Beech, J. (2006). "The theme of educational transfer in Comparative Education: a review over time." Research in Comparative and International Education **1**(1): 2-13.

Berger, G. (1998). Estudio de filantropia empresaria [Study on corporate philanthropy]. Buenos Aires, Universidad de San Andrés y Gallup.

Bertoni, L. A. (2001). Patriotas, cosmopolitas y nacionalistas. La construcción de la nacionalidad argentina a fines del siglo XIX [Patriots, cosmopolitans and nationalists. Building the Argentine nationality in the late ninetheenth century]. Buenos Aires, Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Bertoni, L. A. (2005). Una burocracia temprana. El Consejo Nacional de Educación, 1880-1900 [An early bureaucracy: the National Education Council, 1880 - 1900]. London, Presented in a Seminar at London Unversity - ILAS.

Best, S. (1995). The politics of historical vision. Marx, Foucault and Habermas. Ney York, London, The Guilford Press.

Botana, N. (1977). El orden conservador. La política argentina entre 1880 y 1916 [The conservative order. Argentine policy between 1880 and 1916]. Buenos Aires, Sudamericana.

Botana, N. (1984). La Tradición Republicana. [The republican tradition]. Buenos Aires, Editorial Sudamericana.

Botana, N. (1996). Sarmiento. Buenos Aires, Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Botana, N. R. (1991). La libertad política y su historia [The political freedom and its history]. Buenos Aires, Editorial Sudamericana.

Botana, N. R. and E. Gallo (1997). De la República posible a la República verdadera (1880-1910) [From possible republic to real republic (1880 - 1910)]. Buenos Aires, Ariel.

Boyd, D. N. P. W. L. (1994). "Antipolitics, education, and institutional choice: the flight from democracy." American Education Research Journal **Vol 31**(2): 263-281.

Calhoun, C. J. (1992). Habermas and the public sphere. Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press.

Cardini, A. (2005). "The influences of globalisation in education policy-making: the case of the charter schools in the Province of San Luis, Argentina." Educate: 26 - 38.

Carli, S. (2002). Niñez, pedagogía y política: transformaciones de los discursos acerca de la infancia en la historia de la educación argentina entre 1880 y 1955 [Childhood, pedagogy and politics: the transformations of discourses on childhood in Argentine history of education between 1880 and 1955]. Buenos Aires, Miño y Dávila.

Carli, S. (2003). Educación pública. Historia y promesas [Public education. History and promises]. Los sentidos de lo público. Reflexiones desde el campo educativo [Meaning of the public sphere. Reflections from the education field]. M. Feldfeber. Buenos Aires, Noveduc**:** 11-26.

Castel, R. (1994). Problematization as a Mode of Reading History. Foucault and the Writing of History. J. E. Goldstein. Oxford, UK and Cambridge, USA, Balckwell**:** 237-256.

Chubb, J. E. and T. M. Moe (1990). Politics, Markets and America´s School. Washington DC Brookings Institution.

Clarke, J. (2005). "Creating Citizen-Consumers: New Labour and the Remaking of Public Services." Public Policy and Administration **20**: 19-37.

Cucuzza, R. C. (1995). Historia de la Educación en debate [A debate on History of education]. Buenos Aires, Miño y Dávila.

Cunill Grau, N. (1997). Repensando lo publico a traves de la sociedad : nuevas formas de gestion publica y representacion social [Rethinking the public sphere through society: new forms of governance and social representation]. Caracas, Venezuela, Centro Latinoamericano de Administracion para el Desarrollo-CLAD : Editorial Nueva Sociedad.

Dagnino, E. (1909). Novedades bibliográficas. La Restauración Nacionalista de Ricardo Rojas [New releases. The National Restoration by Ricardo Rojas]. La Vanguardia**:** 1-2.

Dale, R. (1997). The State and the Governance of Education: An Analysis of the Restructuring of the State-Education Relationship. Education, Culture and Economy. A. H. Halsey, H. Lauder, P. Brown and A. S. Wells. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Dale, W. J. (1977). The global economy, the state and the politics of education. Education, culture, economy and society. Oxford, Oxford press**:** 128.

De Luca, A. (1991). Los consejos escolares de distrito: subordinación o participación popular [The district school councils: subordination or popular participation]. Sociedad civil y estado en los origenes del sistema educativo argentino [Civil society and state in the origins of Argentine education]. A. Puiggrós. Buenos Aires, Galerna.

De Wesse, P. (1996). "Getting past schools politics: A world-class education should be within every child's reach." Michigan Forward.

Deacon, R. (2000). "Theory as Practice: Foucault's Concept of Problematization." TELOS **2000**(118): 127-142.

Deacon, R. (2006). "From confinement to attachment: Michael Foucault on the rise of school." The European Legacy **11: 2**: 121-138.

Delucchi, F. (1968). Sarmiento Buenos Aires, El autor.

Downes, P. (02/07/2006). Las ONG inciden en políticas públicas [NGOs influences in public policy]. Clarín. Buenos Aires.

Draxler, A. (2008). New partnerships for EFA: Building on experience. Paris, UNESCO-IIEP/World Economic Forum 2008.

Drucker, P. (1984). "The new meaning of corporate social responsibility." California Management Review **26**.

DurantIII, W. C. (1997). "The gift of a child: the promise of freedom: creative approaches to learning, teaching, and schooling." The Freeman **47**: 360-364.

Dussel, I. (1997). Curriculum, humanismo y democracia en la enseñanza media (1863-19209) [Curriculum, humanism and democracy in secondary school]. Buenos Aires, FLACSO.

Educación, M. d. (2006). Ley de Educación Nacional [National law of education]. Nº 26.206.

Edwards, B., M. W. Foley, et al. (2001). Beyond Tocqueville : civil society and the social capital debate in comparative perspective. Hanover, NH, University Press of New England [for] Tufts University.

Eley, G. (1992). Nations, publics, and political cultures: placing Habermas in the nineteenth century. Habermas and the public sphere. C. Calhoun. Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press.

Elster, J., A. Hylland, et al. (1986). Foundations of social choice theory. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire] ; New York, Cambridge University Press.

Etzioni, A. (1968). The active society : a theory of societal and political processes. New York, Free Press.

Etzioni, A. (1983). An immodest agenda : rebuilding America before the twenty-first century. New York, New Press.

Etzioni, A. (1993). The spirit of community : rights, responsibilities, and the communitarian agenda. New York, Crown Publishers.

Fernandez Enguita, M. (2001). ¿Es pública la educación pública? [Is public education public?]. Barceolna, Cisspraxis.

Filmus, D. (2003). Estado, sociedad y educación en la Argentina de fin de siglo: proceso y desafíos [State, society and education in late twentieh century Argentina: process and challenge]. Buenos Aires, Troquel.

Follari, R. A. (2003). Lo público revisitado: paradojas del Estado, falacias del mercado Los sentidos de lo público. Reflexiones desde el campo educativo. S. Carli. Buenos Aires, Noveduc.

Follari, R. A. (2003). Lo publico revisitado: paradojas del Estado, falacias del mercado [Revisiting the public scene: state paradoxes market fallacies]. Los sentidos de lo publico. Reflexiones desde el campo educativo. M. C. Feldfeber. Buenos Aires, Novedades Educativas**:** 47-66.

