

## Part 1

# Comparative Education & History of Education

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## Jullien: Founding Father of Comparative and International Education Still Pointing the Way

### Abstract

The aim of this paper is to conduct such an appraisal of Jullien's ideas and vision, as a guiding light for the future development of the field in the twenty-first century world. The paper commences with a brief biographical sketch of the life of Jullien, followed by his vision for the field. This vision is then placed within the context of the pre-history and history of the field up to today. After Jullien the field of Comparative Education was at first side-tracked by the rise of nation-states, and the field tended to serve rather narrow national interests. However, a series of wide-changing societal changes are taking place in the twenty-first century globalised world. A global education expansion and reform project is taking-off as a response to these changes. The field of Comparative Education is superseded by Comparative and International Education, and with the vision of Jullien, this field has the promise to inform that international project in pursuing its objective of creating a more humane world.

Keywords: Comparative Education, Comparative and International Education, globalisation, Jullien, twenty-first century

### Introduction

It is this year 200 years ago that Marc-Antoine Jullien published his book, in which he coined the term "Comparative Education". This publication or "Plan" as it is affectionately colloquially called by Comparative Education scholars, charted a way for the development of the scholarly field of Comparative Education. Jullien is widely hailed as the "father of Comparative Education". After two centuries of vigorous growth, the field stands today before a rapidly changing world, facing new challenges. As the time is apt to re-question the direction and purpose of the field, a re-assessment of the value and relevance of Jullien's vision for Comparative Education appears to be a potentially meaningful exercise. The aim of this paper is to conduct such an appraisal of Jullien's ideas and vision, as a guiding light for the future development of the field in the twenty-first century world. The paper commences with a brief biographical sketch of the life of Jullien, followed by his vision for the field. This vision is then placed within the context of the pre-history and history of the field up to today. The purpose of the field, as contended by comparativists is then surveyed, as are the main trends in contemporary world. In this world, the value of Jullien's vision for the future evolution of the field of Comparative Education is spelled out.

### **Marc-Antoine Jullien (1775-1848): Biographical sketch**

Jullien hailed from a middle-bourgeoise family, active in the politics of the day. Two shaping influences on his life and views were his education and the political events of his age, in which he participated actively. He entered the Collège Navarre in 1785. Here his thoughts were shaped by learning about a diverse number of intellectual streams: the philosophers of the Enlightenment who assured him of the perfectibility of the humanity, of the interior voice of conscience and of the exigencies of reason; and the Encyclopedists convinced him of the continual progress and virtues of the sciences (Gautherin, 2000). He lived through the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, the restoration of 1815 and the 1830 revolution. In these he took active part. He served in the Diplomatic Corps (was being sent to London by the Marquis de Condorcet) as from 1792, then joined the military and, then formed part of the government of Robespierre. He broke with Robespierre and after a spell of journalism went to Italy to become a scribe in the Army of Italy. Subsequently he was part of Napoleon's invasion of Egypt (1798) but later he opposed Napoleon, for which he was imprisoned. He lived through the restoration of the monarchy (1815), and spent his last years publishing political and scholarly journals.

While in the employ of Napoleon he was sent to Italy in 1810, and passed through Yverdon in Switzerland, where he became acquainted with the education reformer Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827). Jullien sent his first three sons to the well-known experimental school of Pestalozzi in Yverdon. Pestalozzi is widely regarded as the starting point of modern pedagogy, in that he substituted experimentation for tradition in classroom practice (Duggan, 1916). Pestalozzi also contended, along many of his preceding and contemporary reformers, that the purpose of education was to bring about a reformed society. But unlike most these reformers, he maintained that this could only be accomplished when every individual has been properly educated. Thus he pleaded for universal education, but with a motive different from the religious reformers.

As could be expected from his occupation as journalist, Jullien was a prolific writer, and a long list of publications, on the politics of his day, and on education, came from his pen. Among the education writings, Fraser (1964, pp. 8-9) regards the following two, both published in 1810, as significant: *Essai général d'éducation physique, morale et intellectuelle, suivi d'un plan d'éducation pratique pour l'enfance, l'adolescence et la jeunesse, ou Recherches sur les principes et les bases de l'éducation* (General Essay of Physical, Moral, and Intellectual Education: Following a Practical Plan of Education for Infants, Adolescents, and Youth, or Researches on the Principles and Bases of Education) and *Essai sur l'emploi du temps, ou Méthode qui a pour objet de bien régler l'emploi du temps* (Essay on the Employment of Time).

