

The Philosophy of Education within and for Initial Teacher Education¹

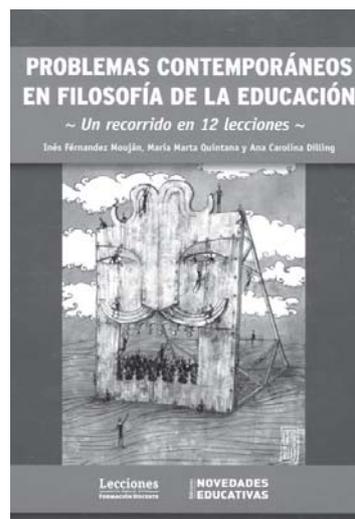
María Cristina Sarasa²

Brief review of the work by Fernández Mouján, I., Quintana, M. M., and Dilling, A. C. (2014). *Contemporary Problems in the Philosophy of Education. A 12-Lesson Journey*. Buenos Aires-Mexico: Novedades Educativas).

This book by Inés Fernández Mouján, María Marta Quintana, and Ana Carolina Dilling (2014) is titled *Contemporary Problems in the Philosophy of Education. A 12-Lesson Journey*. The authors work in the fields of philosophy and education as teachers and researchers at the State Universities of Buenos Aires and Rio Negro, Argentina. The Prologue to this edition is by Daniel Freixas, who—on the one hand—underlines the well-grounded ways through which the *12-lesson journey* conceives philosophy and education, while—on the other—discloses interrelated in-between spaces for reflection and practice.

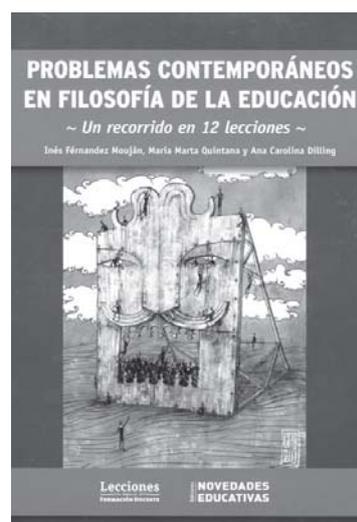
Contemporary Problems in the Philosophy of Education is part of the series *Lessons for Teacher Education* by Novedades Educativas Publishing House. The collection aims precisely at charting a course along different subjects in the curriculum for initial teacher education, although its contents will surely interest a wider readership. The quality and the originality of Gabriel Ramírez's illustrations for the cover and the opening engravings for each of the twelve chapters are worth noticing.

In the Introduction to their work, Fernández Mouján, Quintana, and Dilling underscore the articulation of philosophy and education within in-between spaces, thus avoiding the dangers of distance and polarization,



problematizing the blurred edges between them both. The book is explicitly destined to teachers during their initial education (although, as already stated, it merits a larger audience). In spite of its subtitle, the work does not want to impart lessons but to pose questions precisely in order to embark on a reflective route concerning big—and also small for that matter—issues. The authors outline the four parts into which their volume is organized, which—in turn—are the backbone of their approach, along with their readers', to the twelve lessons. Each chapter offers encounters with different authors, interweaving connecting threads. Each lesson ends with the bibliographical references—with authors clearly identified previously within the main body of the text. There follow guides for different activities, such as analyzing a given quote, examining one or more of the referenced authors in depth, referring to other writers, watching a video on the Internet or a fiction films in order to reflect and reconstruct—among other proposed types of complex creative thinking suggested.

The first part attempts an understanding of the philosophy of education, overcoming the thought—experience dichotomy in four lessons. The titles for all the twelve chapters perfectly sum up their contents and approaches. Lesson 1 “The initial question: philosophy and/or education? Philosophy as ‘philosophy and education’” clearly surmounts their disciplinary split. Lesson 2 “The philosophy of education as practical philosophy: education and subjectivity” envisions the philosophy of education as, naturally, a *philosophical* and theoretical action and education as a social discursive activity. Lesson 3 “Education as a political issue: tensions between novelty and repetition; liberty and education in anarchism” offers a problematizing historical approach, repositioning education as a critical practice that necessitates philosophy. Lesson 4 “Thought and experience: John Dewey’s pedagogical and philosophical project” deals with this preeminent anti-polarity philosopher, whom the authors consider as pedagogizing philosophy and philosophizing pedagogy.

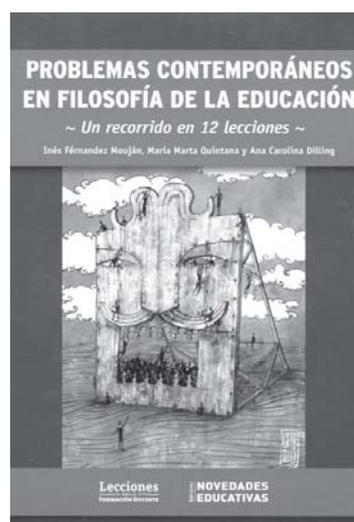


The second part critiques the modern view on education in two lessons. Lesson 5 “Modernity as an educational project; the modernity/education alliance and its crisis” resumes previous analyses of Modernity in the text, which are pursued to the end. Lesson 6 “The philosophical dilemmas of education vis-à-vis the genocide” draws on the contributions of the School of Frankfurt, relating these issues to its counterparts in Argentinean education and society after the last military dictatorship.

The third part deals with the ties between knowledge, power, and subordination in the making of subjectivities, echoing highly topical debates. It comprises three chapters. Lesson 7 “Power and knowledge: disciplining and the production of subjectivities” historicizes the construction of the concept of childhood in relation to discipline, which involves, in turn, knowledge and power as configuring subjects in education. Lesson 8 “Education, the political, and emancipation” discusses the notion of equality in the teacher—pupil relationship in philosophical and political terms. Lesson 9 “Globalization and hospitality as philosophical and educational problems” originally positions the friendly sheltering of alterity in education today.

The fourth and last part problematizes other forms of knowledge production, addressing the tensions involved in coloniality—liberation—decoloniality. It is made up of the final three lessons. Lesson 10 “The contributions of Latin American liberation philosophy and the project Modernity/coloniality” resignifies education in Latin America beyond Eurocentrism. Lesson 11 “Contemporary debates and issues: coloniality and liberation” continues the previous lesson, posing the challenge of ‘reoriginalization’. Lesson 12 “Culture and identity: interculturality in educational spaces” explores the concept of interculturality as a means of offering new possibilities for thinking in philosophy and education.

In short, this book is illuminating not only for teachers and their educators in different domains of initial teacher education in our country and Latin America. Likewise, it



is highly pertinent in other, wider and more far-ranging, geographical contexts as both an illustrative and a provoking view on local and global educational issues.

Notes

¹ Original work in both versions, Spanish and English, by the author.

² María Cristina Sarasa is a University English Teacher. She holds a Postgraduate Diploma and a Master Degree in Higher Education. She is a full-time tenured professor at the English Language Teacher Education Program in the School of Humanities with the State University of Mar del Plata, Argentina. She is a member of the Education and Cultural Studies Research Group.

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