Foucault, M. (1970). El orden del discurso [The order of discourse]. España, Tusquets.

Foucault, M. (1970). The order of things : an archaeology of the human sciences. London, Tavistock Publications.

Foucault, M. (1977). Discipline and punish : the birth of the prison. London, Allen Lane.

Foucault, M. (1997). Society must be defended. Lectures at the College de France. New York, Picador.

Foucault, M. and C. Gordon (1980). Power-knowledge : selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977. Brighton, Harvester Press.

Foucault, M. and P. Rabinow (1991). The Foucault reader. London, Penguin.

Fraser, N. (1981). "Foucault on modern power: empirical insights and normative confusions." Praxis International(3): 272-287.

Fraser, N. (1992). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy Habermas and the public sphere. C. J. Calhoun. Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press.

Freidenraij, C. (2007). La palanca de Arquímedes. Configuración y desarrollo del sistema educativo en Buenos Aires, 1875-1905 [Archimede's lever. Configuration and development of the education system in Buenos Aires, 1875-1905]. Buenos Aires, Universidad de Buenos Aires**:** 42.

Fung, A. and E. O. Wright (2001). "Deepening democracy: innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance." Politics & Society **Vol. 29**(1): 5-41.

Gessaghi, V. and L. Petrelli (2006). "El debate en torno a la Ley de Educación Nacional: una mirada sobre la construcción de sentidos acerca de la participación." Propuesta Educativa.

Gewirtz, S., S. Ball, et al. (1995). Markets, choice and equity in education. Buckingham, Oup.

Goldstein, J. E. (1994). Foucault and the writing of history. Oxford, UK ; Cambridge, Mass., USA, Blackwell.

Gordon, C., P. Miller, et al. (1991). The Foucault effect : studies in governmentality, with two lectures by and an interview with Michel Foucault. London, Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Green, A. (1990). Education and state formation. The rise of education systems in England, France and the USA. London, The Macmillan Press.

Guerra, F. X. (1998). Los espacios públicos en Iberoamérica. [Public spaces in Latin America]. México, Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Gvirtz, S. (1991). Nuevas y viejas tendencias en la docencia (1945-1955) [New and old trends in teaching (1945-1955)]. Buenos Aires.

Gvirtz, S. (2009). De la tragedia a la esperanza. Hacia un sistema educativo justo, democrático y de calidad [From tragedy to hope. Towards a fair, democratic and quality educational system]. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación.

Gvirtz, S. and D. Gonçalves Vidal (2002). "Ensaios para a construcao de uma História Comparada da Educacao: a Escola Nova e o ensino da escrita no Brasil e na Argentina (1920-1940) [Essays for the construction of a Comparative History of Education: New School Movement and the teaching of writing in Brasil and Argentina]." Cultura: revista de história e teoria das idéias. Centro de História da Cultura, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal **Vol.13**(2).

Gvirtz, S. and M. Narodowski (Unpublished - personal access to the manuscript). Educational reform in Argentina: past, present and future tendencies. Contemporary Educational Issues in the Americas. C. Brock. Oxford, England., Symposium Books, Wallingford.

Gvirtz, S. and A. Oría (2009). Más que un servicio, un derecho [More than a service, a right]. La Nación. Buenos Aires.

Gvirtz, S. and A. Oría (2010). "La relación entre el Estado y la sociedad: alianzas público-privado para la mejora educacional [The relationship between state and society: public-private partnerships to improve education]." Revista Iberoamericana de Educación **Nº 54**.

Habermas, J. (1989). The structural transformation of the public sphere : an inquiry into a category of bourgeois society. Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press.

Habermas, J., N. Crossley, et al. (2004). After Habermas : new perspectives on the public sphere. Oxford Malden, MA, Blackwell Publishing : Sociological Review.

Halperín Donghi, T. (1982). Guerra y finanzas en los orígenes del Estado Argentino (1791-1850) [War and finances in the origins of the Argentine state]. Buenos Aires, Editorial de Belgrano.

Halperín Donghi, T. (1995). Proyecto y construcción de una nación [Design and construction of a nation]. Buenos Aires, Espasa-Calpe/ Ariel.

Hill, P. T. (1995). Reinventing public education. Santa Monica, California Institute on Education and Training**:** 138.

Hillert, F. (2003). Lo publico, democratico y popular [The public, democratic and popular]. Los sentidos de lo publico. Reflexiones desde el campo educativo [Meanings of the public. Reflexions from the educational field]. M. C. Feldfeber. Buenos Aires, Novedades Educativas**:** 83-94.

Hirschman, A. O. (1970). Exit, voice, and loyalty : responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press.

Irigoin, A. (1999). Finance, Politics and Economics in Buenos Aires. The New Political Economy, the state finances during the 1850s. London, University of London. **PhD**.

Irigoin, A. (1999b). "Del dominio autocrático al de la negociación. Las razones económicas del renacimiento de la política en Buenos Aires en la década de 1850 [From autocratic control to negotiation. Economic reasons for the rebirth of politics in 1850's Buenos Aires]." Anuario del Instituto de Estudios Históricos Sociales (IHES)(14).

Jessop, B. (2002). The future of the Capitalist State. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Kallen, D. (1980). The Future of Education in The Netherlands. Amsterdam, European Cultural Foundation.

Katz Michael, B. (1987). Reconstructing American education. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press.

Keane, J. (1988). Civil society and the state : new European perspectives. London ; New York, Verso.

Kirkpatrik and Masiello (1994). Sarmiento between History and Fiction. Sarmiento. Author of a Nation. T. Halperín Dongui. Berkley, Los Angeles, University of California Press.

Klijn, E. H., F. Rynck, et al. (2012). The democratic character of new institutional governance arrangements: comparing Dutch and Belgian experiences. Beyond fragmentation and interconnectivity: public governance and the search for connective capacity. H. J. M. Fenger and V. J. J. M. Bekkers. Amsterdam, IOS Press**:** 142-164.

Kymlicka, W. and W. Norman (1994). "Return of the citizen: A survey of recent work on citizenship theory." Ethics **Vol. 104**(No. 2): 352-381.

Levin, H. M. (2000). The private-public nexus in education. New York, National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education. Teachers College, Columbia University**:** Occasional Paper No. 1.

Loader, D. (1999). "Redefining 'public' in education." Curriculum Perspectives **Vol 19**(1): 53-58.

Lubienski, C. (2000). Redefining 'public' education: charter schools, common schools, and the rethoric of reform. Annual Meeting of the American Eucational Research Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, Eric (ED 444238).

Mantovani, J. (1949). Epocas y hombres de la educación argentina [Periods and men of Argentine Education]. Buenos Aires, El Ateneo.

Marengo, R. (1991). Estructuración y consolidación del poder normalizador: el Consejo Nacional de Educación [The stucturing and consolidation of the normalising power: the National Education Council]. Sociedad civil y Estado en los orígenes del sistema educativo argentino. A. Puiggrós. Buenos Aires, Galerna.

