

IS THERE A SEMIPERIPHERAL TYPE OF SCHOOLING? State, Social Movements and Education in Spain, 1970-1994

XAVIER BONAL
XAVIER RAMBLA

Abstract - *This article applies the theory of semiperipheral societies developed by the Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Souza Santos to the Spanish educational system. It is argued that the characteristics of semiperipheral societies can be observed at work in Spain's school system. The article reviews the main educational developments and changes from Santos' theoretical perspectives, and concludes by arguing that this type of analysis might change the automatic transportation of theories produced in central countries to those of the periphery and semiperiphery. It is proposed that a shift in frameworks can be particularly useful in comparative studies in the Mediterranean region.*

Introduction

If we had to adopt Western standards in educational development as a benchmark or referent, then Spain appears to be behind its continental neighbours, and somewhat a 'late-comer'. A mass school system had not been set up until the seventies, a true state school system had not existed until the eighties, participation in school decision-making had not been defined until 1985, and a system for vocational and educational training is still practically non-existent. These shortcomings have been key issues as far as educational legislation is concerned. The General Educational Act (LGE) of 1970 started a new model of state involvement in education. The school system had been historically dominated by the Church. The LGE 1970 signalled the first step in a change of state intervention culture, aiming to universalise provision of eight years of compulsory education and to extend post-compulsory secondary education. After Franco's death in 1975, democratic governments had to set the conditions for participation. The inheritance of a strong private educational system raised a political right-left contention. In 1981 a right-wing act was passed defending absolute ideological autonomy of schools. When Socialists came into power in 1982, they repealed the act and passed a new one based on a public model of schooling (Act on the Right to Education, LODE 1985). These struggles have delayed curriculum change until the approval of the 1990 General Educational System Act (LOGSE).

A similar pattern of events can be observed when we look at different dimensions of Spanish social structure. Economic organisation, public services, family patterns, labour markets, social movements, and so on have only recently adopted models prevailing in Western countries (Miguélez & Prieto 1991; Maravall 1985; Espina 1989; Flaquer 1990). For this reason, many authors argue that Spain is a backward country that is trying to accelerate its modernisation process (Moreno & Sarasa 1993).

It is our view that these alleged shortcomings must be contextualised within a reality distinct from Western countries, the 'centre' from where sociology normally analyses the phenomena. Other views assert that elements constituting social structures are articulated in different ways in different states or regions. With respect to education, Green (1990), Dale (1989) and Ramírez & Boli (1987) are supporters of this thesis. They see educational systems and the role of the State as the product of specific historical processes which have salient differences in spite of partial similarities, and therefore cannot be simply compared quantitatively.

In this article we want to ask if some of the issues raised by authors like Tilly (1993), Malefakis (1992), Santos (1990a, 1990b, 1992), Stoer et al. (1990) or Correia et al. (1993), contribute meaningfully towards an analysis of state intervention in Spanish educational policy. These authors have tried to sketch a South European region in their consideration of features of social structure or forms of state intervention. More specifically, we want to focus on Santos' theory of semiperipheral social structures and on the related analysis of the educational system in Portugal by Stoer (1994).

The theory of semiperipheral societies applied to education

According to Santos (1992:109), semiperipheral societies are characterised by a significant articulated mismatch between production and social consumption, that is to say, consumption patterns are closer to central capitalist countries than is development of production. However, two factors enable society to cope with this mismatch. First of all, buffer groups in the social structure help meet the deficits of public provision. They fulfil the needs that markets and the state fulfil in other economies. For instance and with reference to the Spanish case, we can point out that women's domestic labour has played a key role in substituting welfare state provision; underground economy has complemented income in many areas and has helped many families to survive; and family support is necessary for small businesses, which represent one of the mainstays of the labour market.

State regulation has to be very wide in order to arbitrate these groups' decentralised and scarcely institutionalised practices (Santos 1990). That is, the State is central in social and economic regulation, even though its direct intervention in production or in service provision is very narrow. For instance, social legislation allows some private institutions to provide education, health or social services, but maintains a bureaucratic control over their organisation. The main consequence of such an articulated mismatch is that the state is internally strong because of its wide field of activities, but it is often weakened by its own regulation: due to the heterogeneity of its policies, its legitimation is continuously strained.