### **Jullien's vision for Comparative Education**

What he is best remembered for, however, at least in the field of Comparative and International Education, is his *Esquisse et vues préliminaires d'un ouvrage sur l'éducation comparée* (Plan and preliminary views for a work on Comparative Education), published in three articles during 1816-1817, and as a fifty six page

pamphlet in 1817. Jullien's book consisted in two parts. The first part proposed and motivated the establishment of an international commission on education to collect data on the education of many countries, by means of a questionnaire. Such a commission would analyze and classify this data, and on the basis thereof make recommendations as to how to improve education, and establish a multilingual journal to disseminate educational research. The second part of Jullien's book presents an extensive sample of such a questionnaire. Jullien believed that governments all over Europe in his day were concerned with the reform and improvement of education, but were ignorant in matters of education. It was a matter of indicating the means of satisfying this need in the surest, most efficient and prompt manner. Jullien proposed his plan as a means towards this end. Further, being an expert of the ideas of the French Enlightenment, Jullien believed ignorance led to the conflict and turmoil of his age (French Revolution, Napoleonic Wars) and he saw a solution in education.

### **Comparative Education: Historical evolution of the field and the place of Jullien**

In the historical evolution of Comparative Education seven phases should not be seen as seven sequential and mutually exclusive phases; one following the previous. They should rather be seen as a progressive broadening and expansion of Comparative Education; i.e. of the aims of Comparative Education, of the relevance of Comparative Education, the content of Comparative Education, the themes under study, and of the methods of Comparative Education:

#### *Phase 1: A phase of travellers' tales; since times immemorial*

As these travellers' tales of the education practices of foreign societies and cultures are mostly incidental, cursoric and not at all scientifically done, this phase could be regarded as a prescientific phase of Comparative Education.

#### *Phase 2: A phase of the systematic study of foreign education systems for borrowing; since approximately 1830*

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, mostly government officials began to undertake comprehensive studies education systems and educational developments in foreign countries, with the goal to borrow best ideas, methods, insights and practices; i.e. to import them to improve their own education systems back home. These developments could be understood against the backdrop of the rise of national states in the countries of Western Europe and Northern America at this time, and the establishment of national education systems of primary education in the states, as part of the national project of state and nation formation. Though comprehensive, these studies of foreign education systems generally do not comply to the rigours of scientific scholarship. Often, on the basis of pre-conceived ideas, beliefs and prejudices, rather than on the basis of evidence, some systems and practices were declared better than others. Comparative Education was still in a pre-scientific stage.

#### *Phase 3: A phase of international cooperation, since 1925*

It was at this time when Jullien appeared on the stage, pleading for a scholarly endeavour of "Comparative Education" (he coined the term) serving the interest of humanity rather than narrow national ends. While he had no influence in the world

of his day, in the twentieth century got underway his ideals were realised in a variety of ways. These include International Organisations (such as UNESCO), International Institutes of Education Research (such as Institute of Education, University of London, or the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education, OISE, University of Toronto), professional Comparative Education societies, conferences and journals, and studies international in scope (such as those of the International Association of Education Achievement, IEA).

*Phase 4: A “factors and forces” phase, since about 1930*

This was a phase when (national) education systems were studied as the outcome of (national) contextual forces, a phase which reached its zenith in the inter-war decades, a phase and paradigm chiming-in with the rise of nationalism and of nation-states in parts of Europe.

*Phase 5: A social science phase, since approximately 1960*

In this phase, which gathered momentum in post-war Europe and North-America, attempts were made to turn Comparative Education in a full-blown social science. In these decades there was a wide-spread belief in the power of education as total panacea for all societal ills.

*Phase 6: A phase of heterodoxy, since about 1970*

This was the phase of paradigm wars, the main fault lines between the equilibrium paradigms (such as human capital theory, structural functionalism and modernisation theory) and the conflict paradigms.

*Phase 7: A phase of heterogeneity, since approximately 1990*

This was a phase of a proliferation of the number and variety of paradigms making up the field.

To summarise, while Jullien formulated a lofty vision for the field, and laid the basis for a science of Comparative Education (the two phases prior to his time were pre-scientific phases) his ideas and vision only came into fruition in the twentieth century. On top of that Comparative Education first went into a phase of remission (“factors and forces” stage) and went into a meandering course (fixation with paradigms) which distracted attention from the mission identified by Jullien.