Mc Griff, D. (1996). "Redefining public education: School choice - Michigan kids, parents deserve education options." Detroit free press.

Merquior, J. (1993). Liberalismo viejo y nuevo. [Old and new liberalism]. México, Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Ministerio Nacional de Educación, C. y. T. (2006). Documento para el debate. Ley de Educación nacional. Hacia una educación de calidad para una sociedad más justa [Discussion paper. National law of education. Towards quality education for a fair society]. Buenos Aires.

Minvielle, L. (2004). El cuasi-mercado educativo. Acerca de sus condiciones de posibilidad [Cuasi-markets in education. About its conditions of possibility]. School of Education. Buenos Aires, Universidad de San Andrés. **MA**.

Minvielle, L. (2011). El gobierno local de la educación en la provincia de Buenos Aires a fines del SXIX: Un estudio acerca del devenir del proyecto de participación ciudadana [The local government of education in Buenos Aires at the end of the nineteenth century: a research on the evolution of citizen participation]. Escuela de Educación. Buenos Aires, Universidad de San Andrés. **PhD**.

Monitor (1909). Dictámenes [Sentences]. Buenos Aires, Consejo Nacional de Educación. **Tomo XXX Nº 439 Serie 2ª-Nº 59**.

Monitor (1909). La Escuela y la Patria [The school and the Fatherland]. Buenos Aires, Consejo Nacional de Educación**:** 675.

Monitor (1910). Discursos y oración a la bandera [Discourses and oath to the flag]. Buenos Aires, Consejo Nacional de Educación**:** 159-168
.
Monitor (1910). Festejos Patrios [Patriotic celebrations]. Buenos Aires, Consejo Nacional de Educación. **Tomo XXXIII Nº 450:** 1040

Moreno, J. L. (2000). La política social antes de la política social. Caridad, beneficencia y política social en Buenos Aires, siglos XVII a XX [Social policy before social policy. Charity, beneficence, and social policy in Buenos Aires, XVII and XX centuries]. Buenos Aires, Trama - Prometeo.

Nagel, T. (1991). Equality and partiality. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Narodowski, M. (1994). "La expansion lancasteriana en Iberoamerica. El caso de Buenos Aires. [The lancastrian expansion in Latin America. The case of Buenos Aires]." Anuario del Instituto de Estudios Historico Sociales (IEHS) Facultad de Ciencias Humanas. Universidad del Centro(9).

Narodowski, M. (1996). La utilización de periodizaciones macropolíticas en la historia de la educación. Algunos problemas [The use of macropolitical periodisations in the history of education. Some issues]. Escuela, historia y poder. Miradas desde América Latina [School, history and power. A Latin American perspective]. M. Narodowski and A. Martinez Boom. Buenos Aires, Ediciones Novedades Educativas.

Narodowski, M. (2008). "Sueño de gardapolvo blanco [The dream of white uniforms]." Página 12.

Narodowski, M. and M. Andrada (2001). "The privatisation of education in Argentina." Journal of Education Policy. **Vol. 16**(No. 6).

Narodowski, M. and L. Manolakis (2002). "Defending the 'Argentine way of life.' The State and School Textbooks in Argentina (1884–1984)." Paedagogica Historica **38**(2): 301-316.

Newland, C. (1991). "La educacion elemental en Hispanoamerica: Desde la independencia hasta la centralizacion de los sistemas educativos nacionales. [Elementary education in Latin America: from independe to the centralization of a national education system]." The Hispanic American Historical Review **71**(2): 335-364.

Newland, C. (1992). Buenos Aires no es Pampa: la educacion elemental porteña (1820-1860) [Buenos Aires it is not Pampa: elementary education of Buenos Aires (1820-1860)]. Buenos Aires, Grupo Editor Latinoamericano.

Newland, C. (1995). "Spanish American elementary education 1950–1992: Bureaucracy, growth and decentralization." International Journal of Educational Development **15**(2): 103-114.

Norton, A. (2004). "Public and private: a distinction of little value." BHERT News **Vol. 19**(AEI July 2004): 4-6.

Oría, A., A. Cardini, et al. (2007). "'Urban education, the middle classes and their dilemmas of school choice 91 — 105." Journal of Education Policy **22:1**: 91 — 105.

Oszlack, O. (1997). La Formación del Estado Argentino [The Argentine state formation]. Buenos Aires, Ariel.

Ottolenghi, J. (1972). Qué proyectó y qué hizo Sarmiento durante su presidencia: 1868-1874. Buenos Aires, Instituto Sarmiento de Sociología e Historia.

Palcos, A. (1929). Sarmiento. La vida. La obra. Las ideas. El genio [Sarmiento. The Life. The Work. The Ideas. The genius]. Buenos Aires, El Ateneo.

Perazza, R. (2008). Pensar en lo público [To think of the public]. Buenos Aires, Aique.

Pineau, P. (1997). La Escolarización de la provincia de Buenos Aires (1875 - 1930) [The process of schooling in Buenos Aires]. Buenos Aires, FLACSO.

Pineau, P. (1998). "El concepto de educación popular: un rastreo histórico [The concept of popular education: a historical review]." Instituto de Investigaciones en Ciencias de la Educación **Dossier Especial**: I-IX.

Prado, C. G. (2000). Starting with Foucault : an introduction to genealogy. Boulder, Colo, Westview Press.

Puiggrós, A. (1990). Sujetos, Disciplina y Currículo en los orígenes del Sistema Educativo Argentino (1885 - 1916) [Subjects, discipline and curriulum in the origins of the Argentine education system]. Buenos Aires, Editorial Galerna.

Putnam, R. D. (2000). Bowling alone : the collapse and revival of American community. New York, Simon & Schuster.

Putnam, R. D., R. Leonardi, et al. (1993). Making democracy work : civic traditions in modern Italy. Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press.

Ramallo, J. M. (1999). Etapas históricas de la educación argentina [Historical periods of Argentine education]. Buenos Aires, Fundación Nuestra Historia.

Ramos, J. P. (1910). Escuelas Nacionales en las Provincias. Ley 4874 [National Schools in the Provinces. Law Nº 4874]. Buenos Aires.

Ramos, J. P. (1910). Historia de la instrucción primaria en la República Argentina. 1810-1910. Buenos Aires, Jacobo Peuser.

Ramos, J. P. T. I. (1910). Historia de la instrucción primaria en la República Argentina. 1810-1910 [History of public instruccion in the Argentine Republic]. Buenos Aires, Jacobo Peuser.

Ramos, J. P. T. I. (1910). Historia de la instrucción primaria en la República Argentina. 1810-1910. Buenos Aires, Jacobo Peuser.

Ramos Mejía, J. M. (1899). Las Multitudes Argentinas [The Argentine multitudes]. Buenos Aires, Second Edition 1838.

Ramos Mejía, J. M. (1909). Memoria del Consejo Nacional de Educación [National Education Council's memory]. Buenos Aires.

Ramos Mejía, J. M. (1910). Escuelas Nacionales en las Provincias. Ley 4874. CNE. Buenos Aires

Ramos Mejía, J. M. (1913). La Educación Común en la Argentina. Presidencia del Doctor José Ramos Mejía. Años 1909-1910 [Common education in Argentina. Presidency of José Ramos Mejía]. Buenos Aires, Consejo Nacional de Educación.