In summary, following Santos, we can argue that in semiperipheral societies the contradiction between accumulation and legitimation is more acute than in central societies. Where a strong state has to deal with many heterogeneous demands,¹

solutions to core problems of the capitalist state often became more contradictory because decisions setting accumulation conditions easily damage state legitimation.

Stoer et al. (1990), Correia et al. (1993), and Gomes (1994) draw on Santos' ideas when analysing the semiperipheral features of Portuguese educational system and policy. Thus far, this theory has not been applied to the Spanish case: however, some considerations allow us to think that similarities between Spain and Portugal can be analysed from the same theoretical perspective.

We could argue that the main mismatch pointed out by Santos can be translated into the educational field. The fact that the expansion of education and the economic crisis have taken place simultaneously in countries like Portugal, Spain or Greece, may explain the mismatch between educational 'production' (provision) and 'consumption' (demand) (Gomes 1994). In the case of Spain this can be observed in the surplus of students at the higher education level or in the inefficiency of the grant system to guarantee the continuity of eligible students (Clero 1993). The mismatch is also noticeable at other educational levels. For instance, although female activity rates are increasing (Espina 1989) - and therefore, so is demand for infant schooling - there is a lack of nurseries to facilitate it. Besides, although many teenagers leave school at sixteen or seventeen (Casal, Masjuan & Planas 1991), there is not a complete vocational education and training system for them.

Buffer groups make it possible to cope with this mismatch. Family networks take care of children or unemployed teenagers and family economies have to pay for indirect costs of higher education. That is one of the reasons why increasingly youngsters leave home later in life (Casal 1994).

As Santos (1990) suggests, in spite of deficits in educational provision, the state is able to manage the legitimation crisis through the production of legal measures. For instance, the state allows the private sector and local governments (which are not legally in charge) to provide infant schooling or youth training schemes. That is, the state is able to transfer educational provision to other actors when it cannot meet the demands. This type of educational policy broadens state regulation but moves it away from managing the final delivery of its service. Therefore, internal contradictions in educational policy-making are especially acute. For instance, the Act on the Right to Education (LODE 1985) had to standardise school organisation although half of the schools belonged to the private sector (Boix & García 1985). Similarly, the hiring of teachers remains very bureaucratic and centralised (Gimeno Sacristán 1995), whereas school autonomy has increased.

Stoer et al. (1990) and Bonal (1995) have shown how these internal contradictions lead to a specific logic of curriculum policy-making. Stoer et al. (1990) draw on Fritzell's (1987) arguments about the education-production correspondence to make a case that negative correspondence is more likely to pattern curriculum policy in semiperipheral societies. That is, due to legitimation problems, the state relies on structural autonomy and promotes democratic values more than industrial values. Bonal (1995) extends this thesis to the analysis of the last Spanish educational reform, arguing how expressive contents are particularly meaningful in curriculum change.

The specificities of educational policy in a semiperipheral social formation: the case of Spain

In this section we try to sketch an explanation of the way in which Santos' arguments can be applied to an analysis of the recent history of Spanish educational system. It is our view that this historical approach has to introduce the role of agents in order to grasp the formation, the evolution and the consequences of semiperipheral contradictions in educational policy-making. In Giddens' terms (1993), we want to focus on the structuration of educational policy-making, considering both agents and structures. The interplay between agents and structures crystallises in what Dale (1989) refers to as the 'mandate' of an educational system. A mandate is an action programme establishing what is desirable and legitimate to expect from an educational system. At a certain moment, a specific mandate of an educational system is simultaneously shaped by the former mandate, the demands emerging from agents and through the social structure. This interplay fixes the limits of what is achievable and what is not in educational policy-making. In a semiperipheral state such as Spain, the ascendance of the state has become quite relevant, since it has imposed its own dynamics over the link between mandates and contradictions, and has even succeeded - at least temporarily - to model agents pressing over educational policy.

In the recent period of Spanish history several mandates have co-existed, but one of them has tended to predominate. Four periods may be distinguished in relation to the interplay between mandates, contradictions and agents.

