

# Towards an educational modernization process: UNESCO interactions with Franco's Spain (1952–1970)

Mariano González-Delgado, Manuel Ferraz-Lorenzo and  
Cristian Machado-Trujillo

*Department of History and Philosophy of Science, Education, and Language,  
Universidad de La Laguna, San Cristobal de La Laguna, Spain*

## Abstract

**Purpose** – After World War II, an educational modernization process gained ground worldwide. International organizations such as UNESCO began to play a key role in the creation, development and dissemination of a new educational vision in different countries. This article examines the origin and development of this modernization process under the dictatorship of Franco. More specifically, we will show how the adoption of this conception in Spain must be understood from the perspective of the interaction between UNESCO and Franco's regime, and how the policies of the dictatorship converged with the proposals suggested by this international organization. Our principal argument is that the educational policies carried out in Spain throughout the second half of the 20th century can be better understood when inserted into a transnational perspective in education.

**Design/methodology/approach** – This article uses documents from archives that until now were unpublished or scarcely known. We have also analyzed materials published in the preeminent educational journals of the dictatorship, such as the *Revista de Educación*, *Revista Española de Pedagogía*, *Bordón* and *Vida escolar*, as well as documents published by the Spanish Ministry of National Education.

**Findings** – Franco's dictatorship built an educational narrative closely aligned with proposals put forward by UNESCO on educational planning after World War II. The educational policies created by the dictatorship were related to the new ideas that strove to link the educational system with economic and social development.

**Originality/value** – This article is inspired by a transnational history of education perspective. On the one hand, it traces the origins of educational modernization under Franco's regime, which represented a technocratic vision of education that is best understood as a result of the impact that international organizations had in the second half of the 20th century. On the other hand, it follows the intensifying relationship between the dictatorship and the educational ideas launched by UNESCO. Both aspects are little known and studied in Spain.

**Keywords** Francoism, UNESCO, Educational planning, Educational policy, Transnational history of education

**Paper type** Research paper

## Introduction

After World War II, educational systems worldwide underwent a remarkable transformation. In many countries an unprecedented process of educational modernization and universalization began, while mass education began to become a reality. The backdrop to this phenomenon was the realization that educational systems could be a fundamental pillar of economic and social growth and development (Jones and Coleman, 2005). For this reason, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the idea of expanding secondary and university education was seen as a way to improve

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the economic modernization of developed countries as well as those that were less developed. To achieve this goal, nations would have no choice but to modify and reform their educational policies and adapt them to new economic and social needs. This led to the expansion of equal opportunities in education, in an effort to achieve greater social cohesion and improvements in human capital. The creation of educational statistics services and of other instruments for comparing educational progress within a country and between different countries also became important. All of this, in addition to creating and redirecting educational research institutions, also served to adjust and augment the programmes that were launched. A good example was the creation of new educational research centres or school construction plans (Eلفت and Ydesen, 2020). On the other hand, educational improvement also affected teaching methods. Educational modernization, therefore, also involved introducing information and communication technologies or other audiovisual tools designed to achieve greater effectiveness in teaching and learning (Trörlher, 2013).

One of the causes that explains this transformation was linked to the influence exerted by international organizations (IOs), in different countries and at a global level. These organisations included the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank (WB), and together they constituted what Phillip Jones has termed a kind of “global architecture of education” (Jones, 2006, p. 48). A nexus of interconnections between educational experts and countries emerged, accompanied by a powerful consensus and momentum in favour of considering educational systems as one of the driving forces of modernization and economic and social growth (Dorn and Ghodsee, 2012; Bürgi, 2017; Ydesen and Andreasen, 2019). The context of the Cold War together with the Modernization Theory, and their dissemination by the aforementioned IOs, helped shape a new vision of education that permeated different nation-states (Rudolph, 2002; Lindo-Fuentes and Ching, 2012; Ydesen and Grek, 2020).

The history of education has made advances in the analysis of how such educational transfer processes took place. A number of studies explore the educational influence that empires have had on their colonies, the circulation of people and the connections between institutions (Goodman *et al.*, 2009; Depaepe and D'hulst, 2011; Bruno-Jofré and Schriewer, 2012). In recent years, however, this area of analysis has expanded, while ways of studying international influences on national education systems have improved. We refer here to the emergence of what has been called transnational history in education (Sobe, 2013; Fuchs, 2014; Droux and Hofstetter, 2015; Roldan-Vera and Fuchs, 2019; McCulloch *et al.*, 2020). In the context of this paper's subject, what caught the attention of some researchers – and led them to seek an explanation – was the fact that after World War II, educational systems worldwide seemed to move in the same direction regarding their educational policies. Despite countries' different political systems, diverse cultural traditions and antagonistic educational structures, during the second half of the 20th century, they began to converge towards the same idea of educational modernization (Popkewitz, 2009; Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). In this way, nation-state analysis as a space from which to study educational policies began to be seen as a framework that needed to be rethought from a transnational vision. From this point of view, transnational history of education would try to see how the educational modernization process launched by the IOs was received and developed by local educational actors through the creation of new educational policies. Such policies could sometimes reflect direct recommendations from the IOs; or they could represent proposals created by local actors under the ideological premises that they had acquired in institutional meetings, personal networks or international conferences generated in the spaces of the IOs. Therefore, many of the educational policies that emerged in different countries after World War II were, in reality, projects generated within the spaces of international institutions dedicated to education, and not exclusively in national states.