Recand, F. (1921). "Voces Amigas [Friendly voices]." Cuasimodo **Año II, Nº 16**: 4.

Rivas, Á. (2009). Lo uno y lo múltiple: Esferas de justicia del federalismo educativo [Unity and multiplicity: spheres of justice in educational federalism]. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación.

Roca and Wilde (1884). LEY 1420 DE EDUCACIÓN COMÚN [Law of Education Nº 1420].

Rojas, R. (1909). La Restauración Nacionalista [The nationalist restoration], A. Peña Lilo Editor.

Roldán, D. (2008). La síntesis entre liberalismo y democracia es un tesoro que debemos cuidar [The syntesis between liberalims and democracy is a treasure we must take care of]. Clarín. Buenos Aires.

Romero, J. L. (1959). Las ideas políticas en Argentina [Political ideas in Argentina]. Buenos Aires, Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Romero, L. A. (1994). Breve Historia Contemporánea de la Argentina [A brief contemporary Argentine history]. Buenos Aires, FCE.

Ryan, M. P. (1992). Gender and public access: women politics in nineteenth-century America. Habermas and the public sphere. C. Calhoun. Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press.

Sabato, H. (1998). La politica en las calles : entre el voto y la movilizacion : Buenos Aires, 1862-1880 [Politics in the streets. Between elections and mobilisations: Buenos Aires]. Buenos Aires, Editorial Sudamericana.

Sabato, H. (1999). Ciudadanía política y formación de las naciones : perspectivas históricas de América Latina [Political citizenship and national formation: historical perspective about Latin America]. México, Colegio de México : Fideicomiso Historia de las Américas : Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Salisbury, R. H. (1975). "Research on political participation." American Journal of Political Science **Vol. 19**(Num. 2): 323- 341.

Salvadores, A. (1941). La instrucción primaria desde 1810 hasta la sanción de la Ley 1420 [Elementary education from 1810 to the sanction of Law Nº 1420]. Buenos Aires, Consejo Nacional de Educación.

Salvatore, R. (2003). Wandering Paysanos. State order and subaltern experience in Buenos Aires during the Rosas era. Durham & London, Duke University Press.

Samar, E. (2008). "Sarmiento." Página 12.

Sarmiento, D. F. (1841: 1854). Ortografía e Instrucción Pública [Ortography and public instruction] **Vol. 4**. Ed. Luz del Día, Buenos Aires, 1949.

Sarmiento, D. F. (1849). Educación Popular. [Popular education] **Vol 11**. Ed. Universidad de la La Matanza, Buenos Aires, 2002.

Sarmiento, D. F. (1853). Educación Común [Common education] **Vol 12**. Ediciones Solar, Buenos Aires 1987.

Sarmiento, D. F. (1856). Informes sobre Educación [Educational reports] **Vol. 44**, Ed. Luz del Día, Buenos Aires, 1949.

Sarmiento, D. F. (1858). Anales de la Educación Común [Annals of common education] **Vol. I, Nº1**, Archivo Histórico de la Provincia de Buenos Aires.

Sarmiento, D. F. (1861). Anales de la Educación Común [Annals of common education] **Vol II, Num. 21**, Archivo Histórico de la Provincia de Buenos Aires.

Sarmiento, D. F. (1861). Tercer Informe del Jefe del Departamento de Escuelas [Third report of the Head of Schools of Buenos Aires], in: **Anales de la Educación Común, Vol. II, N. 20**, Archivo Histórico del Museo Sarmiento.

Scobie, J. R. (1964). La lucha por la consolidación de la nacionalidad argentina, 1852-1862 [The struggle for the consolidation of Argentine nationality]. Buenos Aires, Hachette.

Senén Gonzalez, S. (2008). Política, leyes y educación [Politics, law and education]. Pensar en lo público [To think of the public]. R. Perazza. Buenos Aires, Aique.

Serra, M. S. (2003). Es posible lo publico no estatal en educacion en la Argentina? [Is it possible to have public education with no state intervention in Argentina?]. Los sentidos de lo publico. Reflexiones desde el campo educativo [Meanings of the public. Reflexions from the educational field]. M. C. Feldfeber. Buenos Aires, Novedades Educativas**:** 95-106.

Shaw, M. (2008). Civil Society. Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace and Conflict. L. Kurtz. San Diego, Academic Press**:** 269-78.

Shumway, D. R. (1992). Michel Foucault. Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia.

Skelcher, C. e. a. (2008). The democratic anchorage of governance networks in three European countries: Full Research Report ESRC End of Award Report. Swindon, ESRC. **RES-000-23-1295**.

Solari, J. A. (1968). Días y obras de Sarmiento [Sarmiento's days and works]. Buenos Aires, Plus Ultra

Stuart Mill, J. (1992). On liberty and utilitarianism. 1859 (first published). Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Sturm, J. (1998). "Educational Pluralism. A historical study of the so called « Pillarization » in The Netherlands. ." Comparative Education **Vol. 34**.

Suissa, J. (2010). Anarchism and education: a philosophical perspective Oakland, CA, PM Press.

Suriano, J. (2001). Anarquistas. Cultura y política libertaria en Buenos Aires. 1890-1910 [Anarchists. Culture and libertarian politics in Buenos Aires. 1890-1910]. Buenos Aires, Ediciones Manantial.

Tamboukou, M. and S. Ball (2003). "Genealogy and ethnography: Fruitful encounters or dangerous liaisons." Genealogy and Etnography **17**: 1 - 36.

Tedesco, J. C. (2003). Educación y Sociedad en la Argentina (1880-1945) [Education and society in Argentina (1880-1945)]. Buenos Aires, Siglo Veintiuno.

Terán, O. (2000). Vida intelectual en el Buenos Aires de fin-de-siglo (1880-1910) [Intellectual life in Buenos Aires at the end of Century (1880-1910)]. Buenos Aires, Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Terigi, F. (2006). Un sistema desarticulado [A dislocated system]. Clarín. Buenos Aires.

Vallejos de Llobet, P. (2000). Texto y contexto en el discurso de las ciencias fácticas de principios de siglo en la Argentina [Text and context in factual science approach at the beginning of century in Argentina]. La ciencia en la Argentina entre siglos [Science in Argentina between centuries]. M. Montserrat. Buenos Aires, Manantial.

Van Vugt, J. (1996). Brothers at Work (A History of five Dutch Congregations and their activities in Catholic Education, 1840 – 1970). The Netherlands, Valkhof Pers.

Vanderberghe, V. (1999). "Combining market and bureaucratic control in education: an answer to market and bureaucratic failure?" Comparative Education **Vol. 35**(3).

Veleda, C. (2012). La segregación educativa. Entre la fragmentación de las clases medias y la regulación atomizada [The educational segregation. Between the division of the middle classes and the fragmented regulation]. Buenos Aires.

Vincent, C. (2000). Including parents? : education, citizenship and parental agency. Buckingham, Open UP.

Warner, M. (2002). Publics and counterpublics. New York, Zone Books.