The 1970 - 1977 mandate

From 1970 to 1977 the late Francoist governments tried to re-define the mandate of the educational system in Spain. Since 1857 there had not been an Education act. The old mandate had just required educating élites and keeping the masses ignorant, because their literacy was openly perceived as a threat (De Puelles 1986). Some internal (migrations, baby-boom, emergence of technocratic élites) and external (agreement with EEC, foreign investment, tourism) factors provoked the need to legislate on many areas, one of them being education. The new mandate implied, therefore, a formal divide in Spanish history: *it aimed to set conditions for meritocratic reproduction*. Thus new technocratic élites could reproduce their positions and the external image of the régime was improved.

Such a change in the political agenda of Francoism highlighted a *contradiction* that already existed due to the increasing number of students in universities (Lerena 1986). All of a sudden, the élitist educational system that could not manage massified universities declared it would provide equal opportunities for everybody. The consequence was that expectations were enhanced whereas participation was not allowed and facilities were not provided. Perception of deficits was automatically multiplied as neither primary schooling was guaranteed nor was massified University

helped. And what is more, the old monopoly of religious private schools, being based on the accepted and provoked shortcomings of the state system, was challenged.

Mandate	Structural Contradictions	Main Agents
Building a meritocratic educational system	Raising expectations vs. Low participation and poor facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technocratic political élites - Religious private sector - Fragmentary anti-Francoist opposition
Democratisation of access to education (cost-free public education, building schools, conditions for participation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Previous mandate + - Low participation - Unchanging teachers working conditions - Ideology of economic restrictions 	Institutionalisation of demands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Right represents the interests of the religious private sector - The Left absorbs demands from community associations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement of the public sector by organising and broadening it - Modernising the educational system according to European standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-involvement of 'industrial trainers' in educational policy - The existence of a dual educational system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Religious and private élitist schools - Nationalistic political parties and other sectors - Teachers' Union demands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curriculum change - Excellence - New concept of citizenship: an individualistic model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low prestige of VET - Scarce resources - Democratic deficits - Bureaucratic assessment vs. de-regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers against labour conditions - Students against <i>numerus clausus</i> - Discreet involvement of new social movements in education

Of course, implementation of LGE has oscillated from side to side during the twenty years when it has been the basic scheme of the Spanish educational system.

The interests of three main agents - namely, political élites, the Church and opposition movements - should be taken into account in order to understand why a true counter-reform was launched between 1971 to 1977. With respect to political élites, it can be suggested that state auto-rationalisation had begun in 1959, when

economic policy had been orientated in line with the OECD pattern. Free exchange rates and wider economic liberalisation eroded the basis over which the Financial Aristocracy had reconstructed its Ancien Régime hegemony in Spain (Moya 1975: 93-119). A new bureaucratic élite was born and consolidated around the Catholic movement called *Opus Dei*. Substitution of old factions supporting Francoism (the Party, pro-aristocratic Catholics, and the military) in Ministries, and aristocratic surnames in the main boards of directors, attained its peak by 1970. At first LGE aimed to broaden this new rationalistic legitimation.²

However, the aims of LGE were not accomplished because resources were diverted and potential support was eroded. Actually, its early implementation consisted of transferring huge subsidies to religious private schools in order to make sure that universal schooling could in fact be provided despite the lack of attention and resources accorded to the public system. Some pro-Church politicians negotiated this arrangement, although Catholic political dissent was notable. Furthermore, some university professors and school teachers withdrew political reformist pressure after the first legal developments (Subirats 1974).³

Social movements increasingly exerted pressure but they failed to constitute a coordinated nation-wide platform. In the educational field social movements drew their strength from three sources, namely the professional class, the working-class, and community associations. But these found expression in a middle class, professionalised movement and a working-class suburb-based movement. The first had its roots in Catalonia and Euskadi, where the middle-classes turned to the school in order to ensure new and academic ways to guarantee social and cultural reproduction (Subirats 1975). The second one remained restricted to a local context, where educational and labour demands often merged (Balfour 1990).