The objective of this work is to analyze the origin and early developments of this educational modernization process in Spain. This article attempts, therefore, to demonstrate that the origin of this educational change in Franco's Spain is related to the education ideas launched by the IOs. To do this, we analyze the beginnings of UNESCO's activities in Spain and the way in which this body established itself as an entity for the generation of modernization. It was the gradual convergence of Franco's educational policies with these concepts that would culminate in 1970 with the governments General Law of Education (LGE). The origin of this conception of education offers a prime example of the interaction and impact that IOs, particularly UNESCO, had on the modification and modernization of education under the Franco regime. Their interaction is attested to through the signing of educational agreements and joint projects that were to be carried out between Spain and UNESCO. But it is also evident in the development of educational and curricular policies created by Franco's educational institutions based on the recommendations of UNESCO and on the ideas espoused by IOs as being conducive to achieving the objectives of economic and social development.

As Andrea Mariuzzo has pointed out, in order to better understand educational policies after World War II, it is necessary that they be "placed in an appropriate international context", so as to grasp their origins and evolution (Mariuzzo, 2016, p. 353). Poul Duedahl explained this by examining IOs which focused on education. The author states that by doing so we can "achieve a deeper understanding" of some of the most important educational policies carried out in different countries (Duedahl, 2016, p. 3). These organizations are producers of local policies on a global scale and are places where ideas are exchanged, intervention projects are drawn up, and people gather beyond the constraints of national limits and frameworks.

This article is positioned within the above perspective. It is based on the idea that the origin and development of the educational modernization process during the years of the dictatorship can be better understood if it is inserted within the agreements and proposals that UNESCO recommended to Spain after World War II. This not only allows us to comprehend how this new direction was conceived, it also serves as a framework with which to explain some of the latest research in Spain focusing on how under Franco educational institutions developed educational modernization projects related to educational technologies (Ossenbach and Groves, 2013; González-Delgado and Groves, 2017, 2020), health education (Terrón *et al.*, 2017; Ferraz Lorenzo, 2020; Del Cura and Martínez-Pérez, 2021) and other educational policies (Ossenbach and Martínez-Boom, 2011). In addition, it also allows us to delve into how the educational modernization process occurred in Spain and broadens the view of some recent research on educational modernization and Spanish foreign relations in this historical time (Townson, 2007; Martín García and Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla, 2020).

In order to carry out this research we consulted original and scarcely known archival materials. Additionally, we studied the most important educational journals published during the dictatorship, such as *Revista de Educación*, *Revista Española de Pedagogía (REP)*, *Bordón* and *Vida Escolar*. Documents generated by the National Ministry of Education (MEN) related to the projects developed by UNESCO during the Francoist regime were also consulted. This research, therefore, offers an analysis that can help to continue with the configuration of the transnational turn within the history of education. It allows us to study the impact of educational modernization and how UNESCO's ideas were absorbed within a country with a dictatorial political system.

### **The beginnings of UNESCO in Francoism**

Spain made notable advances in the expansion of education during the first third of the 20th century. Under different governments, including the Liberals, the Primo de Rivera

Dictatorship and the Second Republic, efforts were made to provide education to a significant part of the population. The focus, however, was largely on primary education. Despite the fact that during the Second Republic an expansion plan for secondary education was also carried out, the truth is that this educational level was still seen as a space for social elites (Viñao, 2004). However, a notable change would take place after World War II in Spain. As in other European countries, the interactions between the government's education experts and UNESCO proved crucial in abandoning the idea of a secondary and university education aimed only at an elite; this marked the forging of a new modernization process of education.

UNESCO was created in 1945 as a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) for matters relating to education, science and culture. Its initial purpose was to rebuild cultural, educational and scientific institutions destroyed by the war and to promote international understanding, cooperation and peace between countries. To a certain extent, it could be said that the objective was to avoid the repetition of phenomena such as racism, inequality between classes or the nationalist, maximalist visions that led to the world wars (Kulnazarova and Ydesen, 2017). It is clear that over the years, UNESCO managed to expand its scope. The increase in educational programmes would be constant and would house a notable branch of policies aimed at educational, economic and social development (Duedahl, 2016). It is not easy to establish the influence and impact that UNESCO had during the early years of Franco's dictatorship. However, even before its official entry in 1952 (Oliveros, 1978, p. 40), the dictatorship seemed to be aware of the activities of UNESCO from their very origins. As David Brydan has pointed out in the case of the League of Nations Health Organization (LNHO) or World Health Organization (WHO), some Spanish medical experts maintained contacts with the LNHO and WHO during and after World War II. Despite the alignment of Franco's Spain with Nazism during World War II, these organizations justified their actions in Spain during this period "on professional, humanitarian, and technical grounds". In this way, despite the fact that the victorious powers of the War broke diplomatic ties with Spain, the professional connections between Spanish experts and foreigners were maintained. They even served for Spain to enter international circuits again in the early 1950s (Brydan, 2019, p. 61). We must not lose sight of the fact that different Spanish experts saw in the countries that won the War a model, owing to their high levels of scientific and technical modernization. This aspect allowed the internal struggles between Fascists, Monarchists and Catholics in the Franco dictatorship to be mitigated under the common goal of modernization (Brydan, 2019, p. 22).