## **The aims and purposes of Comparative Education; and the vision of Jullien**

Scholars and practitioners of Comparative Education list the aims and purposes of the field under the following rubrics (*cf.* Wolhuter, 2014, pp. 32-35):

- Description: The most basic utility of Comparative Education is to describe education systems/learning communities, within their societal contexts in order to satisfy the yearning for knowledge which is *sui-generis* part of human nature.
- Understanding/interpretation/explanation: On the next plane Comparative Education also satisfies the need to understand: education systems in learning communities are explained or understood from surrounding contextual forces which shape them.
- Evaluation: Thirdly, Comparative Education serves to evaluate education systems the own education system as well as universal evaluation of education systems.

- Application:
  - educational planning: Comparative Education is also used to design a new education system, to plan education, and to reform education systems;
  - teaching practice: Recently there have appeared a number of publications proclaiming the value (or potential value) of Comparative Education in assisting the teacher to improve his/her teaching practice (e.g. *cf.* Planel, 2008);
  - in other fields of Educational study: Comparative Education is also of use to other fields of Educational scholarship (and even beyond, to related fields of social sciences), e.g. for Philosophy of Education, Comparative Education offers a show-case of the track record of the implementation of various philosophies of education in particular places at particular times in history;
  - furthering the philanthropic ideal: Serving and improving the state of humanity: the original inspiration source of the scholarly field of Comparative Education, the philanthropic ideal of the time of Jullien, remains the most noble cause of Comparative Education.

So while Comparative Education is called upon to perform a wide range of functions, these reach their zenith in the philanthropic ideal, a vision of the field first formulated by Jullien.

### **The current world and the metamorphosis of Comparative Education to Comparative and International Education**

Conspicuous societal trends of the current era are the environmental crisis, the scientific and technological revolution (of which an important part is the information and communications technology or ICT revolution), economic growth and increasing affluence on the one hand, on the other persistent economic inequalities, the rise of knowledge economies, the neo-liberal economic revolution, democratisation, the rise of the Creed of Human Rights, the demise of the once omnipotent nation-state and the movement of the locus of control into two opposite directions: upwards towards supra-national and international structures and downwards towards sub-national and local structures and eventually to the level of the individual, the decline in importance of primary (family) and secondary (workplace) social groupings and the rise in importance of tertiary (functional) social groupings, the rise of multicultural societies, the empowerment of minority groups, and the religious-spiritual and values revolutions (*cf.* Steyn & Wolhuter, 2008).

A combination of the above factors firstly underscored the value of education in contemporary society, and secondly resulted in a massive global education expansion project, which got off the ground since the middle of the twentieth century and which is continuing today unabatedly. Globally, higher education enrolments for example increased from 6 317 million in 1950 to 28 084 million in 1970 to 88 613 in 1990 to 180 207 in 2010. Globally secondary education enrolment ratios rose from 13 percent in 1950 to 36 percent in 1970 to 52 percent in 1990 to 70 percent in 2010.

With a global education expansion project rolling forward and with education being looked up to play an important part in the evolving global society of the twentieth century (such as ensuring global peace, or eradicating global economic inequalities), there is a growing contention that Comparative Education should be superseded by Comparative and International Education. International Education is

used as explained by Phillips & Schweisfurth (2014, p. 60), namely that International Education refers to scholarship studying education through a lens bringing an international perspective. With the scholarly field of Comparative Education then evolving into Comparative and International Education, the idea is that single/limited area studies and comparisons then eventually feed the all-encompassing, global study of the international education project.

## Conclusion

While Jullien coined the term “Comparative Education”, and while he laid the basis for a science of Comparative Education, his lofty vision for the field was side-tracked and for long the field was practised in a paradigm — though not entirely devoid of merits — standing in the service of narrowly national interests more than serving humanity. In a twenty-first century globalised world of economic changes, rising affluence, the rise of knowledge economies, democratisation and individualisation, the rise of the Creed of Human Rights, wide-ranging social changes and ecological challenges, a global education expansion project is taking form, as a response to these challenges. It is in this context that the field of Comparative and International Education, shooting like a supernova out of Comparative Education, is currently appearing, and with the vision of Jullien, can be a field of scholarship informing an international education project which will rise to the occasion, to create a more humane world.

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