In summary, during this mandate the state was able to define a formally meritocratic educational system, but it could not implement it fully because structural contradictions and fragmentary societal demands restricted what was actually achievable.

The 1978 - 1982 mandate

A second period can be distinguished between 1978 to 1982. This is the first democratic period, also known as the phase of political transition. The new mandate tried to *respond to former contradictions without substantially changing either the structure of the system or the curriculum*. The 1978 Moncloa Agreement between parliamentary parties (Socialists and Communists who represented trade unions as well) defined educational policy as one of the main instruments leading to an equitable distribution of the burden of economic crisis (Bas 1978). Specifically, the mandate could be summarised by stating that educational policy was entrusted to bridge the gap between the LGE of 1970 and actual policy ever since. The main agenda in educational politics was an ambitious construction programme since several schools

had to be built if access to education was to be democratised

Naturally, the same contradictions highlighted by the late Francoist counter-reform were salient during the period of political transition. But new contradictions emerged too. Firstly, although participation was now not only allowed but also proclaimed, its range and intensity did not increase dramatically (Fdez. Enguita 1993). Secondly, some professional demands - such as teachers' claim for increased status, or young university teachers' lobby consisting of demands about labour conditions and pedagogy - were delayed because Socialist parliamentary opposition blocked the Centrist government project for university autonomy (*Ley de Autonomía Universitaria*: LAU, 1981) and also eroded its act on school organisation (*Ley Orgánica de Estatuto de Centros Educativos*: LOECE, 1981) (De Puelles 1986). Thirdly, perception of deficits was institutionalised and simultaneously counteracted by official discourse on the grounds of restricting expenditure in times of crisis.

Pluralism was adopted in educational policy-making, thus redefining the role of agents. Both bureaucratic élites and the Church configured their interests in the new *Unión de Centro Democrático*, the party backing the government. Parliamentary opposition, on the other hand, recruited a generation of younger politicians with the goal of developing a new cadre of professional élites and in the hope of striking a new deal with the Church. Thus the school-building programme and the debate on organisational structures contributed towards the consolidation of new institutional actors. Socialists and Communists were instrumental in channelling social movement demands into this debate, one embracing health and housing as well as education. They convinced the unions that it was important to reach an agreement on these issues, and they co-opted leaders of the community associations movement into local governments. In some ways they absorbed forces from civil society so as to make the agreement possible.

As a consequence, de-mobilisation followed the institutionalisation of demands (Subirats 1988; Lope et al. 1989) and a vague consciousness of consensus became a key but weak element of civic culture (Pérez Díaz 1991b). It can be concluded that 'consensus', the main motto of political discourse during those years, gave rise to a 'silencer effect' (Orti 1989). In Catalonia, for instance, the silencer effect may have relied on the split between locally-based demands on the one hand, and the debate on ethnicity on the other. After 1978 schools and primary health care centres became established to such an extent that popular expectations were quantitatively met, and the suburbs had obtained facilities they lacked. On the other hand, 1979 elections for the *Generalitat* autonomous Government galvanised a debate on ethnicity that consolidated a Catalan national consciousness. Political autonomy, abolished by Francoism after the Republic, had been a symbol for all political opposition movements, starting from those defending the immigrants' social rights to those defending Catalan political rights. In education as in other fields, working-class and community association movements accepted the idea of political autonomy although it was not their priority. After the 1978 Agreement and the 1979 election a double-sided

definition of ethnicity became hegemonic. Whereas Catalonia was homogeneously perceived as an oppressed nation within Spain, the meaning of its symbols merged with the perception of social inequalities in the Catalan context (Woolard 1989). In this way, the abstract definition of ethnicity became the mark of nationhood and social rights were relegated.

We can conclude that democratisation of access was restricted to some quantitative issues during this mandate. Internal qualitative contradictions of schooling became salient and civil society was broken up by political parties.

