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Daniel Tröhler [a]
[a] University of Luxembourg, L-7220 Walferdange, Luxembourg

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Between ideology and institution: the curriculum of upper-secondary education

DANIEL TRÖHLER

This study examines apparently similar historical phenomena in 19th-century Prussia and Switzerland: the establishment of modern foreign languages in the curriculum of upper-secondary education. Through the course of the 19th century, there appear to have been great transnational European affinities with regard to both the differentiation of the upper-secondary education into types and the development of the curriculum. However, the contextualization of the curriculum within the overall organization of the school system raises doubts as to whether the similarity is more than only quantitative. A second contextualization of the overall organization of education within cultural convictions also reveals fundamental differences rooted in different political convictions, such as monarchism and republicanism. As a result, despite the formal similarities, the establishment of the foreign language education in Switzerland and Prussia could not have been more different.

Keywords: comparative education; curriculum; gymnasium; modern foreign languages; Prussia; secondary education; Switzerland

At the opening of a school conference in Berlin in December 1890, which triggered a year-long controversy over the different types of gymnasiums, Kaiser Wilhelm II accused the school of having neglected patriotic education. Based on his own experience at a gymnasium, Wilhelm felt qualified to call into question the value of the classical/humanities education with its two central school subjects, Latin and Greek (Wilhelm II 1891: 72):

> Whoever has been at Gymnasium himself and has had a look behind the scenes knows what is missing. A national basis is wanting. The foundation of the Gymnasium must be German; we must raise national young Germans and not young Greeks and Romans.

Daniel Tröhler is Professor of Education at the University of Luxembourg, Route de Diekirch, L–7220 Walferdange, Luxembourg; e-mail: daniel.troehler@uni.lu. He is editor-in-chief of the *Zeitschrift für pädagogische Historiographie* and co-editor of the critical edition of the letters written to Pestalozzi (*Sämtlichen Briefe an Pestalozzi*). His research interests centre on the comparative analysis of the paradigmatic languages of education; history in the USA, England, France, Germany, and Switzerland; pragmatism and contemporary international discourses about school reform; and comparative curriculum studies. His recent publications include *Republikanismus und Pädagogik: Pestalozzi im historischen Kontext* (Bad Heilbrunn, Germany: Klinkhardt, 2006), *Pragmatism and Education* (with Jürgen Oelkers, Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2005), the religious background of early Chicago pragmatism (*Educational Theory*, 56 [2006]), and (with Gert Biesta) English and German editions of George Herbert Mead's lectures on the philosophy of education. His *Languages of Education* (New York: Routledge) is forthcoming.

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In addition to increasing the hours devoted to German in the curriculum, Wilhelm also demanded the study of patriotic history and greater emphasis on physical education (p. 73).

Towards the end of his speech, the Kaiser addressed the conflict over the role of the different types of gymnasiums, the reason for Berlin school conference. In addition to the classical *Gymnasium* criticized by Wilhelm, Prussia had had, from 1859, the *Realgymnasium*, or semi-classical gymnasium, and, from 1882, the *Oberrealschule*, or non-classical gymnasium, which had a different status.[1] Wilhelm II demanded a reduction from three to two types of gymnasiums, a classical gymnasium and a gymnasium that would centre on the *Realien*, or sciences. There was to be no intermediate type like the *Realgymnasium* (p. 74).

Wilhelm was unsuccessful with his demand: The three types of gymnasiums remained in existence, and, 10 years later, at the second school conference in Berlin in 1900, he declared that all three types had equal standing,[2] and recognized the necessity of Latin at both the classical and the semi-classical gymnasium. However, the Kaiser demanded a significantly greater emphasis on the study of English in the curriculum, to be secured at the cost of the study of Greek and, in part, French (see Michael and Schepp 1993: 189).

The Kaiser's suggestions did not secure total support. Thus, at the second school conference, the Kaiser's former tutor bemoaned how the times had changed and how the old educational ideal had been corrupted:

> Personal intellectual development used to be considered a high goal worth striving after, and now it is seen merely as a means to successful activity in the wild struggle of existence. ... With this, it seems to me, there has been a significant shift in the entire ideal of education. In the past, being an educated man included knowledge of the classical languages, the culture and the history of the Antiquity; today, being an educated man includes knowledge of the more modern languages, the culture and history of Germany, and the natural sciences. (Hinzpeter 1901: 3)

The reasons given for the necessity of the modern foreign languages were in fact utilitarian.[3] Whereas the Kaiser had argued very generally that the English language was 'of great importance', Böttinger (1901: 131), a factory director and Member of the House of Representatives, insisted on increasing the study of English because English 'is today without doubt the world language', a fact to which one had to adapt if Germany was to maintain its position abroad. Taking a similar utilitarian perspective, von Truppel (1901), a department head in the Imperial Naval Office, emphasized the various advantages of the modern foreign languages for the armed forces. It made sense to 'teach the soldiers, the officers, the language of *the* country in which a war is expected to take place' (p. 132; emphasis added).[4] This utilitarian justification was still used in 1915 during the Great War: 'We will teach French and English, because we need both, for simply practical reasons' (cited in Christ 1983: 99; freely translated here).