Weiler, H. (1990). "Comparative Perspectives on Educational Descentralisation: An Exercise in Contradiction?" Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis. **Vol. 12**.

Weinberg, F. (1976). Dos utopías argentinas [Two agentinian utopias]. Buenos Aires, Solar/Hachette.

Weinberg, G. (1987). Prólogo a Educación Común [Introduction to Educación Común]. Educación Común [Common Education]. Buenos Aires, Ediciones Solar.

Weinberg, G. (1995). Modelos Educativos en la historia de América Latina [Educational models in the history of Latin America]. Buenos Aires, AZ Editora.

Weinberg, G. (1999). Sarmiento, Bello, Mariategui y otros ensayos [Sarmiento, Bello, Mariategui and other essays]. Buenos Aires, Academia nacional de educación.

Wilde, E. (1883). "Memoria de Justicia, Culto e Instrucción Pública [Reports of justice, culture and public education]."

Zanotti, L. J. (1981). Las etapas históricas de la política educativa [Historical stages of education policy]. Buenos Aires, EUDEBA.

Zimmermann, E. (1995). Los liberales reformistas. La cuestion social en la Argentina, 1890-1916 [Liberal reformist. The social question in Argentina, 1890-1916]. Buenos Aires, Editorial Sudamericana.

Endnotes

Chapter 1

---

i Criollos, mestizos and indios are terms that date back to the Spanish colonial caste system in Latin America. 'Criollos' were the people born in Spanish colonies and deemed to have 'pure blood' (or 'cleanliness of blood') – although the local-born criollos ranked strictly lower than the governing peninsulares who were Spaniards born on the Iberian Peninsula. 'Mestizos' referred to people of mixed European (most often Spanish) and local indigenous ancestry in the colony. 'Indio' was the term used to refer to the indigenous inhabitants of the Argentine territory.
ii The Jesuits were the best organized and most influential throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
iii The italics are mine.
iv The Unitarian group was predominantly integrated by the elite porteña (of Buenos Aires): members of the upper class, intellectuals, militias, etc. They defended the interests of Buenos Aires and sought to be the head and capital of the country. Unitarians considered that the Nation pre-dated the provinces. Provinces, they believed, were only internal divisions with restricted autonomy.
v Gauchos were generally nomadic and lived on the pampas, the plain that extends north from Patagonia, bounded on the west by the Andes and extending as far north as the Brazilian state of Paraná. Most gauchos were either criollos or mestizo Spanish, but the term applies equally to people of other European, African or mixed ancestry. The gaucho plays an important symbolic role in the nationalist feelings of this region, especially in Argentina and Uruguay. The epic poem Martín Fierro by José Hernández (1872, Argentina) used the gaucho as a symbol against the corruption of Argentine national tradition, pitted against Europeanising tendencies.
vi Habermas argues that the early bourgeois public sphere was composed from narrow segments of the population, mainly educated, propertied men, and they conducted a discourse not only exclusive from others but sometimes prejudicial to the interests of those excluded. In Argentina, however, the right to elect and become elected constituted the core of the political rights that were entitled to the 'citizens' sice the early post-independence period. Following Sábato (1998) Argentina was not the case of a country that gradually moved away from a 'restricted citizenship' based on property and qualification. 'In most parts of Ibeoramerica, the point of departure was a rather broad conception of citizenship, closer to the citoyen of revolutionary France than to the propertied citizen conceived by Locke (…) In spite of the Constitution and the laws, effective electoral participation was rather limited, thus, there was a system of restricted citizenship de facto (p. 13). (I use de facto, the author says 'de hecho' but there is no direct translation into English)
vii 'Negocio casero, personal'
viii A note on how the Provincial Law (1875) and the Law 1420 (1884) differed (Pineau, P.: 1997; Minvielle. L.: PhD thesis, University of San Andrés, 2011).
ix José Luis Moreno's studies (2000) are eloquent examples of this. Moreno, J. L. (2000). La política social antes de la política social. Caridad, beneficencia y política social en Buenos Aires, siglos XVII a XX [Social policy before social policy. Charity,

beneficence, and social policy in Buenos Aires, XVII and XX centuries]. Buenos Aires, Trama - Prometeo.

x Following Oscar Terán (2000), both Sarmiento and Alberdi conceived the nation as a domain where universal values should be realised, not specific characters or programs that could differentiate a nation from others. Alberdi stated: 'Let us remind the people that our Patria is not the land. We own the land three centuries ago but we only have a Patria since 1810. Patria is liberty, order, richness and an organised civilisation within the native land, under its symbol and its name'.
xi Participation of private education on the primary level total enrolment had a decreasing tendency throughout the first half of the twentieth century, going from 25% at the end of the nineteenth century to 5% in 1930. During all of those years, the fall of private enrolment figures for primary education is explained by the growth of enrolment in public schools, which in that period increased 7.5 times its number of students (Morduchowicz et al. 2000).
xii NBI: Necesidades Básicas Insatisfechas [Unsatisfied Basic Needs]
xiii Clarifying whether exit should be seen as an indicator of the public sector's decay, or the public sector's situation was aggravated by the flee of the middles classes from the public sector would require further research. A critical hypothesis first articulated by Ball on the analysis of schooling and English middle classes suggests public education could have first been taken by socially mobile groups who, having now exhausted its possibilities, seek for alternative advantages outside the public. See Ball, S. J. (2003). Class strategies and the education market : the middle classes and social advantage. London; New York, RoutledgeFalmer. Cecilia Veleda (2012) analyses how the state generates segregation through distribution policies that reach students, teachers and materials, among other regulations. But at the same time, she explores the ways in which schools and families' practices work in deepening this segregation Veleda, C. (2012). La segregación educativa. Entre la fragmentación de las clases medias y la regulación atomizada [The educational segregation. Between the division of the middle classes and the fragmented regulation]. Buenos Aires.

Chapter 2

xiv John Ball, Watt Tyler, Jack Straw. The revolt in 1381 had at its core, the issues of individual freedom to offer individual labor freely against established (but crumbling) forms of bonded labor (serfdom). The revolt therefore pre-figured issues that were to be central to the creation of the Modern public sphere and sensibility.
xv Calhoun makes clear that the weakening of the public is not just a matter of new (lower class) entrants being mere consumers or substandard participants. Habermas asserts with empirical evidence that the consumption of mass culture increases with wealth, status and urbanisation.
xvi Calhoun elaborates a critique of both Habermas' over-estimation of the degeneration of the public sphere and his inability to find in advanced capitalist societies an institutional basis for an effective political public sphere corresponding in character and function to that of early capitalism, but corresponding in scale and participation to the realities of later capitalism and states. Other writers in this book argue for a notion of multiple, sometimes overlapping or contending public spheres. Social movements would be among the several possible sorts of subsidiary

public spheres we might conceptualise if we break with the idea that there must be one public sphere for each State. I look at possibilities for a more pluralistic and open approach to conceptualizing the public sphere at the end of this section.
xvii This is the title of a book edited by Crossley and Roberts (2004).
xviii The critique focuses on guaranteeing opportunities for minorities to convince others that what in the past was not public in the sense of being a matter of common concern should now become so. Fraser (1992) is particularly concerned about feminists being till quite recently a minority thinking that domestic violence against women was a matter of common concern and thus a legitimate topic of public discourse vs. the majority of people that regarded it as private issue between what was assumed to be fairly a small number of heterosexual couples. Then feminists formed a subaltern counter-public from which they disseminated a view of domestic violence as a widespread systemic feature of male-dominated societies and eventually, after sustained discursive contestations, succeeded in making it a common concern. See Fraser, N. (1992). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy, in Habermas and the public sphere. C. J. Calhoun. Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press.