This was also the case for the educational institutions of the dictatorship. In fact, the regime's Ministry of Foreign Affairs had first-hand knowledge of the document on the first "International Conference of Ministers of Education" organized by UNESCO in London (UK) in 1945 [1] and the conference held in Geneva (Switzerland) in 1947 on "public instruction" [2]. The fact is that some educational experts, such as José Royo (1945), Adolfo Álvarez-Casado [3] and Francisco de A. Caballero (1946) had attended these conferences and others organized by UNESCO and they maintained personal and professional relationships with some experts of this IO. Moreover, in the 1940s, educational institutions such as the MEN itself and the San José de Calasanz Pedagogy Institute, echoed UNESCO's proposals and published several articles about them ("Mission and service of the International Office of Education", 1945; Martínez-Val, 1947; Snowden, 1947). In this way, as Brydan has pointed out, the strong connections existing between Spanish social experts and IOs in the 1940s indicate the need to re-examine "the limits of the idea of Spanish isolation" (Brydan 2019, p. 7) after the Spanish Civil War. Contrary to what has been argued on varied occasions, the process of internationalization of the dictatorship did not begin during the transition to democracy in the 1970s or with the trade agreements signed with the United States in the late 1950s.

A good example can be found in 1950. This year, the Spanish Royal Academy of History (RAH) received a commission from UNESCO related to the *International Understanding*

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*Programme*. The RAH began to participate in UNESCO's working group on the "Project for a Scientific and Cultural History of Mankind" [4] that had been prepared by historians and social scientists such as Lucien Febvre, Carl J. Burckhardt and Jean Piaget. The objective of this project was "the production of books, talks, exhibitions . . . that facilitate the broadest understanding of the scientific and cultural aspects of humanity", to develop an idea of "mutual dependence of peoples and cultures", as a "common heritage" enterprise [5]. It is true that there was some reluctance on the part of the dictatorship with regard to the formation of said committee [6]. However, this did not hinder the conformation and development of the project during Franco's regime. In 1954, with the visit of UNESCO General Director Luther H. Evans to the Ciudad Universitaria [7], a painting exhibition sent by UNESCO for international understanding "for educational purposes" in Spain [8] had already begun. Concerning this project, a high school inspector even suggested "the advisability of sending detailed information . . . of the aforementioned entity to all the Secondary Schools in Spain", and proposing "as the subject of writing for exams the following June, an essay on the UNESCO" [9].

In this sense, proposals for the *International Understanding Programme* were somehow disseminated through different institutions of the dictatorship. Around these ideas, educational films created by UNESCO such as "Emancipation of women", "Right to education", "Abolition of slavery" or "Qu'est-ce qu'une race?" [10] began to arrive in Spain. In 1952, an agreement had already been signed so that "all UNESCO documents could enter Spain without censorship," and their circulation in the country should be encouraged [11]. Indeed, these same films began to be used by the San José de Calasanz Institute within its Pedagogical Missions programme to combat illiteracy rates [12]. All of these activities were increased under a broader programme aimed at cooperation between countries that included a review of school textbooks. In this way, from 1951, Spain signed an agreement with Brazil to bilaterally review different history textbooks in order to try to identify those contents that fostered ideas of racial or identity prejudice [13]. These agreements were expanded upon with the creation of the Spanish National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO in 1953. During the following years, the "bilateral review of history textbooks" programme for international understanding was also signed with France (1954) [14], Honduras (1957) and Paraguay (1957) (González-Delgado and Groves, 2020). This work was carried out not only by the RAH but also by institutions such as the Centre for Documentation and Didactic Orientation of Primary Education (CEDODEP), which engaged in such work from its inception (Mañillo, 1959).

However, the development of UNESCO's activities was not limited in its early years to specific questions of international understanding. Audiovisual media as an educational element, and also as a means of promoting the economic and social development of the country, took on importance in the educational institutions of the dictatorship. In 1948, the San José de Calasanz Institute created a "Filmology Department" with the aim of improving the processes of "literacy and development in rural areas" [15]. A few years later the same centre relied directly on UNESCO sources for the development of educational activities with such means. In 1951, Guillermo De Reyna, director of the department referred to, delivered a report on his attendance at the congress held by the "International Center for Educational Cinema and Culture (CIDALC)" [16]. A year later, he attended a UNESCO congress held in Milan (Italy) on "studies of audiovisual media in basic education". In the report he submitted to the San José de Calasanz Institute, the author indicates that audiovisual media could be useful with "the backward populations" and in helping them "to understand the problems of the environment in which they live." In other words, this media could provide rural populations with "a fair idea of their rights and duties, both civic and individual", and so that they could "participate more effectively in the economic and social progress of humanity" [17]. As De Reyna himself wrote shortly afterwards, audiovisual media was seen as a tool "capable of carrying out the deepest economic and cultural renewal in the most backward

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communities in our homeland” (De Reyna, 1952, p. 167). The important thing to note about this issue is that these ideas became the main slogans that, under agreement with UNESCO, would be reproduced in different seminars or congresses organized in Spain on this issue. Examples can be found in those organized in Tangier (Tangier International Zone) in 1955 [18] or in Valencia (Spain) in 1960 [19].