Behind these curricular ideologies, which were widely discussed in German educational publications of the *fin de siècle*, are complex cultural developments. What is unique in Prussia was not the fact that there was pressure to adapt curriculum to general developments, but the way in which

these phenomena were dealt with socially, politically, and culturally. This can be seen if we compare the German discussion with that in German-speaking Switzerland, where the same topics were under debate,[5] but where the discussion on the value and status of the gymnasium curriculum, and the role of modern foreign languages in particular, took a different course. It is this different handling of instruction in modern foreign languages in Prussia and Zurich that I will examine in this essay.

As I draw the comparison, I proceed in three ways. First, I examine the quantitative significance of instruction in modern foreign languages as compared to other school subjects in the different types of gymnasiums. Second, I set the developments of the types of gymnasiums and their curricula in relation to formal organizational elements of the school, such as administration or control. And, third, I examine this overall organization of the school in the context of fundamental cultural convictions in the two territories. I interpret the quantitative data on instruction in modern foreign languages based on reconstruction of these cultural beliefs.

My thesis is that through the course of the 19th century, there appear to have been great transnational affinities with regard to both the differentiation of the gymnasium into types and the development of the curriculum—particularly with regard to the modern foreign languages. However, a contextualization of the curriculum within the overall organization of the school system raises doubts as to whether the similarity is more than quantitative. The contextualization of the overall organization within cultural convictions not only supports this hypothesis but also reveals fundamental differences that become visible precisely when we look at modern foreign languages. In order to support my thesis, I will first discuss the similarities between Prussia and Zurich, taking the example of the types of gymnasiums and their curricula. In a second step, I make a plea for organizational and cultural contextualization of the curriculum question, and in a third step I apply this model to the two cases of Prussia and Zurich. Finally, I draw some theoretical conclusions on the relation of culture, school organization, and political control.

Is there a grammar of curriculum?

In US research on the school, a concept, the 'grammar of schooling', has become established and is now used worldwide—because schooling has its own 'grammar' or formal rules, it reacts very selectively to changes initiated from the outside (Cuban 1979, 1993). The central elements of this grammar include the division of knowledge into identifiable school subjects and into teaching periods in a timetable, the assignment of pupils to classes based on age, the regulation of transitions from one school level to the next and, as a part of that, the assessment and certification of achievement (Tyack and Tobin 1994). If reformers wish to effect change, they have to adapt to the grammar of schooling and undertake changes within it (Tyack and Cuban 1995). Changes in the school system are only possible if they are congruent with the historically evolved inner-organizational structures.

The thesis of the school having a grammar can be extended from the school in total to its parts, such as to the curriculum which defines the school subjects and assigns knowledge to them. According to the 'grammar-of-schooling' thesis if we focus on the curricula of 19th-century gymnasiums, comparable developments should be found—that can be seen as reactions to the various thrusts of modernization: the modern natural sciences, improvements in transport and communication, the growth of national industries, the internationalization of trade, and the emergence of nation-states—and, connected with that, the emergence of educational systems.

Comparison of the structures and curricula of higher education in Prussia and Zurich around 1900 does reveal much that is similar. In both territories there are three types of gymnasiums that in turn regulate entrance to university:

- In both Prussia and Zurich, there was the classical gymnasium, with its central subjects of Latin and Greek; in Prussia this school type was called *Gymnasium*, in Zurich *Literargymnasium.*
- In both Prussia and Zurich there was a 'lighter' version of the classical gymnasium, a semi-classical gymnasium, that included Latin but not Greek in its curriculum, and taught modern foreign languages and more of the natural sciences. In both Prussia and Zurich, this type of gymnasium was called *Realgymnasium*.
- In both Prussia and Zurich there was a gymnasium offering no instruction in the classical languages that was oriented mainly to mathematics and natural sciences. In both territories this type of gymnasium was called *Oberrealschule*.[6]

With regard to the curricula in both Prussia and Zurich, the three types show striking parallels. Their defined school subjects were practically identical, and they underwent similar historical development of the curriculum. The general trend was the decreasing importance of Latin in favour of other school subjects, especially the modern foreign languages. The developments in the classical gymnasium are set out in figure 1.

However, the general trend of the reduction of Latin and Greek is associated with a different history of the modern languages in the two regions, which a more detailed view reveals more clearly (see figure 2). In the Prussian classical gymnasium, not only Latin but also French declines in significance. English is not taught at all (French was the only modern foreign language in the period discussed here). German studies are on the upswing starting in 1882, a trend that becomes stronger after Kaiser Wilhelm's speech in 1890. In Zurich, in contrast, the importance of French becomes stabilized, as does the place of English which is already firmly established in 1882. The very different development of the school subject religion is conspicuous: in Prussia the percentage of school hours devoted to religion remains stable, while in Zurich religion has entirely disappeared from the mandatory curriculum by the 1920s.

A similar general trend is found for the semi-classical *Realgymnasium* (see figure 3). Latin unmistakably declines in significance—and in Zurich earlier than in Prussia—with its significance in the curriculum levelling off at ~ 20% in both places in the 1920s. The absence of English is conspicuous in