Chapter 3

xix Foucault also uses the strategy of reversal of the major claims of particular discourses, such as the claim of sexuality to be silenced by repression - the 'repressive hypothesis', perhaps Foucault's most striking historical reversal: 'A first survey made from this viewpoint seems to indicate that since the end of the sixteenth century, the 'putting into discourse of sex', far from undergoing a process of restriction, on the contrary has been subjected to a mechanism of increasing incitement; that the techniques of power exercised over sex have not obeyed a principle of rigorous selection, but rather one of dissemination and implantation of polymorphous sexualities; and that the will to knowledge has not come to a halt in the face of a taboo that must not be lifted, but has persisted in constituting – despite many mistakes, of course - a science of sexuality' (Foucault, 1976: 12).
xx The school uniform has been a subject of academic research. See Dussel, I. 'School Uniforms and the Disciplining of Appearances. Towards a History of the Regulation of Bodies' in Cultural History and Education: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Schooling (Eds.) Thomas S. Popkewitz, Barry M.
xxi Among others, Leopoldo Lugones (1945); Allison Williams Bunkley (1952); Alberto Palcos (1962); José Campobassi (1975); Anibal Ponse (1976); Natalio Botana (1984); Paul Verdevoye (1988); Gregorio Weimberg (1984); Félix Weimberg (1988); Tulio Halperín Donghi et al (1994); T. Halperín Donghui (1995).
xxii Besides the state's correctness or incorrectness in declaring the hymn to Sarmiento compulsory in state schools of the City of Buenos Aires, the above debate led the educational authorities to buy and distribute in every school the Complete Works of Sarmiento, in order to allow teachers and students to engage in their reading, understanding and critical analysis.
xxiii See Zimmermann, E. (1992) for an account on ways racial ideas affected the political, social and cultural development of the new nations. This paper addresses the connection between racial thought and the emergence of social reform movement in Argentina at the turn of the century. The author suggests 'race transcended all ideological boundaries and was adopted as a key term by

intellectuals and politicians of all persuasions (…) Ideas that later became symbols of reactionary politics, such as the intrinsic superiority of certain racial groups over others or the need for a scientific regulation of racial purity, were at that tie considered to be progressive notions, accepted by liberal reformers and socialists both in Argentina and in countries where many of these doctrines originated' (p.22)

xxiv The italics are mine.

xxv More about Sarmiento's position in relation to schooling and the possibilities of a genuine exercise of 'political' rights, in Botana, N. R. (1991). La libertad política y su historia [The political freedom and its history]. Buenos Aires, Editorial Sudamericana.

xxvi According to Foucault, 'the two processes – the accumulation of men and the accumulation of capital – cannot be separated; it would not have been possible to solve the problem of the accumulation of men without the growth of an apparatus of production capable of both sustaining them and using them; conversely, the techniques that made the cumulative multiplicity of men useful accelerated the accumulation of capital' (1977: 221).

xxvii Adriana Puiggrós (1990) Historia de la Educación Argentina. Sujetos, Disciplina y Currículo en los orígenes del Sistema Educativo Argentino (1885 – 1916) [Subjects, discipline and curriculum in the origins of the Argentine education system]. Editorial Galerna, Buenos Aires; Violeta Guyot, Un sujeto llamado maestro. Un análisis desde la partición civilización-barbarie [A subject named teacher. An analysis from the partition civilisation and barbarism]. Anuario Nº3-2000/2001, Sociedad Argentina de Historia de la Educación (SAHE) Buenos Aires, 2001; Maristella Svampa (…) El dilema argentino: civilización o barbarie. De Sarmiento al revisionismo peronista. Ediciones El Cielo por Asalto, Buenos Aires [The argentinean dilema: civilisation or barbarism. From Sarmiento to peronist revisionism]; Hugo Vezetti (1985) La locura en la Argentina. Paidos, Buenos Aires; among others [Madness in Argentina].

xxviii Tulio Halperín Donghi (1985) has analysed the rules and dynamics of the national press, the complex relations between political leaders, editors and journalists, the overlapping of roles in certain figures, the economic dependency of the companies with the State and political parties. Beyond the explicit or implicit political filiations of most periodicals, each time more they sought to cut a space of increasing autonomy y relation to the political power. The newspapers liked to present themselves as 'free press', representatives of a 'free opinion', non subordinated to the state (Sabato 1998).

xxix The underlining is mine.

xxx The Spanish term 'Parroquia' derives from colonial times and refers to sub-divisions of Church districts that served as political sub-divisions.

xxxi Tedesco calls it 'optimismo pedagógico'. Tedesco, J. C. (2003). Educación y Sociedad en la Argentina (1880-1945) [Education and society in Argentina (1880-1945)]. Buenos Aires, Siglo Veintiuno.

xxxii Mill insisted on that state education should only exist, if it existed at all, as one among many competing experiments, carried on for the purpose of example and stimulus, to keep the others up to a certain standard of excellence. And adds: 'Unless, indeed, when society in general is in so backward a state that it could not or would not provide for itself any proper institutions of education unless government undertook the task: then indeed the government may, as the less of

two great evils, take upon itself the business of schools and universities…' (Mill p. 102)

xxxiii The italics are mine.

xxxiv The Capital letters are from the original.

xxxv Prussia, Holland, Belgium, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania had established a special contribution for this purpose. Sarmiento explained in Prussia those who benefitted from it paid primary education. The head of family had the legal duty to educate his sons and contribute, proportionally to his wealth, to cover the costs of those who had no possibilities of paying for education. The contribution was 'direct' and collected by the Municipality 'that knows the possibilities of each person'. The State and provinces helped the poor population who could not meet a minimum of education. In Holland, the Municipality only concentrated in providing education for the poor. The state left in hands of private organisations the education of the better off families. However, Sarmiento argued that the free schools, subjected to inspection, provided of well trained teachers and put under the vigilance of government, very soon surpassed the private schools, 'to the point of making the schools for the poor more attractive' (Sarmiento vol. 11: 47). According to Sarmiento, this had led to the creation of 'public schools were people paid', extending the advantages of the system of inspection to both the private and public sectors. France also collected contributions to cover the public needs of each town. However, education did not count with a special rent. Funding for education came from a mass of general municipal resources, thus 'distorting the most powerful element of the contribution, which is obliging the heads of family to pay for education' (Sarmiento vol. 11: 44).

xxxvi The original table goes from 1845 to1860.

xxxvii Sarmiento was probably referring to Rosas' administration, when education was erased from the state's budget.

xxxviii The underlying is mine.

xxxix Minvielle (2011) quotes Morlino, L (1985) Cómo cambian los regímenes políticos. Instrumentos de análisis [How do political regimes change]. Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales. According to Morlino, the structures of authority are 'the set of roles and regulated models of behavior and expectations that describe the ways in which those who occupy special positions will behave (…) and the way others will behave before them' (p. 35).

xl As stated in an earlier Chapter, very early in 1821 Buenos Aires defined the system of vote with no restrictions for all adult men. Since then, there were no limitations (censatarias) nor in capacity to the exercise of suffrage. Immigrants were allowed to participate in local elections (Sábato 1998). According to Minvielle, although some of the people belonged to prominent local families, merchants – native and foreign – also had a space to participate in local government. This trend increased approaching the XXth century, were the participation of the immigrants became increasingly important.

xli The central organs (General Education Council and General Education Direction) intervened in three main areas: content and structure of education, teacher training, distribution of the school population and the inspection. The central organs also received the annual budgets elaborated by each district, and carried out their analysis and evaluation/approval. This was not a mere formality, analyses were rigorous and in many cases budgets were given back to the District for revision. These functions gave the central organs the power to make strategic definitions and exert control over the system.