We should not be surprised by the fact that such work was going on in Spain at this time. Starting with its inception, UNESCO had launched various projects on the use of audiovisual media as an instrument for economic development. As Suzanne Langlois indicated, in 1945 UNESCO already saw the use of films as a “powerful tool for modernization” of developing countries (Langlois, 2016, p. 73). Emile McAnany has also pointed out how, since the late 1940s, UNESCO had “quickly become a consumer” of American literature on media and development. The institution was particularly interested in Wilburn Schramm’s work on the use of television as an educational method that could be remarkably effective in the pursuit of economic modernization. Years later Schramm would become one of the main UNESCO expert in the development of this type of programme in different countries (McAnany, 2012, p. 20).

### **Towards an educational modernization process**

However, while these programmes were being developed, a parallel process was unfolding that would modify educational policy during Franco’s regime. Here we are referring to events initiated in the early 1950s by the Francoist educational institutions and UNESCO. In 1952, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs received a letter from UNESCO Director John W. Taylor. In it, the Spanish executive committee was invited to contribute its observations on the “working group on UNESCO’s future program and development” [20]. Among the documents they were asked to comment on was one related to the work programme of the 8th General UNESCO Conference, held in Montevideo (Uruguay) between November 12th and December 11th, 1954. This was the first conference at which the Spanish delegation was entitled to speak and vote. The following year, the Spanish executive committee of UNESCO issued a series of observations on this programme. In them the committee affirmed that it “shows its conformity in principle” to everything referring to the “campaign for free and compulsory education”, as well as “adult education”, insofar as the contents represented in their eyes fundamental elements in the quest for development [21]. For the first time, Franco’s educational institutions accepted and aligned themselves with a fundamental idea that UNESCO had just put on the table. We refer here to the idea that educational systems and their universalization were a fundamental axis for economic development. At the same time, the educational modernization vision was considered valid, as was the idea that educational systems must be established in relation to the economic and developmental needs of countries. In this way, the MEN was endorsing a basic premise of the Modernization Theory, acknowledging at the same time that the idea of educational planning was desirable [22].

After the Montevideo congress, the concept of educational policy would continue to move in this direction. The speech given by the Minister of Education at the conference left little doubt in this regard. In it, Joaquín Ruiz-Giménez recognized that the fundamental principle that should rule in all educational spaces was the “principle of substantial equality of all men and all peoples . . . without distinction of race or social class” (Ruiz-Giménez, 1954, p. 157). Furthermore, paraphrasing the new educational vision that UNESCO had developed, he indicated the need to generate “the social elevation of the economically weakest sectors in all peoples” through education (Ruiz-Giménez, 1954, p. 160). The Spanish delegation attending the congress expressed itself along similar lines. The report issued by Manuel Fraga Iribarne and José Luis Villar Palasí (senior educational experts of the regime) after attending this conference pointed out how the Spanish delegation had offered a “defense of the work of this conference” and of ideas proposed by UNESCO [23].

These kinds of statements about the need to plan the educational system in relation to economic development should not surprise us. As we have seen, during the 1940s different Spanish educational experts had established links with UNESCO and its ideas. Furthermore, the 1950s brought Spain closer than it had ever been to Western economic liberalization and developmental measures proposed by the Modernization Theory. During this decade, Franco signed agreements with the United States, and the country soon began to join other IOs such as the OEE/OECD, WB and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla, 2016). Besides, a notable opening to the importation of foreign technology began. New economic laws were created that made tariff taxes more flexible and Spain began to enter the market economy (Cebrián Villar and López, 2016). The technocratic groups began to be within the government political structure and began to develop new economic ideas close to Modernization Theory and Keynesianism (Martorell Linares, 2021). Thus, during the 1950s, the MEN began to establish educational policies framed within programmes of economic and social development and of improvement to human capital and, by extension, to the educational modernization process. We refer here, for example, to the School Construction Law (1953 and 1956), the increase in budgets for the School Protection Commissariat (1956) (Panorama of school protection, 1957), the promulgation of the National Questionnaires/ Syllabus for Primary Education (1953), the Law for the Regulation of Middle Education (1953) and the Law of Industrial Professional Training (1955) (Escolano, 1992, pp. 291–298). Under the patronage of UNESCO, a “pilot institute for the preparation of teaching staff for teaching secondary techniques” began to operate in 1955 in Madrid for the purpose of training teachers for Spain and Latin America to encourage advances and improvements in human capital in their home countries [24]. The MEN was actually implementing ideas on educational planning that had become central within UNESCO since the early 1950s. These initiatives underwent an acceleration after 1963 with the creation of the Institute for Educational Planning by the same organisation (Jones and Coleman, 2005, pp. 61–90).