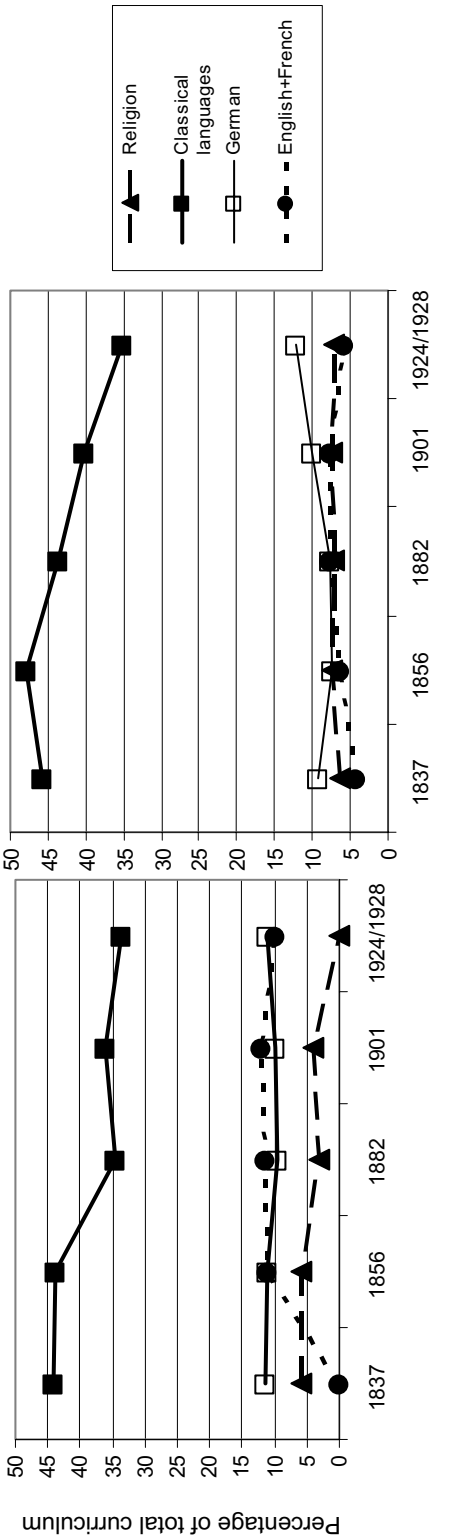

Figure 1. Religion, classical, and modern languages at classical gymnasiums in Zurich and Prussia: percentage of total curriculum. (a) Zurich; (b) Prussia. Sources: Herrlitz *et al.* (1993); School programmes of the Cantonal School of Zurich (see Programm der Kantonsschule in Zürich).

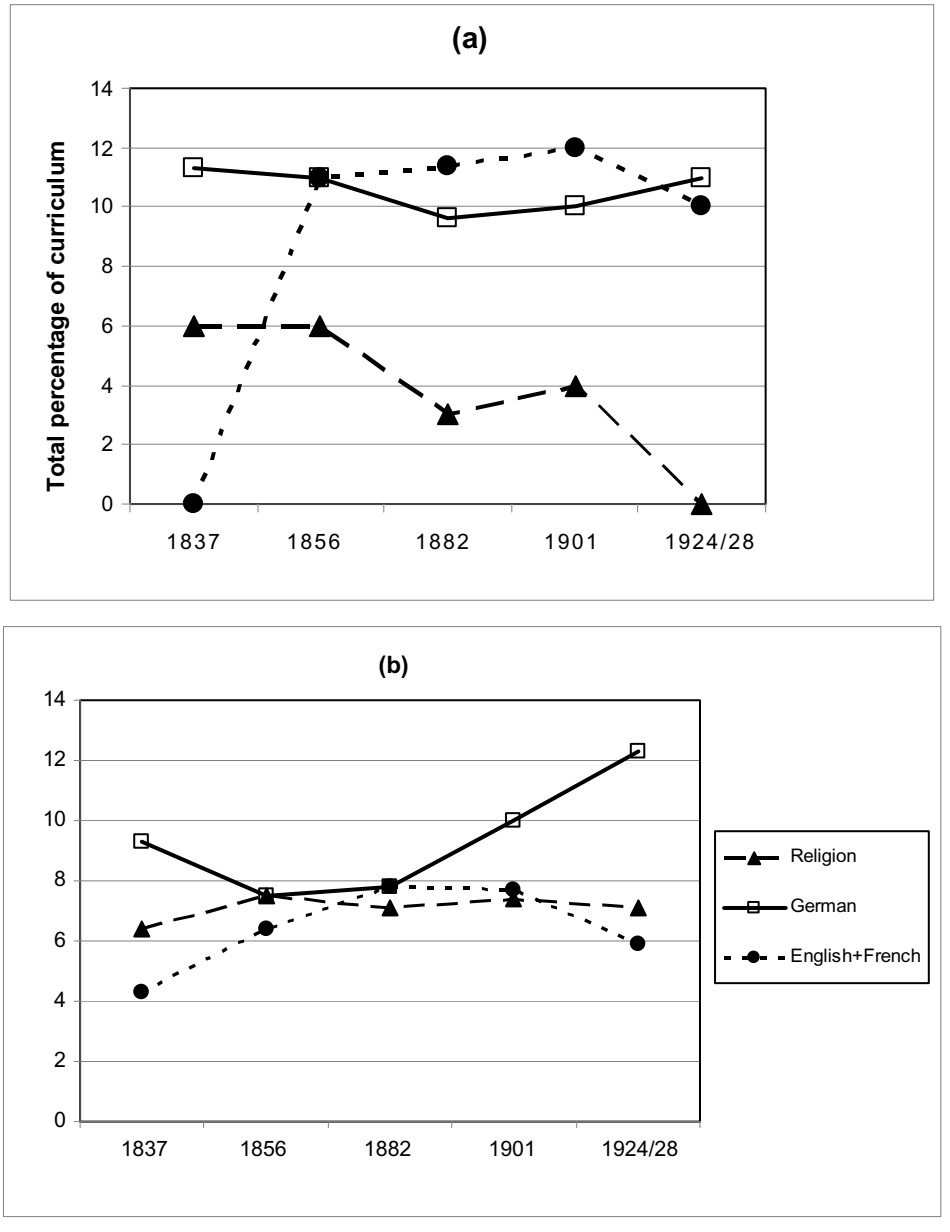

Figure 2. Religion and modern languages at classical gymnasiums in Zurich and Prussia: percentage of total curriculum. (a) Zurich; (b) Prussia. Sources: Herrlitz *et al.* (1993); School programmes of the Cantonal School of Zurich (see Programm der Kantonsschule in Zürich).