The 1982 -1985 mandate

From 1982 to 1985 the new Socialist government brought about a significant change in Spanish education policy. The Socialists had already announced, during the Centrist legislature, their intention to repeal the Schools Administration Act (LOECE) passed in 1981. With the new legislature, Right and Left positions concerning educational policy were more rigidly defined than before. While the Right centred its discourse on school choice and an ideology of autonomy for private schools (even for those subsidised by the State), Socialists were basically supporters of the principle of equality of opportunity and of compensatory policies, and were especially involved in the development of a new education act meant to consolidate the public education sector as well as parental involvement in school administration.

Over and above such goals, educational policy had to start responding to the deep changes in economy and production. An efficient policy was necessary to modernise curricula and to improve teacher training, thus developing a better education system, one that was in synchrony with new societal demands.

Thus, during this period, the education policy mandate was shaped by the need to compensate for historical inequalities between private and public schools, but the educational system also had to avoid obsolescence, and to be closer to European educational systems (Maravall 1985). Equality and excellence appeared as two simultaneous needs, ones that were in perpetual tension due to a poor educational budget.

But contradictions inside and outside the educational system made it very difficult to attain both goals. Excellence was a rather difficult objective for educational policy to achieve because there were no historical links with the production system. Besides, the very existence of a dual education system and the inheritance of a culture of school-choice among the middle-classes constrained the state's attempts to unify criteria and to broaden the public sector. The political struggle over the Right to Education Act (LODE 1985) illustrates the resistance that private schools could put up to guard themselves against loss of privileges. It was impossible to bring about any curriculum change before implementing a compensatory policy to correct historical inequalities. In this process of struggle, the

ministry had to deal with different interests embodied by different agents. The Church and private élitist schools centred their demands against State interventionism on school ideology. The focus of the struggle was located on the school owner's freedom to hire and fire teachers depending on how close they were to the school ideology and practices. But the Socialist government also had to deal with another private school sector (CEPEPC) - a progressive one, born in Catalonia as an alternative to the national schools during Francoism - whose demands for moving into the public system had not yet been met.

On the other hand, the demands on the part of nationalist parties and other non-public educational organisations for the decentralisation of educational competencies added other difficulties to the development of a uniform policy in favour of equity (Boix & Garcia 1985).

In a context of insufficient funding, a compensatory policy could only be addressed by taking money away from one educational sector and allocating it to the public sector. This zero sum game was in fact played out in part, and at the cost of private suburban schools, which almost disappeared during the eighties. But it did not affect church schools or those of the secular bourgeoisie (Mayoral 1989).

The consolidation of the public educational sector also had to face teachers' demands on labour conditions. Non-civil servant teachers (PNN) - who had begun their struggle in the late seventies - became a huge problem in the early eighties. At the same time, decentralisation processes put pressure on the State in terms of maintaining the same wage level for all Spanish teachers, including those working in regions with full competences on education budget allocations (Iriso 1990). This process became particularly acute in Catalonia after 1987, since many teachers decided to leave their work places when knowledge of the Catalan language became a prerequisite for teaching in primary schools. Having left their work places, they were also losing some acquired privileges, since Catalan teachers had won a salary increase after 1987.

To summarise, in the 1982-85 period, the conflictual interests of different agents collided in the discussion of the very controversial Right to Education Act (LODE). Here, the goal of educational equality of opportunity was, for the first time, an objective of educational policy. But this goal implied severe political costs to different social groups. Religious private schools, secular and progressive private schools, Parents' Associations, regional governments of Teachers' Unions: all of these had different interests and problems within the educational system. The very different reactions of these sectors during and after the passing of the 1985 LODE shows how impossible it is for the State to go beyond the content of the Act to move in the direction of a more Left-wing educational policy. Thus a mandate aiming to find a balance between equity and excellence ran into difficulties mainly due to a low correspondence between education and production, and due to resistance from the private sector. Moreover, labour and nationalistic demands entered into the political agenda.⁴

The 1985 - 1994 mandate

The State faced two challenges during the more recent period, 1985-1994. On the one hand, the State had to restructure the educational system in response to different pressures. Among these one can mention internal decentralisation, European convergence of educational systems, and the implementation of LODE, all of which compelled the State to introduce changes in compulsory schooling and school administration. On the other hand, a curriculum change was particularly urgent. Schools were still under the 1970 General Education Act. Everything was out of date in terms of textbooks, knowledge areas, teacher training programmes, teachers' expectations and mobility, the vocational/academic division, and so on.