Despite the dismissal of Ruiz-Giménez as Minister of Education in 1956, the approach taken by the regime’s educational institutions continued through much the same channels. One important event, marking a turning point, came in 1954, when a French technician from UNESCO received a scholarship from the “Raimundo Lulio Board of Trustees” to work with the San José de Calasanz Institute. The initiative, focused on “education in relation to social media” [25], was carried out every year until 1960, and the technician, Jacques Bousquet, served as technical adviser to the MEN. Bousquet held the same position from 1969 to 1973 for the development of the LGE (Bousquet, 1974, p. 3). In 1957, he published an article in the *Revista de Educación* in which he insisted on the need to “completely rethink education”. He pointed out the importance of adopting a new educational perspective that “realizes that the institutions created in the course of the last hundred years are extremely ineffective” and that this made it necessary to “completely recast” them. In other words, “the problem is not to reform specific plots or to imitate a little of this or that, but to completely rethink education” (Bousquet, 1957, pp. 1–3). The author was really referring to the need to plan the entire educational system in relation to the goals of economic and social development [26]. In other words, he was proposing redirecting the educational system from an elitist vision to one that would put it at the service of the masses, for the sake of maximizing the available human capital.

At about this same time, the Secretary General of the National Council of Education, Fraga Iribarne, was to make an important announcement. In Santander in 1953, he organized a series of talks on “Education in a mass society” (Fraga Iribarne, 1954) in which he expressed the need to modernize the Spanish educational system and adapt it to development. Fraga stressed the importance of “expanding” and “planning” the educational system. It was a matter of “forcing the State to control education more” and to, among other things, “extend the period of compulsory schooling” (cited in Ortiz de Solorzano, 1953, p. 238). These were aspects that different MEN educational experts had learned of directly from their

participation in different UNESCO conferences such as the “Conference of Compulsory and Free Education” held in 1953 [27]; the meeting on “The causes of failure in schools” in 1956 [28]; and the meeting on “Study of the problems of school protection” in 1959 [29]. Indeed, at the meeting in 1959, José Navarro Latorre, Commissioner of School Protection of the MEN, was “elected Vice President of the International Association of University and Professional School Information and School Protection”, created by UNESCO in 1959 [30]. Following these first initiatives addressing the issue, works began to appear on the “social desirability of the democratization of education” or the importance of promoting “equal opportunities for families with low incomes”, seen as ways of modernizing and improving economic development through increases in “human capital” (Lorenzo Gelices, 1958, pp. 61–63).

### **“We have no choice but to go there”: the rise of UNESCO’s concept of education under the dictatorship**

After these first steps addressing the need to plan and reform the educational system as an element of development, the topic gained additional traction in the 1960s. The Minister of Education himself, Jesús Rubio García-Mina, made this clear in a speech given at the 11th UNESCO General Conference in 1961, where he stressed the importance of “making an effort to achieve greater rigor in planning” of the educational system. At the same time, he pointed out that educational programmes could not be articulated in “a swarm of unrelated initiatives”. Rather, he hoped that the educational reforms would be “articulated and integrated as a whole, yes. In effect, that is what we must aim at.” (Rubio García-Mina, 1961, p. 26).

The same year a forum was organized between the OECD and UNESCO for the development of a series of technical assistance programmes in Spain. The brief report published afterwards contained several recommendations for the regime. Among other steps, it proposed “that Spain undertake a vast program of educational development, adapting it to its plan for economic and social growth.” To this end, it recommended that the MEN expand “access to education for lower-income classes”, that it reduce the “inequality existing between some regions and others in access to culture” and that it promote “access to education for women”. For its part, the MEN itself recognized the appropriateness of these recommendations, affirming that, in reality, “this is where we are going. Rather, we have no choice but to go there” (OECD: *Development of Spanish Education*, 1965, p. 89).

In late 1961 Spain entered the Mediterranean Regional Project (PRM) (Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla, 2020). With this, the notion of educational modernization as one of the driving forces of economic development was strengthened. The resulting report highlighted, yet again, the need to establish a “norm” towards “educational planning”, one integrated into the “economic development strategy”. For the first time, however, the OECD did not establish access to schooling as the main element. As the report itself acknowledged, “seeking a quantitative increase in primary education is not the only important thing; it is also important to improve its quality.” In other words, there was a call to improve “the necessary equipment” in schools accompanied by “teachers capable of directing them”, as well as the “equal opportunities” programme and “access to the University” or the improvement of “adult education” (OECD-MEN, 1962, pp. 25–28).