Prussia, whereas in Zurich it has a clearly increasing importance—of a kind only seen in Prussia for German language after 1882.

The impression of greater flexibility with regard to the modernization phenomena in Zurich is confirmed by the data for the non-classical gymnasium, the *Oberrealschule*, which existed in Prussia only after 1882

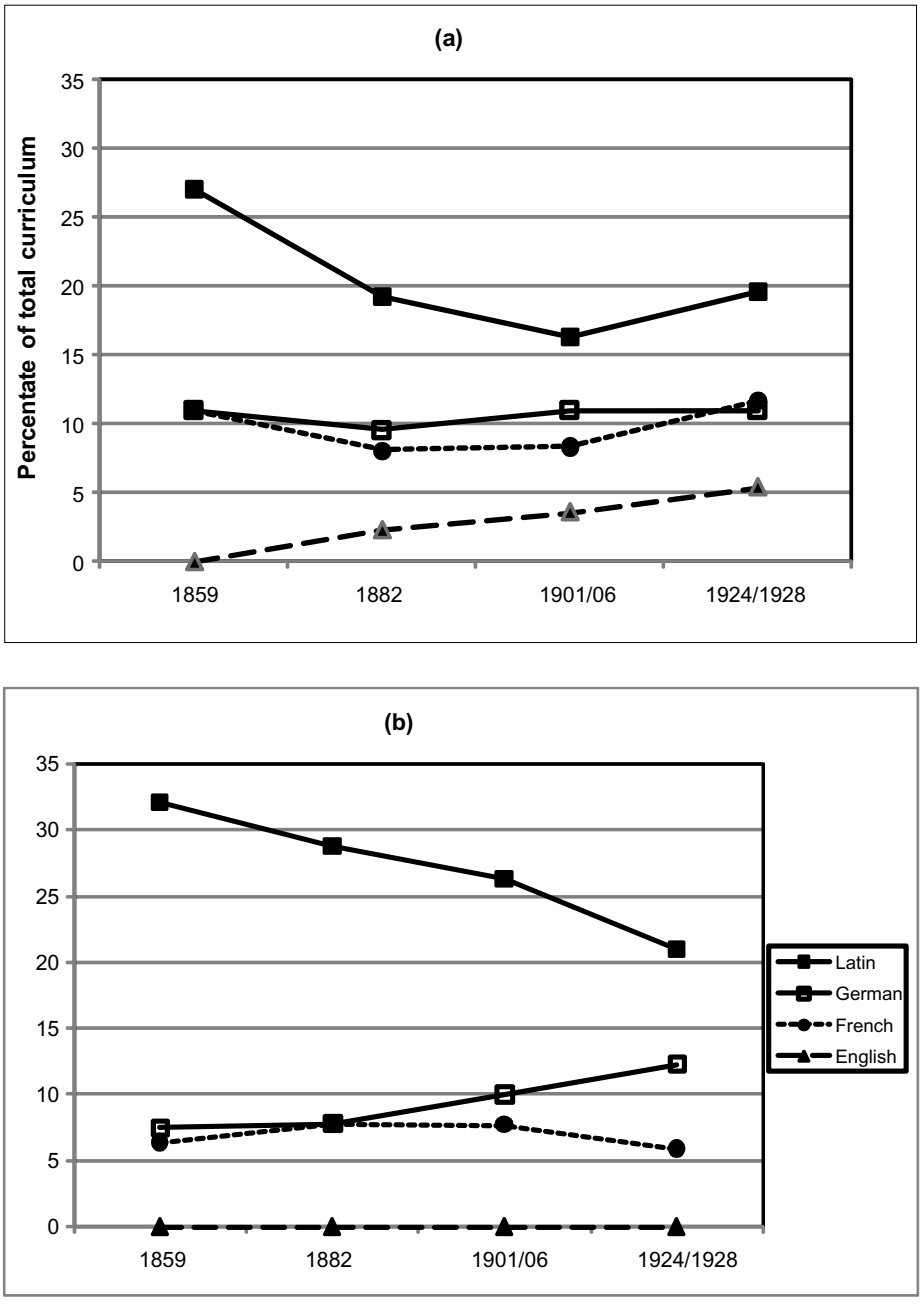

Figure 3. Development of Latin and modern foreign languages at *Realgymnasium* in Zurich and Prussia: percentage of total curriculum. (a) Zurich; (b) Prussia. Sources: Herrlitz *et al.* (1993); School programmes of the Cantonal School of Zurich (see Programm der Kantonsschule in Zürich).