These two main challenges have modelled the new mandate of educational policy for the last decade. The state has had to change the structure and the content of the educational system. The most important word in current official discourse is quality of education. Actually, after the failure of Savary's Act in France (Weiler 1989), Socialists learnt to focus on quality instead of equity.

The new mandate concentrated on excellence in educational provision as a means to achieve European competitiveness and also as a means to guarantee individual development. In this period there is a turn towards a new concern for citizenship. The 'social group' loses ascendance in the discourse in favour of the rights and duties of 'individuals,' both as a vehicle for national development and in terms of developing personal potential.

A process culminating with the approval of the 1990 Educational Reform Act (LOGSE) bears witness to the constraints and contradictions which surround the project, and which determine both content and conditions for the implementation of the educational reform.

The contradictions that prevail in the implementation of the new mandate are internal and external to the education system. On the one hand, technical and vocational education has had neither the social status nor the public attention that academic education has enjoyed. Therefore, the 'new vocationalist' policy is used more as a tool for state legitimisation than as a direct response to productive needs (Bonal 1995).

Another problem concerns resources: although LOGSE declares educational expenditure must attain European levels, actual budgets do not (Gárzon & Recio 1992).

Thirdly, the Spanish educational system still has enormous democratic deficiencies which are directly translated into social pressures on the field of educational policy-making. It is therefore difficult for the State to speak in terms of excellence of secondary schooling, since this sector has never been a compulsory or a comprehensive one. It is also difficult for the State to promote efficiency measures in school management and administration within a very bureaucratic mode of school

assessment and inspection, or to develop a more democratic system of school participation (through school councils⁵ included in LODE) whilst encouraging a more enterprise-run culture of school management. Actually, after the 1985 LODE, parental involvement in schools has been a complete failure. Thus, barely ten years later, the first draft of the new act on participation and quality places the responsibility for school administration in the hands of headteachers (MEC, 1994).

Finally, contradictions can also be identified in curricular aspects, and this mainly due to the low correspondence between education and production. Post-Fordist policies lose coherence when considering what labour places are available after vocational training. Contradictions are also located in curriculum decisions. Deregulation only operates at the level of curriculum decisions and practices whilst the State keeps a bureaucratic culture to assess teachers and schools (Gimeno Sacristán 1995).

Concerning agents, only hypotheses can be advanced at this moment because, to our knowledge, there are no sociological analyses available on this issue. Certainly, demands exist, but they are fragmentary. The 1990 Educational Reform Act (LOGSE) is supported by a wide consensus in comparison to LODE. The only protest came from the Church and the Catholic Parents Associations, who were against the exclusion of religion as a compulsory subject in the curriculum.

Teachers launched a strike in 1989 claiming better wages and improved labour conditions in reaction to a policy favouring their economic proletarianisation. Students' movements protested against *numerus clausus* regulating access to university. In 1987 they launched another strike against this measure and the protest led to the resignation of the minister. Very particularised conflicts - such as claims against cuts of posts for philosophy teachers in secondary education, or struggles between short-term (*diplomatura*) and long-term (*licenciatura*) professional bodies - are spreading. On the other hand, new social movements have not been very effective in influencing educational policy, or, more specifically curriculum development. Feminist and environmentalist concerns do feature in curricula, but it is difficult to judge the extent to which this is a consequence of pressures from social movements. Moreover, feminist issues have been promoted through institutionalised channels.

However, this segmentation of interests might be overcome as long as civil society realises that LOGSE goals are not met due to budget cuts and delays. *Comisiones Obreras*, one of the main teachers' unions, has campaigned for a new financial act for the educational system. At the same time, there have been since 1994 a number of demonstrations by parents, teachers and students demanding a true implementation of LOGSE.

In summary, although the educational mandate has shifted from equality to quality, similar structural contradictions remain. This time, the state had regulated and contained both Right-wing and Left-wing demands, but potential dissent is noticeable among fragmentary and newly institutionalised interlocutors.