The recommendations made by the OECD and UNESCO did not fall on deaf ears, and the MEN quickly got down to business. In 1961, and in collaboration with UNESCO, the MEN organized a series of “study missions on educational planning” (MEN, 1962, p. 16), followed by more conferences on the subject the next year. At these meetings, ideas very similar to those espoused by UNESCO and the OECD were reiterated. Emphasis was placed on the idea that “a total planning of education has been for years one of the fundamental concerns of the MEN”. Therefore, in the face of “the close coordination between education and economic and social development”, it was necessary to give “the highest priority to educational



investment”, “to restructure the organization, content and methods of teaching”, and to improve the “systems of teacher selection, training and development at different levels in order “to achieve the goals of economic and social modernization” (MEN-UNESCO, 1962, p. 199). However, the activities carried out on this new educational vision extended well beyond the structures of the MEN itself. At the same time, CEDODEP organized UNESCO-sponsored courses for teacher training with the aim of modernizing classrooms (CEDODEP, 1960) and created publications such as *Notas y Documentos* to give access to the educational debates being generated internationally [31]. Moreover, the Spanish Society of Pedagogy (SEP) and the San José de Calasanz Institute dedicated the 3rd National Congress of Pedagogy to *The Spanish educational system based on economic and social needs*, which advocated a “total revision of the school system”, to promote permanent education “and promulgate a Foundational Law for the entire school system” (García Hoz, 1965, p. 862). Along these same lines, a significant number of scientific articles dealing with the importance of educational planning were published throughout the 1960s (Maíllo, 1963; Paredes-Groso, 1966; “UNESCO and research on planning”, 1967).

However, the development of this new educational concept was not limited to the publication of articles or the organization of conferences and courses. During the 1960s, the MEN developed a significant number of educational projects in this direction. All of them were related to proposals or programmes that UNESCO had developed or was developing during these years. Here we are not referring exclusively to the increase in primary or secondary schooling capacity (“Education and development”, 1966), the law “on the extension of the period of compulsory schooling to fourteen years” [32], the new “Questionnaires [Syllabus] for National Primary Education” [33], or the law “on the organization of secondary education” [34]. Perhaps most important, from the point of view of a reform of the educational system and the idea of educational planning, was the link between the educational system and development plans (Tena-Artigas, 1966). Around these initiatives, measures were implemented to modernize the educational system in order to achieve the economic growth standards set for the 1970s. This led to 1960s educational projects such as the *National Center for Media Education by Radio and Television* and the *RTV Baccalaureate* (1963), curricular proposals such as programmed learning, the *Teleclubs* (1964) or *School Television* (1968) (González-Delgado and Groves, 2017, 2020). An attempt was also made to improve the quantitative and qualitative structure of education with the creation of the “National Fund for the Promotion of the Equal Opportunity Principle (PIO)”, made at the request of the OECD [35]; the modernization of the educational administration with the transformation of the old MEN into the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC) (“The Minister of Education and Science explains the policy of the new Ministry”, 1966); and the “general planning of research [including educational research] in relation to the needs of economic and social development” (“Research and Development”, 1967, p. 86).

Notwithstanding these myriad efforts by the MEN and the MEC over several years, UNESCO was not entirely convinced regarding the implementation of the proposals. Between October and November 1968 an inspection mission led by UNESCO travelled to Spain to examine the measures carried out within the PRM and with an eye on future educational reforms. This committee was made up of specialists from UNESCO, the WB and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The purpose of the mission was “to review the current plans for the development of the educational system and to carry out a preliminary investigation into the possible priority sectors for investment” [36]. While the specialists did “positively evaluate” the actions that had been carried out so far, they also called for greater efforts on planning and economic development. In their view, the changes made suffered from “a weak link between the [development] Plan and the reform program” [37]. The problem was not only that “education in general still lacks systematic contact with industry”; there were also obstacles posed by the “selective orientation of the system”, by an “overly

conservative approach to the curriculum” and by a “high rate of dropout” in secondary education [38]. The mission was clear, “the Spanish school system needs a radical change” [39]. According to the recommendations given, this radical change could only be implemented through a variety of educational projects. The first of these would have to involve giving higher priority to planning through the creation of a “general long-term educational plan” [40]. This translated into increasing investment and planning “research on the development of curriculum”, “giving high priority to scientific and technological research”, promoting “equal opportunities for all” and “educational orientation and professional” and creating “experimental institutions” [41]. However, of fundamental concern to the mission was the problem of “teaching staff needs” and research in education. The objective was to have the reform personnel themselves get involved in the reforms and thus ensure a “true education plan” [42]. The orientation of educational policy, therefore, seemed clear and the response of the MEC in this direction was immediate.

During 1969, the MEC requested technical assistance and funding for the development of a structural educational reform of the programme of activities that UNESCO, the WB, the OECD and the Ford Foundation had launched in 1968 [43]. The objective of this programme of activities was to provide aid to countries of medium–high development levels, thus helping them with the application and development of reforms and educational planning. This aid was granted by UNESCO to Spain in early 1969 (Corrales-Morales, 2020, pp. 131–133). With the arrival of funding, the MEC began the process of reforming and structuring the educational system around the idea of planning, bringing it into closer alignment with considerations involving economic development. This same year the MEC published a comprehensive report (*Libro Blanco* [White Paper]) on the situation of the Spanish educational system and the need to carry out a structural reform (MEC, 1969). As requested by the UNESCO Mission, the Ministry also created, with funds from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the National Research Center for Educational Development and the network of Science Institutes of Education (CENIDE-ICEs) [44]. These institutions, in addition to helping implement the required reforms, also launched UNESCO's first pilot teacher training project with computer-aided instruction (CAI) to improve the educational reform [45]. The following year the MEC, in promulgating General Education Law (LGE) [46], would take the country's adoption of the educational modernization process from the previous decades to its apex.