(see figure 4).[7] In Zurich mathematics predominates, and religion becomes an elective starting in 1900; in Prussia religion makes up a stable 7% of the curriculum and mathematics stagnates at 17%. In addition we can note the decreasing importance of modern foreign languages (French, English) in

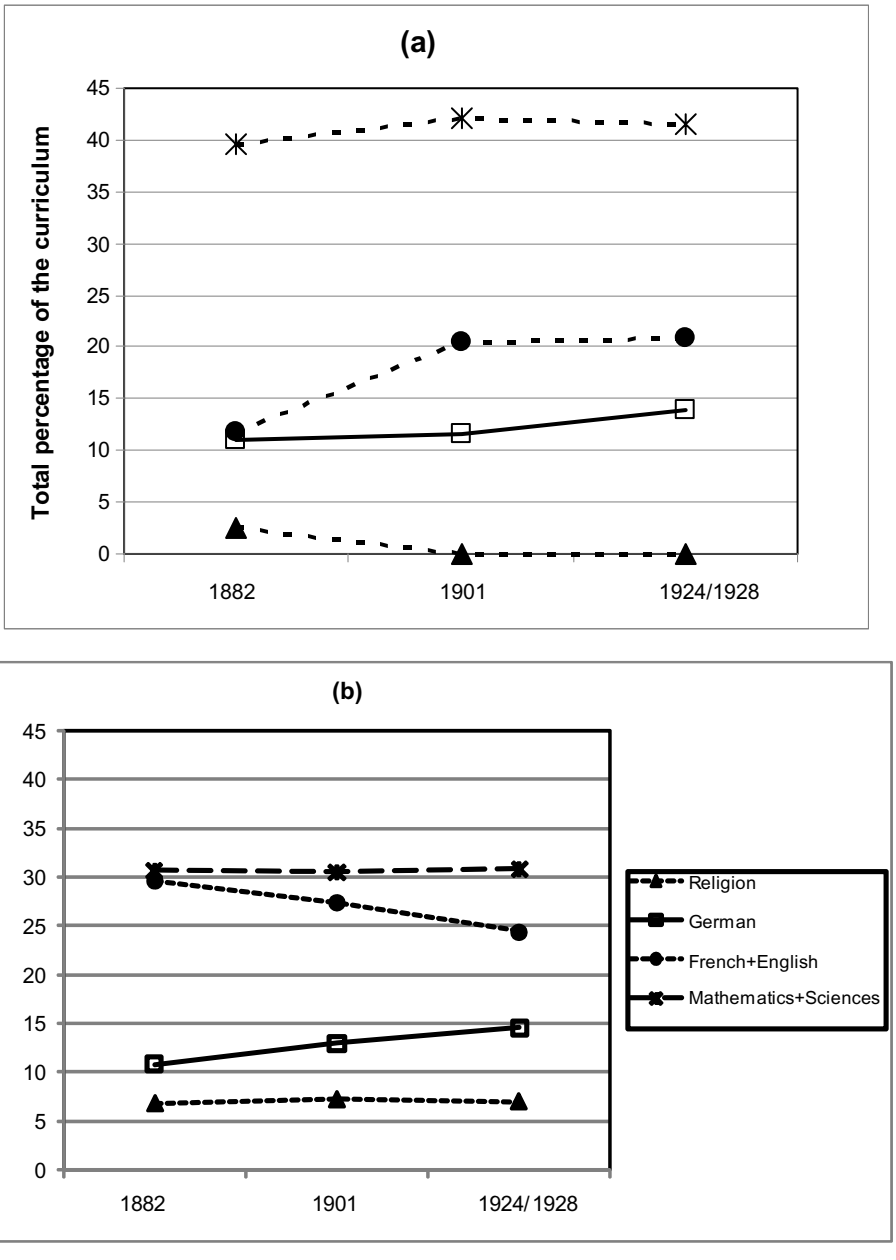

Figure 4. Religion, mathematics/science, and modern languages at *Oberrealschulen* in Zurich and Prussia: percentage of total curriculum. (a) Zurich; (b) Prussia. Sources: Herrlitz *et al.* (1993); School programmes of the Cantonal School of Zurich (see Programm der Kantonsschule in Zürich).

Prussia, while there is a slight increase in their importance in Zurich—at the beginning of the period modern languages had made up a greater proportion of the curriculum in Prussia. German as a modern non-foreign language has a similar place in the curricula in both territories.

In summary, we see a clear tendency to less Latin instruction in both Prussia and Zurich. In Prussia there is a marked increase in the teaching of German and a stable position for religious instruction. In Zurich, in contrast, the importance of religion decreases significantly, and modern foreign languages take on a much more important position in the semi-classical gymnasium and mathematics in the non-classical gymnasium than in Prussia. In other words, the different gymnasium types are much more clearly differentiated in Zurich than in Germany. However, although Prussia is more conservative than Zurich in the differentiation of the gymnasiums, the parallels are still obvious. If we do *not* assume a principle of entelechy, according to which development proceeds as determined by a given nature, we have to ask what contextual conditions made these developments possible or compelling.

Historiographic pitfalls

There are no histories of the school that offer a cultural-theory interpretation of the developments in Prussia and Zurich. In the historiography around the Prussian school, the dominant doctrine starts out from the social-historical premise that (especially) the classical gymnasium was the object of a struggle between the educated classes, the propertied classes and other social classes, all pursuing their own interests; as they ascended, they excluded those below them (Lundgreen *et al.* 1988, Becker and Kluchert 1993). The history of the school in Switzerland is conceptualized in a completely different way. It does not describe a vertical class struggle between 'higher' and 'lower' but follows a history-of-ideas approach at the horizontal level. According to this approach, the schools in the Canton of Zurich (or Switzerland) emerge from the conflict between (at first) two ideologies, described as 'progressive' or 'liberal' on the one hand and 'conservative' on the other (and joined after the turn of the 20th century by a 'democratic' ideology). The arguments, recommendations, concepts, and teaching materials are subdivided and assigned according to this (dual) pattern (for a criticism, see Tröhler 2007).

