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The construction of educational knowledge: The case of the Dalton Plan in Great Britain and the United States (1920-1925)

One of the best known methods of the Progressive Education is the Dalton Plan. Its originator, the American educator Helen Parkhurst, has supervised the first trial in the High School of Dalton (Massachusetts) in 1920, and later on she was applying it in the private elite Dalton School of New York, that still existing today. The method was rather influential in the 1920s in the Anglo-Saxon countries, especially in Great Britain and The Netherlands, whereas it was less predominant in the United States. The principles of the Dalton Plan were in the basis of some methodologies for the university teaching that were put into practice in the 1970s; for instance learning contracts, now broadly used in many European and American universities.

The lecture will try to explore two fields that have inspired my recent investigations. In first term, I will analyse the marketing strategies used in Great Britain for transforming the Dalton Plan into a pedagogical brand related with individualisation practices. These strategies can explain the immediate success of this methodology in the British-influenced areas. In second term, I will study the academic strategies used in the United States for defining and spreading out the pedagogical knowledge about the Dalton Plan. This scientific insight, built up around 1925, is still part of many History of Education textbooks all over the world. Both perspectives will drive me to reflect on the power of the networks in the construction of educational knowledge.

Curriculum Vitae

Dr. María del Mar del Pozo Andrés is Full Professor of Theory and History of Education at the University of Alcalá (Madrid, Spain). In the years 2000-2006 she was Secretary of the Spanish Society of Educational Sciences and Deputy Director of the journal *Bordón. Revista de Pedagogía*. In the years 2005-2013 she was Secretary of the Spanish Society for the History of Education. From 2006-2012 she was member of the Executive Committee of the International Standing Conference for the History of Education. From 2014 onwards she is one of the editors-in-chief of *Paedagogica Historica. International Journal for the History of Education*. Her main lines of research and publications are: the role of education in the building of national identities, urban education, teachers training, transnational dimensions of pedagogical

movements (with particular attention to Progressive Education), iconography and education, women and education, ethnography of the school, and history of curriculum. Some of her most recent publications are the editorship of the special issues of *History of Education & Children's Literature* ("Images of the European Child", 1, 2018), of *Historia y Memoria de la Educación* ("Fotografía, propaganda y educación", 1, 2018), and of the catalogue *Madrid, educational city (1898-1938). Memory of the Public School. Essays for an exhibition* (Madrid, 2019).