## Conclusions

The origins of the influences and convergences that began to operate between Francoism and UNESCO are not easy to detect. We do know that different Spanish educational experts maintained professional and personal connections with international experts of UNESCO during the 1940s. Two important points can be made concerning this fact. First, this article is part of a wider literature that reconsiders tropes such as “international isolation” of Spain. The idea of modernizing the country seems to have taken precedence over the internal struggles of Franco's government. Secondly, the connections established between Spanish and foreign UNESCO educational experts allowed the entry and debate of an educational modernization conception that had been born within UNESCO. In this way, the educational modernization process that the OI strove to implement starting in the 1950s began to be debated, and subsequently, to be implemented, in Franco's Spain.

From this point forward, educational policies – involving literacy, equal opportunities and mass education, adult education, educational radio and TV and, most importantly, education as a fundamental tool of economic development – began to be debated and developed, finding their reflection in educational measures taken by the government. This modernization process intensified in the 1960s; no longer did anyone seem to question the need for the country's educational system to be organized according to economic and social needs, and for

it to be structured through the perspective that UNESCO had defined as strategic educational planning.

In the late 1960s, the MEC again requested new funding from the assistance programmes signed between UNESCO, WB, OECD and the Ford Foundation. With this financing, the CENIDE-ICE network and CAI teacher training project were created, while the following year saw the enactment of the LGE. The educational modernization process born from the context of the Cold War reached its culmination in 1970s Spain in the context of a dictatorship. However, Spain was no isolated educational “island”. It was one of the countries with a medium–high level of development that used or, more accurately, organized its educational system around the recommendations given by IOs with the aim of achieving greater economic development. In short, the origins of the educational modernization process that prevailed during Franco’s dictatorship in Spain were directly related to the ideas and confluences that Spain established with IOs and, in particular, with UNESCO. To understand why certain educational and curricular policies were implemented in Spain at the time it is necessary to study the mediation and links established by the dictatorship with UNESCO. In short, the new change process arose from a novel view about the role that educational systems should play in the social modernization of Western countries.

#### Notes

1. “Conferencia Internacional de Ministros de Educación organizado por la UNESCO”, November 1945, Fondo Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores (10)000.000, box R-5927, folder 43, Archivo General de la Administración (AGA).
2. “Conferencia Internacional de Instrucción Pública organizada por la UNESCO”, 1947, Fondo Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores (10)000.000, box R-2481, folder 8, AGA.
3. “Postcard of the Centre International d’ Eutes Pedagogiques-Sevres, France signed by Adolfo Álvarez-Casado to Nicholas Hans” (April 30, 1945), Institute of Education Archive, Invitations, Correspondence and notes 1935–1968, Box NH/4/11.
4. “Report on the Project for a Scientific and Cultural History of Mankind” (March 17, 1950), box Secretaría de la Real Academia de la Historia, Papeles Varios, UNESCO (1951–1983), Archivo de la Real Academia de la Historia (ARAH).
5. “Informe para una Historia Científica y Cultural de la Humanidad”, (May 25, 1951), p. 1, box Secretaría de la Real Academia de la Historia, Papeles Varios, UNESCO (1951–1983), ARAH.
6. “Carta de Manuel González-Hontoria al Duque de Alba” (June 11, 1951), box Secretaría de la Real Academia de la Historia, Papeles Varios, UNESCO (1951–1983), ARAH.
7. “Carta de Antonio Poch a Pedro Laín Entralgo, vista de Luther Evans a Madrid” (May 5, 1954), box ES, AGUCM, R-266, Archivo General de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid (AGUCM).
8. “Carta del Embajador de España en París a los Delegados permanentes de España ante la UNESCO” (July 6, 1954), Embajada de España en París (10)097.000, box 54/11502, AGA.
9. “Carta del Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores al Director General de Enseñanza Media” (May 12, 1954), box ES, AGUCM, R-266, AGUCM.
10. “Carta del jefe de la Oficina de la UNESCO del MEN al Comisario de Extensión Cultural” (February 26, 1954), box ES, AGUCM, R-266, AGUCM.
11. “Carta del Embajador de España en París al Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores” (April 14, 1952), Embajada de España en París (19)097.000, box 54/11594, AGA.
12. “Catálogos extranjeros de cine educativo, UNESCO” (1954), box ISJC/25/8, Archivo del Instituto San José de Calasanz de Pedagogía, Residencia de Estudiantes (ISJC).
13. “Revisión de textos escolares en países hispanoamericanos” (1952), Ministerio de Educación (05) 001.029, box 35619, AGA.