These interpretations of the history of schooling say a lot about the dominant paradigms in the history of education, but not very much about the 19th-century school.[8] They confirm premises, but throw little light on the historical developments themselves. Cultural history avoids this danger because it incorporates the social and the history-of-ideas dimensions and can overcome their duality. Cultural history is especially helpful if it is comparative in design. It reveals the collective, or dominant, ideas, and convictions that are at the bottom of the organizational structures of the school and, among other things, shape the curriculum.[9]

To this purpose, the data and findings I outlined above must be put into the broader context of the overall organization of the school. The fact that

the types of gymnasiums are more clearly distinctive in Zurich than in Prussia, and that modern foreign languages had fewer problems getting established in Zurich, has first to be linked with organizational elements that can be culturally contextualized as the formal overall organization. On the issue of the connection of formal organization and cultural context, a line of research known as 'neo-institutionalism' has become established in the last 30 years. The main thesis of this approach is that the formal structure of an organization always adapts to collective expectations, taken-for-granted assumptions, in order to gain legitimacy as an organization. The organization thus requires legitimacy *from* the environment, which is also called 'institution'. The search for the legitimacy conferred by the institutional order, i.e. collectively shared ideas and expectations, leads the formal organization of the school—to which the curriculum belongs—to adapt to these institutions (Meyer and Rowan 1977, Brunsson and Olson 1993).[10]

Organization and institution

The difference between the organization of secondary education in Prussia and Zurich can be well depicted by looking at some aspects of the school that show how differently the schools were organized and situated in the two societal orders. I will comment here on just three aspects: first, the relation of organization of education and social background; second, the question of the organizational adaptation to the changing educational needs of the society; and third, the inner organizational order or structure. I will try to interpret all three with regard to their cultural framing, or their cultural institutionalization.

The question of social stratification is perhaps the most obvious difference between the two national settings. In principle, the Zurich gymnasium was open to all citizens, as laid down in the law of 1832 governing the educational system (*Gesetz über die Organisation des gesammten Unterrichtswesens* 1832):

> §86. The state sees to it that all of its citizens can freely choose to educate themselves naturally for science and art.
>
> §87. To this purpose the state establishes a Cantonal School, to follow immediately upon the basic elementary and secondary schools. … (my translation)

The difference with Prussia is very clear: there entry to the gymnasium was usually dependent upon either private tutoring or attendance at a *Vorschule*, a preparatory school designed to prepare pupils for gymnasium that existed alongside the public school and was open to the privileged classes.[11] This early selection had consequences: many positions in the Prussian government required gymnasium or university diplomas (Albisetti and Lundgreen 1991: 273, Table 2). Zurich had no such rules: only occupations termed 'professions' required university diplomas.[12]

In Prussia, completion of gymnasium was also rewarded with military privileges—which would be totally inconceivable in Switzerland with its tradition of militiamen, or citizens, always ready to respond to a call to arms to defend the fatherland. With the exception of marginal cadet instruction at the gymnasium, Switzerland separated education from military affairs as

strictly as it did education from the question of social background. Social standing, according to the ideology of Swiss Republicanism, should never be determined by birth, but instead based exclusively on the public merits of the individual person.[13] Although in earlier centuries military performance in defence of the fatherland had shaped the meritocratic order, in the 18th and 19th centuries it was acts for the common good which usually required insight into societal connections or education.

The second organizational aspect focuses on the non-classical gymnasium, the *Oberrealschule*, the school type that did not offer instruction in the classics. In Prussia, the *Oberrealschule* was established only in 1882; it Zurich it had emerged in 1833—in parallel to the establishment of the classical gymnasium. As early as 1831, leading intellectuals in Zurich had spoken of the 'external separation and unity in spirit' of two types of gymnasiums (Orelli 1831), which led to the foundation of an *Industrieschule*. The aim of this school was to 'equip its pupils with those skills and scientific knowledge that are required for the pursuit of higher industrial purposes', knowledge which included French, starting 'from the bottom up' (*Gesetz über die Organisation des gesammten Unterrichtswesens* 1832: §§101, 103). Although the question of admission to the university of graduates of this non-classical gymnasium remained unresolved for a long time,[14] there is no disparaging rhetoric to be found in the contemporary publications directed at a gymnasium with no Latin and no Greek. At the same time the classical gymnasium was free of excessive expectations. The law on education of 1832 saw the purpose of the classical gymnasium quite simply, as 'a preparatory school for study at the faculties of the university, at the same time, however, to spread academic knowledge generally' (*Gesetz über die Organisation des gesammten Unterrichtswesens* 1832: §91).