Conclusion

Educational policy must be analysed within a broader context that must be defined on theoretical grounds. In this article we have tried to point out the main features of schooling and educational policy in Spain. It is our view that the 'backwardness approach' should be avoided in order to grasp the specificities of a semiperipheral social formation. That implies taking both structural properties and the agents' role into account. Two concepts must therefore be related when analysing a semiperipheral type of schooling: mandate and contradictions influence agents, and conversely agents may raise recursive effects on mandate and contradictions.

Two main conclusions can be stated. First of all, our historical analysis of the Spanish system from 1970 to 1994 has shown the progressive structuring of a public school sector. However, in contrast with central countries, it is a semiperipheral type of schooling because it entails a significant gap between aspirations and provision. Although facilities were provided between 1978 and 1985, remaining qualitative and quantitative deficits have continued to produce structural contradictions. For this reason, Spanish schooling relies on buffer groups, has not been subjected to strong regulation, and keeps a low correspondence with the production system.

Secondly, legitimation through educational policy-making has been confronted with newly institutionalised and very fragmentary demands. The public-private contention has been especially acute between 1970 and 1985, this being the core political issue. With respect to the other demands, the eighties have witnessed the segmentation of the previous anti-Francoist consensus: teachers struggle for improved labour conditions, student movements protest against *numerus clausus*, a number of private secular schools struggle to become state schools, regions make nationalistic demands for decentralisation, and so on. This kind of pressure has compelled the State to deal with many legitimation problems, and to institutionalise interlocutors for negotiation.

These two points contribute to an understanding of the semiperipheral nature of Spanish schooling. Similarities with other Mediterranean countries' could make comparison worthwhile for theoretical and empirical reasons.

Notes

¹ Certainly, every state deals with heterogeneous demands (Dale 1989), but demands are even more heterogeneous in semiperipheral states because the social structure is much more fragmentary (Santos 1990a).

² We support this thesis instead of an alternative one stating that counter-reform can be explained simply by arguing that internationally homologated educational policy foundered because a weak industrial capitalist fraction had not enough strength to back it (Bozal & Paramio 1975). Agents disappear in this deterministic view since it implies that a necessary process of modernisation is halted because one of its alleged necessary conditions is not fulfilled.

³ In fact the church found itself in an ironic situation. On the one hand, state religious confession and generous educational subsidies show that the Church was at the height of its hegemonic power. On the other hand, however and simultaneously, many clerics were questioning 'their own' Church's triumph by pointing out that young people, workers and non-Castilian citizens had been ignored (Pérez Díaz 1991a), and that

the key educational issues raised by these categories had not been dealt with by the LGE.

⁴ Educational policy during this period might have provided an appropriate context for the take-off of the public education sector. However, more qualitative goals linked to the development of a policy favouring equality of opportunity and including reforms of curricula and of vocational education - were not met. The fact that 'industrial trainers' were not involved in educational policy-making - especially in vocational education - did not contribute at all to substitute obsolete content and pedagogical methods. Qualitative changes did take place in the university sector. The University went through a process of nationalisation, with departments being run by elected directors rather than personal chairs, and market-based degrees set up, for instance. Paradoxically however, access to the non-university sector remained quite undemocratic. Neither was this sector marked by an improvement in quality.

⁵ School councils are the main decision-making bodies at the school level. Teachers, parents, local government and pupils are represented.

Xavier Bonal is a graduate of Economics (UAB, 1978). He holds a PhD in Sociology from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), and lectures in Sociology of Education and Social Structure in the Department of Sociology at the UAB. He is currently research director of the GRECS (Research Group in Education, Culture and Society) at the Institute of Education (UAB).

Xavier Rambla is a graduate of Contemporary History (UAB, 1989) and of Sociology (UAB, 1991). He obtained his PhD in Sociology in 1995 (UAB). He is currently a lecturer in Methodology in the Department of Sociology at the UAB and a researcher with the GRECS (Research Group in Education, Culture and Society at the Institute of Education UAB). Address for correspondence: Department of Sociology, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Bellaterra (Barcelona) Spain. Tel: (3) 5811784; Fax: (3) 5812007.

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