14. "Comisión Nacional Francesa: Revisión de manuales de Historia" (1954–1998), box 58/folder 1, Archivo de la Comisión Nacional Española de Cooperación con la UNESCO (ACNEC-UNESCO).
15. "Carta de Víctor García Hoz a Guillermo de Reyna" (September 17, 1948), box ISJC/25/6, ISJC.
16. Guillermo de Reyna, "Memoria de la representación española en la asamblea general del Centro Internacional del Cinema Educativo y de Cultura (CIDALC)", Unpublished Manuscript (November 15, 1951), box ISJC/4/1, ISJC.
17. Guillermo De Reyna and Juan Juez Vicente, "Congreso de estudio de los medios audiovisuales en la educación de base. Memoria de los representantes del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas asistentes al mismo", Unpublished Manuscript, (May 16, 1952), p. 9, box ISJC/4/3, ISJC.
18. "Carta de Juan Esterlich al Embajador de España en París", (February 14, 1955), Embajada de España en París (10)097.000, box 54/11594, AGA.
19. "Memoria sobre la XI Conferencia General de la UNESCO y sobre las actividades de la Comisión Nacional Española" (December 15, 1960), box ES, AGUCM, R-300, AGUCM.
20. "Carta de J. W. Taylor al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores" (December 10, 1952), box ES, AGUCM, R-266, AGUCM.
21. "Observaciones españolas al documento 7G/PGR/39 relativo al programa y desarrollo futuro de la UNESCO" (August 29, 1953), p. 10, box ES, AGUCM, R-266, AGUCM.
22. On the Modernization Theory and its relationship with education see [Martín-García \(2015\)](#).
23. "Carta de Manuel Fraga Iribarne al Presidente del Comité Ejecutivo de la UNESCO, Pedro Laín Entralgo" (January 21, 1955), p. 11, box ES, AGUCM, R-266, AGUCM.
24. "Carta del Director General de Política Exterior a Comisión Nacional de la UNESCO. Asunto: Proyecto de centro para la formación de profesorado de enseñanza medias técnicas en Madrid", (September 16, 1955), box 459/folder 1, ACNEC-UNESCO.
25. "Contrato de colaboración, Patronato Raimundo Lulio, Instituto San José de Calasanz al prof. Jacques Bousquet" (February 3, 1954), box ISJC/18/8.
26. Similar comments can be seen in [Utande Iguualada \(1959\)](#).
27. "Conferencia regional sobre la enseñanza gratuita y obligatoria" (1953), Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores (10)000.000, box 82/10522, AGA.
28. "Reunión sobre curso de fracaso en las escuelas organizado por la UNESCO" (1956), Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores (10)000.000, box 82/13593, AGA.
29. "Reunión de la Comisión Internacional Permanente para el estudio de los problemas de la protección escolar convocada por la UNESCO" (1959), Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores (10)000.000, box 82/13593, AGA.
30. "Informe sobre la Reunión de la Comisión Internacional Permanente sobre Protección Escolar" (1959), Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores (10)000.000, box 82/13593, AGA.
31. An example to indicate that the first number of *Notas y Documentos* opened with the following article, [Tena Artigas \(1961\)](#).
32. Ley 27/1964, de 29 de abril, sobre ampliación del período de escolaridad obligatoria hasta los catorce años, BOE núm. 107 (May 4, 1964).
33. Orden de 8 de julio de 1965 por la que se aprueban los cuestionarios que han de regir todas las actividades didácticas en las Escuelas Primarias, BOE núm. 229 de (September 24, 1965).
34. Ley 24/1963, de 2 de marzo, sobre modificación de la Ley de Ordenación de la Enseñanza Media en cuanto a las pruebas de grado y de madurez, BOE núm. 55 (March 5, 1963).
35. Ley 45/1960, de 21 de julio, por el que se crean determinados Fondos Nacionales para la aplicación social del Impuesto y del Ahorro, BOE núm. 176 (July 23, 1960).

36. "España. La Reforma de la Educación. Informe Preliminar (Confidencial EFM/17)", (February 1969), p. 1, box UIL 370.51 Sp ARCHIV, UNESCO Archive.
37. "España. La Reforma de la Educación", p. 2.
38. "España. La Reforma de la Educación", pp. 3–16.
39. "España. La Reforma de la Educación", p. 36.
40. "España. La Reforma de la Educación", p. 29.
41. "España. La Reforma de la Educación", pp. 37–40.
42. "España. La Reforma de la Educación", p. 33.
43. "Carta de Emilio Garrigues (delegado permanente de España ante la UNESCO) a Ricardo Díez-Hochleitner" (February 2, 1969), box 342/folder 2, ACNEC-UNESCO.
44. "Country and Intercountry Programming. UNDP assistance requested by the Government of Spain for period 1972–1976", (September 5, 1973), p. 15, box 75/folder 1, ACNEC-UNESCO.
45. "The Plan for the Use of Computers in the Education of Teachers" (January 1972), Box 3 Cooperative Programs between Spain and United States, 1975, Indiana University Archives, Peter A. Fraenkel papers, 1940–1983, bulk 1959–1976.
46. Ley 14/1970, de 4 de agosto, General de Educación y Financiamiento de la Reforma Educativa, BOE núm. 187 (August 6, 1970).

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### Corresponding author

Mariano González-Delgado can be contacted at: [mgondel@ull.edu.es](mailto:mgondel@ull.edu.es)

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