The local District Education Councils decided on key administrative areas, such as hiring and dismissal of teachers, programs of in-service teacher training (pedagogical conferences), and budget and resources management. Control of activities didn't escape either from the hands of DEC: local sub-inspectors (in addition to the inspectors lead by the General Director) delivered regular visits to the schools and demanded written reports on various aspects of the school's daily life, serving in this case as the nexus between the local and central instances of control.

xlii This is the term used in the text of the law. It does not give further precisions. In order to shed some extra light on this point, Chapter 2 of Educacion Popular says: 'Heads of family are all the inhabitants in a Municipality that have 'menaje' (the translation of 'menaje' is household equipment. Sarmiento is surely referring to those who own a 'property'). All who contribute to other needs of the Municipality will be put in this category' And continues: 'With the exception of: wage earners or those who live from the bread of another' (p.44)

xliii At this point, however, Freidenraij's work seems less consistent and lines of argument are somewhat hard to follow.

xliv Salvatore develops a social history of the country-men during the nineteenth century, and describes numerous events where rural middle fractions and immigrant settlers in these areas show modern citizenship patterns: like claims for territory from immigrant settlers in Chivilcoy, petitions to access the right to vote for military authorities in San Fernando, demands by towns in the province to have a representation in the provincial assemblies, etc. Salvatore's account challenges the view of a country-side immersed in complete apathy and lack of participation.

xlv The Conquest of the Dessert was a military campaign directed mainly by General Julio Argentino Roca in the 1870s, during Avellaneda´s government, with the intent to establish Argentine dominance over Patagonia, which was inhabited by indigenous peoples.

xlvi Salvatore develops a social history of the country-men during the nineteenth century and describes numerous events where rural middle fractions and immigrant settlers in these areas show modern citizenship patterns: like claims for territory from immigrant settlers in Chivilcoy, petitions to access the right to vote for military authorities in San Fernando and demands by towns in the province to have a representation in the provincial assemblies. Salvatore's account challenges the view of a country-side immersed in complete apathy and lack of participation.

xlvii The succesfull cases of the Escuelas Superiores in Parishes 'Catedral al Norte' and 'Catedral al Sur'. See Sarmiento, Obras Completas, Vol. 44, p. 92-93. In this same text, pages 113 and 119.

Chapter 4

xlviii Following Oscar Terán, both Sarmiento and Alberdi conceived the nation as a domain where universal values should be realized, not specific characters or programs that could differentiate a nation from others. Alberdi stated: 'Let us remind the people that our Patria is not the land. We own the land three centuries ago but we only have a Patria since 1810. Patria is liberty, order, richness and

organised civilisations within the native land, under its flag and its name' (Alberdi quoted in Terán, 2000)

xlix Ley 1420 applied to primary schooling. In 1885, the Ley Avellaneda - named after N. Avellaneda its initiator - set the basis to which national universities statutes should subscribe. It referred mainly to the organization of its administrative system, leaving the other aspects unregulated.

l I subscribe to Zimmermann's characterization of the governing class at this juncture. He argues Argentina's institutional transformation was due to the offices of a liberal and progressive 'administrative intelligentsia', rather than to the reactions of a besieged aristocracy that sought to protect its own interests (Zimmermann 1995: 34). The groups that designed public policy and confronted the emerging social problems at the beginning of the twentieth century were Liberals reinforced with 'outside talent'. This approach to the State accounts better for the huge proliferation of discourses, new practices, roles and functions that became institutionalised in this period. Those who constituted the 'expert public' and who were importantly responsible for transferring publicness into the central state nevertheless failed to create a sense of the public at local or district levels. Local and district levels lost influence.

li At that time, Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Santa Fe, Entre Ríos, Corrientes, Santiago del Estero, Tucumán, Salta, Jujuy, Catamarca, La Rioja, San Juan, San Luis and Mendoza, were Provincial territories. The rest of the country was composed of National Territories: these were the present-day Tierra del Fuego, Santa Cruz, Chubut, Río Negro, Neuquén, La Pampa, Chaco, Formosa, Misiones and Buenos Aires City, Federal Capital of the Republic.

lii Among other 'powers and duties' prescribed by Law No.1420, the National Education Council would: '1st Direct the instruction offered in all primary schools, in accordance with the prescriptions of this law and other implementing regulations (…); 3rd Administer all funds, whatever their origin, destined to the maintenance and promotion of common education; 4th Organise the inspection of schools and the accounting and custody of funds destined to their support (…) 6th Duly execute the laws relating to common education sanctioned by Congress, and other decrees issued by the Executive Branch (…); 10th Distribute in every public and private school enrolment, attendance, statistical and school population census forms, and direct their use as judged convenient; 11th Dictate teaching programs in schools, according to the prescriptions of this law and the needs of the progressive advances in common education (…); 15th Prescribe and approve adequate textbooks for public schools, furthering their publication and improvement by means of competitions and other stimuli, and ensure their uniform application…' Roca and Wilde (1884). LEY 1420 DE EDUCACIÓN COMÚN [Law of Education Nº 1420].

liii Rivas, Á. (2009). Lo uno y lo múltiple: Esferas de justicia del federalismo educativo [Unity and multiplicity: spheres of justice in educational federalism]. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de Educación.

liv See Chapter 3, pp. on the 'participatory project'.

lv Italics are from the original text.

lvi The week of May 1810 concluded on the 25th with the revolution that initiated Argentina's process of independence from Spain.

lvii The 'Roquismo' was a centralised government ruled by the conservative party of Julio Argentino Roca, an army general who served as President of Argentina from 1880 to 1886 and from 1898 to 1904.

lviii I signal the different sectors in conflict through the italics.

lix The Lainez Law allowed the national state to create and manage national schools in the territories of the provinces
lx Newland argues that a 'revisionist' trend in historiography has sought to criticise this vision about Rosas. These authors attempt to soften the 'black legend' about the rosist period disseminated by the official trend (1992: 24-25).
lxi The fact is this was not as simple. A famous controversy between Sarmiento and Alberdi took place. Sarmiento argued in favour of building and educational system and Alberdi of the 'education of things' – institutions, immigration, work, etc. Ramos overlooks this discussion. The need of a formal and state-regulated educational system is given for granted, a key contribution to building common sense in this period.
lxii Sarmiento's early public years as Head of Education in Buenos Aires (1856-1862) have been scarcely considered by historians of education. Researchers generally concentrate on the presidential period or upon his role in the debates that preceded the passing of Law 1.420, which gave place to the foundational version of public education in Argentina. Sarmiento's most original thinking about 'public' education only becomes available through examining his early work.

lxiv During the Presidency of Ramos Mejía, the National Education Council managed to pass a reform project geared towards 'facilitating and standardizing all the subvention-related procedures' (El Monitor p. 599-607).