On educational issues Zurich was not only more liberal but also more pragmatic than Prussia, and thus readier to adapt to general developments. The relatively pragmatic approach in Zurich is due a 'cultural' attitude that made no strict separation between spiritual and empirical worlds. Moreover, Zurich had a more positive view of technical/vocational education than did Prussia. Zurich had been a republic governed by its guilds since 1336; that is, a city of citizens organized politically through societies of artisans and merchants. This led to a largely undogmatic attitude towards vocational education and also—and this is the third fundamental organizational difference—to the republican principle of self-government being carried over to the organization of government. This meant extensive self-administration of the Cantonal School with first its two (and later, three) types—very much in contrast to Prussia, where the school was far more strongly determined and controlled by the government.[15]

These three examples of differing organization—tying school to the pupils' social background, early creation of gymnasiums not offering instruction in Latin, and self-administration—reflect the difference between cultural-political attitudes that involve political preferences, such as a monarchy or a republic. In their cultural contextualization, the organizational differences attest to institutions that could not be more different. Thus, the duality of higher vs merely useful education celebrated in Prussia points to notions that had defined the German concept of *Bildung* in the

late-18th century; that is, education of a harmonious inward form of the soul. That concept bundled conceptually the German reaction to the natural sciences of the West and to democracy, which was criticized for superficiality and atomism. Standing behind this rejection was a notion definitively formulated by Luther and reinforced by Kant—the duality of inward/outward, whereby the inward world was given a far higher value. In the context of this notion the educational goal is the harmonious formation/development of the soul to become an inner totality. Such formation cannot be carried out in the encounter with the concrete empirical world, or with the natural sciences, but can be sought through the examination of the ideal/aesthetic world of Antiquity.[16]

The Prussian notion of national superiority was thus attached to a concept of education requiring Greek and Latin, which in turn explains the resistance of the government to the idea of a gymnasium that had no Latin in the curriculum, never mind putting it on a par with the classical gymnasium.[17] In this context, it was difficult for modern foreign languages to secure a foothold in the competition of the school subjects. Only German, riding in the slipstream of the '*völkisch* movement' and the post-1880 nationalism, succeeded in gaining additional ground in the curriculum, partly at the expense of Latin but also at the expense of French.[18]

Conclusion

In contemporary educational research it is not curriculum but standards and the efficient control of the school system that dominate. In countries with a strong democratic tradition, the school's resistance to attempts at reform and control is attributed to democratic localism; that is, resistance is said to be caused by the local school boards. Centralized steering and control of the school by experts is being promoted; a centralized monopoly of power and control will end the school's resistance to reform, and make it more efficient (Tröhler 2006).

The comparison of Zurich and Prussia shows, however, that just the opposite is and can be the case. The strong democratic interweaving of the political system and the school system in Zurich prevented an elitist ideology. Prussia, in contrast, still held on stubbornly to mental and organizational means of social stratification at a time when the general developments had long made different educational offerings necessary. Of course, the adaptations were not made in Zurich without fierce discussions, but they were better linked to the concerns of the public, and were given legitimacy because of the democratic structure of the decision-making.[19] Only incremental changes emerged—that accorded with the existing grammar of schooling, or with the cultural ideas of the population that legitimized this grammar of schooling (Tröhler forthcoming). A call from on high for a school conference—as occurred in Prussia in 1890 and in 1900—to which only persons selected by the government could attend, would have been inconceivable in Zurich.

There were, of course, reform efforts in Prussia.[20] However, the legitimating rhetoric in Prussia remained in the grip of the old utility argument,

over which the true or higher *Bildung* hovered like a sword of Damocles, even when it was not the subject of discussion. This persistence is reflected in the contouring of the *Realgymnasium* and the *Oberrealschule*, which were far less clearly different from the classical gymnasium than they were in Zurich. And it can be seen in the differing attendance at the three types of gymnasiums. Even in 1914, 14 years after the high-school types were granted equal standing in Prussia, only 16% of the pupils attended the non-classical gymnasium, 24% the semi-classical gymnasium, and 60% the classical gymnasium (Becker and Kluchert 1993: 13). This meant that 60% of all gymnasium pupils learned only one modern foreign language, which made up only 6% of the curriculum, a smaller percentage of the curriculum than was devoted to the mandatory study of religion. Education was still seen in the values perspective of the classical, inward, and anti-Western concept of *Bildung*—and, towards the end of the 19th century, the religious basis of the inwardness concept had become increasingly linked with the sacralized nation, and thus with the pre-eminent importance of the German language (Tröhler 2003). Within this cultural background, modern foreign languages were in a difficult position.

Acknowledgement

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Notes

1. The privilege of serving a single year in the army as well as unhindered admission to universities was restricted to students with knowledge of Latin and Greek—that is, to students who completed the classical gymnasium.
2. For an overview starting in 1901, see Albisetti and Lundgreen (1991: 273, Table 2).
3. In the face of the fact that no Latin was offered at the *Oberrealschulen*, or non-classical gymnasiums, that were permitted starting in 1882, French took on the position of Latin as the supreme discipline, and for a time, at least in this school type, lost the derogatory rating of 'useful' (Albisetti and Lundgreen 1991: 256).
4. A year after his speech in Berlin, Truppel was appointed governor of Kiaochow (Qingdao), the German colony in China, where he served from 1901–1911.
5. For example, the issue of the 'overworking' of students was also discussed in Switzerland (Welti 1885); this was an issue that in Germany was connected, among other things, with the reform movement concerning instruction in foreign languages (Vietor 1882).
6. More precisely, the *Oberrealschule* in Zurich had two divisions, a technical/natural sciences division and a commercial division called the *Kantonale Handelsschule* [Cantonal Business School], whose graduates were admitted to the university, although only to certain courses of study. For comparability purposes, only the technical/natural sciences division of the *Oberrealschule* is considered here.
7. It should be remembered that in Zurich, in the context of the *Oberrealschule* there was also the possibility of completing a business diploma.
8. Assigning historical arguments and data to already existing structural patterns—whether social classes or political ideologies—always only reinforces the already existing doctrine, which certainly can not be the purpose of historiography.