Chapter 5

lxv By the end of 1902, Anarchism suffered a sudden detention of its growth, due to the harsh repression of Julio Roca's government after long strikes where anarchism had a leading role. The state of siege, the expulsion of the most prominent anarchist activists through the Law of Residence, prison, closure of newspapers and plain official pressure, were all elements that momentarily paralysed anarchist activity, particularly the one of its centres and circles. The effects of this repression lasted a few years. Afterwards the political and union activity gained new intensity. In 1904 anarchists managed to organise more than 50 circles in the city of Buenos Aires, a number that was never later achieved. In 1905 anarchism suffered a new blow during radicalism's failed revolutionary attempt. Out of 51 existing centres in 1904 only 12 continued to work after the repression of the radical rebellion. However, that year 13 new centres were created, totalising 25 in 1905. Circles increased to 40 in 1907 and stabilised slightly under that number in 1908 and 1909, until it began its drop in 1910, a year that was marked by the state of siege and further crumbling of anarchism (Suriano 2001: 53)
lxvi 1814 – 1 July 1876. Russian revolutionary, libertarian socialist, and founder of 'collectivist anarchism' philosophy. He is considered among the most influential figures of anarchism, and one of the principle founders of the 'social anarchist' tradition of anarchism.
lxvii The union's activity was seen as a mean to achieve a higher objective: the worker's instruction and awareness. Slightly libertarian, based on an ambiguous anti-state position and the use of a quasi anarchist language, however always

ready to negotiate, unionism was since its apparition in the first half of the twentieth century an attractive option for the workers.
lxviii These adjustments were in part consequence of the virulent emergence of social conflict. The leading groups strongly linked this phenomenon to anarchism and foreign immigration, and this derived in the sanction of a series of repressive measures (Suriano 2001; Zimmermann 1995).
lxix During Roca's second presidency, the Law of Residence legalised the expulsion of immigrants who compromise national security or disturb public order and, hence, made it possible to expel Argentina's trade union leaders.
lxx On the first place, because until 1902 there were virtually no anarchist educational institutions. On the other hand, because it is hard to assert whether militants 'with teaching functions' were actually expelled. According to Suriano, it is not known how many these were, and the lists of the deported people do not show any clarifying information: the only deported name associated to argentine anarchism was Julio Gamba, who some months earlier attempted to open an evening academy (2001: 235).
lxxi Anarchism was not able to achieve a national reach: although there were nucleus and militants in diverse areas of the interior of the country, their weight was irrelevant among societies of traditional character. Conversely, Anarchism concentrated around more dynamic areas of the economy, like the big cities of the Argentine littoral. (Suriano 2001: 16) During this period Anarchism was predominantly an urban phenomenon (p. 17).
lxxii Some titles: Francisco Ferrer 'La escuela moderna – póstuma explicación y alcances de la enseñanza racionalista [The modern school: posthumous explanation and range of rationalist education]; Paul Robin (1978) 'La educación integral' [Integral education]. Otros precursores, Proudhon (s-f) 'La educación y el trabajo' [Education and work]; en la Argentina '
lxxiii Barrancos states was obsessive in defining Capital, Government, Church and Ignorance as the parts of a four-headed monster that workers should confront and finally suppress (Barrancos: 1990).
lxxiv 1983 is the year democracy was reinstated in Argentina.

Chapter 6

lxxv The current debate includes numerous standpoints. Some in favor of quasimarkets, like Tooley, J. (Education without the State, 1996) and Chubb, J. E. & Moe, T. (Politics, Markets, and the Organization of Schools, 1997); others that observe the negative effects of this model, among others Ball, S. (Ball et. al. Markets, Choice and Equity in Education, 1995; Gewirtz, Sh. (Post-welfarist Schooling: a Social Justice Audit, 1999) and Whitty, G. (Whitty et. al. Devolution and Choice in Education, 1998.); and, finally, more radical positions, like Rikowski, G. & McLaren, P. (Pedagogy for Revolution against Education for Capital, 2001).
lxxvi Some examples of these initiatives in Argentina: Fundación Cimientos, Enseña por Argentina, Fundación Leer. Their operation strategy consists on expanding the reach of their activity to an increasing number of educational institutions. Impact is considerable, however the scale remains always limited and there inasmuch interaction with government or transfer of know how in not in the agenda.

lxxvii A set of laws and regulations were enacted during this decade: Ley Federal de Educación (1993), Ley de Transferencias (1991), Ley de Educación Superior (1995), and Pacto Federal de Educación.
lxxviii The verzuiling or system of politico-religious segmentation of Dutch education into public, Roman Catholic, Protestant and neutral private sectors, is the most fundamental characteristic of Dutch education. It holds a divided nation together in a legal and organisational structure that leaves everybody –every 'zuil', 'pillar'- free in respect of everything concerning his or her inner convictions. Kallen, D. (1980). The Future of Education in The Netherlands. Amsterdam, European Cultural Foundation.

Chapter 7

lxxix The 'official sphere' within the period of the 'conservative order' (1880-1916), far from being a closed and homogenous system, enabled the rise of renovating trends inspired by progressive principles, which in the social field adhered to the early century's values of 'new' liberalism. This 'liberal-reformist' wave aimed at establishing new limits to the State's action, a new balance between State and freedom. On the other hand, it aimed to satisfy several parallel concerns; i.e. to establish a certain public order, to develop forms of active citizenship, to incorporate a new scientific way of engineering social policies, to strengthen the relationship between the state and new professional fields (Zimmermann: 2001).
lxxx See Roldan, D. (1993). Joaquín V. González, a propósito del pensamiento político-liberal (1880-1920 [Joaquin V. Gonzalez and the liberal-political thought]). Buenos Aires, Centro Editor de América Latina. Ines Dussel (1997) also offers interesting insight about this Dussel, I. (1997). Curriculum, humanismo y democracia en la enseñanza media (1863-19209) [Curriculum, humanism and democracy in secondary school]. Buenos Aires, FLACSO.
lxxxi An illustrative example of new developments that find conditions of emergence within the contemporary paradigm is the 'Association of Schools of Social Administration' (Asociación de Educación de Gestión Social). Every year this social organisation organises National Meetings with strategic agendas and increasing participation. In 2012 the state even provided a venue for the Meeting. More information about the Association of Schools of Social Administration in: http://escuelasgestionsocial.blogspot.com.ar/ More information about the Association of Schools of Social Administration in: http://escuelasgestionsocial.blogspot.com.ar/.