9. I start out from an approach in which the organization of school as well as the arrangement of knowledge in curricula is brought into connection with dominant ideas in society, such as the idea of the child and its soul and development and its future role as citizen in the fatherland and with the basic normative structure of the state; see Popkewitz *et al*. (2001).
10. Of course, the curriculum, and thus the question of the priority ranking of foreign languages, is not the only formal organizational aspect of the school. Some other examples are questions of school entrance requirements, the differentiation of the system, certification, control, or financing. All these must be considered and understood as the result of interactions that take place between the logic, or grammar, of schooling on the one side, and the cultural expectations on the other.
11. As far as I can see, there are no studies available on the preparatory *Vorschulen*—which were fiercely debated at that time (Lehmhaus 1894) but only abolished in the Weimar Republic—that provide any information on how the selection mechanisms worked and on whether legal bases, financial questions, or cultural practices, or a mixture of all three factors, controlled entrance to the preparatory schools.
12. Higher administrative positions in government or the private sector were usually filled by graduates of the technical/natural sciences division (*Oberrealschule*), and lower administrative positions by graduates of the commercial division (Cantonal Business School).
13. That does not mean that accusations of corruption were not made time and time again, but it is those accusations that show how strong the collective expectation was.
14. Even though university admission for graduates of the non-classical gymnasiums became an issue only with the founding of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in 1855, and admittance to certain faculties of the university was possible only after 1904, the difference between Switzerland and Prussia is apparent: never in Prussia would there be found a description in words that connected instruction in the classical languages simply with 'academic education' and alongside words that spoke of 'higher industrial purposes'. The term 'higher' and 'deeper', belonged in the sphere of 'true' education, which aimed at inwardness and marginalized what is outward. It represented a dominant type of thinking in education that, after 1900, was propagated with a lasting effect mainly by what is called *Geisteswissenschaftliche Pädagogik*, or education as one of the arts and humanities (Tröhler 2003).
15. The teachers at the Cantonal School of Zurich elected the principal and vice-principal from their own ranks by secret ballot (*Gesetz über die Organisation des gesammten Unterrichtswesens* 1832: §113). Starting in 1847 the principals were selected by the Education Council and from 1865 on by the *Regierungsrat*, the executive council of the canton. The two (and later three) gymnasiums were overseen by a special superintendence commission, which was appointed by the Cantonal Education Council by secret ballot (§114). The Education Council itself was a government agency elected by the Cantonal Parliament, whose members were unpaid. This Education Council was also responsible for determining the curriculum of the gymnasiums.
16. The concept of *Bildung* took on a connotation in German-speaking Switzerland that was far more political than in Germany (Horlacher 2004).
17. The importance of the classical languages was also emphasized in Switzerland. In 1860, for instance, following upon and in reaction to the Zurich school reform, which effectively made Greek optional in the curriculum, the *Verein Schweizerischer Gymnasiallehrer* [Association of Swiss Gymnasium Teachers] was founded, which made a plea for classical/humanities education mainly through a journal, *Neues schweizerisches Museum: Zeitschrift für die humanistischen Studien und das Gymnasialwesen in der Schweiz* [New Swiss Museum: Journal for Humanities Studies and the Gymnasium System in Switzerland]. However the journal folded in 1866 after only six issues, and it never reflected the acrimony of the Prussian discussion. The following publication survived, however: *Jahreshefte des Vereins Schweizerischer Gymnasiallehrer* [renamed in 1910 *Jahrbuch des Vereins Schweizerischer Gymnasiallehrer*], which was published from 1869 on and renamed *Gymnasium helveticum: Zeitschrift für die schweizerische Mittelschule* in 1947.
18. That led even to a first step towards overcoming the traditional gender-biased system. All through the 19th century, young women were not permitted to attend the gymnasium and

thus had no participation in the classical idea of education. In contrast, in the context of girls' secondary schools, they received extensive instruction in English and French, taught using methods that differed from the instruction in classical languages and were more efficient (Doff 2002). In this regard also, nationalism proved a help—even if perhaps unintentionally, in that the notion of *Bildung* became Germanized and therefore was also extended to include women's education. As early as 1880 Otto Weddingen made the following plea for more German instruction at the gymnasiums in the framework of a more comprehensive national education:

> Also in our education of women, in our upper girls' schools, we need to put what is national in the foreground. For we want to bring up our girls to become *German* young women! This would be a valuable achievement for our Fatherland. But unfortunately, instead of soul-refreshing literature, two foreign languages are taught predominantly! French conversation, English conversation! And their own native language? (Weddigen 1880: 8; freely translated here)

19. In Zurich it was not possible to simply dictate extensive reforms, such as a huge reform package in 1871, which was a draft bill supported by the Education Council and turned down by the voters in 1872. The reactions were so vehement that from then on, no further sweeping reforms were put forward.
20. For example in the second half of the century efforts, when the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Realschulmännerverein* [Association of *Realschule* Men] and the *Verein Deutscher Ingenieure* (VDI The Association of German Engineers) advocated raising the status of the natural sciences and modern foreign languages, which led in 1900 to recognition of the equal standing of the different types of gymnasiums.

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